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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.

**Statements by Members**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Today we have members' statements from the Member for the District of Mount Pearl South; the Member for the District of Bonavista South; the Member for the District of Port de Grave; the Member for the District of Labrador West; the Member for the District of Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi; and from the District of The Straits – White Bay North.

The hon. the Member for the District of Mount Pearl South.

**MR. LANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday I had the pleasure to participate in the Mount Pearl Lions Santa Claus Parade. The parade began at Mount Pearl Senior High and travelled down Ruth and Park Avenue, ending at Mount Pearl Square where participants were treated to a hot chocolate, Timbits, pop, and hotdogs by the Lions Club members and other community-minded volunteers.

There were numerous participants in this year's parade including cheerleaders, floats, marching bands, animated characters, community organizations and dignitaries from various levels of government. The weather was absolutely wonderful for parade participants and onlookers alike which was evident by the large number of families present along the route who were there to enjoy the festivities and catch a glimpse of good old St. Nick. An event such as this certainly would not be possible if not for the commitment and support of many community volunteers, organizations, the city, and the corporate community.

I ask all members of this hon. House to join me in congratulating the Mount Pearl Lions Club and all of its community partners in hosting another successful Santa Claus parade in the City of Mount Pearl.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Bonavista South.

**MR. LITTLE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Honourable colleagues, I rise in this House today to recognize the Elliston Root Cellar replica, started on May 13, 2014 and displayed at the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum in Ottawa.

Information was gathered from the Agricultural History Society, the Intangible Culture Heritage, the Historical Society, the Heritage Foundation, and Memorial University to recreate the replica cellar. The museum staff used photos of Elliston root cellars to make it look authentic as part of the new exhibit on food preservation. Described in the exhibit is how microorganisms and enzymes break down food, and why food is stored in cool, dark places like root cellars do not decay as quickly.

Root cellars were important places that made self-sufficiency possible for outport Newfoundland. The exhibit is called Food Preservation, The Science You Eat. Incorporated in the exhibit are audio interviews of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians describing their memories of root cellars. The display also includes potatoes as they would have been in the nineteenth century Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, hon. colleagues, please join me in recognizing the Elliston Root Cellar replica, part of Newfoundland and Labrador heritage being displayed at the Canadian Agriculture and Food Museum in Ottawa for the next five years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. LITTLEJOHN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today in this hon. House to pay tribute to the Helping Hand, an interdenominational church organization run by a board from twelve

churches in the area. Through the years, the Helping Hand has clothed and fed thousands of residents in my district.

The Helping Hand is located on Patterson Street in Bay Roberts in what once was the Little School of Amalgamated school before its closure. This building now houses food, clothing, used furniture and toys dropped off by residents near and far. Under the direction of manager, Darlene Kearley, this organization caters to those less fortunate by offering quality clothing and other goods at a minimal cost to help generate revenue for its food bank.

Darlene says many people find it more difficult during Christmastime so we always get more requests. They have about 120 regular clients. These clients get a once-a-month issue unless it is deemed an emergency. Many local organizations support the food bank with food drives of their own throughout the year to ease the burden on the staff and volunteers.

I ask all hon. members to congratulate the Helping Hand for over twenty years of dedicated service to our communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MCGRATH:** Mr. Speaker, I stand in this House today to welcome thirty-five new Canadians to the District of Labrador West. On October 29 of this year, I was very pleased to be able to join over 100 guests who gathered to recite the Oath of Allegiance to Canada and welcome these new Canadians to our beautiful country.

These thirty-five applicants from seven different countries proudly sang their new national anthem at the end of the ceremony. Being witness to such a momentous occasion reminded me of how fortunate we are to be citizens of Canada and, even more, citizens of this beautiful Province.

I have had the privilege of getting to know most of these new citizens over the past few years and admire the many skills they have to offer to our society. From clergy to medical professionals, engineers, skilled trade persons, and various other occupations, they have so much to offer.

Mr. Speaker, Labrador West has a new population of over 450 residents who are proud to call this home, and I look forward to standing with many more of them as they take their oath.

I ask all hon. members to join me in welcoming our new citizens.

**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 rise today to commend the leadership and the congregation of historic Cochrane Street United Church in my district. Faced with a 100-year-old building and skyrocketing upkeep costs – not the least of which is the monthly oil bill – the people at Cochrane Street could have made the decision to close.

Instead, they looked at the community they are part of, consulted extensively, and developed a solution that would work for that community, as well as for the church and congregation. They have developed a plan to transform the church's annex into ten units for supportive living, as well as an arts and community centre. This will provide more homes in the city's centre, as well as recognizing that Cochrane Street in downtown St. John's is the hub of the city's creative zone.

I applaud their consultative process in reaching out to others with expertise in transforming church communities and neighbourhoods, and look forward to the eventual results.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Rev. Miriam Bowlby and the congregation for their vision and courage, and wish them well with their innovative proposal.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Mr. Speaker, the Great Northern Peninsula continues to showcase its talents with literary works of fiction and non-fiction produced from those connected to L'Anse aux Meadows, Savage Cove, and Roddickton.

Gina Noordhof published a children's tale, *A Puffin Playing by the Sea – The Twelve Days of Christmas in Newfoundland and Labrador*, providing a perfect balance for both children and adults to be captivated by the illustrations and authenticity of our traditions, culture, heritage, and history

Megan Coles, co-founder of Poverty Cove Theatre Company and *Our Eliza* playwright, has recently written her first collection of short stories, *Eating Habits of the Chronically Lonesome*. Her storytelling ability gives a portrayal that every character from Montreal to Thailand encounters problems, providing the reader a realization that it is their troubles that make them human.

Earl Pilgrim, army serviceman, retired forest ranger and wildlife officer, Canadian Light Heavyweight Boxing Champion, master storyteller and best-selling author has now written eighteen books. His most recent, *Josephine*, tells the tragic story of Josephine O'Brien of Cape Broyle.

I ask all hon. members to join me in congratulating Gina, Earl, and Megan on their literacy accomplishments for sharing their talents of the Great Northern Peninsula with the world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Statements by Ministers.

#### Statements by Ministers

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

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this hon. House to speak to an ongoing review of the Protected Road Zoning regulations.

The Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs is currently undertaking a review to modernize and update regulations regarding zoning for protected roads. This review is taking place from November 17 to December 22 and will ensure that all views are captured to inform the development of modernized regulations.

The Protected Road Zoning regulations are designed to keep roads safe, to allow traffic to flow properly, and to provide for consistent development throughout the various areas of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, over the next couple of weeks I encourage residents throughout the Province to engage with the department to provide feedback on ways to enhance the Protected Road Zoning regulations.

As a government, gathering insight from stakeholders and residents is always a top priority. In this particular case, it will allow us to enhance the Protected Road Zoning regulations to better reflect the needs of all stakeholders.

Letters have been sent from the department to respective MHAs, as well as municipalities and local services districts that have protected roads in their jurisdictions. Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador and other professional organizations, which have expressed interest on this issue in the past, have also been sent correspondence to make them aware of the consultation and to encourage participation.

Information about the consultation, including background information about the Protected Road Zoning regulations as well as a listing and maps showing the location of the protected roads throughout the Province is available on the department's Web site.

As outlined on the Web page, interested parties can choose to submit their feedback to the provincial government in writing either electronically or by regular mail.

When the consultations are complete, a “What We Heard Document” will be released on the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs Web site.

Mr. Speaker, as a department, we are always reviewing legislation to ensure it meets the needs of residents and stakeholders. Reviews are needed periodically to ensure the regulations remain appropriate and certainly in keeping with best practices.

I again encourage all interested stakeholders to provide feedback to the department and draw their attention to the deadline date of December 22.

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. These new proposed protected road regulations will have an impact on local development and will override the right of towns to do their own development. The level of that impact is being determined by the towns right now.

The minister wants input by December 22. A lot of the towns and local service districts do not have the planning staff to supply this information by that time, and they are asking to have it done in a little over a month.

Mr. Speaker, what we hear from local towns is that, yes, it is great, but we need time to participate. We need time to provide the information to the minister. The approach is good, but I think you should extend the period of time to give more municipalities a time to review it because a lot of the small municipalities, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, do not have the staff in place to have the information at their fingertips and a lot of residents.

So I encourage the minister to review that. I will be writing today asking for an extension to give people time to do it.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I also thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. There is no doubt that protected zoning regulations need change and modernization. To add to that, the siting regulations need to come in line also with the rest of Canada. Both pieces work hand in hand. I would also invite the minister to look at making changes to the Highway Traffic Act as well, to make the act come in line with the rest of the country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. O’BRIEN:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to talk about a job fair that was recently held for inmates at Her Majesty’s Penitentiary. This is the first time the “Workin’ It” Job Fair has been held at the Penitentiary and was organized by the HMP Mental Health Working Group, which included representation from the Community, Career and Employment Partnership Project.

This successful job fair provided inmates the opportunity to access information to help plan for the future after their sentences are served. The job fair featured thirteen organizations that inmates could speak with to discuss their options. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills was one of the participating partners along with representatives from the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, and joined groups, such as the John Howard Society, Stella Burry and post-secondary training institutions.

Inmates provided positive feedback on the job fair and were very eager to learn about the opportunities for retraining and employment that are available to them. Most questions focused

on the trades, Adult Basic Education, post-secondary education, Employment Insurance and resume writing.

Mr. Speaker, the job fair sent a positive message that there are services available and organizations to help inmates when returning to school or work.

Our government is committed to removing barriers, Mr. Speaker, to obtaining an education, employment and training, which is integral to achieving long-term success for all individuals throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The job fair demonstrates what can be achieved when we all work together and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the valuable work of the HMP Mental Health Working Group on their very successful job fair. It was a great example of the provincial government and community partners collaborating for a common goal.

Thank you, 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.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

Kudos to the HMP Mental Health Working Group on arranging this job fair. We know that only one in three adults, and one in four children who need mental health services in Canada actually receive them. One of the sad outcomes of a lack of access to mental health care is incarceration. One of the principles of sentencing is rehabilitation. Government could and should do more to prepare inmates for their release through education.

Government says it is committed to removing barriers. We need more supportive employment opportunities to help people with barriers find and maintain employment. There should be more opportunities for training for inmates to maximize their time, even employment, so inmates can save money prior to release. Equipping inmates with skills and connections

will reduce recidivism rates and improve quality of life for these people trying to start anew.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS ROGERS:** I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

Mr. Speaker, bravo to the HMP Mental Health Working Group on their job fair, but I am astounded that the minister can stand up in this House today when we have the most antiquated prison in the country. It is detrimental to both staff and inmates. The majority of inmates have mental health and addictions issues.

Our prison has become our new asylum. Inmates are not getting the treatments they desperately need. They cannot find housing when released, let alone a job. There is no continuity of care when they are released into the community, because back to the community they come, Mr. Speaker, back to the community they come.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CRUMMELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide hon. members with the third annual update on implementing the 2011 climate change and energy efficiency action plans.

These plans outline our government's strategic approach for adapting to the impacts of climate change, improving our Province's energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Speaker, this fall we released a detailed report outlining the progress and the seventy-five commitments contained in these plans.

Since the launch of the action plans in 2011, our government has taken significant steps to improve our Province's resilience to the impacts of climate change. This includes continuing to develop flood risk maps for communities and expanding coastal erosion monitoring to 112 sites throughout the Province, including nine in Labrador. Mr. Speaker, with projected increases in precipitation and extreme weather, this work ensures our communities can factor climate change into their planning and development decisions.

Additionally, we are improving our preparedness for extreme weather events as 97 per cent of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians now live in areas with Emergency Management Plans and we have an alert system that notifies at-risk communities of potential flooding.

Mr. Speaker, we have also continued our Residential Energy Efficiency Program. This program provides grants to low-income households to complete energy-efficient upgrades to their homes. By March 2015, over 5,400 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will have benefited from this program, saving an average of \$720 each year on their energy bills.

Demonstrating leadership on energy efficiency remains a priority for our government, Mr. Speaker. In addition to energy efficiency retrofits in government buildings, we have two ongoing pilot projects that raise awareness about energy conservation. In October, we launched HotShots – an exciting new initiative for teachers and students that has included sending over 850 resource packs to 263 schools in the Province. We are also working with Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro to provide 500 households with real-time energy monitors to determine whether they help individuals conserve electricity.

These initiatives complement our award-winning *Turn Back the Tide* campaign, Mr. Speaker, which received two Pinnacle Awards this year from the International Association of Business Communicators of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the many highlights of our government's work to implement our climate change and energy

efficient action plans. Our government is committed to continuing to drive forward the delivery of its remaining commitments and consider what future action needs to be taken in pursuit of our 2020 targets.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. REID:** I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. Mr. Speaker, climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing our globe today. It is already having a significant impact on our ecosystem, economy, and our communities. It is important that our Province place high priority on this global issue, not just in words but in actions because we are especially vulnerable, given our many coastal communities.

While I compliment the government on some of the initiatives they have undertaken, we can and must do much more. One area where the minister did not mention is the failure of government to create the culture of conservation that they talked about in the 2007 Energy Plan. Also, it is important to note that government cut funding to the program that he mentioned in relation to increasing home energy efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude, we all have a role to play in working together to find solutions to global warming, and there is much more that government can do in this regard.

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 the statement here today. We encourage government to carry on with energy efficiency measures and enhance them. With energy prices sinking, it still does not negate our responsibility

to future generations in preserving our environment and the air we breathe.

Government also needs to promote alternative energy development, Mr. Speaker, and they can help by repealing Bill 61 and let everybody participate in adding alternative energies to the grid.

Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral Questions.

**Oral Questions**

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, back on December 9, 2013, one of the questions I asked in this House of Assembly – and I have asked it many times since that – was the evaluation of MPRs, Minimum Processing Requirements, in our Province. These requirements, these MPRs, were negotiated away, and at the time there was no value given by this government on what they would be. As a matter of fact, they were so valuable that the former Premier slammed the phone up on Stephen Harper in the federal loan guarantee on Muskrat Falls.

Today, do we have an evaluation on those MPRs?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Minimum Processing Requirements on the fishery in Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the two very important aspects of what we have here in Newfoundland and Labrador that keeps the fishery alive in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker – MPRs, and we also have licensing. It is important to people in the rural part of the Province, it is important to fish harvesters, and it is important to fish processors as well.

When the federal government came to the Province and asked for the removal of MPRs for the purposes of the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement with the European Union, there was a discussion, and it has been an ongoing discussion on the value of the MPRs. To us, it is important that we ensure the long-term sustainability of the fishery for our Province. It is important that we create opportunities for fishery in rural Newfoundland and Labrador for not only years to come, for decades to come. That is the value. That is the value on MPRs for us as a government, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier said that the MPRs are very important to the fishery. It keeps many small and rural communities in our Province alive. The federal government is putting a price tag on that.

