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Speaker: Honourable Wade Verge, MHA

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Verge): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Before we begin Routine Proceedings, I would like to observe an old parliamentary tradition. I have the pleasant task of formally welcoming a new member who was duly elected in the by-election of November 5, 2014. The new member is Mr. Rex Hillier representing the District of Conception Bay South. I have been advised by the Clerk of the House that the member has taken the Oath of Office and the Oath of Allegiance to the Crown as required by the Constitution and has signed the Members' Roll.

I would invite the Leader of the Official Opposition to come forward with the new member.

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you.

Mr. Rex Hillier, duly elected in the District of Conception Bay South. I ask you (inaudible) pleasure to take his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Let the member take his seat.

Welcome to the House of Assembly.

MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I am also pleased today to welcome to the Speaker's gallery His Excellency Werner Wnendt, Ambassador of Germany.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Along with Honorary Consul Waldemar Scharway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: If my pronunciation of these German names is in error, I apologize.

I am also pleased to welcome to the public gallery today Ms Bryant, who will be the subject of a member's statement a little later on.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we have members' statements from the Member for the District of St. John's East; the Member for the District of Burgeo – La Poile; the Member for the District of Port de Grave; the Member for the District of Bellevue; and the Member for the District of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

The hon. the Member for the District of St. John's East.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to honour somebody in this House of Assembly. It is particularly good when you have known the person you are honouring for decades.

Patricia Bryant, better known to everybody as Patti, is an amazing woman. She is raising three children and is an active volunteer with both Epilepsy NL and the local soccer association.

Patti has also created a Canadian network, dravet.ca, for families, friends, and caregivers of people with the little-known Dravet syndrome, a genetic disorder that causes epilepsy and other neurological and developmental problems, accounting for about 1 per cent of the epilepsy population.

Patti spearheaded the drive to get charitable status for dravet.ca, connects with other Dravet support groups around the world, organizes fundraising activities, and continues to play an integral role in the organization, which will award two research grants next year, thanks in large part to the tireless and inspirational Patti Bryant.

Last December, the President of Memorial University awarded Patti the President's award for exceptional community service. That is besides also working at the Health Sciences Centre Library.

I ask all hon. members to join me in thanking Patti Bryant for her tireless dedication to her community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. OSBORNE: By leave, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: By leave.

MR. OSBORNE: I would like to make a member's statement, Mr. Speaker, regarding the Community Food Sharing Association, by leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Member for the District of Burgeo – La Poile.

I say to the Member for St. John's South, I have reviewed your member's statement and communicated to you that it was not appropriate.

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

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

I rise today to recognize and congratulate fourteen-year-old Julie Pink of Burgeo upon placing second in the regional cross-country running competition and earning the right to compete in the provincials. Julie is a Grade 9 student at Burgeo Academy.

The provincial competition was held in Springdale and Julie placed seventh out of sixty-nine competitors. She said she was nervous and tired going into the provincials, but her love for the sport kept her going.

Julie also plays on both the softball and volleyball teams for her school and is a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador female under-fifteen team which recently travelled to Moncton to compete in the Atlantic Challenge Cup hockey tournament where they won the bronze medal.

Julie is also involved in the Community Youth Network, the Girl Guides, and is a member of the Respect Team at her school. She is a well-rounded student and a credit to her parents, Stacy and Dawn Pink.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to join with me in extending congratulations to this multi-talented young lady and wish Ms Julie Pink well with all her future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Port de Grave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today in this hon. House to congratulate five high school graduates from my district who recently received provincial scholarships.

Ms Rebecca Shephard, a graduate of Ascension Collegiate, received the Constable W.C. Moss Scholarship, valued at \$1,000. This scholarship is awarded to the son or daughter of an RNC or an RCMP officer who is retired, active, or deceased.

Joshua Thomas, Emily Mercer, and Emily Peddle, graduates also of Ascension Collegiate, were recipients of the Electoral District Scholarships given to three high school graduates who received the highest marks in the district. Each student received \$1,000 towards their post-secondary education. Matthew French, also a graduate of Ascension Collegiate, was awarded one of the fifty-five Centenary for Responsible Government scholarships.

These students are to be congratulated for their hard work and academic achievements. This financial assistance will help all these student pursue their chosen career paths. I ask all hon. members to congratulate these students on receiving these awards.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PEACH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize April Drake from the District of Bellevue. April Drake was recently named to the Canadian Ball Hockey Association. She will be one of twenty players who will represent Team Canada at the 2015 World Ball Hockey Championships in Switzerland on June 19-28 to defend the championship on the world stage.

April will be playing as a forward on the team. There will be eight female teams participating in total: Switzerland, Greece, the United States, Czech Republic, Italy, Canada, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom.

April is twenty-four years old and she is from Long Cove. April has been active in her community throughout the years, volunteering her time to others and different events. She is a very dedicated and motivated person. This dedication has led her to where she is today.

April graduated from Crescent Collegiate in Blaketown and recently convoked from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, where she completed a Physiotherapy Degree.

I would ask all hon. members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating April on her wonderful accomplishment and wish her all the best in Switzerland in June.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS PERRY: I rise in this hon. House today to extend congratulations to Fire Chief Anthony Casey for being elected as Director of Region Four on the Executive Board of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Fire Services.

Mr. Casey is an extremely dedicated and experienced firefighter, with over twenty years of service with the Harbour Breton Fire Department. His commitment and passion will

serve the forty fire departments in Central, the Baie Verte Peninsula, and on the South Coast with characteristic integrity and unwavering reliability.

Anthony has a long record of giving selflessly and generously to his fellow residents, and he will be an excellent voice for the firefighters he represents. I have no doubt that his steadfast nature and commitment will ensure that our firefighters have access to the best training, equipment, and support for the services they provide. The countless hours Anthony dedicates to his community, the region and the Province are greatly appreciated, and we look forward to working with Mr. Casey on the concerns of firefighters.

I ask all members of this hon. House to join me in congratulating Mr. Casey in his new role with the provincial association as he represents the dedicated firefighters in Region Four.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Ministers

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to recognize provincial seafood companies that are pursuing export opportunities and building strong reputations in international markets.

Mr. Speaker, in 2013 the total value of Newfoundland and Labrador's seafood exports was more than \$823 million – a testament to the economic importance of the fishing and aquaculture sectors. At present, the United States is the largest market for provincial seafood, representing almost 40 per cent of the export value generated in 2013. However, provincial processors have been focused on building clientele in markets other than the United States, and have been especially successful in Asia.

China is currently the second largest export destination for provincial seafood, accounting for just over 20 per cent of the export value. In addition, we have seen tremendous growth in sales to Southeast Asian countries in recent years. From 2006 to 2013, provincial seafood sales to countries in this area of the world, which include Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, have increased almost 250 per cent – from \$19.2 million to \$66.9 million.

The provincial government has supported this success by investing millions to support various marketing initiatives by the provincial seafood industry, and by providing direct support to producers attending seafood tradeshows around the world.

In recent years, the provincial government has focused on organizing annual trade delegations to Seafood Expo North America in Boston, Seafood Expo Global in Brussels, and the China Fisheries and Seafood Expo, which I recently attended in Qingdao. Assistance provided to producers at shows has included organizing booth space within the expos to help delegates showcase their products and hold meetings, as well as assisting with costs. Small-scale companies taking their first steps into international exporting and large-scale provincial processors that are well-established throughout the world have all benefited from their involvement in the trade delegations we organize.

Mr. Speaker, this government's efforts to foster international trade opportunities for provincial seafood products help drive new economic activity, support employment, and increase prosperity in rural communities. We remain committed to helping the provincial fishing and aquaculture sectors diversify and succeed globally, and to growing the value of the Province's billion dollar seafood industry.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SLADE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. The fishery is indeed important to our Province, and our export markets are crucial to the success of this industry. I join the minister in commending our seafood companies that are pursuing export opportunities. The provincial government, however, cannot be congratulated; instead, must be held accountable.

I would like to remind the current minister that his government announced in July 2011, it would accept all marketing recommendations of the 2010 MOU report; but, other than piecemeal assistance, we have no comprehensive seafood marketing council, three years after the commitment was made. Fishing nations like Iceland, Norway, and Alaska have well-managed fisheries and marketing organization. This government also has a pitiful record of setting a budget for seafood marketing and then leaves most of it on the table. This is called missed opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Minister, I recommend that your best accomplishment might be to get the seafood marketing council off the ground so that we can double our billion dollar industry. Rejuvenating a sustainable cod market would be a critical component of this effort. Since 1992, Mr. Speaker, this government has not grown the industry.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I, too, thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I am also pleased to congratulate the provincial seafood companies for their positive work in bringing our seafood, the best in the world, to export markets; however, it is sad to note, that five ministers ago we were promised a provincial seafood marketing strategy. So many other places, Iceland and Alaska come to mind, are marketing their

seafood, making their brands instantly recognizable around the world.

While this government has boasted of its tourism marketing program, it has failed to make the connection to the benefits a similar program would bring to our large and sustainable resource, even though ministers have acknowledged it. If this government is actually committed to helping the industry, Mr. Speaker, I ask then why doesn't it follow through on that promise?

Thank you.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: (Inaudible) Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues some information on November's Good Food Challenge, organized by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Good Food Challenge was developed to encourage better food choices and to help overcome some of the obstacles to healthy eating. This is also a focus of the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, Mr. Speaker – to encourage and support all of our residents in the pursuit of healthy eating and an active lifestyle. It is through initiatives like the Good Food Challenge that we can do just that.

I signed up for the challenge myself – and I have found it quite interesting. Throughout the month I have been receiving information and tips on how to make better food choices. There are some terrific recipes on the Web site. The point that the Good Food Challenge makes is that we can all make changes – maybe small changes at first, maybe major changes – but we can all make a conscious decision to start eating healthier, today, and to carry that commitment forward.

Founded in 1998, the Food Security Network is a provincial, non-profit organization, Mr. Speaker. Their main objective is to help ensure all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have

access to adequate and healthy food. The provincial government provides \$105,000 to the Food Security Network annually in support of their work.

Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the importance of healthy eating and that well-nourished individuals of all ages are better able to actively participate in the life of their communities. Strategies and supports for healthy eating initiatives include, but are not limited to: *Eating Healthier in Newfoundland and Labrador*, a provincial framework and action plan; support for the Kids Eat Smart Foundation, which provides breakfast programs to children in K-12 schools throughout the Province; *Eat Great and Participate*, a program designed to increase access to healthy food and beverage choices in recreation, sport and community facilities and at events; and “*Easy, Tasty... Nutritious – Healthy Eating for Healthy Aging*”, a recently-released publication which focuses on the nutritional needs of older adults.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage everyone to check out the Good Food Challenge Web site at www.goodfoodchallenge.ca – because it is never too late to start eating healthier.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say the first fellow, I think, is going to join up has to be the Member for St. Barbe. He has been chatting about it ever since I got up to speak, so I expect he is going to be the first one to get up and sign up.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thanks to the minister for an advance copy of his statement. It is certainly worthy to note that the Member for St. John's South has issued a challenge to all Members of the House of Assembly to help out with the food drive next Wednesday, December 3, after Private Members' Day from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Food Security Network's Good Food Challenge helps raise awareness about what

good food is; and, sadly, in our supposed have Province food security is a real issue. Whether due to income or geography, many people are unable to eat healthy foods for lack of access, and it is certainly worthy to note that many people who are at or below the poverty line or on Income Support are unable to afford to eat a diet that follows the Canada Food Guide.

Earlier this month Food Banks Canada released Hunger Count 2014, and, yet again, the report revealed that amongst the provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest percentage of its population using food banks. We have twice the national average of food bank usage. In March of this year over 26,000, almost 27,000 people, relied on a food bank for survival in this Province and over 10,000 – it is shameful – of those people were children.

So, I encourage the Minister Responsible for Wellness to use this challenge as an opportunity to reflect on how inaccessible good food is to many people in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

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

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I congratulate the Food Security Network for their great work across the Province, particularly their campaign to encourage local food production and buying locally-produced food. This is a win-win campaign for everyone, and the Good Food Challenge is an excellent concept. Bravo!

I would like to remind the minister of the increasing number of seniors on limited incomes who, because of the high cost of housing, must decide between paying their heat and light or buying good food. Unless government does something concrete to help these seniors, they can hardly afford to eat, let alone eat healthy. More and more seniors are having to use food banks.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are no strangers to winter weather.

In many ways, it has helped shape our Province's culture and defines us as we take pride in our ability to brave heavy snow, ice, freezing rain, and high winds. However, such a familiarity with weathering harsh conditions can create a sense of overconfidence among motorists.

For more than five years, the Department of Transportation and Works has used a public awareness campaign to remind motorists that snow means slow. This year's *Snow Means Slow* campaign is scheduled to begin next week and will include a combination of television, radio, and print advertising that will run throughout the Province.

In addition to the awareness campaign, there is also a series of resources available for motorists on the department's Web site and through regional dispatch centres. Through these resources, motorists are able to access updated road condition reports, view road conditions through highway camera images, obtain safe driving tips and call regional telephone lines for assistance.

Mr. Speaker, all motorists contribute to safe roadways and highways by driving conscientiously. The *Snow Means Slow* campaign reminds motorists of that shared responsibility and encourages them to monitor road conditions and adjust their driving behaviours to suit the weather.

Cautious driving practices also improve the ability of the more than 800 members of the department's winter maintenance team to maintain their focus on clearing roads. Aggressive and distracted drivers can hinder the success of road maintenance operations and can

create dangerous working conditions for our crews.

Winter maintenance is extremely complex and requires significant planning and co-ordination to ensure that all provincial roads and highways are maintained efficiently.

I would like to use this opportunity to acknowledge the members of our winter maintenance team. Often unheralded, they deliver a tremendous service each year and are to be commended for their dedication and commitment.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude, I would like all members of this hon. House to encourage motorists throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to practice driving practices and remember snow means slow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. We, too, would like to recognize the workers who go out and keep our roads clear and safe during the winter hours, sometimes in unsafe conditions. We would also like to encourage people to drive slow during the winter months because it is a more dangerous time in our Province.

Mr. Speaker, with all that said, I would like to bring something to the government's attention. It was brought to my attention Saturday night. People in Bay of Islands, Mr. Speaker, from 9:30 at night to 6:30 in the morning, if it snows, cannot even get through the snow to drive slow because the plows are off the roads.

If we have a marine ferry that comes into Port aux Basques, Mr. Speaker – our link to Canada – if that ferry is delayed in the nighttime, from 9:30 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. or 6:30 a.m., the road is not even plowed, Mr. Speaker.

Government must look at that policy. They must have that policy where the foremen has the ability to call people in if they knew snow was coming, Mr. Speaker. I ask the government to revisit that.

Everybody, drive slow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement here today.

Hats off to our highway workers; they are a hardworking bunch.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that snowfall is coming. It has already happened in a lot of areas of the Province now, but what drivers also need is the security in the knowledge that full crews are going to be out there when the time comes. All areas of the Province need twenty-four-hour snow clearing. The weather does not wait just for daylight hours. We do not know when an emergency will happen, but the people of this Province need to know that their roads will be clear should that need arise.

Mr. Speaker, the final word goes out to the motorists out there, in doubtful conditions where the weather may be extreme or the weather forecast could be nasty, calling for nasty weather: do not even attempt it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Before I begin today, I would like to recognize Lorna Proudfoot, of course. Lorna received her

QC this morning and I think all MHAs in this House will recognize the great work that she does.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BALL: Mr. Speaker, Eastern Health has begun sending tissue samples out of the Province because of breast cancer testing issues.

I ask the Premier: What is the issue with breast cancer testing in our Province today?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, as members opposite may recall, ER-PR testing stopped in December of last year because there was an issue with a proficiency test result. Proficiency tests were instituted following the Cameron report to ensure that our testing is at the highest possible standard.

The ER-PR testing did not stop because of issues with the testing. At the time, there were not a suitable number of pathologists to actually interpret the tests. While the assessment was ongoing, Eastern Health and pathologists determined that it made most sense to have both tests conducted in the same lab at the same time. That is the procedure that is currently in place with the lab that is out of Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We understand by media reports that this test is for the HER2 positive breast cancer which is what is causing problems at Eastern Health today.

I ask the Premier: When and how was this issue with breast cancer testing discovered?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, I can assume members opposite and people throughout the Province, that safety is paramount when it comes to any kind of test or procedure in any of our facilities. What we are dealing with here is an issue around turnaround time and quality. We are actually investing in new technology within Eastern Health that will replace one HER2 test with a new version of that test.

Until that new technology is in place, until the new test can be performed within Eastern Health, it makes sense to have both the ER-PR testing and the HER2 testing conducted in the same laboratory. It was agreed by Eastern Health officials and pathologists that would be the most responsible and most effective approach, and that is certainly an approach that I support.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, we accept the approach, but my question was: When was it, and how was this issue discovered?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: We have a very stringent quality assurance program in place in our laboratories, Mr. Speaker, and as I said in response to the first question, the testing stopped in December 2003. During proficiency testing which was in place, a problem was discovered with how the test was read – through this proficiency testing process. So, a problem was identified early because of the checks and balances that are now in place. That, Mr. Speaker, is a good thing.

The testing was stopped in December of 2003. There were some issues also at the time with the number of pathologists that were available to perform the test, and as a result, this measure was taken.

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to give the minister just one chance to clarify: I heard 2003, but was that 2013?

MR. KENT: In 2013.