Why do you not know that value? If you are willing to negotiate it away for what would have been \$280 million or something less now, why did you not put a value on that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, we do not believe that the removal of MPRs as part of the CETA agreement is going to have a negative impact on fish processors in Newfoundland and Labrador. We do not believe that.

What we believe is that the CETA agreement that is under negotiation between the EU and the Government of Canada is going to be forever. It is going to be a longstanding agreement between the European Union and Canada.

We wanted to make sure that we have an opportunity to benefit fish plants and fish processors throughout Newfoundland and Labrador for decades to come because we realize the value of MPRs is historic. It is



almost cultural for us as a Province to have an agreement, so that when vessels land at the wharf, they offload their catch and it is processed right here in Newfoundland and Labrador. We firmly believe, Mr. Speaker, there will not be a negative impact because of our CETA agreement on those aspects of MPRs.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not so sure what the Premier meant by that. On one hand he is saying it is an important part of keeping rural Newfoundland and Labrador alive, and on the other hand he is saying MPRs will not have a negative impact. It seems to me it is like *A Tale of Two Cities* here. There is an historic and cultural impact to it.

I ask the Premier: During the negotiations and the discussions, how did you and this government arrive at the \$280 million?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that officials in the government have been directly and very intensely involved with the CETA negotiations. They have represented the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador very well. They have represented the people of Newfoundland and Labrador very well. It has been a very complex piece of work that has been led by ministers and also by officials.

The value of MPRs for us as a Province is the value of the future of the fishery. They wanted us to give up MPRs. For us, we said, well, we wanted to benefit from that. We wanted to be able to have an opportunity for that because MPRs are important to us.

I should clarify for the members opposite, too, it is only for the CETA agreement that MPRs are on the table. They are not on the table on fishery products to go to the United States, for fishery products to go to China, for fishery products to go to Russia. That is not part of the

deal, Mr. Speaker. It is only for the CETA agreements; it is only for the European Union.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, yesterday and a few days prior to that, the Premier was saying that we had reached the stage in this agreement where we are literally dotting the i's and crossing the t's. Obviously, that was yesterday, something happened last night.

I ask the Premier: Could you explain to me and to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador what happened with the meeting with Minister Moore yesterday to change this agreement?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When you talk about agreements and negotiations, you have to look at the big picture of what is taking place. In recent days, in the past week, Minister Moore was here in the Province twice. He came with a group last week. He met with ministers in our government. They had lengthy discussions. They expressed a desire to conclude the agreement, but they also have added a condition on the agreement that is simply not acceptable to me and it is simply not acceptable to our government.

When Minister Moore left last week, he expressed an interest in coming back and having a further discussion. He flew into the Province Sunday night. We met yesterday morning. I sat with him for an hour, and ministers stayed with him for ninety minutes and had a lengthy discussion about how we move this forward. He suggested that officials then have meetings; officials, we made them available.

We have not been able to make progress, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we need to elevate this beyond Minister Moore and bring it to the Prime Minister of Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There seems to be a lot of meetings that have occurred after a celebration that took place in November 2013. Will you explain to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, what were you celebrating in November 2013?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, very simply, I can tell you what we were celebrating last year. We were celebrating a deal that was had in good faith, Mr. Speaker. That is what we were celebrating.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** It is a deal that allows for the future of the fishery, and that is what we are standing by over on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. It is an opportunity for the future of rural Newfoundland and Labrador. It protects the best interests of rural Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It protects the men and women who go to work in processing facilities and fish plants around this Province, Mr. Speaker. That is what we celebrated last year, a \$400 million fund to ensure that the sustainability of the fishery is going to last for decades to come.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You celebrated a \$400 million fund and you are off to Ottawa tomorrow to see if that fund is still available, is what has happened here.

Mr. Speaker, has there ever been a signed agreement with the federal government guaranteeing \$280 million to Newfoundland and Labrador? Has there ever been an agreement signed?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, the CETA negotiations that involved all provinces in the country, with Canada leading negotiations with the European Union, as I have said earlier, it is a very complex piece of business, a very intense piece of business that has continued on for some time. As part of that process, there has been a significant amount of documentation that has gone between the Province and the federal government.

I tabled last year – I think it was eighty-two pages of documentation that was tabled here in the House last year. If you read through that documentation, that documentation supports a deal was done, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** I say to the Premier: Are you saying last year the deal was signed committing \$280 million to Newfoundland and Labrador, and since your meetings this week with Minister Moore that deal is now changed?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, we reached an agreement on the elements of CETA. We reached an agreement on a fund that was going to be 70-30 cost-shared.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible).

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** There was agreement –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible).

**PREMIER DAVIS:** It has already been tabled, I say to the member opposite. There has been lots of documentation, up to December last year, that were tabled in the House. If you read through the documentation, it supports that

agreement was reached on the terms of the Fisheries Innovation Fund.

I can tell you, not only is that supported by our government, I can tell you the FFAW supports it, Mr. Speaker. Just recently we heard the federal Leader of the Liberal Party, Justin Trudeau, supports it. Maybe the hon. member opposite can tell us, does he support the deal or not?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, if the Premier went back in time, we actually did support the CETA deal, but what we said we would do is we would make sure during a negotiation what we were negotiating away, we would know what the amount would be. That is the mistake of this government right now. You walked away from the table. You had no idea what you walked away from, I say to the Premier.

I ask the Premier: Last week there was some mention of advanced spending on this particular fisheries fund; how much money has been spent of the \$400 million fisheries fund? Where does that stand now?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. member should have a review of the documents, because he will see we did not negotiate anything away in our discussions with the federal government, Mr. Speaker. We negotiated the future of the fishery for this Province. We negotiated an opportunity to build on the good work that is done by people throughout rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

We want to build on the fishery science and the work that we have done in the fishery science. We want to build on research and development. We want to build and emerge infrastructure for rural Newfoundland and Labrador so the fishery

can be sustainable for the long term, Mr. Speaker.

We did not negotiate anything away, Mr. Speaker. We negotiated for the people of the Province and the people who work in the fishery in our Province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier did not answer about the advanced spending. As a matter of fact, clearly he said he did not negotiate anything away.

Based on that comment, are the MPRs still intact for Newfoundland and Labrador, I say to the Premier?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you MPRs are still intact for Newfoundland and Labrador. What we have come to an agreement with last year with the federal government was that if they want MPRs as part of CETA, it was going to cost them \$400 million, a 70-30 fund for the sustainability of our fishery and nothing has changed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier, I guess he should get his numbers right if he wants to be attacking me as Leader of the Opposition. You did not get \$400 million from the federal government. You got \$280 million based on a 30-70 arrangement, and you do not have that yet.

Mr. Speaker, government promised to provide the people of the Province with a mid-year economic update by December 8, but missed the

deadline. Yesterday, the Premier was not clear on when this update would even be announced.

I say to the Premier: Will you commit to announce the mid-year update before the House of Assembly closes this year?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. WISEMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is important when members ask questions in the House that they are very precise on their question. He indicated that I was going to release an update by December 8. I have never mentioned December 8 any time. Any comments I have made in this House or outside, I have never mentioned the date December 8.

What I have said, Mr. Speaker, and what I have said very clearly –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. WISEMAN:** I have said very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that I would provide an update on the Province's fiscal position for this fiscal year ending March 31, when OPEC had their meeting, and we had a sense to understand how prices were going to stabilize and what the reaction of the markets would be after that announcement. I said recently there has been a tremendous amount of volatility in the market since that announcement.

It is still not settled. We still do not know exactly where that may happen. I have committed to make sure the people of the Province have an understanding of where we are going to be the end of March.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I went back and did a review of volatility in oil prices. Interestingly enough, in a twenty-year period between 1949 and 1969 we had seen like an 18 per cent change. In four or five years shortly after that, we have seen over a 300 per cent change. Volatility in oil markets is not anything new to this world, this global economy.

Will you commit that before the House of Assembly closes that you will release the mid-year update?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. WISEMAN:** Mr. Speaker, again, let me repeat, so I am abundantly clear, so there is no misunderstanding in the future. I have indicated that I will provide an update to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador as to where we will be at the end of March 31, 2015 when we are able to get a really good feel for where the prices will be for the remaining part of the year.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. WISEMAN:** We have seen, Mr. Speaker, a lot of change in oil prices since July of this year, but since OPEC had their meeting a little while ago we have seen tremendous fluctuations, even within a twenty-four hour period.

So we will continue to monitor oil prices. We are having some consultation with a number of people who are providing advice – economists who do this for a living, Mr. Speaker. So we will commit, as a government, that we will provide an update to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador before Christmas.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 2011, government discovered that compensation practices at the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information were not in line with the rest of government.

Two years ago, the AG issued a report saying there were big pay raises and a lack of job competition within the centre. The minister at the time said the centre needed to snap in line and assured the public they would.

So I ask the minister: Why hasn't this issue been fixed?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Discussions with the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information have been ongoing, and we want to make sure we put a solution in place that meets with the objectives outlined by the Auditor General and is also fair and respectful of employees involved. I am confident that we will reach a solution over the next few months.

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

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Mr. Speaker, last year taxpayers funded the Centre for Health Information to the tune of \$20 million – about \$10 million spent in salary, another \$3 million spent in consulting. This government has known for over three years that it could be saving money with reduced salaries.

So I ask the minister: You are telling us here it has been months, but you have not done it in the last three years. Can you confirm that you will have this done and have it done soon?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KENT:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the member opposite that the centre has revised the majority of its human resource policies so that they are aligned with government policy, so there has been progress. We have clearly communicated with the centre that they must align their policies and compensation practices with the provincial

government. I anticipate a full resolution over the next few months.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Mr. Speaker, the former Minister of IBRD in the media and other members of your government caucus have stated that providing cellular service is a federal responsibility.

I ask the minister: Do you agree with your own government members that cell service is strictly federal?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite would know, cellular service is indeed a federally regulated responsibility. It has nothing to do with provincial government or provincial jurisdiction, but I would remind the member opposite that we do believe there are opportunities for the provincial government to participate in programs to move forward in supporting local private companies in advancing cellular service in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We have done that, as we have with broadband initiative, Mr. Speaker, to hundreds of communities in this Province. We will continue to do that where the opportunity presents itself, but I will remind the member once again that it is indeed a federal responsibility, the regulation of cell phone services.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Mr. Speaker, not \$1 of the funds that have been provided have gone towards expanding cell coverage, and the Government of BC signed an agreement that within five years 1,716 kilometres of highway will see cell coverage.

I ask the minister: Why does your government have no plan, leaving commuters and communities without a cellular connection?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, I guess we are starting to see the differences in how we develop the economy and develop the Province between the two parties, because as I have said many times in this House we do not believe that it is government's role to do many of the things the member opposite is talking about. We believe in creating a climate where businesses are encouraged to develop the economy and to develop initiatives such as this.

It is only the last call that we did for broadband services, Mr. Speaker, that we also called for private investment in cellular services in the Province. We will continue to do that, but we do not see it as our role to do that. It is our role to support the businesses that want to do that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Mr. Speaker, proposals have been put forward but none funded.

I ask the minister: When will he and this government get serious about the consequences as to what is happening in the shrimp fishery, and what action is in place? What plan do you have to address this pending crisis?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. GRANTER:** Mr. Speaker, we have done some research with regard to a study on the importance of the shrimp fishery in the Province. When that report is available, we will make it public and we will address that with the federal government.

With regard to LIFO, Mr. Speaker, this government has been against LIFO with the federal policy since 2010. It is something that I have advocated against with the federal minister. It is something I look forward again to speaking with the federal minister on, as are other fishery opportunities and problems in the fishery in the Province.

We will sit down with the federal minister in the days and the weeks ahead and look at the issues and the opportunities that are available to the fishers of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** I ask the Minister of Fisheries: Why have you not had any face-to-face discussions then with the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, given the broad fishery issues and challenges that we have and the current drop in shrimp quota?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. GRANTER:** Mr. Speaker, I spoke to the Minister of Fisheries at an opportunity in Prince Edward Island. I have been advised by the officials in the department to establish meetings with the federal minister. I look forward to sitting down with the federal minister and looking at the opportunities that are available in the fisheries in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and addressing the concerns that fishers have in the Province with regard to shrimp and shrimp allocation.

Again, I say to the member opposite, LIFO is a policy that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador stands against. We stand firmly against that, Mr. Speaker. It is a policy that we stood against since 2010. Numerous ministers in Fisheries and Aquaculture have addressed it. Numerous letters have been sent to the federal department. Numerous letters have been sent directly to the minister. I look forward to sitting down and advocating for the fishers of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. LANE:** Mr. Speaker, government has an obligation to regulate and enforce occupational health and safety. The establishment of the Fish Processing Sector Safety Council was meant to protect those who work in seafood processing. Government identified this as a priority in 2007 and funding has been set aside for four years.

I ask the minister: What have you done to follow up on the establishment of the Fish Processing Sector Safety Council?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CORNETT:** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the Fish Processing Sector Safety Council, as the hon. member is asking over there, the commission has been meeting with the fish processing industry to review safety performance with an emphasis on industry safety statistics and injury prevention.

Mr. Speaker, the commission has allocated approximately \$500,000 to create the new safety sector council for high-risk industries and is willing to accept proposals. In fact, the commission and its advisors, with the Newfoundland Federation of Labour and the Newfoundland Employers' Council, remain available to sit down with industry when it is ready to continue to discuss creating the new sector council.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. LANE:** I say to the minister, four years and nothing done.

Mr. Speaker, we recently heard from a constituent who borrowed \$600 at the beginning of the month and had to repay \$900 at the end of the same month. This is the equivalent of a 600 per cent interest rate. Unfortunately, more and

more people are using these services and government is well aware of it.

Therefore, I ask the Minister of Service NL: Will you bring forward payday loan legislation to protect consumers, a mandate of your department?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CORNETT:** Mr. Speaker, that is one of the mantras of this government, to protect the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Service NL, after significant research and consideration, we looked at regulation of payday loans and payday loan companies. It is a complicated area, with a number of policy considerations as well. Mr. Speaker, payday loan companies need to comply with section 347 of the Criminal Code of Canada in order to operate in this Province. This section states that it is a criminal offence to charge more than 60 per cent interest per year. This would amount to a maximum charge of \$2.30 per \$100 for a fourteen-day loan.

So, we see the seriousness of this. We always review our legislation, we always look at it, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. EDMUNDS:** Mr. Speaker, winter has definitely arrived in Northern Labrador, and freeze-up is well underway. The *Motor Vessel Astron* has already made its final trip to some communities who are still awaiting supplies.

So I ask the minister: Why was the freight not delivered, and will those communities eventually receive their much needed supplies?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. WISEMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously, transportation to the North Coast presents some real challenges in the winter months, and government has obviously been very cognizant of that – since we have been in government, actually, we have acknowledged that has been a huge issue facing the North Coast. We have always made a commitment to ensure that the service is effective and services the needs of the people who live on that Northern Coast.

I say, Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting question the member has asked. I do not have a very specific answer for him, and when the minister returns tomorrow I am sure he will be able to answer it for him.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains, for a very quick question.

**MR. EDMUNDS:** Mr. Speaker, Hopedale is waiting for their entire winter supply, and it looks like the *Astron* may not make it there because of ice.

So I ask the minister: What contingency plan is in place if the *Astron* is unable to reach Hopedale?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Finance, for a very quick reply.

**MR. WISEMAN:** Mr. Speaker, as always, we have made a commitment in the past, and we will continue to make commitments to the people who live on the North Coast that we will respond to their need to have freight delivered in a timely fashion, and we will do the same thing this year.

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

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

Government partnered with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to hold Province-wide consultations on a new fiscal formula.

I ask the Premier: Will government sit down with municipalities and work with MNL to implement their recommendations?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned yesterday in the House, we engaged in a process committed in 2013 to recognize there was a requirement for a new fiscal framework, with all of the municipalities working collectively together. We have started that process. Actually, the consultations are complete.

Over 500 consultations took place, culminating in recommendations by Municipality Newfoundland and Labrador. It was an opportunity to meet with them at their AGM in the fall, and municipal leaders. Certainly, there are many recommendations there. We are reviewing those as part of the budget process, and we certainly hope to respond in the budget coming up in 2015.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS MICHAEL:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, government's Municipal Operating Grant formula is unworkable, incomprehensible, and unfair.

I ask the minister: When will government create an open and transparent MOG formula based on population and services provided?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we enhanced the MOG formula just a few years ago. It was increased. I think it was \$6 million to \$22 million. In addition, everything we heard from municipalities we are



supportive of that. We also looked at larger municipalities in terms of them wanting access to municipal capital works funding, which was more important to them than the actual MOGs. They were allowed to drive infrastructure spending.

As well, it was this government in 2008, I believe, who brought in the new funding ratios which saw municipalities spend less dollars on municipal infrastructure, with the Province kicking in from the revenues we generated to build their infrastructure. It is probably the first time in history that amount of money has been spent. We continue to work with municipalities, and we will continue to do that through the new formula coming up in the budget of 2015.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS MICHAEL:** I ask the minister: Will he put the MOG on a five-year cycle and index it to the cost of living like they are asking?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to listen to municipalities. Just in last year's Budget we went with a three-year commitment in terms of municipal capital works. In regard to larger municipalities, it was \$160 million which secured funding for them for three years, which they were looking for to give them sustainability.

There was \$60 million that went to the smaller municipalities; \$20 million a year which give them stability in terms of financing for infrastructure. Again, those are all good things we have done with municipalities. There has been a list of recommendations through the MNL report. We are reviewing all of those and we will certainly look forward to announcing some initiatives for next year in the 2015 Budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Taxpayers in St. John's got lucky yesterday when their tax bills did not increase. Other communities here in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker, will not be so lucky.

When will the minister sit down with Municipalities NL and let them know what government is proposing in the next Budget of 2015-2016 so that they can plan?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Gentleman, I have met with the Executive Director of Municipality Newfoundland and Labrador. I have met with staff there. It was just yesterday the gentleman was here in the House. I went out and met with him outside. Good discussions and updates in regard to the recommendations for MNL in terms of the infrastructure and what is happening. We have good dialogue, a lot of dialogue in terms of municipal leaders. I continue to talk to municipal leaders.

As I said, I was out at the AGM. Some members on the opposite side wanted me to sit down with municipal leaders in their communities. I did that. I heard what their concerns were. If there are more who want me to do that, I am certainly more than willing to do that. I look forward to the discussions and continuing the good work that this government has done with municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Part of the problem of funding and running any municipality is that they never know how much they are going to get, Mr. Speaker.

Can the minister ensure, this time around, there will be predictability on the part of the new funding formula that will be coming out?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Mr. Speaker, again, I am not sure the hon. gentleman understands. We brought in a new Municipal Operating Grant program which is predictable, which demonstrates to them what that MOG would be. When we did refine it, I think the results were – I think 80 per cent had an increase in terms of the overall MOG. So there certainly is sustainability and there is predictability in them.

Again, as I said, with our three-year initiative we did in 2013 in the Budget in regard to municipal capital works that gave predictability and sustainability in terms of the amount of money that is flowing into these communities. The new funding ratio we brought in in 2008 allowed heavy investment in municipal infrastructure. All of those recommendations are in the report. We look forward to talking about them in Budget 2015, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The time for Question Period has expired.

**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:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

During Question Period, upon questioning from the Member for Mount Pearl South, the Minister of Service NL clearly read from his documents. So I would ask that he table those documents, please.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I ask the Minister of Service NL to table his documents.

**MR. CORNET:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for 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 humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS mental health programs and services are crucial to the health of individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS despite mental health services being delivered by government, community-based organizations and informally by families and friends, there are still large gaps in services and programs in the Province; and

WHEREAS despite these efforts, stigma remains a significant barrier for people needing to access mental health services, and participate in society; and

WHEREAS new directions and priorities are needed for mental health programs and service delivery, especially for unique groups such as youth, Aboriginal people, immigrants and refugees; and

WHEREAS deep fiscal cuts in the last budget have placed a great strain on organizations delivering mental health services in the Province.

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to immediately strike an all-party committee on mental health which, through extensive public consultation, will review the current state of provincial mental health services, receive expert testimony on best practices in mental health care delivery, and report their findings with the intent to provide guidance and oversight in redesigning mental health programs and services to better serve the needs of all the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will every pray.

Mr. Speaker, once again, these petitions keep coming into my office. They are coming into my office from all over the Province. These people who are signing these petitions know what they want. The Community Coalition 4 Mental Health knows what they want. They are calling specifically for a select all-party committee to look at the issue of mental health services in the Province.

The Minister of Health has said, oh, no, no, I am going to do something better. I am going to do a Province-wide consultation. Mr. Speaker, we know that is not better.

This government has been in power for eleven years and the issue of mental health and the services have gotten worse, not better. The waiting times are horrendous. People are desperate. We need the clout and we need the legislative ability of an all-party committee on a select committee which has a beginning, a middle, and an end because we must use every tool at our discretion, at our disposal in this House in order to come up with effective solutions.

A select committee will use an open, transparent, and thorough process to review the current state of mental health services in the Province. An all-party committee will contribute to debate in this House, because certainly, Mr. Speaker, that is what we need to do. We need to contribute to debate on mental health services.

Thank you very much.

**PREMIER DAVIS:** A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Premier on a point of order.

**PREMIER DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier today I commented publicly that I would table documents pertaining to discussions between the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Canada regarding CETA negotiations. I would like to table those documents now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Does the hon. the Premier have leave to revert to the Tabling of Documents?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Leave.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Leave.

Further petitions?

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

**MR. KIRBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have been presenting this petition in the House of Assembly for maybe a little over a year now. There are over 100 names on this petition today, people from St. John's, from around St. John's, from communities outside St. John's, from Conception Bay South, from Marystown, North West River, in Mount Pearl, a variety of different communities from around the Province. I do not know how many signatures we have presented to date, but it has been quite a number. I have spoken to people from all across Newfoundland and Labrador about the need for this.

One of the phenomena that we have unfortunately in the Province today is the fact that children are not getting diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in time for them to fully avail of the publicly-funded services that they would otherwise be able to take part in, particularly the applied behavioural analysis program. It is an unfortunate circumstance that government continues to not act to ensure that children are diagnosed at an early enough age to take part in the program. They subsequently age out as a result.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will end it there. There are lots more petitions.

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

**MS DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS Labrador's coastal communities already pay extremely high hydro rates; and

WHEREAS small businesses are struggling to stay in operation against rising costs of operation; and

WHEREAS Nalcor, a Crown corporation, is proposing an 11.4 per cent increase to residential hydro rates and a 20 per cent increase to business rates;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to work with Nalcor to establish rates that are fair and consistent to the whole Province

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, back in 2013 there was a rate application that was filed with the PUB and that was going to see coastal communities have an increase of 0.9 per cent, I believe it was. There were some other areas of Labrador that were going to see an extremely high increase, 25 per cent or 26 per cent. That would not have been fair either, Mr. Speaker, but that was either pulled off the table or rejected. The new application right now being proposed is that isolated communities where most of the people who live in those communities are people on a fixed income, old age pensioners is all that is left in a lot of these small communities, and now they are going to be hit, if this is accepted beginning in February, with an 11.4 per cent increase.

Businesses that are struggling are going to be hit with a 20 per cent – we just heard my colleague in Question Period. We have communities that by the time the boat gets back, five, six weeks without any goods; they are paying more for everything, the service that they do have. Now it is acceptable to hit them with an extra 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

A couple of weeks ago, I showed actual hydro bills from very small businesses, small businesses that have a small profit margin that are paying \$6,000 already just for heat and light, homes that are paying \$300 or \$400 a month. This is going to cause financial hardship and they are going to pay in other ways. When people have to start choosing between their heat and their pills and they are saying no to their pills, we are going to be paying for that in other departments.

It is very disappointing to hear that this government supports that – very disappointing. There has to be a fair way to evenly distribute. If hydro wants to double their rate of return on equity, Mr. Speaker, I say that application needs to be pulled back and there needs to be a fair way to do that, not balance it on the backs of the most vulnerable people in our society.

I will continue on behalf of the people in my district and the people on the North Coast of Labrador and isolated communities to stand and urge this to be relooked at.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SLADE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS the town council of Bryant's Cove has applied for funding of \$958,403 from the provincial government over the past three years, 2011, 2012, and 2013 for the upgrades of the paving of Point Road, but has not been successful; and

WHEREAS Point Road has deteriorated to the point that council can no longer maintain the road; and the residents and businesses are complaining about the cost incurred to the upkeep of their vehicles due to the condition of the road and the risk to their personal safety; and

WHEREAS school bus operators are expressing concerns about the condition of Point Road and are indicating that there is a possibility the buses will not operate on this road in the upcoming school year; and

WHEREAS Point Road has the highest population of traffic than any other municipal road in the town, with seven side roads branching off; and

WHEREAS residents are stating they will not be paying property taxes until the upgrades are carried out on the road;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide a funding application to the town council to have Point Road upgraded and paved this year.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have brought this petition here before and I guess many more will come behind it. Imagine having to use this kind of a process to recognize the need of a town that is out there and has many issues. They had their share of the funding and yet nothing is done with it.

The group on the other side there, they say we are concerned about communities, we want them to grow and we want them to prosper. Mr. Speaker, for the people to have to use this forum here to get their point across and for people on that side over there to listen, it is just unacceptable – absolutely unacceptable. The people across the way should be ashamed that people have to use this forum. Ashamed, I am telling you – ashamed. It is absolutely ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to sit down after that note. I will continue to bring those petitions. I

will work on behalf of the people of my district and that is what I will do here.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. REID:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a petition to present related to health care in the Heatherton to Highlands area. To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS there has not been a permanent doctor at the clinic in Jeffrey's for almost a year; and

WHEREAS this absence of a permanent doctor is seriously compromising the health care of people who live in the Heatherton to the Highlands area and causing them undue hardship; and

WHEREAS the absence of a doctor or nurse practitioner in the area leaves seniors without a consistency and quality of care which is necessary for their continued good health;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to take action which will result in a permanent doctor or other arrangements to improve health care services in the Heatherton to Highlands area.

Mr. Speaker, I have presented other petitions on this topic as well, about the lack of a doctor in Jeffrey's and the problems it is causing. It is important to note, this is not a new position. It is a position that has been in place for a long while. The people are not asking for a new expenditure. It is something that has been budgeted in last year's Budget, and budgeted in previous years as well.

The problem in St. George's is also developing as well, as the doctor in there is about to leave soon. That will be another community in the area that is left without a doctor or a nurse

practitioner to provide the immediate care that people need.

This situation also causes problems for the Stephenville hospital, as people who are unable to get care in either the Jeffery's clinic or St. George's have to come to the hospital in Stephenville to get care. They have to wait long times, adding to the waiting times at the hospital in Stephenville.

I have talked to people at Western Health. I have talked to the minister about this issue. Everyone is aware of it, I think. It is a serious problem that needs to be addressed soon. It has gone on for too long. I look forward to some solution soon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS Route 432, Grenfell Drive, is the primary highway for residents on the Great Northern Peninsula East; and

WHEREAS prior to 2012s repaving in patches, Route 432 had a twenty kilometre rough road sign; and

WHEREAS without repaving on the remaining section of Route 432, the past investment will rapidly erode; and

WHEREAS Route 433 connects Roddickton-Bide Arm, Englee and Conche and it too is in deplorable condition; and

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

WHEREAS an improved road network is needed to enhance road safety, and will help

local commerce, enhance tourism, and create new business opportunities surrounding this section of the highway;

We the undersigned, petition the House of Assembly to urge government to allocate funds under the provincial roads program to pave this section of Route 432-433.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, today's petitions are primarily from residents of Croque, as well as Englee, Main Brook, and there are some as well I believe from the community of Roddickton. These particular communities – when we look at the amount of municipal upgrades in infrastructure. We have seen repaving happen in the Town of Conche and the Town of Roddickton-Bide Arm where the municipal road infrastructure is quite good in those two particular towns.

When we look at the main highways leading to the towns, these hubs and the economic engines that are happening around the Northern Peninsula East and the level of activity when it comes to the forest industry, potential mining, the fishing activity that is there, and the tourism and outfitting industries, if we do not have that main access point taken care of, then it is going to be very difficult to build on the level of revenues that comes back to the Province in the form of business taxation to be able to support and sustain municipalities like Roddickton-Bide Arm, Conche, Main Brook, Englee.

It is so critical that you have primary highways in good condition. Doing things in patches sometimes can help provide that band-aid solution, but if it is done and it is not addressed in future years – and this was done in 2012 and now we are approaching 2015 – well then that investment will certainly be eroded.

That is why I would like to see some form of priority listing as to roads and their condition and how they get done. My petitioners are certainly asking for that when it comes to Route 432-433.

So thank you for the time today, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS Tordon 101 contains the chemicals 2,4-D and picloram; and

WHEREAS the chemical picloram is a known cancer-causing carcinogen; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has banned the cosmetic use of the pesticide 2,4-D; and

WHEREAS safer alternatives are available to the provincial government for brush clearance such as manual labour, alternative competitive seeding methods, and/or the mechanical removal of brush; and

WHEREAS the provincial government is responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to cease the use of chemicals covered under its own cosmetic pesticide ban and begin using safer methods of brush clearance that will not place its citizens in harm's way.

As in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the people from St. John's in this particular petition, who gladly filled this one out and sent it in to our offices. We keep getting these in from time to time from people who happen to care about the environment they are living in and care about the future of the environment they are going to be leaving their children and care about the environmental legacy. We have heard about environmental legacy in this House of Assembly before and the cost to society, and the potential future costs to government as well.