MR. BALL: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, in January 2013, government celebrated the accreditation of all its medical laboratories, which was of course recommended in the Cameron Inquiry. However, the clinical chief of laboratory medicine has now indicated that Eastern Health is overhauling its lab testing.

I ask the Premier: Why is lab testing being overhauled just one year after receiving this accreditation?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, I can assure people in the Province that we have excellent laboratory procedures in place throughout our regional health authorities not only in Eastern Health, but in all four regional health authorities. We are constantly improving practices, and as new technology becomes available, as new procedures become available, as new training becomes available, we institute those improvements into our health system, and that is exactly what is going on within our laboratory program in our health authorities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last week the Minister of Finance and government boasted about having six budget surpluses out of the last ten budgets. They said it was evidence of their successful track record in fiscal management. What they did not say was that without the Atlantic Accord there

would only have been three surpluses. That is what the AG said.

I ask the Premier: Why are you leading people to believe that the surpluses were by your fiscal management when the AG has said that government has little to do with it?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the success of this Province can be attributed to many sources of revenue. We have had mining revenue, we have had personal income tax revenue, and we have had Atlantic Accord revenue. It is not about who generates the money or where the money is coming from; it is how you manage what you have to work with.

When I made a comment in the House last week about our fiscal management, it was not just my comment. The bond rating agency of Moody's and the bond rating agency of Dominion have made similar comments about our experience in the last ten years, Mr. Speaker. The ratings that we have are a reflection of good fiscal management. My comment reflected their observation about how well we have done since 2003.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would disagree with the Minister of Finance. The source of the revenue is very important because we already know the Atlantic Accord revenue is no longer.

The Auditor General went on to say that without the Atlantic Accord arrangements over the last ten years, this government would have run a cumulative deficit of \$41 million. It is clear this government has not used the oil resources to diversify our economy.

I ask the Premier: Why do you claim to be good fiscal managers when it is clear that without

deals signed by previous governments, you would have had a cumulative deficit of \$41 million? The source does matter.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: Mr. Speaker, we continuously hear, in this House and outside the House, the Leader of the Official Opposition talking about the revenue that we have had for the last ten years and how generous it has been, and how we wasted that money. He has never ever said – and let me ask him the question today. He has never ever said what he would not spend the money on.

Would he have not reduced personal income tax to the lowest in Atlantic Canada to make us competitive with being able to attract the kind of workers we need to sustain our economy? Would he have not built health care facilities? Would he have not put health care technology into our hospitals? Would he have not built the \$6 billion or \$7 billion worth of infrastructure that we have spent in the last ten years? Which one of those items would he not have done when he suggests we did not spend the money appropriately?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Mr. Speaker, I tell the Minister of Finance what we would have done. We would have done this. When the AG went looking for that infrastructure strategy, it would have been available. Your government did not do that, I say, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BALL: Last year, government started including its equity investment in the Atlantic Lottery Corporation as a financial asset to be claimed against total debt.

I ask the Premier: Why did this change occur?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For a long, long time now, ever since the member has been the Leader of the Official Opposition, that is the first time I have heard him say what he would really do.

Mr. Speaker, now we are on a roll. Maybe, as months progress, we will hear many more things that the Liberal Party will do and the leader will do. We are finally now starting to hear their platform. The first plank of that platform is they would make available to the AG a strategy on infrastructure spending. As he does that, he can only build on the \$7 billion that we have already spent.

Sources of revenue and how we account for various pieces of money, I would say, Mr. Speaker, in our financial statements, are reflections of advice we get from the AG and the Comptroller General.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: I ask the Minister of Finance before we got this answer, which had nothing to do with what the question was – I am not surprised, but I will ask it again, to give the minister the second opportunity.

Last year, your government started including equity investment of the Atlantic Lottery Corporation as its financial asset to go against debt. Why did this change occur?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I have said a moment ago, any changes in accounting practices and recording of assets, or the treatment of income or treatment of debt, sometimes it comes about as a result of

standards changing, accounting practices changing.

Sometimes the AG will make a recommendation or a suggestion as to how we account for and track our expenses and our revenues. Sometimes the Comptroller General responsible for internal fiscal control, sometimes that individual may make a recommendation to government as to how we track our expenses, how we track our revenue, and how we treat equity investment, whether it is from the Atlantic Lottery Corporation or whether it is from the liquor commission. Any of those accounting treatments of accounting practices come from those two sources, I say, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister, who is the seventh minister since the St. John's long-term care facility was announced to replace then existing crumbling infrastructure: Your own data stated that the per cent of the population in 2006 over sixty-five was about 12 per cent of the population, growing to 20 per cent in 2016, an 8 per cent increase.

What have you done to increase the spaces in St. John's for people who are waiting for long-term care today?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, this government has continued to increase long-term care spaces in Newfoundland and Labrador because we recognize we have an aging population and there is a need for even greater long-term care supports and services going into the future.

We just opened a 460-bed facility at a cost of \$150 million to replace the Hoyles-Escasoni Complex. That led to the addition of sixty new beds for long-term care in this region. It is a

positive step forward, but we acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that there is still more work to be done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, sixty beds with a population increase in that demographic of 8 per cent certainly is not a substantial increase. The minister likes to provide lots of reassurance, reassurance about all the things he and his government are doing.

I ask him again: What has his government done to increase the number of spaces for long-term care for people in St. John's who need that care?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, we have added sixty new beds for long-term care in this region. I think that represents significant progress. There is more work to be done, of course.

We have also made major investments in home support. We have introduced a paid family caregiving option. In this past fiscal year, we spent \$169 million to assist over 8,600 home support clients. We have made major investments in home support. We have made major investments in long-term care. We have introduced the paid family caregiving option, and we recognize again that there is more work to be done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, sixty beds with 50 per cent of those beds replacing infrastructure from the Waterford Hospital is not a substantial increase.

Last week the minister stated in this House that work was underway to address the current LPN shortage, which is affecting operations of the new long-term care facility in St. John's. In

Outlook 2020, the demand for health care occupations was forecasted to grow the fastest.

Given that your own data identified the problem in 2011, I ask the minister: Isn't the lack of Newfoundland and Labrador trained LPNs to get every bed open in that facility, in that St. John's facility, a result of your government's poor planning?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, as I outlined on a number of occasions last week, we have known there were some challenges with the number of LPNs to meet our needs in our facilities. As a result, we have taken a number of steps. We have been working closely with the Centre for Nursing Studies. We have been working closely with the College of the North Atlantic. We have introduced bursary programs. We have offered other incentives. We have availed of international recruitment. We have more beds that will be open in the next couple of months, and that means good things for long-term care in this region, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, government promised an adult literacy plan almost eight years ago. Meanwhile, over half of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are at the lowest levels of literacy. The Minister of Advanced Education and Skills said in March that a new plan would probably be ready in early September.

So I ask the minister: When will you release the adult literacy plan you promised almost eight years ago?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Soon, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, we rank last among all provinces in literacy and numeracy; people are waiting – almost a decade later. In the year 2000, a \$2 million Literacy Endowment Fund was established. Interest on that fund has grown to almost \$4,000. The interest accrued is meant to fund literacy initiatives. It has been five years since the literacy project was funded by the interest on the fund; meanwhile, Newfoundland and Labrador scored the lowest among provinces in literacy in a 2012 report on adult competency.

So I ask the minister: How can you drag your heels on an adult literacy plan that would identify the best use of that fund, when over half of our population is functionally illiterate?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, I disagree in regard to the number that the hon. member mentioned of illiterate people in this Province. I am very proud to be a Newfoundlander and Labradorian. I am very proud of the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who live here, and I am proud of the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who went elsewhere in regard to their lives' travels.

That fund was initiated in 2002, I believe, and it was slow in accumulating any kind of interest that would provide any grants to any of the organizations that might want to apply over the number of years. It is only recently that we actually accumulated around \$300,000, which we will be using in supporting our literacy plan going forward, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Mr. Speaker, the minister should not be proud of those statistics which are a sad reflection of this government's record.

Government's plan for full-day Kindergarten involves renovating seventy-five schools. In some schools, the minister plans to put Kindergarten in gyms and cafeterias, libraries and labs, and classroom facilities that are designated for other use.

So I ask the minister: How many schools need temporary portable classrooms, and how many tenders have been called for those portable classrooms to date?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, six schools will require modular classrooms in order to be able to facilitate full-day Kindergarten. Some of them are actually in the process of being done right now. We are not waiting until September 2016 to do that. We have started that as early as now. We have been very proactive.

Mr. Speaker, we have hired two engineers as well within the department to take a look at the facilities within the Province and to ensure the renovated spaces that are required will actually get started as quickly as we possibly can as well.

Mr. Speaker, the work is underway. We still plan on having full-day Kindergarten fully implemented in September of 2016.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Mr. Speaker, this government has been notorious for its failure to plan ahead when it comes to classroom space. When they have had to resort to using temporary, portable classrooms they have rarely – I do not know if ever – been able to deliver them on time.

If the minister is planning to use portable, temporary classrooms for all-day Kindergarten, for full-day Kindergarten in 2016, can she guarantee parents today that those portable classrooms will be in place by the start of classes in 2016?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the people opposite and I say to those who are viewing this, that herein lies the difference between that side of the House and this side of the House. They will find obstacle after obstacle after obstacle and we are focused on finding solutions and a way forward, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we have two engineers in place to ensure we are able to have the space ready in time for September of 2016. That is where our focus is; that is where our focus has been since the start of this, Mr. Speaker. In spite of what they want, Mr. Speaker, full-day Kindergarten is coming in September of 2016.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HILLIER: Mr. Speaker, in its K-12 capital plan for the fiscal year, the Department of Education announced a new K-7 school for Conception Bay South to be built in Kelligrews. So far we have a sign and a site, but little else.

I ask the minister: When can we expect a tender call for this new school so we can start moving this much-needed project forward?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Our officials are assessing exactly where the school should be built. We work very closely with the school district and the Department of Education. We are assessing what properties we have available. That process is in the final stages. We will be announcing in the near future exactly where that school will go. The construction of that school will be second to none, as our investments in all the schools we do here are for the betterment of the students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HILLIER: Mr. Speaker, I will let the member opposite know that the site has been selected just behind RONA in Kelligrews. The sign is up. I just want to know when it will be started.

Mr. Speaker, St. Edward's elementary school and Upper Gullies Elementary School are bursting at the seams. Conception Bay South is growing in leaps and bounds, adding to the space pressures these schools are experiencing. A delay in this project would have a huge impact.

I ask the minister: Once the site is identified, can you give the people of Conception Bay South some indication of when this project will be completed?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Like all of our projects here, they are moving forward. There is no delay on our school processes here, Mr. Speaker. We are investing in the people of this Province. We have our contracts ready to go. There are contracts that have been out to tender in the last week or so.

This school is not delayed. Great work was done by the previous member there and it will

continue. We will move things forward in the near future, Mr. Speaker. Stay tuned, the contracts for that school will be on time and out in the near future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. George's – Stephenville East.

MR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the Coast Guard's approach to the *Manolis L* disaster is a band-aid solution. A recent leak from the sunken vessel continues to trap our marine ecology.

I ask the Minister of Environment and Conservation: Besides a letter, what specific actions has this government taken to get the federal government to act on this issue?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly share the concerns of the people of the region. I think everybody in Newfoundland and Labrador has been following this story very closely since March 2013.

We know the federal government has responsibilities off our waters, Mr. Speaker, but we have been taking a proactive approach. We have been very close with the federal government in making sure we are monitoring the situation and that the plans and the containment are coming through in a timely manner.

A long-term solution is exactly where we need to be. We are aligned with that. I wrote a letter not long after I became appointed minister responsible. I have called the minister's office responsible and requested a meeting. Mr. Speaker, a long-term solution is what we all want, and we are aligned.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. George's – Stephenville East.

MR. REID: Mr. Speaker, from that answer I can assume he has done very little specific actions on this file. We have over 500,000 litres of oil sunken off our coast and the potential of a major oil disaster on our hands. The minute this oil hits land it becomes a provincial responsibility.

I ask the Minister of Environment and Conservation: What has he done to ensure our ability to clean up such a spill if it washes up on our shore, and does he have any estimates of the potential cost of such a cleanup?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, there are 500 tons of oil, is our understanding, in the *Manolis L*. We recognize that is a fairly substantial amount of oil. Certainly, the first response would be the federal government to contain that if the worst incident does occur, but we are confident that the measures taken right now are doing the right things at the right time. Again, a long-term solution is what we are looking for.

With regard to if it does hit the land, Mr. Speaker, we do have protocols and policies in place to respond when necessary. We work very closely with Service NL and their officials as well. We are well aware of the situation. We are monitoring it and we are on top of it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. George's – Stephenville East, for a very quick question.

MR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: Does he have any estimates of the potential cost of such a cleanup?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Conservation for a quick reply.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, we do not have any cost estimates around that. Again, we

are hoping it is not going to get to that point in time. It is not appropriate to discuss those types of numbers at this point, and it is a federal responsibility. We have to make sure the federal government steps up to the plate and ensure there is a long-term solution to this problem. Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to keep their feet to the fire on this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Last week, Ontario's NDP was successful in convincing their provincial government of the wisdom of a \$15 a day federal-provincial child care program.

I ask the Premier: Will his government commit to partnering with the federal government to ensure that every parent in this Province has access to \$15-a-day child care?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, certainly child care is a very, very important focus for our new department. I would like to say I am really happy about the fact that this Premier had the vision to bring both departments together to move early childhood learning and development into the Department of Education because that continuum is very important.

Mr. Speaker, the work that had been done in the past through the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services through the new child care strategy has, I think, been very, very helpful in terms of moving the agenda forward. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to see the implementation of that particular strategy around ensuring quality, sufficiency, and affordability.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The federal NDP child care plan would save families in this Province \$500 a month.

I ask the Premier: Why won't he commit to helping parents save money?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the hon. members from the Liberal Party for the great applause this afternoon. I appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, child care is very important to this government. It is very important to me, as Premier, as well. That is why I took the move –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DAVIS: I made the move, Mr. Speaker, to include Early Childhood Education as part of our pre-existing Department of Education because it is very important to start opportunities for the education of our children at a very young age. It made a lot of sense to move both of these together, Early Childhood Education and the former Department of Education, move them under one umbrella.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, the goal of moving this department together was to create opportunities to benefit early childhood education in the Province. We have just begun, Mr. Speaker. We have just begun.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last week in the House, when I asked the minister about putting a public health professional on the fracking review panel, the minister stated, "...I certainly appreciate the support from the Liberal Opposition in the make-up of the panel".

I ask the minister: Can he please explain his comment?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, that is three questions now, and I think pretty much all the same answer.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of fracking is very important to the people of the Province. Our government is committed to the health and safety of our people and the protection of the environment. Mr. Speaker, I would suspect all members of this House would feel the same. To do so, Mr. Speaker, we made a responsible decision to put an independent panel in to take a look at this issue. It is in the best interest of the people of the Province. They will come back to government, and we will make that decision.

As for what the Liberals say about that, Mr. Speaker, I think they were clear in their press release. They understand that this is a responsible choice to make, to put a panel in to take a fair, responsible look at this issue. I do not understand why the NDP do not get that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, if both parties think it is responsible, the question then will go towards both parties. Will the government reconsider the panel members and appoint a public health professional to the panel?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear on numerous occasions about the panel, the make-up of the panel, how we looked at other jurisdictions, what we felt was in the best interest in terms of having a very productive panel, and all interests cannot be represented on the panel.

I have said clearly, and it is a commitment of our government that we have shown time and time again, not only do we have experts on the panel, Mr. Speaker, but what is most important here is that we have laid down a process that gets everybody, including the NDP, to stand forward and bring their facts forward, to present it to the independent panel experts. Also, it will allow the experts to bring in other experts if they wish. The process is what is important, and every medical doctor on the West Coast who wants to speak to it can clearly stand before the panel and present their information, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's East for a very quick question.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, one panel member holds a patent to a drilling process.

Would the minister agree that it is a responsible decision to have this member on the panel who is already in a conflict of interest position?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources for a quick reply.

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, what I say to the member opposite is what is important here is that we have experts. Not Google experts, Mr. Speaker, experts to serve on the panel.

Also, it is very important to keep in mind the panel will not make the decision whether we frack in this Province. That will be left to the government, Mr. Speaker, to make that decision on behalf of the people and what is in the best interests of the people of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The time for Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

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

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will move the following private member's resolution, seconded by the Member for Port de Grave:

BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House encourages the provincial government, through its new Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, to identify and advance opportunities, build knowledge and capacity, and promote access and awareness so that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians embrace active, healthy lifestyles and habits within supportive environments that will serve them throughout their lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that the private member's motion just presented by the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale, seconded by the Member for Port de Grave, will in fact be the private member's motion we will be debating this coming Wednesday, November 26, 2014.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

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

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS the Edinburgh Group Limited has been granted permission to proceed to develop 110 recreational cottage lots at Ocean Pond near Whitbourne; and

WHEREAS the roadway, three kilometres, accessing the new development was built by and maintained by cottage owners for the past thirty-five years; and

WHEREAS the existing Ocean Pond road cannot possibly withstand the heavy construction equipment and traffic of a 110 lot development; and

WHEREAS Edinburgh Group started extensive work on the development in May 2014 before any approval from Lands and Environment; and

WHEREAS the land in question, with the exception of the portion of Crown land that was subsequently added, was first licensed as a land and community development licence to the Bethunes in 1887, and in 2003, the government approved the issuance of a grant to the Garland estate for certain portions of the land included in the licence. An area of land was eventually granted to the Garland estate on December 13, 2013; and

WHEREAS there was access given to this property through Crown land as well as a change in the boundary of the original land licence shortly before the purchase by the Edinburgh Group but after the grant was finalized; and

WHEREAS cottage owners in attempting to obtain information from government departments to provide public comments as per the minister's request on July 11, 2014, have not

been able to obtain the requested information and as such are in a position whereby they do not know the government's intention on existing road maintenance and future development in the area; and

WHEREAS the mission statement of Environment and Conservation is to ensure that a clean and sustainable environment and resilient ecosystem is adhered to; and

WHEREAS we are not aware of any survey to ascertain the existence of rare plants or endangered species such as boreal felt lichen which have been found approximately two miles from the project; and

WHEREAS the project was released on September 29, 2014 with no apparent justification or a concern for the substantial public response to the original requested undertaking, and based on Environment and Conservation's guidelines;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to stop the current development by Edinburgh Group, investigate the fact that they have extensively developed this property without permission, and hold a meeting with the Ocean Pond group to outline government's plans for the area and allow the existing residents to have input into the decisions made in their cottage area.

Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that I have raised in the House last week through Address in Reply. This has been ongoing for quite some time, as is indicated here. There was a development, there was an exchange of lands, and there was an out-of-court settlement, allegedly.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the member his time for speaking has expired.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KIRBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS applied behavioural analysis has been shown to be effective for many individuals beyond Grade 3; and

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

WHEREAS it is unacceptable to expect parents in Newfoundland and Labrador to pay thousands of dollars out of their own pockets to cover the cost of privately-delivered applied behaviour analysis after Grade 3;

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a while back – I think a number of months ago – I have a constituent who lives in the west end of the District of St. John's North who has been spending a significant amount of her time going

around and getting people to sign this petition on the comprehensive strategy for autism spectrum disorder. As I mentioned one day before, she recently notified me that she is having to cover the cost herself of applied behavioural analysis for her child who has aged out of the program.

I think we really need to have a good look at how the program can be changed, improved, if it can be changed, to look at the statistics that we have and to see if we can ensure that services are provided to that group that is falling through the cracks, whether that is through a universal program or ones that are means tested and based on income. I think something needs to be really looked at.

This particular constituent of mine is on Income Support and is living in Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and having a great deal of difficulty managing just to get by with day-to-day household costs, let alone providing for her Grade 4 child to get applied behavioural analysis.

I think it is really worthy of looking at and perhaps something the government might want to study for the upcoming Budget.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS the Family Violence Intervention Court provided a comprehensive approach to domestic violence in a court setting that fully understood and dealt with the complex issues of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS domestic violence continues to be one of the most serious issues facing our Province today, and the cost of the impact of domestic violence is great both economically and in human suffering; and

WHEREAS the Family Violence Intervention Court was welcomed and endorsed by all aspects of the justice system, including the police, the courts, prosecutors, defence counsel, Child, Youth and Family Services, as well as victims, offenders, community agencies, and women's groups; and

WHEREAS the recidivism rate for offenders going through the court was 10 per cent, compared to 40 per cent for those who did not; and

WHEREAS the budget for the court was only 0.2 per cent of the entire budget of the Department of Justice;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reinstate the Family Violence Intervention Court.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, again I have petition after petition after petition, signature after signature after signature of people who truly believe and passionately want to see the Family Violence Intervention Court re-established – and they are doing so because they know that it works. They know that it fulfilled its mandate, and they know that it is necessary.

These are people who in all their communities know the stories of what is happening in their communities. As we saw on Thursday, the members across the House also know how important this is, and how important this is for their constituents, how important it is for their communities, how important it is to deal with the root cause of domestic violence.

Now, Mr. Speaker, last week the Premier said, oh, perhaps we will look at it again because we are going to look at teleconferencing or other ways of being able to hold the court. Well, the court, in and of itself, is a small part of the whole process. The reason this court was so effective is because of the activities that happen outside the courtroom itself – and that is the support mechanisms for women and children,

the treatment programs for men. That cannot be done via teleconferencing or video.

Those are the important aspects that make this court a comprehensive court, that reduces recidivism, and keeps women and children safe. That is what is really important, and it is possible – Mr. Speaker, there is no reason on this earth why those support systems cannot be set up in other parts of the Province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, as you know full well this is not the first time I had to present this petition. In fact, I seem to do it on an annual basis when we sit in this House, especially in the fall. Again, we are seeing the same thing here.

To those members on the other side who were not on the West Coast over the weekend, I can tell them how treacherous it was. As a member of the West Coast driving home across this Province on Friday, it was absolutely treacherous from Corner Brook all the way to Port aux Basques.

Now, thank God I was driving during daylight hours because there was a plow there. That is the good news. Unfortunately, after hours, I am on my own – forget it. The fact is this service is on so many other routes in this Province, yet the main route in terms of the gateway to this Province, we do not have this.

We forget about those who have to travel to Deer Lake in all hours to catch a flight. We forget about those who have to travel to the current Corner Brook hospital to get services, including those who want to give birth. If you want to have a baby on the Southwest Coast, you have to have it in Corner Brook. Let's hope you are going to get induced during the daylight hours because if it is during nighttime, you are on your own and that is all there is to it.

Let's not forget about all of those from every other part of Canada, the US, and the world who come across here and get off the boat and travel because they are not going to have a plow taking them on the first part – because, again, let's not worry about that.

I am going to put notice out to the current minister, because I met with the past two or three ministers and I get the same answer back: We are not going to do it. We have a new minister. I am confident he is going to make the right decision, which is we are going to have twenty-four hour – again, it is not even necessarily twenty-four hour; it is the ability to call in as needed. That is what is needed: the call-in. Again, I put it out.

The members wonder why I worry about this, but those are members who get twenty-four-hour snow clearing. When you come out my way and

you do not get it, it is an issue. It is life and death, and I appreciate the opportunity to do this today.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS the local service district of Freshwater-Carbonear has experienced ongoing regard for the need of repairs to the beach breakwater which has been severely damaged by storm waves and this has caused major concerns to the local service district of Freshwater as it pertains to fire protection and safety; and

WHEREAS this lack of repair by government constitutes a fire and safety issue to the community since the residents will be trapped in if a fire ever took place; and

WHEREAS this damaged breakwater roadway is also creating an environmental concern as the Atlantic Ocean has washed over the roadway and out into a fresh water pond where the fish are in the pond; and

WHEREAS this area serves as a capelin run each year which attracts a great many locals, residents and tourists to the site; and

WHEREAS the federal government refuses to assist this repair as they deem it as no associated fishing activity to justify investment;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to respond to the pleas from the community residents and their legislative representatives to have this breakwater structure repaired so that once again it can properly protect the road infrastructure from being more severely

damaged and once done, call upon government to repair this road.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, up until three years ago, the provincial government, the Department of Transportation, was taking care of this road, as well as the one in Bristol's Hope, because the two of them are in the same situation.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what is after taking place or why the Department of Transportation stopped doing it. I can say this much: if it continues to go on down there and one of those residents happens to get trapped in there if a fire did take place, somebody on the government side of the House is going to have to answer for that because this is the second time I have presented this petition.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is very, very important. There is an environmental issue here, too. That pond on the other side of the road there holds trout and other species. Like I said on the Bristol's Hope one, if somebody in Freshwater decided to take a backhoe and fill that pond in, I am sure the Department of Environment would have something to say about that.

I am standing here in this House and presenting this petition on behalf of the residents in there. The Department of Transportation has dropped the ball here on both of those roads. At what point in time did they do that? Why did they do it? What was the reasoning behind it?

Also, Mr. Speaker, even though I have a petition here today, it is something that I will also pursue with the Minister of Transportation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I stand in the House today to present this petition.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament

assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents of Newfoundland and Labrador humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS we call upon the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to make literacy a priority, by supporting the development of a robust provincial Strategic Literacy Plan that addresses the learning and literacy of individuals from the early learning years through the senior years; and

WHEREAS recognize that literacy is intimately connected to the other social issues; and

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is to invest in more funding in literacy programs so that all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians can enjoy the benefits of participation in our society and that no one is left behind;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to make funding literacy programs a priority in order to develop a provincial Strategic Literacy Plan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is the second time I presented this petition. As this House fully knows, and as my fellow member of the House of Assembly spoke earlier today around the literacy levels in Newfoundland and Labrador, we have significant issues in our Province.

There is no evidence that suggests anything this government has done has done anything but fail to improve that statistic. It is a shameful record. The fact that the government has failed to produce a Strategic Adult Literacy Plan, which has been promised since 2007, underscores their lack of commitment to and competency on this critical issue. The lack of policy means that everything else is put on hold and leaves the field without the knowledge and a foundation of how to move forward.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS C. BENNETT: Studies show that we are falling behind countries like Ireland, Croatia, and Russia. Mr. Speaker, a simple solution, as the minister referred to earlier today, was that the excess funding in the amount of \$364,054, which has accrued in the endowment fund created to support literacy in our Province, that money get into the community, into organizations like Literacy NL so they can do the work that needs to get done. Government needs to do and this minister needs to do the work of making sure that board meets, and they make a decision to get that money out the door to help people who need it.

Thank you.

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS Route 434, Conche Road, is 17.6 kilometres of unpaved road; and

WHEREAS the current road conditions are deplorable; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Automobile Association ranked Route 434 the seventh worst road in Atlantic Canada; and

WHEREAS it is government's obligation to provide basis infrastructure to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; and

WHEREAS an improved paved road would enhance local business, fish processing operations and tourism, which is vital to the health of the communities affected;

We the undersigned, petition to the House of Assembly to urge the government to allocate funds in the provincial roads program to pave Route 434.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by residents of Roddickton, Bide Arm, St. Anthony, and Conche. The community of Conche is a very active, economic, and vibrant town. The fish plant started in April and just recently closed. It provided meaningful work for dozens of people who were working directly at the plant, as well as the transportation of raw material over that road. Hundreds of transport trucks travel over that highway in poor condition, and it has been an employer for people outside of the community in places like Englee, Roddickton, Croque, and also other parts of the West Coast and the Province.

If we want to look at building strong economies, we need to have that plan in place. We are limiting other economic potential that Conche could bring. It has an interpretation centre that sees 2,000-plus visitors each year, and if we had a multi-year plan – government has already invested and spent \$6 million rebuilding, realigning that road. The longer it goes without putting any type of asphalt on to this highway then they are just losing their investment into the sides of the road, because there is no calcium chloride program being applied to that highway. The studies would show that they would save money if they did apply.

For health concerns in place, the minimum government should be doing at the moment is installing dust monitors because the people who are commuting from Conche, high professionals who are working at the hospital in Roddickton and other areas to commute for government services, this makes economic sense. It is the right thing to do, to put in a multi-year plan to pave Route 434. It is an economy that is thriving, not dying, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, President of Treasury Board, that we move to Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that we move to Orders of the Day.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

Orders of the Day

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I call from the Order Paper, Order 2, third reading of a bill, An Act Respecting Chartered Professional Accountants And Public Accountants, Bill 27, and I move

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the said bill be now read a third time.

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

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that Bill 27 be now read a third time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act Respecting Chartered Professional Accountants And Public Accountants. (Bill 27)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting Chartered Professional Accountants And Public Accountants", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 27)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I now call from the Order Paper, Order 3, third reading of a bill, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act, Bill 29.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, that the said bill be now a read a third time.

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

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that Bill 29 be read a third time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act. (Bill 29)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 29)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to now call from the Order Paper, Order 4, second reading of a bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3, Bill 26.

I so move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the bill be now read a second time.

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

Motion, second reading of a bill, “An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3”. (Bill 26)

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WISEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my pleasure today to stand and start the debate on this bill. I just want to read into the record – this is a very simple bill, yet, at the same time, has significant impact but also reflects significant progress we are making in as to how we do business in government.

I just want to read the Explanatory note, “This Bill would amend the Revenue Administration Act to establish a procedure for the issuance of electronic clearance certificates.”

Mr. Speaker, this amendment would allow government to move forward to establish and develop what is referred to as a tax clearance certificate portal; which, simply put, what we are really talking about is developing a mechanism to allow people doing searches to be able to go in electronically and provide clearance certificates, tax clearance certificates, should they want to deal with it as a result of some kind of transaction.

These tax clearance certificates are frequently required by lawyers as they are doing transactions for real estate, for example, where they may want to get some understanding of whether or not there are any taxes outstanding that might be levied against that property or charged against the property.

There are a couple of sections of the Revenue Administration Act, section 18 in particular, which provides an ability for government to establish a lien against an asset like a house or some other property the individual may own, so it is a lien by the Crown against that property. It is not registered like you would find in a Registry of Deeds. It is not registered under a

personal property register, but it is in fact a lien against a property.

When lawyers are frequently transacting real estate transactions, for example, they may want to do a search and determine whether or not there are any liens registered against that property. They are able to go to other registries and determine whether or not there are any chattels registered against them. There might be mechanics’ liens that might be registered against them, but they would have no knowledge through those searches of whether or not there are any tax liens against the properties.

Right now – and this is not a new procedure, Mr. Speaker – what is really happening today, as we speak, those searches are occurring. What happens now is a lawyer will, in fact, make a request to the Department of Finance – and we get about twenty-odd thousand of those every year. A request comes in, primarily from lawyers but not always, who want us to certify that there are no tax liens against the properties that might be the subject to a transaction that they are involved with.

We are doing these things now. It is a manual process. Lawyers will make the request and we will have officials who will do a search to determine whether or not there are any liens, outstanding taxes, that the individual has not yet paid; there would be a lien against their property.

What we are doing here now, Mr. Speaker, is establishing a mechanism to provide for an easier access, an electronic mechanism to allow what is now a manual process to occur with a higher degree of efficiency. What mechanism this will provide for us is individuals who want to take advantage of this service will register to become an individual who has access to that.

For example, if there is an individual lawyer who wants to use this service they will register themselves, they will be provided an ID, a mechanism to be able to sign on electronically, and get access to the information they seek. There is still a mechanism whereby they will still be charged a fee for that.

As they, register they will be charged a fee – and these are not new things. The government has

made tremendous strides in recent years towards making business easier. There has been major initiatives with the reduction of the amount of red tape it takes to be involved with government and processes, whether it is a process such as this or other transactions that consumers of government services would have on a regular basis. There has been a tremendous amount of effort for government to help facilitate a process through electronic means.

Just recently, for example, the Department of Finance as a part of this initiative made some changes in the teacher certification fees that are collected by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, allowing teachers to pay in advance for assessments to obtain certification. That mechanism now is electronic.

It would be the same process for building accessibility registration forms collected by the Department of Service NL. Again, now clients are able to pay in advance and do this electronically. Fire and life safety registration is the same kind of process.

These are just three recent examples of where government, as a part of its initiative to become more accessible for clients to access services, registration processes, payment of fees – this is just one other example of where we are trying to provide more online services. Given today's access to computer technology and the connectivity of society today, this makes it a lot easier in day-to-day transactions, not just for government in terms of its own internal process but also for consumers of government services and individuals who need to do business with government departments and transact, whether in this case its getting tax certificates or other types of considerations.

The other thing, obviously, that comes into play here and as a result of this amendment to this legislation now, there will also be a subsequent amendment to the privacy legislation to allow us to be able to release this information as a response to that portal. That is the reason for the registration, Mr. Speaker. Not anyone can go in online and access the information unless they have been approved access to that particular portal, and that is what a registration process will provide for.

Mr. Speaker, many of these inquiries are transacted as a part of normal business arrangements, generally around title searches for properties and the transaction around real estate. So this as I have said, Mr. Speaker, is a minor amendment to a bill that has significant implications.

There will also be the issues around access to information because this is a person's private information. Individuals today, if you are involved in a transaction such as this, you will give your lawyer consent to in fact access the information in question. That government has the ability then to release it. This mechanism will provide an electronic mechanism to ensure there is recognition that we are releasing private information. That is why we need some degree of control over who might be able to access that and provide that registration process.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, this is a mechanism here to take what is now a manual process and make it electronic. To allow us to do that, we need to amend the Revenue Administration Act to facilitate a streamlining of a system that is already in place manually. It is not adding anything new. It is not a further restriction. It is not a further layering of additional bureaucracy or regulation around a process, but purely taking what is now a manual system and making it available electronically.

As I said, a very simple and straightforward amendment with some significant implications, particularly for those people who are involved in making what is now some 20,000-odd annual requests. The intent is to streamline a process, make it more efficient and more accessible to a greater number of people.

Mr. Speaker, I will adjourn my comments now. I look forward to hearing comments from members of the Opposition and my colleagues who may have some additional comments to make. When we get into Committee, I will be only too glad to answer some very specific questions around the implications of this amendment and how this will actually work in practice.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Cross): The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters.

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

I am happy to stand in the House today to speak to Bill 26, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3.

The act, as the minister has indicated, is an amendment to the Revenue and Administration Act. It is meant to immediately amend section 17.

I first want to say thank you to the staff who spent the time last week to brief us on the changes. They were certainly very helpful in answering our questions and explaining what the intention of the change in the legislation is meant to accomplish. I do have some questions as part of our debate here this afternoon that I will be asking the minister if he will comment on.

The minister mentioned there has been significant progress in how government does business. I am assuming what he is referring to may incorporate the idea of business process management and how things are actually done throughout government to improve the efficiency so that we allow our hardworking civil servants and front-line staff to spend their time delivering the services and answering the questions from taxpayers and people they service more so than they spend their time creating paper.