There is a future cost here to health care, Mr. Speaker, in the chemicals we are using on a day-to-day basis. One of these chemicals, of course we are talking about picloram in particular, 2,4-D is another one, but basically the mixture of Tordon 101 being used by government. Most of these chemicals, of course, are covered under the cosmetic pesticide ban. Why is government using these chemicals if they expect the citizenry of the Province not to be using these chemicals because they are dangerous and they cause these after effects? Why does government persist in using them?

It is an interesting question, Mr. Speaker, that we keep asking, and that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador keep asking when they fill out this petition and send it in. They expect government to be responsive to the request to stop using a chemical and stop poisoning people's environments. We know the dangers already of some of these chemicals. We can take a little bit off our environmental liabilities and our future costs to health care if we just pay attention sometimes and pay attention to what the people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador are asking for.

Now these are probably not the foremost dangerous chemicals, Mr. Speaker, but these are four chemicals that the Province has already banned. So one of these days I would imagine people of this Province are going to be asking for government to further dig into other chemicals at the same time that are causing some grief to world society these days.

Mr. Speaker, I will leave this petition with you, and hopefully the government will listen.

Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Orders of the Day.

#### **Orders of the Day**

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to go to Order 2, third reading of a bill, An Act Respecting The Atlantic Provinces Harness

Racing Commission, Bill 33. I move, seconded by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, that the said bill be now read a third time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 33 be now read a third time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

The motion is carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act Respecting The Atlantic Provinces Harness Racing Commission. (Bill 33)

**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 The Atlantic Provinces Harness Racing Commission", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 33)

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to move to Order 3, third reading of a bill, An Act To Amend The Provincial Offences Act, Bill 35.

It is so moved by me, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that the said bill be now read a third time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 35 be now read a third time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that Bill 35 be now read a third time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.



**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

The motion is carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Provincial Offences Act. (Bill 35)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Provincial Offences Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 35)

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I now move to Motion 3 to ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Social Workers Act, Bill 38.

It is so moved by me, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that the said bill be now read the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Social Workers Act, Bill 38, 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 Health and Community Services to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Social Workers Act", carried. (Bill 38)

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Social Workers Act. (Bill 38)

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

When shall the bill be read a second time?

**MR. KING:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 38 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 would like to call from the Order Paper, Order 6, second reading of a bill, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2, Bill 37.

It is so moved by me, seconded by the Minister for Service Newfoundland and Labrador, that the bill be now read the second time.

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

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2". (Bill 37)

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CORNET:** Merci, Monsieur le Président (inaudible).

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, it gives me great pleasure to stand in this hon. House this afternoon to bring forward this important amendment today to Bill 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2. Service NL's mandate is to protect the health and safety of Newfoundlanders and

Labradorians through the development and enforcement of key pieces of legislation.

One of these very important pieces of legislation is the Highway Traffic Act which regulates drivers and the use of all vehicles on roadways, aiding the enforcement of vital safety standards that protect the public. It is a significant piece of legislation and is amended on a regular basis because we are constantly striving to improve highway safety. We need to ensure the act adapts to changes in our society.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment I am bringing forward today is critical to the safety and well-being of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who use bicycles on our roadways. They are among the most vulnerable road users in our Province.

There have been a number of studies conducted by many reputable medical and safety groups that demonstrate the effectiveness of helmet use in preventing or reducing head and brain injuries associated with bicycle collisions and falls. In reviewing this considerable body of evidence, we believe it is appropriate for our government to take action to increase the protection of all bicycle users in the Province by requiring all cyclists to wear helmets when bicycling on our roadways.

This legislation has taken a considerable amount of work, research, and analysis, as well as collaboration with key partners and stakeholders both within government and the community. I am delighted to stand here today and say that we have the full support of partners such as the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Safety Services Newfoundland and Labrador, the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association, the Newfoundland and Labrador Brain Injury Association, the Newfoundland and Labrador Public Health Association, and many others who have a direct interest in protecting vulnerable road users in our communities. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize their contributions and to thank them for their efforts.

This amendment to the Highway Traffic Act will require the use of bicycle helmets on roadways for bicyclists of all ages in Newfoundland and Labrador. The legislation also states that parents

of children under the age of sixteen will be responsible if they knowingly allow their children to cycle without a helmet.

This legislation will come into effect April 1, 2015, and will allow sufficient time for people to acquire the necessary equipment. It will also allow for the development and implementation of an education and awareness campaign to highlight the importance of bicycle helmet use.

Mr. Speaker, I also note that a number of municipalities in this Province, including the largest urban areas, have already made helmets mandatory for all ages of riders. Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador has made a case to extend this protection to all areas of the Province. As such, this amendment also responds to their concerns.

With this legislation, we will join seven other Canadian jurisdictions – four of which have mandatory bicycle helmet legislation for all ages, including the other three Atlantic Provinces and British Columbia. Three others, Mr. Speaker – Manitoba, Ontario, and Alberta – have mandatory legislation for cyclists under eighteen years of age. I must note that the Ontario coroner's office has recommended that the Ontario legislation be extended to all ages, based on their review of 129 bicycle-related deaths over a period of four years.

We know that having mandatory laws also increases the use of helmets. For instance, a study published by the *Injury Prevention* journal found that helmet use was highest when legislation applied to people of all ages. It also found that helmets are more widely used when legislation is mandatory, as opposed to when there is no legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there is a substantial body of national and international research on the effectiveness of bicycle helmets in reducing head injuries and deaths. Most of the studies reviewed are definitive in these conclusions.

Overall, it is estimated that the use of a bicycle helmet can decrease the risk of serious head injury by up to 88 per cent. This would mean that four out of five serious head injuries associated with bicycle collisions could be prevented if every cyclist wore a helmet. The

rates of these types of injuries also decrease significantly with the enactment of mandatory legislation for bicycle helmets. The research also supports bicycle helmet legislation for all ages of riders.

In provinces where mandatory bicycle helmet legislation exists, there has been an average 45 per cent reduction in the bicycle related head injury rate. In 2009, the average hospitalization rate from bicycle injuries for children in Canada was 25.7 per 100,000 people. In this Province, the rate was 49.2 per 100,000 people, double, Mr. Speaker – double – the national average.

In our own Province, the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information indicates that between 2010-2011 and 2012-2013, there were thirty-two bicycling-related head injuries recorded in the Province. Of these, twenty-five were for individuals under eighteen years of age.

This is a clear need for government to act in order to address this significant public health risk. The cost of head injuries does not just include the direct cost of hospitalization or rehabilitation, but can often represent a lifetime of decreased potential, a tragic legacy that is, in many cases, preventable.

Mr. Speaker, the research also shows that adults set very clear role models for children, and compliance by adults will influence younger riders. In fact, we know from the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association which completed a survey in 2010, that 87 per cent of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians believe that bicycle helmet use should be mandatory for all ages.

As I had mentioned previously, this amendment will come into effect April 1, 2015. Between now and the proclamation date, Service NL, the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, along with enforcement agencies, and our injury prevention and safety partners, will work on education and promotional efforts to ensure people are aware of the new law and are in the best position to comply with it before the peak summer season for bicycle activities.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the RNC and the RCMP have expressed their full support for this

initiative in the overall goal of reducing injuries and deaths. They have indicated to us that they will initially focus on educating the public and promoting the new legislation as part of their youth initiatives and overall community safety. Fines for most bicycle-related offences are a minimum of \$25 to a maximum of \$180. The fine for not wearing a bicycle helmet will be set within this range.

Mr. Speaker, the Highway Traffic Act is an important piece of safety legislation, and research supports the enactment of this amendment. We will work closely with the municipalities across the Province, which have already implemented helmet bylaws to protect their citizens, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to implementation and enforcement.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with our many community partners to promote this legislation, to make our roadways safer for our cyclists, and I look forward to the healthy debate this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci (inaudible).

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. LANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It certainly is a pleasure to stand and speak to Bill 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2.

Mr. Speaker, this is a piece of legislation that all of my colleagues in the Official Opposition support. As a matter of fact, in reviewing some of Hansard over the last year or so, I have noted that on November 27 the Member for Burgeo – La Poile asked two questions to the then minister about getting this legislation put into place. Again, it was brought up on November 28 with two more questions. December 2 the Member for Torngat raised the issue; March 13, I raised it; March 20 we raised it again, the Member for Burgeo – La Poile; and on June 2 we raised it again. On numerous occasions we have raised the issue. We have asked the questions, and we have called on government to initiate this legislation.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I also have here a resolution. This resolution is from June 2014. It was the annual general meeting of the Liberal Party. In that particular resolution, without getting into all the WHEREASes, it says:

BE IT RESOLVED the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador calls on the government to develop and introduce provincial bike helmet legislation.

Mr. Speaker, quite clearly, on this side of the House, we have been calling for this legislation. Quite clearly they heard what we were saying. We certainly thank the minister for finally listening to something we have been saying over here and implementing some good legislation that we actually called for. We view it as a positive thing, and we will be supporting this piece of legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER (Littlejohn):** The hon. the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. POLLARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, as usual, I would just like to thank the people from the District of Baie Verte – Springdale for their ongoing support, for their continued support. It is certainly a privilege and an honour to stand in this House again today.

Furthermore, I would like to thank the Minister of Service NL and his officials for carving out some of their valuable time to give us a briefing on this piece of legislation, Bill 37, An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act. What I will do first, like I always do, Mr. Speaker, is read the explanatory notes and then get into some explanatory later on.

“This Bill would amend the Highway Traffic Act to” – four things – “require all persons riding a bicycle to wear a helmet; prohibit a parent or custodial guardian from authorizing or knowingly permitting a person under the age of 16 to ride a bicycle without a helmet; introduce associated penalties; and provide regulation

making authority to the minister to make regulations regarding standards, specifications, identification and marking required for bicycle helmets as well as exemptions from the requirement to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle.”

Mr. Speaker, I like this piece of legislation because I think it is proactive as opposed to being reactive. I would like to thank the minister and his officials for doing that. Getting out in front of a safety issue is very important. This is all about safety, which will trump all other variables or arguments for and against this piece of legislation.

The question was asked, Mr. Speaker, why should cyclists wear a helmet? It is a good question. From the research that I have done, I found out that head injuries are the number one cause of serious injury and death to kids on bicycles. A head injury can permanently change the way a child walks, talks, plays, and thinks. The human skull is only one centimetre thick. Mine might be a little thicker, Mr. Speaker, because when I was small, mom had a hard time getting things drilled into my skull.

A properly fitted helmet helps to protect our brain from absorbing the force of a crash or a fall. A properly fitted and correctly worn bike helmet can make a dramatic difference, cutting the risk of serious head injury – get this, Mr. Speaker – by up to 85 per cent. This means that four out of five injuries could be prevented, Mr. Speaker, if every cyclist wore a helmet.

With that in mind, this is a very, very compelling argument that we could amend the act and introduce this piece of legislation. Research shows, as pointed out by the minister, Mr. Speaker, that injuries and fatalities decrease significantly in provinces where there is mandatory bicycle helmet legislation. Legislation enhances compliance.

The question might be asked: Why not use education and a strategy of awareness? We found out that education alone is not effective. When you pair education along with legislation, two of them put together are very, very important; education is important, but legislation is also important. Couple them together and we have a two-pronged approach in trying to

address safety, bicycle helmet safety, and the wearing of helmets, Mr. Speaker.

Helmets must be worn properly because if they are not worn properly, really they are not very effective. When choosing a helmet – I would like to point out a couple of points, Mr. Speaker – you have to consider the fit, which is very crucial. A loose, sloppy fit of your helmet will not be effective upon impact or a crash. In essence, as parents, we have to buy the right size. The question is asked: Well, how do you know the right size? What is the proper fit for a bicycle helmet?

Well, it is rather simple. According to what I have been reading, Mr. Speaker, the helmet should not wobble from side to side or when you tilt your head front and back, you should not wobble as well. It should not move when you shake your head. It should be snug. It should be tight. Furthermore, it is very important the helmet stays level across the forehead, just above the eyebrows. It is important that the straps are tight as well. Make sure you do it up because if you have a helmet on and the strap is not tight, it is not fastened, it really will not be effective. So it is very important, Mr. Speaker.

Another point to remember is that it is all about certification, as well, which is established by the governing bodies who set the impact standards and do some research on this issue. Before parents or anybody goes out and purchases a helmet for their child, it is very, very important to ensure that the certification sticker from the CSA is shown, so you know what you are getting is approved, it is put to the test, and you know it will stand up when you are in a crash or severe impact.

We also should remember, when it comes to helmets, that it should be replaced after five or six years because the material inside will break down after a while; or if you are in a major crash or one big hit, it is recommended the helmet should be replaced because the foam in the helmet crushes to absorb the energy. That foam is there to reduce the impact of head injury, of course.

Bike helmets, basically, are designed to protect your head against only one crash. After a crash, that foam inside the helmet is compressed;

therefore, it should be replaced even if it does not look damaged. I thought that would be very important to know, some education when it comes to bike helmets.

Mr. Speaker, another question we might ask is: Why now? Why introduce this now? Well, you would consider today's age, 2014, that there is an increased volume of traffic. Bikes are made more complex. They are speedier today for sure, and the infrastructure network around the Province is basically more complex as opposed to when I was growing up in Roddickton. In my day, all I can remember I had was two wheels – in front was a four-inch nail used as the front axle and I would go around the muddy potholed road, Mr. Speaker. When I hit that pothole, bang, I would fall. I would topple over, and no helmet on at the time. Probably that is what happened to me.

We have come a long way from my days and today. I never owned a bike, Mr. Speaker. I remember when I had this crush on this girl across the way, probably a kilometre or two. I had a buddy of mine who owned a bicycle. We paid my friend for a ride and I would take off right across the harbour to see if I could see the girl I liked.

I digress, Mr. Speaker. After all the research and educational awareness, the time is now to implement this piece of legislation. We have the full support – it is very important, as the minister alluded to earlier, that we have all stakeholders involved, the RNC, the RCMP, the Medical Association, MNL, and nurses. Everybody involved agree with this piece of legislation. Furthermore, from my understanding, there are a lot of municipalities, a lot of communities, and a lot of towns out there that agree with this piece of legislation. They have bylaws already put in and they are abiding by it.

From my understanding the Town of Baie Verte on May 27, 2004 got bylaws in there for all ages. The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor on July 21, 2005 implemented the bylaws. Deer Lake is another example; September 1, 1994 they got bylaws surrounding bicycle safety. There are many more across the Province, Mr. Speaker.

It was pointed out earlier as well that Newfoundland and Labrador will be one of five

provinces in Canada to have enacted mandatory bicycle helmet legislation for all ages, Mr. Speaker. There are three other provinces that make helmets mandatory for under eighteen years of age.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that as adults, we should be role models. We should be exemplifying the importance of safety and trying to teach our young children. I am a poppy now; I have four. They are going to grow up one of these days. They will not have a bike with a four-inch nail in the front. They will probably have a real one and more modernized one.

We will be stressing the importance of safety and making sure they wear their helmets. As role models, Mr. Speaker, we certainly have a responsibility and a duty to act accordingly. We should stress the importance to our children of wearing proper safety gear at all times.

Before I sit down, Mr. Speaker, and the minister alluded to it earlier as well, it is important to point out that the amendment to the Highway Traffic Act, these changes will take place April 1, 2015. It gives us a little bit of time so that all stakeholders, everybody involved, will take the sufficient time to carry on an educational awareness campaign, so that Service NL and all their partners and stakeholders will develop and implement a public education and awareness strategy.

With these remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude. It looks like this piece of legislation, again, will pass unanimously, and I am looking forward to the dialogue in this House of Assembly this afternoon.

Thank you very much, 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 think that the hon. Member for Baie Verte – Springdale referred to hitting a pothole when he was a kid; I think that pothole is still there because of the roads program. Hopefully they will fill that pothole for you one of these days.

Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in standing up and talking to this piece of legislation and giving a different perspective on this particular piece because while we support it, we do have some questions that I hope the hon. Minister of Service NL will be able to answer, probably when he gets up to sum up the piece of legislation or perhaps in the Committee stage.

I am a little bit curious about the educational component on the exact measures that government is going to be taking. We know that they are going to be running some sort of an education program out there. We know that there are already existing programs out there when it comes to the safety and use of bike helmets, so that is one component.

The second thing that I would like to bring up is the fact of enforcement. I know that there has to be a delicate balance here when we talk about the whole enforcement mechanism that they are going to be using, because some areas of this Province, obviously, have a lack of policing services. We know that is going to be a challenge on the part of government. We know that some municipalities, for example, cannot afford their own municipal police services; they have to depend on the great work of the RCMP. In some cases, we know that in the Province, for example, in the federal budget, I think it was two years ago now, we lost fifty-four RCMP positions. So that has all to do with the enforcement component as well of the Highway Traffic Act.

There has to be a direct concern here about the enforcement mechanism and how government is going to carry this out. We know that they are going to be undertaking an educational program, and we think that is great as well. The real point that I want to make here too, Mr. Speaker, is that I think government should be looking a little bit outside the box when it comes to the enforcement mechanism here –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

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

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the components that I really wanted to talk about is that while we are talking about helmets and bicycles here, we should be looking a little bit further beyond that too when it comes to implementation of this particular piece into the Highway Traffic Act. I know that every one of the members here – I think I can speak safely on the part of all of the members here that they have also met the challenges of kids on skateboards who are out there in the middle of the roads. We have also met the challenges of kids that are out there on scooters –

**MR. SPEAKER:** I remind the hon. member that we are speaking to the amendment of the bill and it is strictly into bicycles.

**MR. MURPHY:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR. MURPHY:** What I am trying to get at is about the other components that they could be looking at, too, to put in this where helmets are concerned, because we know that kids are using helmets on scooters, skateboards, rollerblades, and that sort of thing.

I ask the minister if he can have a look at that as well, or get his staff to look at that and perhaps come back at the end of the session, or at the end of the debate here and talk about that particular component as well because it is very interesting, the change in dynamics, where you have more kids who are using skateboards and scooters, more so than even bicycles.

I say that for a reason because while I was doing the research on this, I did run into a very pertinent news story when it came to head injuries, Mr. Speaker. I think that it is pertinent to the situation here. The story is out of the States and it says here having to do with the incidences of injuries that were caused by scooters and children. It says here, Mr. Speaker, and the story is from the CBC on December 1 of 2014, “Overall, the annual rate of injury rose almost 40 per cent during the 1990-2011 period, from about 19 per 100,000 to 26 per 100,000, the researchers found.

“The findings highlight the need to increase efforts to prevent injuries associated with ride-

on toys, especially nonmotorized scooters, they said.

“‘Protective equipment, especially helmets, should be used with ride-on toys,’ the study’s authors recommended.”

There is plenty of information out there. If government’s ultimate goal is to reduce the number of head injuries, it should look outside the box as well, not just bicycles. While we support the legislation, perhaps government might be able to form a committee or have some of his deputy ministers or something to actually look at the situation where we can actually change the Highway Traffic Act, if our ultimate goal is to prevent injuries, to look at scooters, rollerblades, that sort of thing, to cover those under the Highway Traffic Act as well because we know – and drivers out there will tell you that they will find the kids out there on skateboards without helmets on; in some cases, they do.

Myself, I actually think that it is a measure of safety that they will practice, but I will ask the minister, I will put the question to him and his department if they will also look at the other safety components when it comes to this piece of legislation.

Like I said, Mr. Speaker, we are totally in favour of this, but we are asking them to look a little bit farther at the same time and perhaps sometime in the future he will be able to look at that and propose either (a) an amendment, or (b) another piece of legislation to cover the other ‘unmotorized’ vehicles, for all intents and purposes, the sense of the word, that are out there.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. O’BRIEN:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to stand in my place today to support this important piece of legislation brought forward by the minister. I have listened carefully in regard to some of the comments made by the hon. members on both sides of the House.

I would like to speak from the perspective of not in regard to the piece of legislation itself, but how important it is for us to recognize the need for the legislation itself, Mr. Speaker. Some people would argue that it is a person's right to wear or not to wear a helmet. We have legislated over the years many aspects of a person's life because it is absolutely in need to do so. In this case here, I would think that 90 per cent of the people out there today wear helmets on bicycles, so do they insist on their families wearing helmets.

That 10 per cent or whatever that number would be is a cost to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, thus the taxpayers of the Province in regard to expenses that would be incurred if that person were to be injured due to not wearing a helmet. The same thing applies, Mr. Speaker, to a person not wearing a seatbelt. It is the same thing if a person would not install a proper car seat for their children. The same thing applies in regard to that.

That is the reason why this piece of legislation is here on the floor of the House today. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I remember a number of years ago this need being discussed in caucus back probably – and I would not be able to say for sure – in 2007 or so. Then somebody might say: Well, why did it take so long to get to here?

**MR. OSBORNE:** In 2006.

**MR. O'BRIEN:** In 2006 – the hon. member, when he was my bosom buddy on this side of the House, reminds me that it was 2006.

Anyway – and he was, no doubt about it.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Not any more.

**MR. O'BRIEN:** Not any more, I do not think, anyway. We do not frequent the same places; maybe a scattered concert or something of that sort.

Anyway, it is 2006. Then somebody might say: Why did it take so long? Well, it takes a while to develop legislation, even though some people, even in this House, might think that is a very simple matter. There are consultations that have to happen. I am sure the minister has consulted

with the RNC, the RCMP. He has consulted with health care professionals, specialists, and all that kind of good thing. As well, in regard to the different advocacy groups we have across the Province in regard to brain injury and all that kind of thing, it has to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Then you have to make sure you look at other pieces of legislation that have been enacted across Canada and elsewhere in the world, to make sure it actually works and to make sure you are doing it right in the first instance and close as many loops as you possibly can in regard to that piece of legislation. I think in this case here, all of that has been done.

Now we are ready to table this piece of legislation. I am certainly happy to hear already that we are going to have unanimous consent in regard to this piece of legislation. That is a good thing, when all parties in this House work together for a common goal, Mr. Speaker. I think that is really important.

I think I heard one of the members mention about enforcement. Well, enforcement is the same, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost, I hope and pray that the RNC or RCMP, none of them across this Province, will ever have to enforce it, because that is the proper thing. People need to wear their helmets. I think people are responsible enough in Newfoundland and Labrador to make sure they wear it themselves and they also insist on their children wearing it as well.

That is what I believe, but sometimes, absolutely, people forget or they just ignore it, whatever it may be. It is no differently than the seatbelts we have regulations pertaining to, no differently than the toddler seats we have regulations pertaining to, and so on and so forth, Mr. Speaker. Then the enforcement will take place. That is the way it is.

You cannot say you are going to have a police force that is going to be dedicated to enforcing these regulations in its entirety, Mr. Speaker. It just cannot happen. That is not the way it works, no differently than any other aspect of the Highway Traffic Act works that way. Speed limits are broken each and every day, so people do that.



I think as MHAs, and members of this House of Assembly, it is incumbent on us to communicate this piece of legislation to our constituents and make sure they understand there are regulations in place. As well, it is incumbent on them to make sure their children, and themselves, wear their helmets.

As well, there might be an issue out there where a constituent might have a reservation in regard to the cost of buying a helmet, Mr. Speaker, but there are programs out there to help people of low income purchase a helmet. One of the corporate citizens we have in this Province, as well as right across Canada, is Canadian Tire with their Jumpstart program. They will support a program such as this. They do so as a great corporate citizen of Canada, and also of this Province as well. I want to remind people out there, that program is in place as well if they have a challenge in regard to buying the proper helmet.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take up too much more of your time, but we do have those needless accidents and injuries in Newfoundland and Labrador, as we have in other provinces in Canada. That is a great cost to the taxpayers of any province. Our health care system is challenged now in regard to the budget requirement for health care to provide all the services that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians demand and certainly deserve. To take any kind of a pressure point away from that, Mr. Speaker, would be a good thing.

I am glad, I am absolutely happy to see there is going to be no division in regard to this piece of legislation this evening. That this piece of legislation will pass through smoothly with full consent, with all the members on both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker. It has been a pleasure to get up and speak to this piece of legislation, in support of it and also its importance.

Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

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

I am very happy to rise and to speak to Bill 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act. This is all about bicycle helmets and the mandatory use of bicycle helmets. I cannot help but think, Mr. Speaker, after speaking with some of the doctors today, that this is a great big, fat, juicy Christmas gift for doctors, for parents all over the Province.

One of the things, Mr. Speaker, being at the press conference this morning where the minister announced this, is that I think this is also a wonderful example of citizens' engagement, and that we know citizens are often way ahead of government, that the reason we have this legislation is because people have pushed, because the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association has pushed, because the Newfoundland and Labrador Brain Injury Association has pushed. They have pushed and pushed and pushed for years begging government, asking government to enact legislation that requires mandatory helmet use.

This is a great big, fat, juicy Christmas gift to them. They are so pleased about this. I also think, Mr. Speaker, that parents of young children all over the Province are really excited about this. They are very happy to see this. This too is a great big, fat, juicy Christmas gift to parents all over the Province, or for parents or doctors who celebrate Hanukkah or Kwanzaa or whatever it is people celebrate over the holiday season.

Why is it so important? Because it can protect the lives of our children and of all adults, but also, it can help prevent or minimize brain damage. Mr. Speaker, for anybody in this House who has met a young child who has had severe brain damage because of a fall from a bicycle, or a fall from a scooter, or a fall from rollerblades, they know how important this is.

It is tragic, because a lot of brain injuries, particularly severe brain injuries, there is no cure for the damage. It is very hard to manage the side effects and the symptoms of severe brain damage.

Mr. Speaker, again what we do is we celebrate and acknowledge this legislation as life-saving. Also, I would like to celebrate and acknowledge how important it is for people of Newfoundland

and Labrador to push government to do the right thing.

That is why we are here today, Mr. Speaker, talking about this bill, because people, either individuals or organizations such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association, or the Newfoundland and Labrador Brain Injury Association, have pushed and lobbied government to do the right thing. Sometimes it takes a long time for government to hear what people are saying and what other experts are saying. As we know, oftentimes it is not governments that are leaders; it is the people who are leaders. It often takes government a while to catch up to the incredible work that constituents do, that citizens do, and that organizations do.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to talk a little bit about the pros and cons of bicycle helmets. Someone stopped me today and said, well, do you think government should have the right to force someone to wear a helmet? I stopped and I listened to what he had to say, but I know for myself that sometimes this kind of legislation protects us from our own stupidity.

I will talk about my own self, Mr. Speaker. I am a bicycle rider, although one of the issues is that our roads, particularly in St. John's, are really not built for bicycle riders, that it is really hard to share our roads with cars and trucks. Sometimes you almost feel like you take your life in your hands. I think we are building more and more a culture of bicycle riding for adults in town, but it is slow. There are a lot of fantastic groups and individuals out there who are encouraging us to use our roads for bicycle riding, but it is pretty tough.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I will take my bike and I will have my helmet, and I am not so sure I want to put this helmet on, so I put my helmet in the front basket on my bicycle. I am not going to do that anymore.

I think it is similar to what we see with safety belts, with seatbelts. How many people perhaps still sometimes do not use their seatbelts all the time? How many of us use our seatbelts because we know it is the law? Sometimes the only reason we obey the law is because of the ramifications if we do not. Nobody wants to pay

a fine, or nobody wants to appear before a judge because they have broken the law. So these kinds of laws are the right thing to do. They are absolutely the right thing to do, particularly when you see the effect this law may have on bicycle helmet use.

Many of us, we put on our seatbelts right away, even before we turn on the ignition in the car. Hopefully now many of us, or all of us, before we sit on that seat on our bicycle, we will affix our helmets, properly fitted helmets, adjust them, and then off we go. I know, Mr. Speaker, that I will be much more aware of using my bicycle helmet.

The other thing is I bet you there are a lot of parents who are so happy about this as well. How many parents – I have been a parent myself, and I have had to push and push and fight with my son on his bicycle. You are not getting on that bike unless you wear the helmet. Oh, I do not want to wear the helmet, it is ugly; or, I do not want to wear the helmet, it is too hot; or, I do not want to wear the helmet because it is a bother.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for many parents who have had to struggle with their children to wear their helmets, this kind of law helps. It really helps, because the same as educating us all to wear our seatbelts, it is about the helmets as well. Parents can say to their youngsters, you have to wear your helmet, it is the law. You have no choice. The choice is settled for us. You have to wear the helmet, it is the law. That is a good thing. I am sure there are going to be many, many parents who are happy about that.

The flipside of that, Mr. Speaker, as well, is that a good helmet is expensive. For some people it is going to be a challenge. I am just wondering if there is any way that could be mitigated for some people where even getting a bicycle is a challenge and now to get a helmet. I think good helmets are at least \$60 and up, probably. I have not bought a helmet in a little while. I know the last time I did buy a helmet about a year and a half ago, it was over \$100. Thank goodness some of the helmets are a little cooler and groovier, and they are kind of funky. That helps with trying to get kids to wear helmets.

Also, I just want to look at an issue that is closely related. This is closely related and very relevant. We are talking about vehicles that are on the roadways, but we see more and more youngsters riding those scooters. Not the electric ones, but just the little scooters on the roadway. As parents and as adults, we see those children and we think, oh, my God, if they fall and crack their heads on a curb or on the pavement. We all see that and we are holding our breath thinking this is so dangerous.

I am hoping that somehow this is something also that government can look at. Is there a role for government in this area? Because we know how dangerous it is to have a crack on your head on the pavement. Most of our kids are riding on pavement, not so much gravel roads or dirt roads, but even those, the impact of that can be hard.