What was interesting is when we were at the briefing I was surprised at the number, which the minister referred to, of 20,000 requests. For those listening at home and for those here in the House today, just to explain the process of what has been happening, my understanding is a letter would come into staff requesting information. The information would be gathered and assessed. A letter would be written and then mailed. Oftentimes that process would take many days, but more importantly, would take much time and valuable resources from our very important civil service who want to make sure they are providing the best service they can.

I asked the question about how long this new electronic process – which certainly as the

minister indicated, will allow for much more efficient use of staff time and being able to focus on what is important versus focused on paper movement. I asked the staff how long that implementation process would take. I think the answer, if I am correct, was between three to six months to implement what is a very simple change, which, again, begs the question, if we can get some clarity on exactly what the business process management program is with a lot of these systems and processes that people are providing answers to.

As the minister, I am sure, and members of this House are aware, business process reviews often require re-engineering of how work is done. When you take one piece and just isolate that and make that change, oftentimes you create dominos of inefficiency. I would be interested to know what other things were looked at, as part of this legislative change, that would allow the staff to be even more efficient and effective. Are we taking one needle out of a haystack, or are we making a substantial change to allow more efficiency?

When I look at the Auditor General's report and look at where this government chooses to prioritize and spend its money, the Auditor General clearly sent a red flag out about expenses, which according to his report have grown 58 per cent from the period of 2004-2005 to 2013-2014 – 58 per cent. While a growing economy requires reinvestment in all kinds of places, one of the places where we cannot afford to waste money is in inefficient systems and processes that do not allow our staff to do the work they need to do but create needless activity, such as replying to paper mail. The Auditor General actually noted that efficiency systems are something that government needed to look at.

When we talk about a business process management system, one of the things that become important is how shared services are managed and the importance of an organization like the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador having a shared service program that is focused on processes that are constantly re-engineered. That re-engineering allows for better, cheaper, faster business processes, but in order to accomplish that there has to be a structure and a technique to evaluate what gets

done, how it gets done, why we are doing it, and how we can do it better.

I am sure we have some exceptional staff in the civil service who can provide information around how shared services can be reviewed in the entire processes that we operate in government, to take a look at things like obvious questions, everything kind of takes too long, but it is difficult to understand why. That is a perfect question for shared services and management to take a look at to see if there are other systems and processes that can be brought in to make it more efficient.

Are consumers of the process all in favour of the desired outcome? From the staff that we met with, staff indicated they were very supportive of this change. From our discussions we would certainly support what government is doing, but we would challenge government to see how much more can be done in the way of using technology to allow our civil servants and our bureaucracy to be even more effective in delivering what they need to deliver.

Are people executing the processes unhappy or cynical? I can say that when the process was described to me of these multiple letters that are 20,000 responses that have to be drafted, I can say the staff were very professional in their commitment to get the work done, but when I questioned whether or not it was productive work, they were certainly excited about the new efficiency that was going to be a result of this particular change in legislation.

The other thing when we talk about re-engineering business processes, or what costs can you eliminate from the process that allow individuals who are very valuable and very important to the running of government, allow them to spend their time on things that are meaningful versus things that do not necessarily carry the same meaning for the taxpayers.

Business process reviews often operate at various levels and have very different building blocks. They include things like a review of core processes. I am not familiar enough, but I am assuming there is some information that the minister or other members of government can share on how core processes are reviewed and how those processes are reviewed with the view

to continue to create value for those who are on the receiving end of those services. Typically, there are cross-functional teams that are tied closely to the organization's goals to make sure that things happen efficiently and effectively.

Business process management also includes strategic and business planning. I would assume that I would ask the minister in the Department of Finance: are there ongoing processes to review how efficiently and how learnings from this piece of legislation might be incorporated into other business processes in that department that would allow for further efficiencies to be identified, and then further optimizing the time of the staff that work there?

The other thing I would ask – I would be curious to get an understanding of how staff are going to be trained and what the implementation program is. One of the biggest challenges in any organization that implements IT change is if you do it in a micro way or you do it in a macro way. Micro changes often will create confusion with employees because one process is different from another process, and then the ability for employees to travel back and forth from different positions sometimes makes it challenging because there is ongoing and increasing costs of training. I would be curious to get a deeper understanding about that as well.

Certainly, as the minister said, this is a good thing, to make the ability for our civil servants to do their job in a more efficient way so they can focus their time and talents on the end-user or the consumer or the person they are servicing is a great thing; but how many lessons can we learn from a small change that we can use to adapt into other areas, I think, is important.

Twenty thousand requests a year is an amazing number of requests when we think about it. If you think about the amount of time that would take – 20,000 requests, an hour a request, 20,000 hours – a significant amount of time from staff has been absorbed in completing this work for many years.

My question would be, and in light of some of the questions we had in Question Period today about where spending needs to be focused, spending should be focused on making sure the services are provided in the most efficient and

effective way, and giving our staff the best access to equipment and technology that allows them to do that.

Certainly, from our side of the House, we will be supporting the change. This is a great opportunity for us to have a discussion and get some deeper clarity and certainty, and certainly get some questions answered around the business processes that government uses, particularly in the Department of Finance.

With that, I will take my leave.

Thank you.

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

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to be able to stand and have a few moments to speak on Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act No. 3. It was interesting to listen to the Member for Virginia Waters across the way. Two words I noticed she used quite a bit were efficiency and effectiveness. That is what this change is all about. It is about being more effective and more efficient.

What we are doing here now is by putting an electronic clearance certificate in place, the opportunity to do this electronically, cuts out a lot of red tape. That is a word, over the last decade, this government has certainly worked very effectively, and what I would consider very efficiently, on doing. Especially since – I think it was 2007 that they really focused in on cutting out a lot of the red tape. I remember there was a time when, in every department, they wanted a reduction of 25 per cent of the red tape issues cut back on. That is what this is all about.

It is very important to see this change made electronically. As a former business person, I remember when I was dissolving a couple of the businesses that I was the owner of, as you were dissolving one business, quite often small business people – I know I certainly was – as you are dissolving or getting rid of one business, you are thinking about the revenue you are hopefully going to generate from that sale. You

are looking at how you are going to invest that into another business that you are involved in.

Quite often, when you are thinking of these changes you are going to make, this particular act, as it exists today, could slow down that process. I remember in one of the businesses that I was selling, I was looking at a major expansion in another business. It ended up I was waiting about two weeks and it cost me several thousand dollars extra because of that two-week period – because of the difference in the cost, from two weeks what I had to purchase and two weeks later, the cost actually made a difference of several thousand dollars.

This processing and going electronically with this, I think, is going to actually save several business people money. It is going to show that it is a much more efficient way of doing business, and it will be very effective.

Some of the other comments that the Member for Virginia Waters talked about was the civil servants and the bureaucrats. It is very important we allow them as experts to be able to do what they are there to do and not lose their time in red tape or in paper pushing, as a lot of people will refer to it as.

I find in the last three years that I have been here as a member in the House of Assembly I certainly have a very high regard for all of the bureaucrats and the civil servants because I have seen how hard they work. Unfortunately, quite often the expertise they have to offer to a government is not able to be utilized because they are spending so much time dealing with red tape and the paper pushing. Unfortunately, that is the way things had to be done.

In today's world, with the information technology that we deal with, it does not have to be that way any more. I am very glad to see that this is a proactive move on behalf of our government to improve the efficiencies when it comes to getting the job done.

I just want to touch a tiny little bit – I do not want to take away any of the minister's thunder when he stands up to speak on this again. I heard the Member for Virginia Waters talk about the Auditor General's report. She alluded to the

fact that there has been a 58 per cent increase in spending since 2004.

When you look at the infrastructure that we had in 2004 and you look at the infrastructure that we have today throughout the Province – and I talk about medical centres, I talk about schools, I talk about provincial buildings, I talk about the infrastructure in roadways and in highways that we have in 2014 versus what we had in 2004 – it shows that 58 per cent certainly is accountable. I just wanted to make that comment.

When you hear of the Auditor General putting out a report of a 58 per cent increase, I think it is being justified, the 58 per cent increase in spending that we have. Again, going directly to this bill, I think it shows that we are trying to be more efficient and we are trying to be more effective in the way we do business. I think that is very important, and I feel we are doing a good job. Bill 26 is a prime example of that.

Talking a little bit directly about this amendment to the Revenue Administration Act, what it is going to do, we talked about the lawyers having access. I think the accessibility, when putting this amendment together, it is covered very well that not just anybody can step in and get any information.

Mostly what it is going to be, the people who are going to be looking to use this system will be lawyers and government officials who will be going in to use the system itself. They will have to have an ID number. They will have to be signed in to the system in order to get it. They cannot go in and just get any information for the sake of getting information. There will be specific information that they will have access to, and I think that is very important.

I also looked at the fact of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the information and privacy act. This will work with that act. Again, it is not going to be a system where you can go in and avail of information that is not necessary for you to be in to.

You will see that there is going to be some rare cases where the search identified an audit currently in progress. This will speed that up, the clearance. I know there are times – and as the Member for Virginia Waters, as well as the

minister, spoke about the length of time that it can take to get the information; this will really speed it up. I think that is important.

In closing comments – I am not going to belabour this; I am certainly going to be supporting it. I think it is a good move. I would like to commend and thank the staff in the Department of Finance for the briefing they gave us and as you heard other speakers comment on. You heard the minister and the Member for Virginia Waters. They were very explicit in the information they gave us. They answered all of the questions. I find when you get a briefing like that you come out from the briefing feeling much more comfortable. You understand what the amendment is going to be, what the bill is all about.

I support this. I think this is a proactive move. It is a move that we are moving forward. It is going to improve services. It is also going to clear up a lot of time, as we heard, for the experts in the civil service to do what they are supposed to be doing there.

With that, I will conclude my remarks and I look forward to hearing the rest of the debate.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

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

I am glad to have time to say a couple of things about this bill. Obviously, it is something that is very straightforward, as has been indicated by the minister and by the other speakers.

I do not have a lot to add to what is being said, but I just want to make sure that my understanding is clear. It seems very logical to me that we would put this piece of work into an electronic registry. As has just been indicated by the Member for Labrador, the people who would be seeking this information and needing to get this information are professionals. They are lawyers, as was said, or government staff, for different reasons.

I wondered first about whether or not the electronic registry, if registering electronically was an option or could people choose whether or not they seek the information electronically or otherwise. I suspect what it is, is that the electronic registry is going to be the registry; but knowing that it is going to be professionals and not just people who might not use electronic communications, knowing that they are not the ones who are going to be using the registry, that it is going to be professionals who are using it, then having it as an electronic registry only does make sense.

The minister can clarify that for me, whether or not that is optional or that the registry will be totally electronic and you have to make a request electronically. Because that is how the bill reads, that one would make the request electronically and then everything happens electronically.

I guess I would like clarification, just for knowledge sake, not because I would vote against it, but whether or not it is optional or now the request has to be made electronically. I would like to know that just for clarification from the minister when he stands again.

Obviously, having this kind of clear information about whether or not money is owed to government before a piece of real estate changes hands is important. It seems to me – I was not able, personally, to attend the briefing; one of our researchers was there. I am asking a question that may have been clear in the briefing and not clear for me. So again I will ask the minister to clarify this for me as well.

It seems to me in the reading of the information I have received that the responsibility is on the shoulders of the seller and the lawyer of the seller to find out if the property is clear. Again, I ask the minister to clarify that for me –

MR. WISEMAN: (Inaudible).

MS MICHAEL: The buyer; that is what I thought when I read my notes. I thought it cannot be the seller; it must be the buyer. It has been indicated to me by the minister across the floor that I am correct in that, that it is the buyer. So I thank you for that clarification. The seller did not make sense to me. The lawyer for the

buyer is the one who makes the request, which makes sense, because the buyer wants to know if the land or the piece of property that they are buying – whether it is land, or a business, or whatever – that there are no taxes owed on that. So, I have that clarification; the minister does not need to speak to that again.

This is something that makes great sense to me; it seems logical. It will save money for people, as indicated by the Member for Labrador, himself, will save money for people who are involved in transactions of buying and selling property. It does make sense that it probably also would be cheaper for government to have this done this way; it would take less time to have an electronic registry, which I think is actually an efficient way to go.

One of the things I would like to pick up on, just for the sake of those who are listening to our discussion, is one of the things that the bill indicates at the very end, “Section 5 of the Access to Information Regulations published under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act is amended by adding immediately after paragraph (q.1) the following: (q.2) sections 17.1 and 17.2 of the Revenue Administration Act”.

What all that is about is that in the regulations for the act, for the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the regulations actually have a list of sections of legislation that are exempted under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Section 5 of the regulations says, “For the purpose of subsection 6(2) of the Act, the following provisions shall prevail notwithstanding another provision of the Act or a regulation made under the Act”. Basically, it is a list of pieces of legislation that are exempted under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

When you go back and study the Revenue Administration Act, one finds that there is a section in the Revenue Administration Act, section 10, which talks about confidentiality of records. This whole section in the act, which talks about confidentiality of records, is extremely important. It talks about confidentiality; it does not talk about an electronic registry.

In the regulations of the ATIPPA, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, we now will be putting into those regulations the electronic registries, basically is what it comes down to. Putting that under the protection of section 5 of the regulations is not something extraordinary. It is something that fits within the fact that the Revenue Administration Act itself calls for confidentiality. It is important that then the regulations for this other act reflect the confidentiality that is demanded by the Revenue Administration Act. That happens quite frequently where changes in one act have to be reflected in another act.

Having a question that I had answered by the minister, I think there is another one he will answer for me, and that has to do with options. I think the answer is going to be the electronic registry will be the only way to go. He can tell us that when he stands. My other question has been totally cleared up.

With all of that, I think that is really all I have to say, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to have the opportunity to have raised my questions and made my points.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Port de Grave.

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not going to belabour many of the points. I think based on the conversations I have heard from the members opposite, I believe they are in support of these changes to the Revenue Administration Act.

I do want to thank the staff for the briefing – it was a very professional briefing – and the opportunity. I want to thank the minister as well for the opportunity to speak to the bill.

I guess in my terms, just for those looking in today, this is an amendment that basically is catching up with the times. We are going from paper to an electronic copy. It is something we see more frequently happening now, where we go to an electronic system. We are basically just modernizing how we do business and using the

technologies that are available to us to do business in a more efficient way.

The tax clearance portal will be an online service for everybody out there. It is just an online service that users will be able to go into. The hon. Member for Labrador West talked about you would need a password and a user name and all the rest to go on to the online service. This tax clearance online service will assist mostly lawyers, because tax clearance certificates are required mostly for the sale of property, for the sale of real estate.

It was to do this to make sure that there are no liens or no outstanding fees or taxes to the property that is being sold. Once again, I was also amazed, as has been said by many of our members, that there is probably 20,000 requests each year for this type of service, and it is not only lawyers. It is sometimes used by government, as pointed out earlier as well. It is sometimes used by government employees, particularly when government departments require certificates for the issuing of loans and providing funding. I remember my time as a public servant, getting requests for funding and those being denied because there were outstanding taxes owed by the individual party. So it is not uncommon.

We are just taking this from paper and putting it online. As the minister outlined earlier, there are similar processes throughout government doing this. I do not think anybody mentioned it, but when you use this service there is a fee-for-service. The fee is \$50. Anyone who goes in to use it pays an online fee of \$50, and they can use the service.

When we were looking at this as a government, every day we were increasing the number of services available online. This is another example of government trying to be more efficient, trying to provide a higher quality of service and using the technology that is available to us to do that.

One of the things that will happen, Mr. Speaker, when this becomes an online service is the tax credit certificate will be generated automatically. For the most part, the majority of tax credit certificates will be generated automatically. The lawyer will go in, the person, or the government

employee would go in, if there is nothing outstanding it will be generated automatically. As the members opposite have stated, sometimes it took – previously, through the traditional paper route, you had to write a letter, you had to do the research, and it took two to three weeks.

In our briefing it said this should only take a matter of a couple of days and we will have this done. In the case of the Member for Labrador West, when he was trying to dissolve one business to put money into another business, instead of waiting two or three weeks and costing him thousands of dollars, it would have only been a couple of days and basically at no cost to the person waiting.

Mr. Speaker, this service should be up and running in the near future, in the next three to six months. I think it is a good piece of legislation. I think it enhances the way we do business. It improves the service. It gives a higher, more efficient way of doing the service.

I will be supporting this bill, Mr. Speaker, and I look for further comments from our Opposition or the minister.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

I am going to try not to say Mr. Speaker too many times because Hansard is having trouble keeping track of how many times members say Hansard.

In any event, I am happy to speak in support of this bill; however, before I finish, members might think I am not supporting it but in fact I am supporting it.

To have a bill in the House of Assembly for the simple purpose of getting a tax certificate from the provincial government is like driving to the supermarket for a can of milk and then you drive back home. Then, you drive to the supermarket

for a can of peas and then you drive home. Then, you drive to the supermarket for a couple litres of milk and then you drive home.

We keep seeming to do minor piecemeal legislation. Maybe it is for the purpose of being able to bring bills into the House. I do not understand why this was not introduced into the House as part of an omnibus bill which would actually resolve so many of the issues that people who are buying and selling real estate run into, and lawyers run into in doing legal transactions.

Mr. Speaker, the types of items I would like to see in an omnibus bill such as this would be all of this could be combined so that when the search is requested the search could be from multiple areas, multiple departments, and multiple agencies. The reason for that is it would be cost saving, and these are standard, normal, ordinary searches that lawyers do in transacting real estate.

Mr. Speaker, the vendor does not really care, but the purchaser does. The vendor does not care because when the property is sold and he or she or the company has their money and they are gone, they are out of town and they have left. They have spent their money or whatever, but the problem is for the purchaser if the lawyer misses some liens. If the lawyer misses some liens and this could be an issue of negligence, then the lawyer ends up being sued for professional negligence. The cost to be able to identify all of these potential liabilities drives the cost of providing legal services to an absolutely unacceptable level in many parts of the Province, and I dare say in St. John's.

When somebody says, well, that lawyer charged me \$4,000 to sell my house, and occasionally when I have had an opportunity to review this – well, let me have a look at the bill. Then I see twenty-five or thirty different services provided. All of these have a cost, and this is an out-of-pocket cost, and the fee is \$600. That did not really seem like that bad for so much work. Exactly what did the lawyer say? Well, he said it was probably going to run me \$600, plus disbursements and whatever that means. So people do not know. This would be one of the disbursements, money paid out that has to be recovered.

What would I have liked to have seen in this if it were more substantive, a larger omnibus bill? For sure we could include the Sheriff's Office. We already do searches at the Sheriff's Office to find out if there are any judgements. If somebody has a judgement in Small Claims Court and they filed it at the Sheriff's Office, because the issue for people buying real estate and their lawyers is that certain liens are statutory liens, and they attach to real property in the jurisdiction.

Real property means land. Whenever land is sold, anybody who has registered one of these has a priority in receiving those purchase monies before the deal can go through. If they are not taken care of, then that becomes a liability which still attaches to the real property. The purchaser must then pay it and look to the lawyer for recourse.

The other types of issues I would like to see are why could there not be a clearance certificate that had a municipal tax clearance certificate for all municipalities in the Province? Why should somebody be able to sell something in St. John's and have taxes unpaid in Musgrave Harbour; or sell something in, who knows, Forteau, and owe money in L'Anse au Clair? It would be relatively easy, but in a large omnibus bill, similar to what the government purported to do when they were going to have a Red Tape Reduction Strategy. It does not have to be a piece of red tape across a crime scene that says it is red tape. Anything that holds up a transaction, causes a delay, or drives up overhead is seen as red tape, and it is frustrating for people in the process.

Why couldn't we have included in this bill – and I do not fault this minister and this department, because this is something which ought to have come from maybe Justice and the Attorney General, and I would say in consultation with the Law Society. The Law Society, I am certain, would be more than happy to have made a recommendation on a whole range of items that could be covered in omnibus legislation that would make it easier to do business in the Province, make it less expensive to do business in the Province and avoid losses.

Why couldn't we have had a workers' compensation lien if there is a lien under

workers' compensation for unpaid workers' compensation? Because a person may be a director of a corporation and a workers' compensation lien is a statutory lien, which means if your business owes the money, in a statutory lien of this nature, you owe the money. So you cannot sell the house, leave all the bills in the company, leave all the debts in the company and walk away.

Why couldn't there have been a legal aid lien? I appreciate that many people may not be aware of legal aid liens, but if somebody is trying to obtain legal aid, and it might be in a family law situation or any sort of a situation where they do not really qualify for full legal aid, but legal aid would help them as long as they will make some contribution to the bill. That would mean a lien would then be generated, and they may have received \$20,000 worth of legal services; there could be a \$3,000, \$4,000, or a \$5,000 legal aid lien. Legal aid should be able to recover this money through the same process.

Why shouldn't there be a hydro lien? In many jurisdictions, electricity that is not paid for attaches to the property that is being sold. If you did not pay the electric bill for a period of time and walked away, and the property was being foreclosed on, then that also shows up as a lien, which could have been picked up in an omnibus bill of this nature.

Mr. Speaker, why couldn't there be a child support lien? We have a child support registry in this Province where millions of dollars, potentially millions of dollars, are owed by people who have not paid child support. We have Support Enforcement. In fact, I have acted for a child for Support Enforcement to collect child support from people who are not payers, to drag them into court and make them be responsible and pay for child support. Why shouldn't we have engaged Support Enforcement to say we want to be able to help? We would like to be able to add this in an omnibus bill to this type of legislation.

Why couldn't there be spousal support orders? There could be a spousal support order in place. Somebody with the means to pay is not paying because they may have been depressing their income for a long period of time through a corporation and now they are selling real estate

and there is a spousal support order. The benefit to a spousal support order lien and also a child support order lien is in many cases the spouse and the children are now receiving Income Support. They are receiving income from the taxpayers to survive, and somebody else who did not honour their commitments may then walk off with money they received from selling a piece of real estate. Why shouldn't this have been picked up in an omnibus bill of this nature?

Finally, one of the most glaring ones the Auditor General referred to in the second last report, I think it was under Fines Administration. Regularly we hear of people in the Province who owe \$20,000, \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000 in fines and they are driving around. The last word from the Sheriff's Office is they were going to establish a unit that would look at the twelve worst offenders. I think *The Telegram* called them – they are going to look for the Dirty Dozen and try to collect these fines.

If a person owed quite a number of fines, someone who is not law abiding, fines after fines after fines and they are going to receive a home maybe as part of a settlement, maybe it is part of an inheritance, and they are going to sell the home. Why shouldn't the taxpayers be entitled to reach in and say, no, we want our fine money first and whatever is left over is yours to go?

Mr. Speaker, while I can support this bill, I wish I had seen a much larger omnibus bill which would have made it much easier to collect all sorts of outstanding liens, enhance the public treasury, and make it easier and less expensive to provide legal services to people of our Province. Those are my observations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am delighted to rise and speak on Bill 26, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to commend staff and department officials on giving the members of the House of Assembly

some great speaking notes and explanation to Bill 26, an important bill.

The Department of Finance receives approximately 22,000 requests each year from lawyers seeking tax clearance certificates for their clients. That is a substantial number, Mr. Speaker. Under the amendments to Bill 26, this new online user system will be expected to be implemented in three to six months, which would allow an electronic tax clearance certificate to be generated automatically providing information concerning any tax owing under the Revenue Administration Act for the taxpayers searched.

Information with respect to any tax owing would be only the personal information provided to the lawyers making the request on behalf of clients. Lawyers who request clearance certificates are subject to the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, under the Canadian document act, which contains provisions to protect personal information, Mr. Speaker.

Just to reiterate what some of the previous speakers already said, what we have been doing all along with paper we will be doing online. Currently, we receive individual requests which are reviewed by staff. When we implement the online portal, all users will have to request access to the portal and sign a user agreement. They will then be required to log in to the system through a username and password.

Other processes take place throughout government are similar to what we are talking about here today, Mr. Speaker. The Labour Standards Clearance Certificate process is a pay online system that enables parties to real estate business transactions to pay upfront for a clearance form from the Labour Standards Division confirming that there is no claim or ongoing investigation underway. That is one of the services that is already being done online that we are aware of. It is certainly an improvement, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to consult and engage with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner throughout this process, Mr. Speaker. As a government, we are increasingly increasing the way citizens can access information, while at the same time

upholding the protection of personal and private information.

Mr. Speaker, with the development and implementation of an online, restricted-access tax clearance certificate request system, we will continue to ensure that people's personal and private information is protected and secure. The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Office and the Privacy Commissioner have been consulted with on our plan to this introduction of an online restricted-access clearance request system.

As a government, we are increasing the way citizens can access information, while at the same time upholding the protection of personal and private information. Our government's plan to move the process of issuing tax clearance certificates online is consistent with our ongoing efforts to increase many of our services online. This service will be more efficient and, therefore, improve the quality of service we provide as a government, and through the Department of Finance, Mr. Speaker.

Through the introduction of a new online restricted-access tax clearance certificate request system, the provincial government will provide a faster and higher-quality service as the majority of tax clearances will be automatically generated – less red tape in the system, as one of my former colleagues spoke on, and improving a service. At the same time, we are going to allow our professional staff, our public servants, to do their work more efficiently and effectively. This is a win-win situation for employees who work in that particular department in dealing with this particular service on a daily basis, Mr. Speaker.

This bill would amend the Revenue Administration Act to establish the procedure for the issuance of electronic clearance certificates. In simplistic terms, Bill 26, the Revenue Administration Act, will allow us to develop a system whereby tax clearance certificates can be requested and provided online.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this particular piece of legislation. Rather than continuing on and being repetitive, this is a good piece of legislation and I look forward to comments made by all Members of the House of Assembly.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: If the Minister Finance and President of Treasury Board speaks now, he will conclude debate.

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

MR. WISEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I really want to thank the members who have spoken to this bill on both sides of the House for their comments and questions that they have raised, and acknowledgement that this is a progressive piece of legislation; making changes to an already existing act to make sure that we have, in fact, moved with the times, moving into an electronic era and making business transactions simpler, easier, more accessible, and obviously providing a better service, not only to lawyers but to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

A couple of issues came up in the debate, and I appreciate members for raising it. The Leader of the Third Party raised an issue around whether or not there was an ability to continue with a manual system, or is this completely electronic when it is introduced. Acknowledging that over time it will no doubt become completely electronic and individuals will only use that method of searching; however, just to ensure that no one loses the ability to conclude a business transaction until we have at least moved it out and well established and recognize that manual considerations are no longer being requested, then we want to maintain two systems simultaneously.

We suspect, though, that many of the current users will want to take advantage of the electronic format because it will be easier and simpler and faster for them. Just to make sure we do not have a circumstance where some law firm out there who may want to request a certificate and for some reason, a system failure, or just the fact that they may not have introduced electronic technology in their offices to date, that they not be denied an opportunity to have such a certificate, we will maintain an ability for people to make manual requests.

The other issue that came up talked about the ability to – the Member for St. Barbe, I think it was, talked about many other aspects of searching that may be done through this process, and linking that question that had been raised by him to the question raised by the Member for Virginia Waters, talking about change management processes and re-engineering systems to include that they are more efficient and effective for all concerned. This system has been built to deal with this particular clearance certificate to this moment. Other options were considered as to how they may be embedded to include other certificates of clearance for other transactions that may be taking place within public bodies.

The system is designed to allow an expansion to include those other types of clearance certificates that may be required, but in terms of this moment in time, in introducing this change, it has been introduced to provide for the tax certificate clearance but has potential to be expanded; which speaks to, I think, the point around how government is changing and the process of looking at efficiencies, how effective we may be able to do things in a much better fashion than we have done them in the past.

There is always opportunity for change, always opportunity for improvement, and we are very pleased, as a government, to say that we are continuously building on the successes of our past, where opportunities exist, to improve how government does business, whether it is the reduction of red tape, whether it is the change in the regulatory regime we have in place, or whether it is the use of what we are introducing here. We are introducing a mechanism to do business in an electronic process.

Just to speak to that point, Mr. Speaker, there will be opportunity to build on this system and there will be opportunities to ensure we will continue to improve. As everybody would recognize, a change like this will require some training for people outside of government who will be using it. There will also be some training required for people within government as they get accustomed to the new change and the process. That is all built into the change management process we will go through in the coming weeks and months.

A couple of other issues that arose, Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak to: the whole issue of privacy. When law offices, lawyers who are in practice, get personal information about the outstanding taxes that may be due, that information is governed and all lawyers in practice are subject to the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act. It is a Canadian piece of legislation and they are bound by that.

So, just as in the past when this was a manual system, individuals should recognize that the lawyers they deal with are bound by a piece of legislation that binds him or her to comply with the legislation that protects the information of the clients that they are dealing with.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I conclude my comments and if there are other questions when we get in Committee, I will only be too glad to answer them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill be now read a second time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3. (Bill 26)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill has now been read the second time.

When shall this bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole House?

MR. KING: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 26)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 3, and ask leave, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, to introduce Bill 30, An Act To Regulate Child Care Services, and that the said bill be now read the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act – I do not have the copy in front of me.

MR. KING: It is Bill 30, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 30.

MR. KING: An Act To Regulate Child Care Services.

MR. SPEAKER: An Act To Regulate Child Care Services.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development to introduce a bill, "An Act To Regulate Child Care Services", carried. (Bill 30)

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Regulate Child Care Services. (Bill 30)

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

When shall the said bill be read a second time?

MR. KING: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 30 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 26, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that I do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the said bill.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Littlejohn): Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 26, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3". (Bill 26)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clauses 2 and 3.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 and 3 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 and 3 carried.

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

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

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

CHAIR: Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the bill without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Cross): The hon. the Member for Port de Grave, Chair of Committee of the Whole.

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 26 without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to report Bill 26 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

MR. KING: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the said bill be read the third time?

MR. KING: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

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

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I would like to call from the Order Paper, Order 1, Address in Reply.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. Member for Baie Verte – Springdale.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly a privilege again to get up and speak on Address in Reply. First of all, I just want to say a great big thank you to the people of the District of Baie Verte – Springdale again for their support and thank them for their trust and confidence that they have put in me. It is certainly an honour and a privilege to represent them in this hon. House. I will be forever grateful and it is indeed a humbling experience.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Premier upon winning the PC leadership, consequently upon the Office of Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: I believe that his caring, compassionate attitude will serve the Province very well, Mr. Speaker. He is people-centered, solution-focused and very authentic; he means what he says and says what he means. I think we are very fortunate to have a Premier of this caliber.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the new members of this House of Assembly today: the Member for St. George's – Stephenville East; and, of course, the Member for Conception Bay South, who took his seat today. Hopefully, you will find your experience very positive in this House of Assembly.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome and congratulate the three new Pages. From time to time in this House of Assembly we would like, indeed, to turn the page. We have three new members. We have Raylene, Ashley, and Lauren. Of course, I would like to welcome back our seasoned veteran, Fatimah. We trust, as a government, that you will find your experience very rewarding, very meaningful as Pages in this House of Assembly and carry your experiences with you in your careers.

In my comments this afternoon, in Address in Reply, I would like to first of all take a few

moments to zero in on my district and at the end of the day provide some provincial perspective as well. First of all, I would like to mention some of the summer events that took place in my district, the District of Baie Verte – Springdale, some of the festivities that are worth noting, Mr. Speaker. For example, we had three communities over this past summer that celebrated Come Home Year celebrations. They were Beachside, Shoe Cove, and Smith's Harbour.

I had the privilege, Mr. Speaker, to attend all three. They were well attended, they were well planned, and they were well organized. The population of each of these communities swelled, some fourfold, some fivefold and some sixfold. There was a sense of community among everybody. There was fun, food, fellowship, laughter, music; you name it, Mr. Speaker. It was a tremendous event. Not to mention all the extra dollars that is injected into the local economy that these small, tiny communities appreciated because every dollar counts to help out the seniors or some recreational facilities that they may have. It is very important to them.

Also, Mr. Speaker, besides Come Home Years, we have had other towns that have held special events as well, such as Spree by the Sea, in Baie Verte. We had Shaun Majumder and his organization called The Gathering in Burlington, Middle Arm and the Smith's Harbour area. We have had various other communities or towns having special days, such as Springdale, King's Point, Middle Arm Day, whatever, and Seal Cove. We can go on and on.

This is not only unique to my district, Mr. Speaker. That was all around the Province throughout this past summer. I am sure all the ministers and the MHAs attended these events as well and found it very rewarding. That was just to name a few.

Just recently, I had the privilege to attend on November 8, the Baie Verte fiftieth fire department anniversary. I would like to congratulate Mayor Clar Brown and Fire Chief Lorne Head. They work together. I would like to congratulate the organizing committee for the stupendous job they have done in celebrating that major milestone, Mr. Speaker.

On November 15, I also had the privilege to attend again another fiftieth anniversary in Baie Verte, the fiftieth anniversary of the Baie Verte hospital. I just want to applaud and commend the local organizing committee for a stupendous, stellar job, Mr. Speaker, in organizing that event.

As a government, all of us agree that providing safe, quality, accessible health care is essential to every resident of this Province. We would like to take the time out just to say a great big thank you and acknowledge all the outstanding efforts of our community volunteers.

We all know in this House their time, energy, and talent that they exhibit to serve their communities, Mr. Speaker, in all kinds of ways is like the oil that lubricates the machine to reduce friction so that the engine can fire on all cylinders; when we have committed, dedicated volunteers such as that, their communities fire on all cylinders. I would just like to acknowledge that today, because never can you applaud and encourage community volunteers enough. They cannot wear out a thank you, Mr. Speaker. They deserve that great big shout out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, in my travels around the District of Baie Verte – Springdale, I found there are four or five issues that always percolate to the top, and that is always a priority to the people of the district, which I would like to mention this afternoon in this hon. House. Namely they are road infrastructure, brush cutting, health care, municipal capital works, such as lift stations or byroads being paved, or water and sewer needs. The fifth one would be the rural broadband service or cellphone coverage, as you hear mentioned from time to time.

I would like to say a few words on each of these, Mr. Speaker, if I may. First of all on road infrastructure, we all know how important this really is. These five issues might represent every district across this Province because my district is not unique. I would say five of these issues are comparable to every district across this Province, and every MHA has heard of these issues for sure.

In my district, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to roadwork it is very, very important. Wherever you go for the thirty-four communities, you hear the phrase roadwork. I am happy to say this afternoon, in the last seven years in my district there are over eighty kilometres of roadwork done in this district – done or being completed, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: This past construction season alone, Mr. Speaker, from Baie Verte to Fleur de Lys, seventeen kilometres has been done, Route 410, much to the dismay of the Opposition over there. Last year, Mr. Speaker, in the last session of the House they stood up fear mongering and tried to exhibit and say it was never going to be done, never going to be done. I have news for you this afternoon, it is done, and it is completed – seventeen kilometres.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank former Minister McGrath, the new Minister of Transportation, and the Premier for the outstanding support they have given, not only to my district, but to rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report there is some work done on Route 392, Beachside, St. Patricks, Little Bay section. We have 9.8 kilometres left to do on Route 414 going to La Scie. Unfortunately, that could not happen this year, but 9.8 kilometres. The tenders are let, it is approved, and the contract is ready to go next year.