We know people using ATVs are required to wear helmets. Snowmobiles, there is not the same stringent regulations about helmets. That is something we need to look at. Our snowmobiles are more powerful and faster, and more kids have them now. It is something else we need to look at.

Mr. Speaker, I am hoping that is something that can be looked at as well. Again, sometimes laws save us from our own stupidity or our own – perhaps to soften that a little bit, our own ambiguity about some things, but for sure now we know that more kids and more adults will be wearing helmets.

It was interesting as well to be at the press conference to hear Dr. Luscombe from the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. It was her who said this is a wonderful Christmas gift for the people of the Province, but also for the doctors of the Province.

She gave us some very interesting information. What she said was that she is so glad to see that this legislation is coming forward. It is certainly legislation that I am sure everybody in this House is going to support. It is something we have all been pushing for. We have all been talking about it because we know the dangers of falling on the pavement with no protection on your head.

She said that bicycling is the leading cause of sports injury of kids in Newfoundland and Labrador. I did not know that. I find that to be a really interesting statistic. The other thing that she said, which surprised me, is that Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest rate of bicycle injuries among kids. Who would have thought that?

Our roads are not as busy as in other major centres. I would not have thought that. Maybe it is because we do not have in some of our more urban areas a real bicycling culture and our roads, our towns, and our cities are older. The roads are very narrow. They are not really built for sharing with bicycles. I know because I have done it. Sometimes I just think, am I going to get home safely or not? Sometimes I have actually gotten off my bike and walked it on the sidewalk because the roads are so narrow and the traffic is hard. We do not have that culture of bicycling, but hopefully that is growing.

She also said that Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest rate of hospitalization for our children who have bicycle injuries. Not only do we have the highest rate, it is almost double the Canadian average. That is amazing, Mr. Speaker. That truly is amazing. Who would have thought that? I learned a lot from her.

She also said that a properly fitted helmet – because not all helmets are equal and it is very important that a helmet be properly fitted – can decrease injury and brain injury by 80 per cent. Who in this House would not want to ensure that they could decrease the possibility of brain injury in a child by 80 per cent, not only in a child, but in an adult, someone we love? Who would not want that for their child or for their loved one? I think that is amazing. It can decrease brain injuries by 80 per cent. That is major. I think it was even a little bit higher than that.

She also said there was a stat that 87 per cent of people in the Province actually support this kind of legislation. It is so odd that we get that much consensus on something, so that is a great thing. I guess also because we know how horrible a serious brain injury can be.

The other thing she told us – she had all kinds of great information – was that the mandatory

bicycle helmet legislation in other provinces shows a decrease of injuries by 45 per cent. That is almost cutting bicycle injuries in half in provinces that do have mandatory helmet legislation. We can look forward to that, Mr. Speaker. Because when you think that we have the highest rate of bicycle injuries per capita in the whole country, that we are going to be able to decrease that by 45 per cent at least – that is what the stats are showing – that is a wonderful outcome, an absolutely admirable and wonderful outcome.

Now we have to find out ways of how we are going to enact this, how we are going to enforce this, and we know that with seatbelts how many of us – many of us are around the same age, we grew up in an era when seatbelt use was not mandatory, but now it is. Now most of us comply. I am sure there are some people who do not comply all the time, but most of us do comply. We had to be taught that. It is not just enough to put the fear of God in you; we have to be taught that, and there were all kinds of great public campaigns about buckling up.

Some people may even have antique cars where there were not even any seatbelts in the cars. I think in the 1960s and in the 1950s there were not even seatbelts in the cars; maybe there were in the 1960s.

There has to be a really concerted effort on public education. Again, I am sure that parents are going to be really happy about this because the onus has been only on the parents to make sure their kids were wearing helmets, although we do know that there has been municipal legislation in some of our municipalities across the Province.

We also heard from Doctor Ploughman, from the Newfoundland and Labrador Brain Injury Association. She is ecstatic about this as well, Mr. Speaker. It is such good legislation. She said that the Newfoundland and Labrador Brain Injury Association has been working on this issue since 1982. How long is that? That is twenty-two years, Mr. Speaker. Is it twenty-two years or is it thirty-two years? Whatever, somebody will do the math. Maybe it is about thirty-two years. That is amazing.

Again, how sometimes government is very slow to react, but thank goodness we have people who are willing to not let go, who are willing to push and push and push to get government to do the right thing.

The other thing she said was two years ago the Brain Injury Association did a tour across the Province and they visited 2,000 kids across Newfoundland and Labrador. She said when they asked kids to identify whether or not they were using helmets, so many kids said they were not. Perhaps that is why we have the highest, almost double the national average, of bicycle injuries across the country.

The other thing she said, which kind of stopped me in my tracks, because it is so true – it is so very true – she said for a brain injury, in a moment, in an instant, a life can be changed. That is true, Mr. Speaker. All it takes is a fall and the life of a child can be changed in an instant, in a moment, and the life of that family is changed as well, if a child has a severe brain injury. The hard part is that severe brain injuries are very resistant to recovery. There is possibility of recovery, but many serious brain injuries are so resistant to recovery. It also stands for adults as well.

Not only can you fall and hurt your head – again because our roads are so narrow – trucks can come by and you can be hit on the head by a side mirror of a truck or a car.

She is very, very happy this is happening. They are looking forward to the day – and maybe it is going to take government a while to catch up with this one, because government has not enacted anything on this yet. When we are looking at scooters and snowmobiles, they want all people wearing helmets when they are using all kinds of moving vehicles.

Now, I know that somebody tweeted and said: Does that mean unicycles? There was a bit of a chuckle about that. Mr. Speaker, we have come far, and this is good, but there are some outstanding issues yet that we have to address. Hopefully, government will find a way, with all of us here together in the House, of looking at those issues, particularly kids riding scooters on the sidewalks.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am really happy to be able to support this legislation. It is an important piece of legislation. I am very grateful for all the different organizations, particularly the Newfoundland and Labrador Brain Injury Association, particularly the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association for taking the lead on this, for pushing government to do the right thing, and hopefully now they will be able to push more for some of those other outstanding issues. I look forward to perhaps there will be a lot of kids with bicycle helmets under the tree this Christmas season.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. LITTLE:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am supporting Bill 37. Based on the previous speakers, there seems to be a large amount of support for Bill 37, An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act. I would like to, first of all, thank the professional staff at Service Newfoundland and Labrador for the briefing earlier this week.

This is a very important piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, a piece of legislation that certainly will have an impact on all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador, each and every community, each and every family in Newfoundland and Labrador in some way, shape, or form. I am delighted to be able to rise on my feet here today and speak to this very important bill that certainly makes it mandatory for the use of bicycle helmets.

We are updating the Highway Traffic Act to make it mandatory for people riding bicycles, of all ages, to wear helmets when cycling on our Province's roads in Newfoundland and Labrador. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador that already have bicycle helmet bylaws in place, which is very important as well.

Actually, I had some conversation with municipal leaders in the District of Bonavista South on this important topic. Through conversation, I sort of got the same response that bicycle helmets for people of all ages, it is very

important that we adhere to bicycle helmet safety regulations, which is very important to community leaders, to municipalities, and to all people who ride bicycles in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I listened to some of the conversations here today by some of my colleagues in the House of Assembly and I heard some wonderful points. I will try not to be repetitive on some of the statements that my colleagues made. I know for a fact a friend of mine had a bicycle accident back some time ago. Unfortunately, he ended up in the hospital. Fortunately, he did not have to stay in the hospital very long. He had a helmet on at the time of the accident.

The good story that came out of that particular story is that the person who I am talking about actually became an advocate for safety and for the instructions of talking to our children and the residents in our communities about the safety of wearing a helmet while riding a bicycle. He is a great advocate and he speaks on those issues as much as he can out in public places. I am sure this individual will be delighted once this piece of legislation is enacted, Mr. Speaker.

Already, many adults wear helmets and many parents already insist that their children wear helmets while riding bicycles, which is a good thing. I do have two children, a boy and a girl. I always insisted that my children wear helmets when riding bicycles and I always wore one myself.

It is important that we show leadership. We are mentors and we are family guidance counsellors who actually say this is a really important thing to do and show leadership. I do have a grandchild right now. I would say my children will enforce the same rules that I enforced as a parent: that helmets are very important to wear before riding bicycles and while riding bicycles.

I will definitely support Bill 37, Mr. Speaker. I listened to my colleague who is sitting next to me for Baie Verte – Springdale. He talked about the importance of helmets while riding bicycles. He gave a unique picture of the history of bicycle riding and events that occurred out in his district, out in the rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador years ago. I thought he was very amusing, but a lot of what he talked about was

related to what we all did back in our past history. During legislation like this, it is very important to talk about events that occurred in our districts and our communities with years gone by and how they tie into the importance of legislation that we are going to pass in the House of Assembly here today, Mr. Speaker.

I listened to the Member for Gander and he certainly had a different viewpoint and outlined some very constructive reasons why we all should be wearing bicycle helmets. In addition to that, the Member for Port au Port, Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, outlined some very important research topics that relates to this important bill, Bill 37, Mr. Speaker.

The combination of all of the speakers here today, in agreement with Bill 37, certainly outlined how important bicycle helmet use is while riding bicycles. I will definitely support this particular piece of legislation. At this particular time, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to continue on and be repetitive. What I will do is actually conclude, and I will certainly support this piece of legislation.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. CROSS:** It is time to follow my colleague from Bonavista South, Mr. Speaker. I just want to stand – we did have a briefing on this. In listening to legislation every time that we have something that comes forward, if there is a different perspective that an individual member can bring to the legislation, then we have a right to do this.

I heard the Member for Gander, the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, when he spoke a little while earlier and one of the comments he talked about was rights and privileges, and the fact that in order for us to be able to ride bikes and have these privileges there is a responsibility that comes with it. I think he alluded to the responsibility not only to the child, and if the child is under sixteen, then that responsibility translates to the parent or to the significant guardian of that child.

It is very important that parents – and the legislation that we are bringing in is for people of all ages when they are sitting on their bicycles and riding and enjoying our places of riding on the highway. Not only just on the highway, any regulated highway that is a part of this Province. This may not apply on T’Railways and other aspects. So, there may have been some debate as to why that stopped at that point.

It is probably wise to think of two or three little facts. Number one, the legislation is for everyone. Why would we stop? Is it a fact that people over eighteen would not get a brain injury from riding on a bicycle? We all have brains, I would hope. Although some said the skull in front of their brain might be thicker than some others, as the Member for Baie Verte alluded to. Everyone can receive an injury, so we do not limit it to age.

We also do not give the child the right, the minute they are away from their parent, to do what they want. At that point, Mr. Speaker, it is important that someone has the responsibility. I just wanted to think about the fact that adults are the role models for children. As the Member for St. John’s Centre said, if the adult does not be that role model and show – I can remember as a principal, attending a bicycle parade as part of a summer carnival activity in my community. Because I was the principal I figured it was going to be great; today, I am going to jump on my bike – I own a bike – I am going to be one of the kids, I am going to go down, decorate my bike, and get in the parade.

I went there all excited, Mr. Speaker. I was going down, and most of the people in the bike parade were students in my school from K to Grade 6, and when we got there I was deflated, because –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Flat tire.

**MR. CROSS:** No, I did not have a flat tire – but what happened was I was going to be a part of the students and really fit in and ride my bike in the parade, and one of the little girls in Grade 2 said: Where is your helmet? That little girl in Grade 2, Katherine, the next time I rode my bike, I made sure I went by her house with a helmet securely fastened – and I was quite a fashion statement, too, Mr. Speaker.

I made sure I let her know that she was my role model for that. Ever since, when I am on my bike, I wear the helmet. So, probably the biggest thing I wanted to say today is thank you to Katherine for being my role model. Maybe we will all be role models with this, and we will pass this piece of legislation, and everyone can ride their bikes safely.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** If the hon. Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador speaks now, he closes debate.

The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

**MR. CORNET:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will be very brief in my closing remarks to close debate on Bill 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2. I certainly want to thank the speakers, the parliamentarians who spoke on this act this afternoon: the Member for Mount Pearl South, the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale, the Member for St. John’s East, the Member for Gander and the Minister of AES, the Member for St. John’s Centre, the Member for Bonavista South, and the Member for Bonavista North. Thank you for your remarks this afternoon and your support to this bill that has come before the floor of the House.

There were some questions and some commentary, Mr. Speaker, as members stood up and spoke on this bill this afternoon in regard to the education campaign, as I think was outlined by the Member for St. John’s East. The education campaign will be developed, I can tell the hon. member, in co-ordination with our partners. We know they are already doing a lot of great work to promote helmet use.

We do not want to duplicate, but we can expand the efforts, especially through social media and community outreach, and our schools and our recreation programs. We will also, Mr. Speaker, have it on our Web site. I know the RNC, the RCMP, and the stakeholders who were at the press conference this morning, in fact, will I am sure take an active role in promoting this new legislation on mandatory helmet use in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I think the question as well came up on enforcement. I am pleased to say we have the full support of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and other stakeholders as well. Mr. Speaker, the police will use the combination of education and enforcement efforts. In fact, many of them were present today at the press conference as well. They are very pleased with this legislation that came before the House for the mandatory use of bicycle helmets on our roadways in our Province. I am very pleased they were there and very pleased they will take an active role in promoting safety.

The key here is promoting safety, that the riders on bicycles on our roadways will use the helmets for safety reasons. We are not going to be out there ticketing if we do not have to, but we want to make that awareness out there. We want to make sure people are wearing their helmets properly.

As the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale said, we as adults are great role models and we want to set an example for our children. Maybe sometimes, Mr. Speaker, the role will be reversed. Maybe it takes the children to be the role models for adults to make us wear our helmets as well.

Also, there was talk about expanding the helmet use for skateboarding, rollerblading, and snowmobiling. Mr. Speaker, currently there is no mandatory helmet legislation for other activities, such as snowmobiling, skateboarding, and rollerblading.

What we are doing this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, we are amending the Highway Traffic Act. The Highway Traffic Act does not govern these other sport activities. Snowmobiling, in particular, would be included under the Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles Act. What is important to note is the research has been conducted, and the evidence provided at this point more favourably supports bicycle helmet legislation. That is what we have done.

Mr. Speaker, there is an important message here as well. Despite the fact we are introducing mandatory helmet use for bicycles only at this point, it is important to remind all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that safety is

everyone's responsibility. We encourage the use of helmets appropriate to the particular sport in order to reduce the risk of serious injuries.

When we talk about the other activities, as the Member for St. John's Centre talked about, snowmobiling and rollerblading and skateboarding, and as St. John's East said, we are always open to further review in these areas, subject that there be supporting evidence and research that intervention may be required. So, Mr. Speaker, we are open. We are looking at the other things as well. These are very important topics, too, to the people of the Province.

Also, the question of affordability came up. I think the Minister of AES, when he was up, spoke on some of the things we have done. The Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development supports the mandatory use of bicycle helmets as well for all riders and have supported initiatives which include bicycle helmet distribution. We recognize the importance of this safety measure and are mindful of the need for access to helmets for all our citizens.