Eighty kilometres, that is great strides, Mr. Speaker, in the last six or seven years. I would just like to say a great big thank you to our PC government. Is rural Newfoundland ignored? No, Mr. Speaker, no!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: We are committed. Are these funds squandered? No.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. POLLARD: Is that frivolous spending? No, Mr. Speaker.

Issue number two, Mr. Speaker, on brush cutting; \$2 million was put in Budget 2014. Brush cutting is all done from Baie Verte to Fleur de Lys – check mark, done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, Brent's Cove junction to La Scie, check mark, done – 9.8 kilometres. Route 413, Burlington, Middle Arm, Smith's Harbour, check mark, done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: That moose-infested area, that moose-infested road where people were concerned about safety, our government came through. The PC government came through, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Is that rural Newfoundland and Labrador? Absolutely, it is rural Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. The highway is safer.

This year, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that from Flat Water Pond to Baie Verte Junction, Route 410, the big trunk road, tenders awarded, tenders let, and the company is ready to go. That is probably about, I would estimate, thirty or forty kilometres. That is on the way.

Is that ignoring rural Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker? Absolutely no, Mr. Speaker. Well, that might seem small stuff to the crowd over there, but roadwork and brush cutting in my District of Baie Verte – Springdale is important.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: It is not squandered money, it is not frivolous spending, and it is not the lost legacy, as pointed out by the Opposition over there, Mr. Speaker.

Now, issue number three: health care, which is tremendous priority –

MR. JOYCE: (Inaudible).

MR. POLLARD: I would like for the person over there, the Member for Bay of Islands, to shut his trap so I can talk.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. POLLARD: We have exhibited \$10 million in the last seven years on health care alone – yes, into the District of Baie Verte – Springdale. Now, one of the biggest projects that we can work on right now in Baie Verte – Springdale is the Green Bay Health Care facility. I am happy to report that that site is prepared, the access road is completed, water and sewer is completed, consultants of Central Health are working on infrastructure. They are working on front field planning and the utilization of best space, Mr. Speaker. That is going to come to pass.

From my understanding, the tenders will be let hopefully this spring, shovels in the ground this summer – much to the dismay of the Opposition over there. They hate success. They are allergic to success because you get a rash of statements over there from time to time – empty, marshmallow, cotton candy statements coming from the Opposition from time to time causing fear –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, I am sincere. I have to be honest; I am sick and tired of the rhetoric, the poison, the malarkey, in my rural days in growing up in Roddickton, absolutely bunkum. I am sick and tired of hearing the crowd over there, Mr. Speaker.

Now, let's calm down. I am getting carried away, Mr. Speaker. Number four: municipal infrastructure needs in the Baie Verte – Springdale district – and I can say in any other district across this Province, forty-eight districts. I can say we have fire trucks, I can say we have fire halls, and I can say we have byroads and bridges done.

For example, Mr. Speaker – again close your eyes over; there they do not want to hear it when it comes to helping people. Fleur de Lys: \$1 million for their complex, a fire hall.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Baie Verte: \$6 million for the water treatment; \$16.7 million in a state-of-the-art K-12 school.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Now, a municipal complex, phase one, a fire hall – tick; it is already being done, Mr. Speaker. It is on the go.

Mr. Speaker, is that lost legacy? Is that squandered spending?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. POLLARD: Is the frivolous spending, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. POLLARD: Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

Again, go and tell the Mayor of Ming's Bight or Shoe Cove or other communities in my district that the bridges that they have is frivolous spending or the byroads paved is frivolous spending. Go to the Mayor of Middle Arm and the people of Middle Arm and the school there and tell them that it was frivolous spending when we paved the parking lot.

Various other towns are approved from water and sewer projects, Mr. Speaker. We have lift stations installed. I can go on, Mr. Speaker. We are not ignored. Rural Newfoundland is not ignored, Mr. Speaker. I get very upset when I hear that phrase. It is nothing but a myth that the Opposition like to put out as poison so they can poison the people of this Province. I am tired of it.

The fifth one, Mr. Speaker, here is another one – number five: rural broadband and cellphone coverage. They know we do not have full control over rural broadband or cellphone coverage. They know it is federally regulated, CRTC, a federal industry, regulated by them. We do not have the full responsibility. Yet they get up here: Oh, government is solely responsible for cellphone coverage and rural broadband.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, I am sick and tired of the rhetoric. I am sick and tired of the theatrics. I am sick and tired of the misinformation. I want the real stuff, Mr. Speaker.

Now, since 2003 we have invested \$29 million in rural broadband, leveraged \$115 million to cover 95 per cent of the Province, over 500 communities. Mr. Speaker, I have to get my breath. In 2014 we have \$4.9 million put in the Budget and I am happy to report today that communities like Shoe Cove, Nippers Harbour, Coachman's Cove, Fleur de Lys, and Ming's Bight are all getting rural broadband.

Will they get up and espouse and say thank you, thank you? Oh, no. Are they saying thank you to the full-day Kindergarten? No, they are finding holes. They do not want it, Mr. Speaker. They pretend they want it, but they do not – all political theatrics. We know the difference.

I am going to take you back to March 31, 1949 when Canada joined Newfoundland under Smallwood. They never got that, did they? They never got that over there.

For twenty-two years under the Smallwood era the Liberals governed. Took one step forward and took two steps backwards; too soft a negotiator was said about Premier Smallwood at the time. He was willing to sell the shop for one job. For twenty-two years, we were exploited by foreign capitalists so that we could have a short-term job.

Mr. Speaker, I am tired of being exploited. I am tired of our natural resources being raped by capitalists and big companies. From 1972 –

MR. JOYCE: A point of order.

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, if he is tired of being exploited, how do they explain having Judy Manning put in Cabinet before him?

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale.

MR. POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, I am not even going to dignify it with a comment.

From 1972 to 1989, who came on the scene? From 1972 to 1979 it was Moores. From 1979 to 1989 it was Peckford. In seventeen years of PC rule, Moores, the Public Tender Act, and the government became more democratic. Under Peckford he laid the template for the Atlantic Accord and we got the oil and gas money. Today, we have to give him credit where credit is due. He laid the foundation.

From 1989 to 2003 the Liberals came into it again. We all thought, Mr. Speaker, the people of the Province thought the Liberals are going to build on the PC rule. That is what you do; you build on the other man's work, or the other lady's work from a municipal point of view and the other point of view.

Lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals assumed power, they could not deal with the low-beam vision and short-sighted policies. It ended up with depression and despondency. Everybody – it set in among the people, despair, depression pervaded the whole Province.

They failed to build upon the previous government's successes. We were led to a precipice, Mr. Speaker. I have news; fourteen years of that then all of a sudden in 2003 guess what we had to do? The PC government again, we had to mop up again what the Liberal rule had done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: We had to clean up the mess again in 2003 right to the very present under Williams, under Dunderdale, under Marshall, and now under Premier Davis. What a metamorphosis is taking place or has taken place. What a renaissance.

We have done quantum leaps, Mr. Speaker, in the economy. Where are we now? You heard me say it. We are a have Province. We are masters of our own destiny. They do not get it. They want power so bad, they are so hungry to dwell on the doom and gloom and the negative

at all times. We can stand on our own two feet for the first time in our history.

When your child, our grandchildren go somewhere on the mainland, Mr. Speaker, they hold their heads up high and proud to say, where are you from? I am from Newfoundland and Labrador. You cannot put a monetary figure on that, Mr. Speaker, absolutely not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: We are proud Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and I do not like when people misrepresent our identity. We are not last, lowest, least, and worst, Mr. Speaker, far from it. We are the envy of the country. We are masters of our own destiny. We pay our own way for the first time. We have pride like we never had before, Mr. Speaker.

We have reduced taxes at half a billion dollars. We have reduced debt. We have invested strategically. We have invested millions in infrastructure. We have invested heavily in the social sector. I can go on and on, and we will also diversify the economy. Nine different streams now coming into the economy. It is not fish any more. It is not big daddy, federal government any more, Mr. Speaker. We have all kinds of revenue streams. So if one sector happens to downturn, we can still sustain the economy.

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

MR. POLLARD: Thank you very much.

Have a good afternoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thanks to the member for his entertaining and high decibel delivery of his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to first welcome the latest additions to our caucus. The new Member for the District of St. George's – Stephenville

East, and the new Member for Conception Bay South, who was actually sworn in today. I congratulate both of them on their election wins.

As everybody who is watching at home knows, we will have a by-election in Humber East tomorrow and in the District of Trinity – Bay de Verde. I encourage everyone to get out and mark an X tomorrow, whatever the weather is, because it is very important for people to get out and exercise their rights and to show their opinion and to participate in the democratic process. It was not a whole long time ago that we had Remembrance Day and certainly those of us in elected office, all of us in the House of Assembly take that opportunity to reflect on how privileged we are to sit here in the House, to have an opportunity to speak our minds and represent our constituents.

I wanted to say first, Mr. Speaker, in response to the Speech from the Throne. I wanted to make a couple of observations with respect to the provision of child care in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I know that, as I pointed out last week, the Premier had been boasting about how the Province was somehow leading the way with the provision of early childhood education, early learning and care, when, in fact, our results certainly show room for improvement.

There was one national study released recently by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives that showed us to have the second highest infant child care cost in St. John's out of the Canadian cities they observed. They could not even say what the cost for toddler child care was in St. John's because the data did not exist, or at least they were not able to access it. I think those holes in the data are a significant problem for us if we want to move forward.

There was another study that was released by the – I think it was funded by the Atkinson Centre at the University of Toronto. It is a great university. They released a report recently that showed us second to the bottom of the provinces when it comes to the provision of early learning and care. Of course, we have made some gains but we still have a far distance to go if we are second to the bottom when it comes to the provinces in Canada.

One of the things they pointed out in that report is we need to do a better job of monitoring our investments in early childhood education. We need to monitor the inputs and to see what precisely the outputs are. A number of provinces in that particular report from the Atkinson Foundation showed they have an annual process for reporting on investments in early learning and care.

If you think about us not being able to provide valuable data, or useful data about the cost of toddler care in the City of St. John's so that we can compare it to the rest of the country, that is a sort of hole in the data that we can alleviate through monitoring the inputs, because government likes to cut ribbons, spend money, make announcements, talk about the inputs and the investments but they do not monitor the outputs. We cannot say for certain what it is we are getting, or at least we cannot look at things holistically and say this is what the result of the investment is.

That is the sort of thing we need to improve on, because it is one thing to spend money but it is quite another thing to spend money smartly and to monitor and measure our investments in any program. Early learning care is just one example. It really demonstrates a continued lack of transparency, really, to not have some sort of regulated or statutory requirements for annual reporting and continuous monitoring.

We want to do this for a variety of reasons, because we know investments in early learning and care lead to stronger essential skills, the development of essential skills amongst our smallest kids. We know they will have improved literacy, and the outcomes will be better down the line. We know there are increases in the likelihood of adulthood employment and young adulthood employment that come with early investments in education. It decreases in the odds that people will be unemployed and then avail of Employment Insurance and programs like Income Support.

It increases the range of occupations that our little ones will be able to choose from when they get up through the school system. It does that in part because they have more choices and more opportunities for post-secondary study. It lifts their lifetime earnings. The amount of money

that they make over their lifetime is higher; thus, they pay more into public coffers through taxation, spur the economy, help to drive small business, and those sorts of things. So these are essential investments.

When the Minister of Finance stood up today and said: what would you do? Well, this is what I think we should do. I do not think anybody over there on the other side of the House of Assembly would really disagree, Mr. Speaker, because what we are talking about is raising the standard of living for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and doing that by starting with more investments at an early age.

If you look at all of the long-term studies that have been done with children who have benefitted from decent early learning and care programs, if you look at over their lifetimes you will see that they tend to smoke less, they tend to use hard drugs less, they tend to use soft drugs less, they tend to be treated for mental health problems, for drinking problems, for drug problems less. They tend to own a home more. They are more likely to own a vehicle. They are more likely to have life insurance, and they are more likely to have a decent standard of living. Those are just some of the results of a study of investments in early learning and care.

Also, when you look at where all of this lands, those children who have the most difficulty, those from the lowest social economic strata, those kids in the most challenging neighbourhoods, the most challenging situations, the most difficult family situations, those kids are the ones who benefit the most, yet another reason why we would want to make such an investment.

This makes more sense if we look at the longer-term macroeconomic conditions that we are facing as a Province and as a country. Our population is aging. We know. Labour force growth is slowing and in part, because of that, there are going to be labour shortages. We know. We have heard ministers talk about it. There have been a lot of discussions since 2011 on Outlook 2020 and the numbers of new jobs being created just by virtue of the number of people who are choosing to retire, though fewer are choosing to retire.

Virtually all of that net job creation is going to be for post-secondary graduates. People who have an opportunity to do a trade, to get their certificate of qualification, to go to college, to do a two-year program, to do a three-year program, to do a degree, to go to graduate school; those people are going to be the recipients. Those post-secondary graduates are by and large going to be the recipients of those jobs that are being made available. All of the things I said before flow from that.

We know that lifelong learning and skills development will be critical. My colleague today was talking about the need to be able to read in order to learn. That is going to be essential and we have to improve our lot.

A lot of our future economic opportunities are going to deal with value-added outputs. Those jobs are going to be done by people who have higher levels of education and higher levels of knowledge and skill. Those are gained through post-secondary education. Those who get the best start in life and are able to proceed through school and succeed will be the people who will be able to go to post-secondary programs. Those kids will be the future benefactors of our economic success.

We also need to do this for productivity reasons. We cannot continue to have such a large section of our labour force that is need of academic remediation. We need to make sure everybody has an opportunity to skill up because that is where the value added end of our economy is going to be.

There are lots of other reasons, economic ones. If you do not want to listen to the social ones, there are lots of other economic reasons to invest in early learning and care, if only for the fact that more women will have an opportunity to get a job and to get in to the workforce. We know that women are the primary caregivers for our children. If we do not have a functioning, decent, accessible, affordable, early learning and care system, by and large, women, in many cases, will not have the choice. It is a choice to go out there, study and work. It is absolutely essential.

I have a list here of five different studies. These are reports and academic studies of the return on

investment in early childhood education. What I have here, more or less the return on the investment for every dollar put in ranges from \$1.49 out, right up to \$2.78, so anywhere from \$1.50 to almost \$3.00 in return.

Someone said something to the effect of what would you cut? Where would you get the money? We are not talking really about cutting anything, frankly. We are talking about, as I said earlier, making decisions to spend our money more smartly.

What does that involve? I can tell you I was driving back from Corner Brook yesterday. We were over in the District of Humber East helping Stelman Flynn. He has the Liberal nomination. He is going to be on the ballot tomorrow in Humber East. We were driving back, and myself and the Member for The Straits – White Bay North observed twice these moose detection systems on the highway. We were wondering actually when they were going to be taken down. As it is right now all it is doing is providing a false sense of security for people who are driving by.

I went back earlier today, I looked and I saw there was about \$1.5 million spent to put those – well, I do not know what it is, I am reticent to call it garbage, but it never worked in any case. It is up on the sides of the highways and it is turned off now. I remember last summer I drove out to the Burin Peninsula, Mr. Speaker, on a Thursday and when I came back on Sunday the thing was still blinking. It was blinking Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. I said to the minister at the time it was not working and he sort of laughed at me. Then, subsequently government announced they were just turning it all off because it did not work.

The minister at the time, when they announced that they were going to spend \$1.5 million on this, said this type of technology has been utilized elsewhere. For what, I do not know. I do not think it was to attract moose. Then, you have to ask yourself the question, because it never worked first or last, how much money did we spend on maintenance. I see crews on that all the time trying to stop it from blinking, or turn it off or something. It never worked first or last.

There is one place to get some money. You would have to spend the money now to take it down, because that is what we have to do. We have to spend money to take it down. That is just one area. That is \$1.5 million plus all the maintenance, plus the cost to take it and throw it in the Robin Hood Bay dump.

One of the other things that I raised was the whole issue of spending over \$1 million a year to basically heat and light vacant schools that are not going to be used. The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District was very kind to provide me with this property disposal list; schools that are to be disposed of that are not being used for any educational purpose that was there. We are keeping the heat on so the pipes do not burst and destroy the property. You have to wonder why.

Most of these here, the vast majority of these schools say to be disposed of. We have this one school here, I. J. Sampson, which closed in 2011, to be disposed of. We spent \$97,591 keeping the heat and lights going on and for other associated costs.

The best thing, Mr. Speaker, if you look at St. Anthony Elementary in the Member for The Straits – White Bay North's district, the building is to be demolished and site to be converted to playgrounds, is what it says. The building is to be demolished and the site converted to a playground for a new school. We spent \$105,600 for the heat and light costs in the operation of that building that is going to be demolished. It makes no sense whatsoever.

You wonder where the money is going to come from. Stop wasting it first of all. Just stop spending on a school that you are going to demolish anyways. It makes absolutely no sense. I have a list here; over \$1 million, Mr. Speaker, of associated costs of schools that are vacant and not intended to be used anymore. It makes absolutely no sense.

We had the office in Ottawa. Remember that? Mail was piled up so high you could not even get the door open. They had no staff in there or anything, so they eventually just turned the lights off on that and stopped throwing money, good after bad, and shut that down.

The Auditor General a couple of years back said there was tens of millions of dollars improperly paid out to people who were not supposed to be in receipt of Income Support. For all sorts of reasons, some of them associated with outdated technology and systems. There are people out there who need Income Support, who are entitled to Income Support, and all these people – tens of millions of dollars paid out.

There is so much more in that report. They paid however many thousands of dollars – tens of thousands of dollars to former Auditor General and PC candidate John Noseworthy to do this report, and the vast majority of that has not even been looked at since. The vast majority has not even been acted upon. There is another way to save some money.

The Member for Burgeo – La Poile last week was talking about having a diabetes registry. We know that not having this registry is actually costing us money. There is such a thing as preventative health care, encouraging people to have healthier lifestyles. The diabetes registry is just one thing that we have already been told, that government has been told time and time again, if you do this it will save money in the long run because these people will not be suffering from Type 2 diabetes and having to avail of health care services that cost a lot of money as a result.

There are all sorts of other things we can do for preventative health care reasons. I will give you another idea. Do not convert school gyms into classrooms because you do not have enough space. Use gym for gym. That is simple enough.

Make sure kids have the full run of a school that is big enough so they are not sitting at a desk all day long, not being able to get up and do a whole lot, sitting there eating their lunch because they cannot even walk down to the cafeteria. They cannot even get that exercise because there is no cafeteria to go to. That has all been cut up and turned into classrooms because they never built the schools big enough.

We are not talking about one school. We are talking about over and over and over again, school after school. Pick a community. Paradise, Portugal Cove – St. Phillips, Torbay, it

is all the same. When you make a mistake once, why go back and repeat it again? You know you did not do it right the first time, so why go back and do that all over again?

There are solutions. It is not all just about rhetoric. It is not all just about criticism. I will be the first one to recognize when government makes a good investment. I have done that in the past, absolutely. Every time I have complimented government on the investments they have made, but it is not your money. It is the people's money. The people of the Province expect these services. That is why they do not mind paying it in, but when they see it being wasted, \$1.5 million on these useless moose detection systems that nobody ever knew they would work at all, no evidence whatsoever it would ever work.

Before the 2011 election, they said here is a good idea. We will put all of this stuff up. It will look like we are doing something about the moose problem and then people will be more or less persuaded that we doing something about it. That is a very poor way to do it. If you wanted to do that you should have just paid for the PC Party election fund as far as I am concerned. Do not spend \$1.5 million, plus maintenance over years, and the cost to take it down and throw it all in the dump, out of the people's pocket. That is not the way things are supposed to be.

Likewise, all of those problems you paid former Auditor General, John Noseworthy, a handsome sum in order to go and investigate. Look at that. Take the report down off the shelf. There are all kinds of savings in there. He told you all about it. That is why you hired him in the first place, right? That is what it had to do with. I am certain that is what it was.

There are all kinds of solutions. There is no question about that. All you have to do is just ask, and we certainly have no problem telling you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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 a pleasure for me to rise in this hon. House today and speak to Address in Reply.

Like members previous, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new members to the House and look forward to an exciting year ahead.

This year's Speech from the Throne was a very marked change in approach, Mr. Speaker, to where our government wants to go with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador over the next ten years. We want to continue building on the growth that has happened. As my colleague from Baie Verte – Springdale spoke about earlier, we want to continue increasing the confidence and pride Newfoundlanders have in themselves, something which has been achieved through the provincial PC government in Newfoundland and Labrador.

This year's Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, some of the themes that were included in there were the Open Government Initiative, the whistleblower legislation, and the ATIPPA review, to name just a few. From my point of view, this legislation has been long overdue and it is going to make a marked difference in the governance of Newfoundland and Labrador. Governance by the people, for the people, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, because the Open Government Initiative truly engages people in the decision making process itself.

It is an opportunity for each and every person in this Province to have their say into the types of programs, initiatives, and services that are of importance to them. There are various means, of course, for using this, social media, online feedback, face to face meetings. All different types of interaction, Mr. Speaker, are being included so that people can have more of an opportunity to voice their concerns. It is making our government more responsive to the people themselves.

Our ultimate goal, as I just said, is to improve the quality of government programs, services, and decisions. That is very, very important to us

as a government and something we are going to focus on as our vision in the Speech from the Throne clearly indicates this year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform the listening audience, Mr. Speaker, that the health care consultations are underway, and the poverty reduction consultations are underway. It is a real opportunity for each and every person to put forward what they see as priorities, and where they would like to see their money, the people's money, being expended on their behalf. We certainly look forward to the response and feedback we are going to receive, Mr. Speaker, from these consultations.

In the Speech from the Throne last Thursday evening, there was a lot of discussion about Muskrat Falls. I, for one, am a very strong supporter of Muskrat Falls. We hear a lot of criticism from time to time about the money being squandered. What have we done with the oil money that is going to result in something sustainable? There is no clearer, more shining example, Mr. Speaker, than Muskrat Falls, which will yield a return for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that some members opposite actually do see the benefits of the project. When I read Twitter from time to time and I see condescendence still spewing about Muskrat Falls needs to be shut down, that is what the Liberals are going to do. I am at a loss as to how he missed the Leader of the Opposition say that he has no intention whatsoever, after criticizing the project for years and years, of shutting it down. He has been made to see the light, I guess, by some of the additions to his team and can now see the bigger, larger benefits of the project.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, it is not fair to mislead the people. It is a project that is underway and a project that I think will be maintained, regardless of which party is in power, Mr. Speaker, be it the Third Party. At this point in time, it is a project that is clearly going to benefit the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Being from Bay d'Espoir, I can certainly speak to the criticisms that happened back in the

1960s. At that time when they were building the power plant in Bay d'Espoir, there was the same outcry, Mr. Speaker, from the Opposition and from concerned citizens of the day, but history has clearly shown, it was one of the best decisions we have ever made. Today, the Bay d'Espoir hydro facility powers over 60 per cent of the Island portion of Newfoundland and Labrador. It has paid for itself ten times over, and will continue to do so. We need more of those types of investments and more of that type of innovative thinking.

That kind of leapfrogs me into something I heard the other day, when there was a speech being made to the board of trade by the Leader of the Opposition. He talked about how the Province needs to diversify the economy and how there is no innovation in Newfoundland and Labrador. Having been Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, and prior to that, worked in economic diversification myself for twelve to fifteen years, I found it was absolutely appalling and insulting to the many fantastic, innovative entrepreneurs who are operating right here in Newfoundland and Labrador today, Mr. Speaker, and who will continue to operate and continue to grow with the positive types of supports that come from the Progressive Conservative government, I say to you, Mr. Speaker. So, innovation is happening right here in Newfoundland and Labrador. I, for one, am very proud of all of our entrepreneurs who are making great strides in this regard and will continue to do so.

Let's look at another area where we are seeing huge diversification. Again, you need to look no further than my great District of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune where aquaculture is growing in leaps and bounds and where, even up to today, members opposite are not supporting the industry. They want to shut the industry down; 1,000 jobs and more to come and it is not supported by the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I have to say to you, Mr. Speaker, it is very disheartening because I, for one, will continue to advocate for the constituents of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune, and I will continue to advocate for the growth. We invested in wharves for the aquaculture industry. The members opposite:

shame on us. That was their response to us. They did not want to see the wharves. They did not want to the investments that we are making down there in the roads. That was one thing they were very disappointed to see.

We are very committed to doing anything and everything that needs to happen to support the growth of this sector, including the new fish health facility, including the new hatcheries, not only in Fortune Bay but in Stephenville and in more communities to come in the future – and in the not too distant future, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, great opportunities are on the horizon.

I am now going to talk a little bit about – I had a speech earlier that was fiery like my colleague for Baie Verte – Springdale, but after listening to Open Line, I wanted to take a little bit more of a serious approach today because I found it very disheartening. Like my colleague for Springdale, I find it very upsetting, all of this negativity – for what? For the purpose of political posturing, members opposite would have us doubt ourselves, would have us lose our confidence in who we are as a people, would have us feel bad about the economic growth that has taken place in Newfoundland and Labrador? I find it absolutely appalling and very upsetting, Mr. Speaker.

There was a great deal of conversation when I was driving home on Open Line about how people are becoming more and more apathetic as voters, as we saw in the election for CBS last week, only 43 per cent voter turnout. That is very disturbing, Mr. Speaker. When we think about what our soldiers went through, why we remember what they fought for so that each and every one of us could live in a free society, and for the apathy to set in like it has because people are tired of the political posturing, they are tired of the negativity, and they are tired of the platitudes that say nothing.

Are we supposed to believe there is going to be a miraculous recovery to every problem in Newfoundland and Labrador if we wake up to a different government? I think not, Mr. Speaker. I think a responsible government and responsible leaders would clearly point out there are challenges that any person, regardless of who they are, have to work through in the best

interest of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

What were they talking about on Open Line? The apathy, and one of the reasons of course they pointed to, in addition to all the negativity and posturing that is happening over the last few months, Mr. Speaker, as we see people hungry for power – and I would put forth that hunger for power far surpasses concern for people, given some of the things that are happening. They talked about how much emphasis there was on Bill 29, the roundabout bill.

I tell you, we had no intentions on our side of the House of putting up speaker after speaker after speaker. What happens in this House if a member opposite gets up and debates for twenty minutes, and then during that debate proceeds to criticize and perpetuate mistruths or misleading information, we have no choice on our side but to get up and respond, and try to correct information and put out information –

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, on a point of order.

MR. A. PARSONS: The member opposite references Opposition people speaking to legislation and they have no choice but to respond to mistruths and unfounded documentation. I would be interested to know what that was in that particular debate that day that she refers to.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

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

MS PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In listening to Open Line all this time being spent talking about what the listeners were saying was a whole lot of things that were probably not a good thing to be spending our time on. It was further shocking to me, as I started thinking; it was the Member for St. Barbe who pointed out it cost \$22,000 a minute. I cannot speak to the factualness of his numbers, but that is what he said –

MR. J. BENNETT: (Inaudible).

MS PERRY: He said it cost \$22,000 an hour – is that what you said – to run this House of Assembly?

AN HON. MEMBER: A minute.

MS PERRY: A minute. Then to have members get up and go on and on and on and on just so that they can get the opportunity to have some air time, Mr. Speaker, is of concern to the taxpayer. It is of concern to me, and it should be of concern to each and every one of us.

Then I started to really get thinking. Of course when you are driving for seven hours on a long drive, like I have to get to my district, you do a lot of thinking. Just last Wednesday night, Mr. Speaker, I had the honour and privilege of attending a supper with the members of the Diabetes Association. It was a fabulous supper. It was great insight into the challenges that people face.

I sat at the table with two lovely women – one of whom has just come back from a tour around the world, another woman who is a mother and a grandmother now, both of whom are on diabetic pumps. It costs them \$3,000 a month just to live, just so that they can open their eyes in the morning and be with their family and friends. It gives me cold shivers, Mr. Speaker, just to think about the significance of that.

Here we are in the House of Assembly wasting \$22,000 a minute on platitudes. Everybody should be upset in this Province about that, Mr. Speaker, not just those of us on this side of the House – each and every one of us – and each and every one of us has a responsibility, I believe, to focus on true governance.

For me, as a Member of the House of Assembly, I will say that it is embarrassing to have to sit here sometimes and listen to the political posturing for purposes of nothing more than political gain when there are people out there with such significant needs. I, for one, when I place my vote in this House of Assembly and when I have my discussions with my colleagues about what the priorities would be in the Budget, it will be about the people and what the people need most, Mr. Speaker.

It certainly will not be asking for, my first priority for the Budget – and another thing I was appalled to hear in listening to the news coverage shortly after the CBS election, we will not be buying red Helly Hansen rain gear for members of the Liberal Opposition Party. To hear that asked for in the Budget, I could not believe it, and I thought, wow, where has the Green Report gone? Are there people reading the Green Report any more? The priorities of government are long past taking care of members, and much more of a focus on taking care of the people of the Province, I say to you, Mr. Speaker.

There is now miraculous cure that will come by a different change. I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that if you take a look at our party today, we have a new leader, we have a new team, and we have great new candidates that will be coming forward for the general election. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and I say to the people of this Province, we offer the opportunity for change just as much as any other party in this Province.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, we offer the option for positive change, not change that is going backwards, not going down into the gutter, not raising taxes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS PERRY: Now, this is another thing that really perturbs me. I have no idea what the policy of the members opposite is – no idea. I have not been able to glean it, as none of us in this Province have. I would really love to know: What is there policy on taxation? We have put over half a billion dollars of taxpayers' money back into the pockets of taxpayers. So they – here we go.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS PERRY: They have more money, Mr. Speaker, to spend on food. They have more money to spend on clothing. They have more money to spend on their grandchildren. They have more money to spend on their housing because they have the money back in their pockets. I for one do not want to see tax increases so that a political party can pay for their promises and whims for purposes again of

political gain, when that money is much better spent by the people themselves and best kept in their own pockets.

What would a Liberal government do with taxes? Would they maintain the Progressive Conservative policy of lower taxes to generate private sector activity because the private sector is the true engine of growth? Or would they raise the taxes to pay for all of their things like Helly Hansen rain gear and whatever else they want to do.

Mr. Speaker, I put that out there for the public to contemplate. I have not heard one word about their position on minimum wage. How do members opposite feel about minimum wage? Would they like to continue to see minimum wage increases, or do they plan on freezing minimum wage? We have no idea.

I know the NDP believes in a stronger minimum wage. I know your federal leader would like to see it go up to \$15 an hour, Mr. Speaker. I do not know where the Liberal Party stands on minimum wage. I do not know where they stand on taxation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Verge): Order, please!

MS PERRY: Mr. Speaker, I can see the heckling is starting to increase. I must be starting to bother some of the members opposite.

I have to tell you, I for one am very confident in the change that has come about, the positive change, as a result of Progressive Conservative leadership in this Province. I fully understand and appreciate it has been a very challenging year for all of us, not just the people of the Province, Mr. Speaker, but for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, we have had the leadership to make changes that are necessary. We have in Premier Paul Davis a visionary, a man who is like you and I, a man who understands the challenges of everyday life. He is not a Maserati driving – I saw an article once about a Maserati driving Premier and he was a fabulous Premier. He is a Premier who drives a Ford just like the rest of us and he understands issues just like the rest of us.

I put forth to the people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador that the PC Party offers change. It offers positive change, Mr. Speaker, something that I do not believe we are going to see from either of the other members opposite.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak here today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I am very happy to stand here in the House today in my position as the Member for Burgeo – La Poile and speak to a number of issues. There are a number of issues in this Province that need to be spoken to. You would not know that listening to the stuff that has been spoken about today by members opposite, specifically the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune and the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale.

The Member for Baie Verte – Springdale went back to Smallwood. They are talking about vision and all their seeing is in reverse. It is absolutely amazing. Here we are in 2014, and he spent twenty minutes shouting about Smallwood, Peckford, and Moores, when the people of this Province want to know what is coming up for the next twenty years. That just goes to show the level of vision that is being displayed right now.

The next speech I heard had nothing but responses to Twitter feeds and Open Line, and not a single thing about the Budget. There were even implications in there of wrongdoing. Unfounded I would say. There is absolutely no proof behind what was said. It is scurrilous to say the least. Whoever is writing the speeches has to remember that there is a level of accountability that exists in this House and I say it was not met. I say that right now. It is absolutely shocking and shameful. We should be here talking about the Budget and talking about provincial issues. All that is going on is foolishness, I say, Mr. Speaker. I just absolutely cannot believe it.

I am going to reference some of the issues that have been brought up because apparently I was at a different dinner the other night. The dinner I was at was by the Canadian Diabetes Association. It was an MHA reception attended by many members of this House on both sides. If the member wants to look at Twitter feeds, I tweeted and said: We can accomplish a lot through collaboration because diabetes is an epidemic in this Province. It is an epidemic that is costing us over \$300 million.

The member opposite, I do not know, must have been engaged in a different conversation when the guest speaker, the Chief Science Officer for the Canadian Diabetes Association spoke. I do not know if they were at the same table. When the Chief Science Officer spoke she said: We need a screening program and we need a registry because without that how can you measure the outcomes and the success.

The minister – sorry, she is not a minister. Sorry about that. That was my mistake obviously there. The member talks about pumps. I have stood in this House on a number of occasions and said quite clearly that was a great initiative by this government. It was needed. It was great. If anything, we need to find a way to expand it because those who hit the age of twenty-five want it to continue.

The member plugged her ears after that. She did not hear when the Chief Science Officer said you spent \$280 million-odd this year and it is going to go up to over \$300 million because you do not know who is getting diagnosed with diabetes in this Province every month, of which, we have the highest rates in Canada. The member did not hear that. She spent her time talking about campaigns and I do not know what else because you have to tune out after a while.

Ninety per cent of what is said on the other side of the House right now has absolutely nothing to do with their plans – nothing. They are responses to what we would do. I do not know if they foresee a change or something, because that is not what we are talking about.

Our job right now as an Opposition is to hold government accountable. We will continue to do that every day in the House, and outside of the House, calling on government to do the right

things for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. That is our job. We will continue to do that as long as we have the privilege of serving in this House.

We need items. We need a vision to look at and determine what parts are good and what parts are not good. There is no vision on the other side, I say, Mr. Speaker – nothing, not a gig. There is nothing coming out of that other side right now, except foolishness about Twitter feeds and Open Line responses. I say if you are going to govern – govern. You are government.