For example, Mr. Speaker, through the government's Poverty Reduction Strategy, \$350,000 is provided annually to the Canadian Tire Foundation for families in the Jumpstart program. This program provides financial support for equipment, fees, and transportation to youth sport and recreation activities in all areas of the Province. I know, Mr. Speaker, they would be very interested in supplying helmets.

As well, Mr. Speaker, through the support of the provincial partners, such as Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador, we are committed to providing additional supports for low-income residents and families to have access to bike helmets. So we do have supports in place. Anyone who needs to avail of these services, I certainly encourage them to make contact with these organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all speakers for supporting this legislation this afternoon, and I look forward to a unanimous vote in this House of Assembly on the mandatory bicycle helmet use in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill now be read the 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 Highway Traffic Act No. 2. (Bill 37)

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

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

**MR. KING:** Today.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Today.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 37)

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to conclude my remarks. I had an opportunity to speak to the Address in Reply yesterday in the House and wanted to talk a little further about mental health and addictions, but also talk about some other issues in our health care system as well if time permits.



Right now my time on the clock is limitless, which is very exciting for all members in this House I am sure. I mentioned as I was concluding –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible).

**MR. KENT:** Oh really, only six minutes and forty seconds. Sorry, folks.

As I was saying, I was talking yesterday about eating disorder services that exist in our Province, and there are services that are offered to both adults and to young people. Within Eastern Health, we have a Centre for Hope for individuals over the age of fifteen and we have an adolescent medicine program at the Janeway for children who are under the age of fifteen. We also have a specialized clinic for survivors of trauma. It is offered to provide support and mental health services as well.

There is also a program at the Miller Centre. It is a geriatric day treatment program for seniors who require mental health services. We also have a number of Assertive Community Treatment Teams, we call them ACT teams that include nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychiatric support. They are located in St. John's, Grand Falls-Windsor, and Corner Brook as well. Those teams provide case management. They do support and outreach as well to individuals living in the community who have severe and persistent mental illness.

As I mentioned yesterday as well, we are making real progress with the adult addictions centre in Harbour Grace, which will open in 2015. We are also making real progress towards replacing the existing Waterford Hospital facility.

It is also worth noting that there are some specific programs related to mental health services in Labrador. In addition to the counsellors and intake workers that are located in Lab West and also in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, we have five mental health counselling positions for children, youth, and adults that are located in Natuashish, Nain, Hopedale, and Rigolet as well.

There are a number of other Province-wide programs and services that are available. We

take a whole of government approach to promoting mental health and well-being. We have programs that are offered by other departments in government. There is an inreach program for inmates with mental illness that is funded by the Justice department and operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association. In fact, it was just today the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Skills made a statement about a program that is being offered to help inmates in their development at the penitentiary.

**MR. O'BRIEN:** What a minister – what a minister.

**MR. KENT:** Well, that is debatable. No, you are a fine minister – you are a fine minister.

We also have, through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, a Supportive Living Program. It is led by Housing, and it funds supporting housing for persons with complex needs.

There are a number of other strategies that impact mental health and wellness as well. They are aimed at improving mental health or minimizing the impact of mental health and addictions. We have our Poverty Reduction Strategy through Advanced Education and Skills. We have the Violence Prevention Initiative. We also have a Social Housing Plan through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation as well.

There are times when out-of-Province treatment is necessary. I hope that will be less frequent as a result of the new treatment centres that are now in place in our Province, and the one that is under construction as well. We do have residential treatment available for youth and adults with complex needs. Treatment out of Province is sometimes required, and when all appropriate provincial resources have been utilized and there are still treatment needs that can be met through treatment elsewhere, then we will avail of that option as well.

I also commented yesterday on the anti-stigma campaign, so I will not say too much more about that. The Understanding Changes Everything campaign over the last number of months has had a positive impact in addressing the real

challenge around stigma related to mental illness. The campaign ran twice. It ran in the spring and again in the fall. There was a TV component, an online component, print component, and movie cinemas were utilized as well. There is a social media component that is ongoing. We have other phases of that campaign that we hope to roll out in the months ahead, particularly as we move into the new fiscal year.

There have been numerous discussions about wait-lists when it comes to mental health and addiction services in our Province. I want to assure the public that we have been monitoring wait-lists very closely. We are into our third fiscal year of tracking wait-list information for counselling services. What we are seeing is that there is not a lot of consistency. Those numbers tend to ebb and flow and there is variation. Not all counselling sites in our Province have wait-lists.

Despite the fact that there are wait-lists in some cases, the regional health authorities have developed policies around priority for services. We want to make sure we are responding to those who are in crisis or who require urgent services. I feel that the regional health authorities have done a good job in that. At the same time, as I said yesterday and I will say again, there is more work to do. Those are the kinds of issues that I suspect will come up when we go into the consultation phase of developing our new mental health and addiction strategy for the Province.

I really want also to emphasize to people who are seeking help that they should not lose hope. I can understand the frustration, but we want to do everything we can to help. While there are wait-lists in some cases, there are also many other avenues that exist for people to get help throughout our Province.

There are in-patient services, there are outreach programs, there is our twenty-four-hour, seven-days-a-week mental health and addictions crisis line, and there is the provincial health line. There are also primary care services, as members would be aware, and emergency services that are provided through the regional health authorities.

There is help available. There are a lot of resources and supports available. We need to do a better job of making sure that people are well aware of what those supports and services are. We certainly intend to do that in the weeks and months ahead, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Address in Reply here in the House of Assembly. I look forward to further debate and discussion about issues as important as mental health and addictions in the days ahead in the House of Assembly as well.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER (Cross):** Order, please!

I will recognize the member in a moment, but I have to deal with this currently.

I rise today here to rule on a point of order raised on December 3 by the Member for Mount Pearl North with respect to words used in debate by the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair. As stated in O'Brien and Bosc on page 632, "Points of order respecting procedure must be raised promptly and before the question has passed to a stage at which the objection would be out of place." I find that this threshold was met.

I have also reviewed the video tape and debate and confirmed that the Member for L'Anse au Clair said: It smells of corruption. The key word here is "corruption". I would like to refer you to the House of Commons debates of 1980 to 1983 at page 23,992 where Acting Speaker Blaker stated, "...I have to explain to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg Birds Hill that it is considered to be unparliamentary language to use the word 'corrupt'."

In addition, I would like to say that unparliamentary language can mean different things at different times. I believe, however, that it is appropriate to determine the use of words and in the context of moderation, which is the standard of debate we strive for in this House.

The use of the word “corruption” in reference to members of this House was not, in my view, moderate nor prudent. It did not meet the standard expected for this House. Consequently, I find that the words used were unparliamentary and I ask the member to withdraw them.

**MS DEMPSTER:** Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I will not withdraw.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I would appeal once again to the hon. Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair to withdraw the words which are unparliamentary and causing disorder in the House.

**MS DEMPSTER:** Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I will not withdraw.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I would again ask the hon. member to withdraw the words.

**MS DEMPSTER:** Too many businesses in my district are hurting and now we are going to hit them again with a 20 per cent increase. I am sorry; I am will not withdraw.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Colleagues, I must express profound regret as your Speaker that I will have to resort to the naming of the hon. Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair.

One last time, I appeal to the hon. member to respect the authority of the Chair and to withdraw her accusation and her comments.

**MS DEMPSTER:** Mr. Speaker, I will not withdraw.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms Lisa Dempster, I must name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair. Pursuant to the authority invested in me under Standing Order 21, I order you to withdraw from the House for the remainder of today’s sitting.

The Chair recognizes the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Chair recognizes the member.

**MS MICHAEL:** I am pleased this afternoon to stand and speak to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, which seems an awful long time ago. That does not mean we cannot still have something to say about that speech, since it is the speech that defines the session we are in, and defines what this government across the way has laid down for this session.

I wanted to stop and think about where to start in responding to the Address in Reply. Then last week we had something going on here in the City of St. John’s, in my district, and in the district of my two colleagues in our caucus, that I thought would be a good starting point.

It was a wonderful show of generosity, there is absolutely no doubt about it. It was the collection of food for the Community Food Sharing Association. It went on all over the city. Many organizations in the city were involved in that.

We had the municipality of St. John’s, for example, involved in it and government offices were involved in it. Ordinary people from the community, through their different agencies, were involved in it. You had people living in apartment buildings and condominiums who had special pickups, I think, yesterday in the front foyers of their buildings. As a matter of fact, I visited some friends Friday night and the baskets were there so that people could put their food in because they knew it was going to be collected on Monday.

There is absolutely no doubt that it showed the generosity of people in this Province and that was not surprising. I think we all know how generous people are and how people care about one another. Going by what I heard from the mayor of St. John’s after the week it seemed that

over 110,000 pounds of food had been collected. He was anticipating when they collected the food from the apartments and the condominiums that it could go up maybe to 125,000 pounds of food.

That is a lot of food. I really congratulate the people in the Greater St. John's Area on the generosity at this time of year of taking part in that food drive, for example, the generosity in giving turkeys because a lot of different organizations collect turkeys that get given out. Besides people giving money or giving food as people went around to their doors collecting last week, you also have people who know the food banks in their area and who donate to those food banks, sometimes all year round. A lot of them do donate all year round and then especially at this time of year.

This time of year is a time of celebration. There are expectations that families can get together, celebrate together, and have turkey dinners. That is our tradition. People want others to have that. They want others to be able to sit down also and enjoy a turkey dinner together as a family. Sit down as a family and feel that they are like everybody else, whether they can afford to do it or not themselves. That is who we are as a people. We do care about one another and we support one another.

I really do congratulate everybody on that. That very reality begs us to reflect on what that is a sign of. Why is it that we had to have that food drive? Why is it that people have to give food and that people have to give turkeys? Of course the reality is because of poverty in our community, and that poverty is everywhere in this Province. It is not just here in St. John's or on the Northeast Avalon, it is everywhere. It is poverty that has grown to a point that has to be shocking for us when we think about it.

It was twenty-five years ago here in St. John's that people formed what was called the food network. That food network even shocked people. They could not believe they were going to have to put together a network of people to take care of people who did not have food.

It is not that we did not always have some people who were in need. There is no doubt that we all have memories of people in our

community who were in need ten, twenty, thirty years ago, and longer for some of us in our memories. The need was there.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Order, please!

You will have to take your conversations elsewhere; you need to listen to the member.

The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate that.

I can remember when I taught, for example. My first year teaching was on Bell Island. We had a couple of families who came to where I lived looking for food on a regular basis. I remember when I taught in Baie Verte, the same thing, but the people who came looking for food – and I mention St. Lawrence as well because I taught there also, and I also taught here in St. John's.

All those places where I lived we always had people who would come to the door looking for some food, but it was a handful of people. We knew who the families were, and we understood their needs. There was not probably a church group around in the Province in those days that did not know some people, a handful of people, who had special needs.

They got help. People made sure they were not hungry. Whether they went to a convent or to the church, no matter what it was, they were taken care of. That poverty started to increase and twenty-five years ago here in the City of St. John's it became necessary. People saw the need to form the food network.

They were shocked then, and some of those people – I was talking to one yesterday who was one of the people who formed the food network – are even shocked more now. We have so much poverty in this Province now that the number of people who are going to food banks, which is in the thousands, over 26,000 last year in this Province – or this year actually, those numbers this year per month is 26,000 – those

numbers are going up again. They had started to come down. Between 2008 and 2012 we saw a drop of about 2.4 per cent of people going to food banks. It looked like things were changing. I think I may even have heard the government side of the House boasting last year, definitely poverty is going down, food bank usage is going down, et cetera.

I have to inform them that since last year to this year, and the surveys are done in March of every year. March seems to be, for some reason, the month where there is the least use of food banks or it sort of evens out in March. The organization that does these surveys with the information that I am giving, which is called Food Banks Canada, does its survey in March. From March of 2013 to March of 2014, did we see the use in food banks drop? No, we did not. What we have now started to see, Mr. Speaker, is that the use in food banks is going up.

Between 2013 and 2014, it went up 0.8 per cent. All of a sudden it has stopped going down. In 2014, 60.6 per cent of reporting food banks – because not all report. In this Province, 60.6 per cent of reporting food banks indicated an increase in usage. In 2013, it was only 37.9 per cent that indicated an increase in usage. This is a serious situation. While it is really good for us to be giving food to those who are in need at this time of year, or any time of the year, and it might make us feel good when we are giving that food, we have to remember what is happening is we are giving food to people who are living in poverty and who cannot afford to buy their food. This is a serious situation and it is not one that is getting better.

What is really shocking for us is that the percentage of children in this Province who are benefiting from food banks is 37.7 per cent; 37.7 per cent of the users are children. It has been more or less consistent over the years; thirty-six point, thirty-seven point, thirty-eight point, but it is pretty consistent. Over one-third of the users of food banks over the last ten years have been children. The percentage of those using food banks on a gender basis: 57.8 per cent of the users are women in general.

Here is something that maybe is a shocker for people to think about, because people have this thing that they believe people who are going to

food banks are people who do not work, who do not have jobs. According to Food Banks Canada – and they get their statistics from the local food banks here in this Province. They are in all the food banks here. They are in touch with them. What they have learned is that 9.2 per cent of people using food banks are people who have jobs, people who are working, people who are earning money, but who are not earning enough money because they are on minimum wage, which does not meet their needs. So 9.2 per cent are people who are working.

Here is another statistic that can startle people and it is a reality, but it will not startle people who are watching here today who are constantly talking about their concerns as pensioners who have been public service sector workers: 5.8 per cent of those using food banks are people on pensions. That means their pensions, along with their public pensions if they were a public service sector worker, that pension plus their OAS, plus their CPP, is still not enough for them to be able to feed themselves.

Here is another one which people might be surprised at. We think of homeowners and we think people are okay. They are doing all right if they own their own home. Well, 12.1 per cent of those going to food banks are homeowners. They are not okay.

I do not have a breakdown, but I am willing to bet a lot of that 12.1 per cent who are homeowners and who are going to food banks are seniors. Seniors who own their own homes, have owned them for a long time, and who cannot afford to live in their homes. However, even if they were to give up their homes, where do they go to live? Because we do not have adequate housing for people in this Province, adequate affordable housing. So, 12.1 per cent of those going to food banks are homeowners.

This is the reality that we are dealing with, Mr. Speaker. The generosity we experienced last week, it is important that it happened, but it must be the time for calling us into recognition of what we are dealing with in this Province.

According, again, to Food Banks Canada, in Newfoundland and Labrador there are thirty-seven known food programs. Food programs, for example, would include the breakfasts in the

schools. The Kids Eat Smart breakfast, that would be a food program. There are thirty-seven known food programs, and thirty-five of those thirty-seven programs do answer the survey that comes out from Food Banks Canada. They do respond. So we are getting a high level of response from those food programs.