Speak to the Budget that you put on us and that we have had three Premiers since you have put there. Speak to that Budget which you were so proud of that saw us borrow. Speak to that Budget, because we are still in that cycle of spending. Mr. Speaker, I want to stand and speak to a number of issues that affect every single one of us in this Province.

The Member for Baie Verte – Springdale gets up and criticizes us about calling out for cellphone coverage. He says it is only federal, do not deal with it. I guess I should not speak about Marine Atlantic because that is federal too.

MR. POLLARD: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order.

The hon. the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale.

MR. POLLARD: In my Address in Reply I talked about district issues such as health care, municipal infrastructure, roadwork, brush cutting, and broadband. He called it foolishness, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: The member gets up and shouts through another point of order. It is absolutely amazing. He is shouting from the other side and it is absolutely amazing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. A. PARSONS: The member tends to think that by shouting, it is more real. By shouting it, he has to be right and that people hear him. People hear him but they are on different floors of this Confederation Building.

We talked about cellphone service because that is an issue that affects people in his district. It affects people in mine. We are going to talk about it.

I am also going to talk about other issues that are of federal jurisdiction but affect us in this Province. One of them is Marine Atlantic.

AN HON. MEMBER: CETA.

MR. A. PARSONS: CETA, we can get to that. The Leader of the Opposition raised those questions on the first day here in the House. It is very important.

I want to talk about Marine Atlantic because that affects every single one of us here in this House. It affects every single one of us. I do not know if the members opposite realize that every number and measurement for passenger traffic and for commercial traffic went down this past summer. I do not know if they think that is positive because it is not. That means there is less traffic coming into this Province. There are less tourists coming into this Province. I have not heard a word out of them – have not heard a word.

I brought this up in the last session of the House. Again, we heard a lot of talk about how this is a prime issue. The Premier at that time, when he mentioned what were the priorities formed with the federal government that was not mentioned. Again, a huge issue affecting ever sector in this Province and not a word out of them, but according to the member opposite it is federal so leave it alone and don't talk about it.

I say to the member, I am going to keep talking about it – because do you know what? Just because it is federal jurisdiction does not mean it does not affect us. We have to advocate and we have to work together to have it, I say that to you.

AN HON. MEMBER: Half-truth.

MR. A. PARSONS: The member opposite is mentioning the word half-truths. If we are saying something that is half true I say, Sir, stand up from your seat and put it on the record. Stand up, don't just talk there from your seat, stand up and put it on the record.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the hon. member to speak to the Chair.

MR. A. PARSONS: Let's talk about some other issues – maybe they are going to talk about half-truths. I do not know if there is something half true about the fact that we talk about the spending. Let's look at municipal capital works; let's look at that. Unfortunately I do not have the numbers here in front of me, but I can roughly get them and if I am half true the Member for Springdale can come here and correct me. It is absolutely amazing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: What I would say to you is: Look, I know the Member for Springdale is upset. He cannot handle what we are saying here. Again, he has to shout across the House but if I am wrong, stand up and put it on the record.

Municipal capital works, if you look at it – again, this is where the politics comes into it, when there is actual work done by civil servants to grade municipal capital works. If you look at the amount that is spent in the Liberal districts and the amount that is spent in the PC districts, it is absolutely staggering this year. This is the first year Port aux Basques has not had one cent of capital works in well over a decade – not a cent. Port aux Basques did not get a cent.

If somebody on the other side wants to tell me I am half true or I am not telling the truth, I say get up and tell me because they did not get anything. If you want, I will give you the number, 695-1995. Call Barry Spencer, the Town Manger of Port aux Basques, and ask him because he will tell you the same.

This is where a government that is trying to desperately grasp onto power is making decisions that are not always the right ones. They are punishing certain districts and they are rewarding others.

One issue I want to talk about, and it is not an issue that gets a lot of play, but it does involve me recognizing a member on the other side for doing good work. Again, if I am being half true, I say to the Member for Springdale, stand up and correct me instead of sitting in your seat.

The current Minister of Fisheries, back when he was the Minister of Environment, was the first member on the other side that granted me and communities from my district an audience when it comes to a National Marine Conservation Area. It is an issue I have brought up on a number of occasions, and it is a complicated issue. It is complicated.

It involves a number of different departments. It involves Natural Resources. It involves Fisheries. It involves Environment. I have spoken about it in this House. I have done speeches. Again, I have put it to the other side. I have never, ever gotten a meeting. I have just been told, look, we are not doing it, that is all that is too it, no information.

So I will give the minister credit because he helped to organize a meeting in his office in Corner Brook where he brought in civil servants from Environment – and he was there as the minister – Natural Resources, and Fisheries. We sat down and had a productive meeting and talked about the issues. The Mayor for Burgeo was there. We talked about the importance to us, and at the same time we understand the government's position in certain ways; but, by working together, you can hopefully achieve good things that benefit everybody. By having that dialogue that happened – now, the only unfortunate thing –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) work with the federal government, though.

MR. A. PARSONS: It does have federal government involvement. Perhaps we should leave it alone. The funny thing is it involves a project that the federal government is going to

pay for 100 per cent – 100 per cent funded by the federal government.

The member opposite, he made sure the meeting happened. The only bad news is he got shuffled out of that portfolio and put into a new one. I am hoping in the new portfolio he will still make things happen. Because again, we might not get the results that we want, but we need to be satisfied that the due diligence has occurred. Right now, up to this point it has not. It has been a case of sit down, be quiet, we know what is best. Again, that is the approach that this government has chosen to take on a number of occasions.

Now, I want to move to another issue that has gotten significant attention in this House of Assembly and outside. Again, I do recognize the advocates, besides us here in the Official Opposition. Members of the NDP have been advocates for it as well, and outside sources. That is the Family Violence Intervention Court.

Now, just a reminder, this was something that was axed two years ago. Axed unceremoniously – boom – that is it, we are not looking at its productivity, we are not looking at its positive effect, we are going to get rid of it, and they got rid of it. Again, it is not going to go away. The issues come up again and again and again since that time. The reason is because it was the wrong move by government.

Government has recognized the error of their ways on a number of occasions. Again, they forced Bill 29 down the throats of every Newfoundlander and Labradorian, but they realized the mistake because it would not go away; it would not be swept under the rug. What did they do? They brought in a review committee. They said do you know what? We fooled up and it is affecting us, so we have no choice but to listen to the people.

What did they do? They went out and they got a very, very qualified skilled committee that went out and listened to people, listened to members of government, listened to members of the Opposition, listened to the public. At some point we will get the results of that review and we will go from there, but again that is an example of government correcting the mistakes that they made.

Again, it shows that they do have that ability. It is not always present but sometimes – the family violence court is just one of those examples where they can again make the right decision. It is funny; I asked a question in the House one day or it might have been the Leader of the Opposition. We asked about it – again, this was court that was cut for about \$500,000.

The answer was: Well, it is so good that we are going to expand it all across the Province. He said we want to go to member's – referring to me; we want to go to rural areas that the member references. I had to remind him the courts in rural Newfoundland in many cases have already been cut, so you cannot have a Family Violence Intervention Court in a courtroom that you already cut; it is not going to work. It does not make sense. It does not add up. You cut the court in Burgeo, cut the court in Springdale, and again we see now out in Port aux Basques we only have a circuit court. We might get three days.

Again, we are asking about this here. I know that there is a study going on right now, apparently. There was an internal study that was done; we were denied that under Bill 29. We would like to see that. We are going to keep pressing it because government seems to be listening. There may be a glimmer of hope that they will do the right thing. Let's just hope, and we will continue to raise that issue.

Another issue, and this is one that is just huge, and it sort of ties in – I see on the clock that I have about five minutes left, so I want to get as much covered as I can in my response to the Budget because again I am trying to respond to a Budget as opposed to standing up talking gibberish about Twitter feeds.

One of the big, big parts of this Budget and every Budget is health care. Thirty to thirty-five cents of every dollar spent is spent on health care. One of the issues – and just to go off topic for a second, we hear on the other side the Minister of Finance stood up – and it is funny how Question Period was reversed today, because when we asked a question he stood up and answered with a question: What would you do? I would remind him, and I remind members on the other side, it was not that long ago that our glorious leader, the former Premier, Mr.

Williams – this was when he was in Opposition – it is funny, he stood up and said: If you want policy, call an election.

Many of these members were elected on that team, and it was fine then to say it, but now it is reversed. People want leadership, people want governance, but this government is spending their time wondering what we are going to do. What do you want us to do? It is absolutely amazing, and that is the problem. We talk about new energy, my God, there is absolutely nothing going on there. Their time is spent wondering what we are up to, wondering what we are going to do, and that is the problem.

We go back to health care. I know the Premier is having summits on health care. That is a good thing. That is a good thing that he is out listening. It was a commitment in the leadership, he is going to go out and listen to people. Maybe the Minister of Health goes. Again, that is good.

We did that. We did one in St. John's here a couple of summers ago. We sat down and we listened to the advocates, the physicians, the health care professionals, everybody. The big thing that resonated out of that forum was they did not talk about more spending, they talked about smarter spending, and that is the thing. This is a government that credits success as to how much they have spent on an issue, whereas we think success should be measured on the outcomes, the result. If you say we spent X number of dollars on a topic and stand there and think that is good, that is not good. You have to measure it.

I would remind those on the other side who were at the Canadian Diabetes Association dinner, that was the same thing they said. They said you have to measure it. I do not know if they heard that. Sometimes there is the selective hearing that goes on. I know what I heard, and the people at my table heard.

We go back to diabetes. We go back to the fact that right now there is no screening, and the registry is not in place. We are the only ones in Atlantic Canada that do not have it. It is an example of the money we are spending on those with complications, the money we are spending on the cost of diabetes. If we did a better idea

on the front end, that money would be saved. That money would pay for your registry.

You look at something like dialysis; dialysis is a huge benefit to those who need it. I know I lobbied for it in my district before I was ever elected. I lobbied with the health foundation to get it for those who had to travel two-and-a-half hours to take dialysis. The preeminent physician in this Province on diabetes who spoke at that dinner, so everybody on the other side who were there should have heard it, he will tell you dialysis is an admission of failure. Dialysis costs you about \$100,000 per person per year. Dialysis is for when you are already too far gone.

We need to look at the front end, and that is the problem. When you talk about what you spent in dialysis, look, the people who need it, people in my district, people in your district, they appreciate it, but talk about the front end. Talk about prevention. Talk about wellness.

I know there is a new minister on the other side of wellness. Hopefully, this is one of the items that is going to be on his mandate, because we are spending too much on that back end. It is money that could be better spent. That is what we are saying over here. The member on the other side does not have to worry; we are going to say it loud and clear, smarter spending. There is tons of money within the system, but it is not always being spent smartly.

In this case, I am wondering if some of the people on the other side even have any idea how it is spent because they spend most of the time asking, what would you do? Is it because they are out of ideas? I do not know. Maybe it is. Maybe they do not care.

We are going to continue doing what we are doing, which is listening to people, asking the questions in the House, and making sure that people are represented, and that is relating to provincial issues, municipal issues, federal issues. We are going to keep doing it because that is our job, and we are happy to stand here and do it.

On that note, I am very happy to stand here, much to the chagrin of certain members on the other side. I appreciate the opportunity.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, I only have a short period of time this afternoon, it is 5:20, but I want to really jump to the crux of the debate that we are having this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

I am not going to stand here and say, what would you do? I will say from the very beginning, our government has been focused and will remain focused on the Province's long-term prosperity by encouraging job creation, encouraging strong communities, encouraging a vibrant economy as well, with a focus on our natural resources and a focus on our people. That is what we have done for the last ten or twelve years, and that is what we will continue to do. That is our focus, and that is where we will set our work in the days and the weeks, and the months and the years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to jump in and talk a little bit about what is happening in Corner Brook, and what has happened in Corner Brook in the last number of years. In the last few days, as was alluded to people across the way, we have been knocking on doors in Corner Brook, in the District of Humber East. People on the doorsteps are telling me, when I knock on the door, they understand the commitments we have made to the people of the Province. They understand the commitments we made to the people of Corner Brook. They can stand on their doorstep and list the priorities we had. They can stand on the doorstep and go through, one by one, what we have committed to in Corner Brook and what we delivered to the people of Corner Brook. That is what I want to do in the eight or nine minutes that I have this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, we have priority investments in education, in health care, in services for children and youth. It supports a vibrant economy. It supports a vibrant economy everywhere around

this great Province of ours. That was our focus for the last ten or so years. That is our current focus, and that will be the focus as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I speak to students, as an example, almost every single day. I led a life, prior to this life, in education; \$282 million dollars, since 2005, to freeze tuition in this Province at Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic. That is what this government did for students in this Province. We committed \$14.7 million for two years to eliminate provincial student loans this year, with a projected investment of approximately \$50.6 million over the next five years. That is what this government did, Mr. Speaker.

Since 2004, as another example, we have invested \$2.7 billion in Memorial University, including Grenfell Campus Memorial University in Corner Brook, and another \$742 million in the College of the North Atlantic. That is what this government did with its resource money, Mr. Speaker.

In Corner Brook, a new residence at Grenfell Campus. I know there is a new residence here in St. John's on the main campus; 200-plus beds on the campus in Corner Brook. It is good for the students in Corner Brook, good for the students in Western Newfoundland. That is what this government did. This is four examples of making a promise, making a commitment, Mr. Speaker, and delivering on the promise, delivering on the commitment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Mr. Speaker, in 2014 more Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are working than ever before, and the number of people receiving Income Support is at an all-time historic low. People will say, well government did not do that; but, creating the environment to do that, that is the commitment of this government. That is what we do today, and that is what we will do in the months, the weeks, and the years ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have been living in Corner Brook for the past twenty-six years. As everyone knows, Western Newfoundland, the Northern Peninsula, Corner Brook, and West of Corner

Brook, and all over the Province, it is really a haven for the theatre, and the arts and music. You go around Corner Brook all the time and you will see theatre thriving, and music thriving in the schools and in our system. I was pleased just a few months ago when the Rotary Arts Centre Committee came looking for funds to advance more theatre and more music in Corner Brook.

I went, along with the former Premier, to advance that file along. I am so glad that in last year's Budget we announced \$362,000. I know I will be joined by members opposite in looking forward to make sure that facility is open –and looking forward to that facility opening up in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. Speaker, since 2004 the provincial government has invested over \$1.2 billion in health care; \$62 million of that invested in Western Health in Corner Brook and for the Western Region. This past summer I was present at an announcement for an investment in Western Health again this year of \$3.7 million. Just a few weeks ago, I went to CFCB to make an announcement that this government continues to offer funding for the radiothon in Corner Brook. This year's commitment in the Corner Brook area alone was \$200,000.

Mr. Speaker, this is where I wanted to end up. I had a lot more in the preamble, but I want to go down through. People talk about commitments that we make and being able to stand up and say what you said you were going to do and what you actually did. I am proud of what we said we were going to do. I am proud of what we were doing. I am proud of what we did.

I am going to list off for the people of Western Newfoundland – I have done that before in this House, but I think it is appropriate for me just to talk about that in the four or five minutes that I have left here this afternoon. I will pick up on this in future days, Mr. Speaker.

I want to take you on a visual journey for any of you who know Corner Brook. We will go to the top of the hill. I am going to go to the top of University Drive and talk very specifically and very quickly: a long-term care facility promised, \$68 million. Delivered by whom? By this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Further up the hill, Mr. Speaker, dementia units that were planned for, designed, and delivered by this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador – just walk down the road, Mr. Speaker; Grenfell campus, a new administrative building, a new residence as I just talked about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: A new research lab at Grenfell campus, Memorial University, a new residence. Corner Brook Regional High, Mr. Speaker, a school that I was so much a part of; \$22 million I believe was the exact figure, at least around \$20 million. It was a \$22 million investment for the students of Corner Brook.

Across the way the curling rink, a new facility that we put there; nearly \$900,000 for the current civic centre, from the Green Fund; over \$500,000 when I was the Minister of Environment and Conservation this past summer, Mr. Speaker, announced to make that facility greener.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Fire trucks in Corner Brook and in the rest of the Bay of Islands area and fire equipment, as well as other parts of Western Newfoundland. Hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Sir Richard Squires Building, court house, soccer pitch, the eye care centre, Bartlett's Point and Margaret Bowater Park, the seniors residence on Park Street, Summit Place, twinning of the highway, cost shared between the federal government and the provincial government in preparation for the health care centre that we are going to deliver on, Mr. Speaker.

I want to take the next minute to talk about the mill in Corner Brook, and I only have about a minute-and-a-half: \$110 million investment that this government made to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador through an investment in the mill in Corner Brook,

something that we worked together on, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: We stood with the union leadership. We stood with the members of the union. We stood with the retirees of the mill. We stood with the current workers of the mills, Mr. Speaker, and we delivered \$110 million investment for the people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: When there were some people out there who said that would not take place, I am proud to say we stood together and we delivered on that promise. Because it was so important to Western Newfoundland, so important Corner Brook, so important to the entire forestry sector in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: A promise that took fourteen or fifteen months to deliver on. I was there as the Parliamentary Secretary to Natural Resources, Forestry and Agrifoods, and we delivered on it. We knew what was happening behind the scenes, Mr. Speaker. Day in and day out the previous Ministers of Natural Resources, along with the current Minister of Natural Resources, we delivered on it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: I see my time is running out, Mr. Speaker, but I will pick this up the next time. I will catch my breath like my colleague in the back.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, that we adjourn debate on this topic this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The motion is that the debate be now adjourned.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

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 Health and Community Services, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that this House do now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

The House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow.

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