The percentage of food programs that participate in the survey in this Province is 95 per cent. Now, in some places in the country 100 per cent of the food programs respond, but 95 per cent is pretty good. It is thirty-five out of thirty-seven.

Then, you also have agencies that are involved. Agencies that are involved would include food banks, for example. We have seven agencies that are included. We also have thirteen organizations that are included.

This is in a Province where thirty years ago you hardly knew the word food bank. You hardly knew what it meant. Now, no matter where we go in the Province you will find there are food banks – no matter where you go. Some of them operate on a regional basis. They may be in a town. I know St Vincent De Paul Society in Carbonear has a food bank, but they give food beyond Carbonear. So, no matter where you go in the Province, and I think everybody sitting in this House knows it, you can find a food bank.

We have a real conundrum in this Province right now. We have serious contradictions going on. Here in the Northeast Avalon in particular, where we have the highest incomes, we also have the highest use of food banks.

We drive down Kenmount Road now and what do we see? We see all these luxury car dealerships, Jaguar, Land Rover, Mercedes Benz, and BMW. I have no problem with people having the money to buy one of those cars. That is not my problem. At the same time that we have a whole plethora now of luxury car dealerships, when before, even ten years ago, we did not even have one. You had to buy one of your luxury cars through the regular dealerships who would bring them in one or two at a time for anybody who wanted one. Now we have actual dealerships selling these cars. That is fine.

The issue is at the same time that income is growing on that level here on the Northeast Avalon, at the same time more and more people are being able to afford luxury cars, or go to restaurants that are, if you want to put it this way, luxury restaurants, haute cuisine as we say – at the same time that is happening, we have a real gap growing between the people at the upper end and low income. It is very real.

Statistics that one will get from Food Banks Canada and statistics that one can get from this wonderful research document that was put out by the Harris Centre called Vital Signs, they have the information on the growing gap between high-end earners and low-income earners in this Province. The reality is the high earner's incomes are increasing at a much faster rate than low earners in all parts of the Province, but mostly here on the Northeast Avalon.

Low-income increases are negligible. There is a little tiny increase in low income, but it is negligible. Where are we with it, Mr. Speaker? We are with a government that hates it when we bring these issues up, but it is a reality. In this Province we need housing that fits the needs of people. People have to have housing that is affordable for their budgets. We need a minimum wage that meets the cost of living. We need Income Support that meets the cost of living. Why can't we get this across to this government?

It is fine for us to collect the food at Christmastime. It is fine for us to feel good about it, and I am glad that we do it, but we should not have to do it.

Even back twenty-five years ago when the food network started here and people were already forming networks in other parts of Canada, I was part of doing work on a national level from St. John's, but we were connected with people around Canada. One of the concerns was should we be doing these food banks? Can we stop giving people food and deal with the fact that we have a systemic problem? We have this inequality in our society. All the activists who were on the ground doing that work realized we can start trying to do that. We can start trying to deal with the inequality, but can we see people starving at the same time?

The conundrum is people who are running food banks believe we should have a society of equality. We should have a society where everybody has decent housing. We should have a society where everybody has an income that meets their needs, a society where everybody has clean drinking water. That is what we want, but neither at the same time can we watch people be hungry; therefore, individuals and organizations are running food banks. We have a responsibility here in this House to be making decisions and creating programs that will stop the inequality.

We should stand this day in this House and be proud and say the income gap is lessening, to be able to say anybody on minimum wage is no longer living in poverty. To be able to say, oh my goodness, did you hear yesterday that Bridges to Hope has closed up? That is what we should want to stand in this House and say, not standing in the House and saying we raised 110,000 pounds of food for people who cannot pay for their own food.

That is the challenge to us, Mr. Speaker, to every single one of us, to myself, as well as all of my colleagues and to the Province. It is our responsibility to work for that society where we will be able to stop collecting food for the poor because people will be treated with dignity in a society of equality and justice.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

It is indeed a privilege to get up here again today, as I always say, to represent the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. It is indeed a beautiful district.

I just listened to the speaker beforehand. Before I even go to my notes, I would just like to acknowledge her, too. It is so important today

that we do take care of the vulnerable people in society and people who do use food banks.

I can remember back when I was younger, society was so different back then. I can remember one year we set nineteen sacks of seed potatoes. It was probably enough potatoes to feed half of Flatrock. I can remember digging them and I was saying to father, what are we going to do with all of them? We gave them out to everyone who needed it. There were people who came in the garden and gave us a hand.

That day is gone. That day is not there anymore. I can remember hauling up off Martin's Point with a truckload of fish, because that is what I did. The first job I ever had was driving the fish truck. It was always a point; we always made sure that if there was somebody who needed a fish or anybody in the community who was down and out, that they got a fish. My father would say drop off so-and-so a fish. There would be fishermen down on the wharf who would say listen here – you see people come down and they would get a fish.

To the hon. member, I understand what you are saying about food banks and everything else, but you cannot compare it back to twenty-five years ago. We live in a different society today altogether than what we did. Food banks are important. I applaud the people who raised 110,000 pounds of food. If that is what it takes to help people, so be it. Good job, well done. I think people should be applauded for doing that. People who do donate to food banks should be applauded for doing it also.

We are living in a different society today. Today is a different society with people, the hustle and bustle and everything else. I am going to talk a little bit later on about volunteerism and just talk a little bit about volunteers. Things have changed a little bit from what it was. Like I explained about the potatoes and the fish, one time it was a part of communities. I am sure it happened in St. John's, as it happened in Corner Brook, as it happened in Torbay, as it would happen in Bonavista, and all over the Province.

It was the way of life. We always took care of each other. Today, it just seems like the hustle and the bustle is there and most families have

two people working. It is a different society. We do need food banks. It is unfortunate that people are using them. I would like to see the day that no one uses a food bank in this Province. The reality is if people go out and collect 110,000 pounds of food, God love you for doing it, God love you for helping the people who need that food.

I understand the member is not saying anything about the people who collected the food; she is just talking about food banks. In today's society when it comes to taking care of our fellow people and fellow residents, as a politician, I take great pride in some of the programs that we do here in the House. We do it on both sides.

I know that the hon. Member for Bellevue got up last week talking about – and listen, I know the caring man that he is – how he was on people's roofs looking. We take care of our seniors. It is our job to go into different organizations and make sure there are grants there available like the Home Repair Program. I did it, I took applications. It is not only for seniors, it is for people under \$35,000 with income.

I took the grants to different seniors groups in my district and made sure everyone was aware that these grants are available. It is important because a lot of times people are not aware, especially when you talk about seniors. I love going to seniors functions. I love going and doing my thing and having dinner with them. As a matter of fact, 6:00 o'clock tonight I am going to be in Pouch Cove to do one.

They are caring people. They do not want handouts, they do not want anything. Things like the Home Repair Program and REEP and that are there so we can keep them in their homes. Maybe if the light bill goes down by \$100 by insulating their homes a little bit, that is \$100 more they have to pay for food.

Our society is built on people doing well and people not doing so well. I do not begrudge anybody buying a BMW. They work hard for their money. If you say, okay, there are BMWs and there are Audi dealerships on Kenmount Road now, good for this place because it shows that there are people doing better.

We do recognize as government that there are people in our society who are not doing well. Every day I get calls, and every member from both sides of this House get calls from different people who do need our help. I am just glad to be there to be able to help them.

I did not even want to go on that spiel but I listened to the speaker beforehand. I would just like to let her know that we over here care, too. I know that I, as a member, and members of this House – and I do not care what side you are on, if you get a phone call from a resident or a constituent of yours who needs your help, then I hope you do it. That is what we are here for. That is our job.

Sometimes people look at MHAs and fellows like myself, who I call a backbencher, wondering what our job is. Our job is to serve the people who elected us. That is what we do every single day. It is important that the people who need our help the most, the vulnerable people, the seniors, people on fixed incomes, have someone they can turn to who can help them whenever they can. That is our job to do.

I want to touch a little bit now on the legislation that came in here today. I did not get a chance to get up and speak on it. It was about helmets. Myself, I said I would never wear a helmet. Macho, I suppose, or whatever it is. I would never wear a helmet. I probably would not wear one playing hockey if I had a choice.

Do you know something, Mr. Speaker? On vacation one day a phone call came to me. It was my son, and he was just after going bottom up on his bike. He said he was crying, he hurt his arm, and stuff like this. I beat it home. When I went home he was there and he was best kind by the time I got there. He showed me his helmet and there were all kinds of these scrape marks on the side of his helmet. I, as a parent, made sure that every time he got on that bike – now meanwhile I probably would not have done it myself, put a helmet on, but I made sure he had a helmet on.

This bit of legislation today, just to bring the thought to it, if there is something we can do that parents – I know the Member for St. John's Centre said that it is a job to get them, but the legislation is in place now that you have to wear



a helmet. So, hopefully, it will protect a few people and we will have less people going to the Janeway, and maybe less adults going to the Health Sciences or St. Clare's or the Waterford Hospital. I think it is a great piece of legislation. I just wanted to tell that little sorry.

I also want to welcome the new members into the House of Assembly, from St. George's – Stephenville East and CBS. I stand in this House and whenever I speak, I always try to do my best to tell it from my perspective on things. I tell you, it is a great honour. It is an absolute great honour to be sat here and to be representing your people. There are days you will look and say you cannot get things done, but it is the little things that you do for your constituents that will make you feel the best. I welcome you to the House of Assembly. I am sure you will know exactly what I am talking about over a period of time.

There are two new ministers on this side and I really want to congratulate them. The minister from Lake Melville and I have Port au Port here in front of me, he just brought in the piece of legislation. I want to congratulate them on their appointments as ministers. I am sure you will do a great job.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Also, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate you, too, your new job in the Chair. You look pretty good up there. It seems like you are pretty comfortable anyway.

Mr. Speaker, I had a hip replacement done in October and I had a chance to go into our health care system. It was amazing. You are in there – I know I am probably a little bit too young to get a hip replacement, but I do not think I am that young. One thing that really amazed me was – there were four of us in the room, we had two guys getting hips and two guys getting knees, and I looked at the young doctors who were doing it. The young doctor who operated on me I would say is about thirty-two years old. The other two doctors who were in the room – one doctor had two patients – I would say the oldest one was forty years old. It is so nice to see.

I know for years and years you always looked at doctors and they were older, but to see what is in

our health care system today is unbelievable. We have more doctors than ever before in Newfoundland and Labrador working here. They are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, young men and young women that are here. They went to school at MUN and now they are doing their job right here in Newfoundland and Labrador. I am very proud that we have so many doctors and nurses and everyone else in the system.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Good retention.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** It is good retention.

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity the last little while to go to different functions in my district. I was down to the Pouch Cove Lions Club for their thirty-two years charter night. I know a lot of members here in the House have Lions Clubs in their districts. I tell you, what the Lions Clubs do for different people in the area is amazing.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. K. PARSONS:** The Lions Club in Pouch Cove raised something like \$30,000. They had a list of different things that they do for the community, and it is unbelievable what these people do.

So, I just want to say, hats off to all Lions in the Province. You do a fantastic job. The Pouch Cove Lions Club, I have the opportunity to go down and work the booth with them down to the Regatta. This year I missed it; I will tell you that story later. I usually go down with them. It is great bit of fun. They are a great bunch of people, and their hearts are really in the right place.

I also had opportunity to – you get to go to a couple of seniors – present two plaques on behalf of myself and the Premier of the Province to two young ladies who are in my district. Ms Hannah Vera Williams from Pouch Cove, who turned ninety-five, and when I went down to see her, she was just after finishing baking her tenth dark chocolate cake. She had ten more light chocolate cakes that she had to do at ninety-five years old. An amazing woman with a big heart, and if anybody wants a cake, you could probably go down and see her.

The other lady I went and saw recently was Mrs. Mary Kinsella from Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove. I did a statement here in the House on her last year, because she teaches rug hooking over to the Justina Centre on Wednesday nights at ninety-five years old. It is pretty amazing, and it is nice to be able to do that kind of thing. You know when you go into those houses that they really appreciate you coming by and giving them that touch – so, it was really good.

Also, the Member for – where are you from, Glenn Littlejohn? Where is his district?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Port de Grave.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Oh, Port de Grave. The Member for Port de Grave got up – I was going to say Bay Roberts, but he would have probably (inaudible). He acknowledged last week a couple of people who went into the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Hall of Fame, and four of them were really – I mean, all of them are great inductees, but I personally knew four of them. I had the opportunity to play hockey for eighteen years with two of them and played against the other two, and they are great inductees: Tony Hawco, Blair Langmead, Wish Pittman, and Ward Gosse. I just want to extend congratulations to all of them – and Colin Abbott, also; Colin was there too and is another great athlete and really good ambassador.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity – last Friday was Volunteer Day in this Province, and I want to tell a little story. I do not want to get too long into the story, but what happened, there was a young lady down in one of the communities I am from, and she won a contest where – and I will tell the name of the company, it was Eastern Siding that supplied windows and doors and siding to her house. She won this contest, and the last couple of years she has been battling a really hard disease and she got a little bit of bad news a couple of weeks ago. So anyway, one of my friends called me and said: Is there anything we can do for her? Is there any way we can help out?

We got on the phone. He made a few phone calls and I made a few phone calls. Last Thursday, we were going to get a group of people together to see if we could get this done.

Last Friday, we started and we had twenty people show up, all carpenters, and all fellows who knew what they were at. It was no good of me being at it because I did not know what I would be at, but I was down helping and going and getting whatever. We had twenty people show up. We started at 8:00 o'clock on Friday morning and by 2:00 o'clock Saturday we had a complete house done: windows, siding, and doors, everything done on her house.

Do you know what? It just makes you feel good when a community comes together. As far as I am concerned, we live in the best Province in the world. Our communities – all you have to do is stick out your hand, ask people to help, and they will. They came through for this young girl. I have to say, it was probably one of the proudest times I ever was of a fellow man, to know what they did for her. She was so appreciative of it, too.

So, hats off to our volunteers. Last night I went to a function down in Flatrock and the communities down our way – I am going to one next week down in Torbay where they have volunteer night, where they show appreciation to their volunteers. I know last week was Volunteer Day and I just want to extend a real thank you to all the people. I think we have more volunteers per capita than anywhere else, I would say, in the world. People are good. We have good people in this Province. To see them reach out and help out like they did last week, like they do every day, it is really good to see.

Mr. Speaker, I have a slew of notes here; I am not even going to get halfway through them. Anyway, I just wanted to touch a little bit on my district. I always get up and talk a little bit; I have to tell a little bit about the new school. We are hoping that soon the tender will come out on the new school in the area. It is a major problem in the area. Our growth is unbelievable. In the last couple of years, in the area that I am from and I guess around the St. John's area, it has grown amazing.

Torbay last night passed a budget for over \$8 million. In the last couple of years it seems like it grows \$1 million every year, so it will tell you the growth in that.

When I was Mayor of Flatrock back in 2005 our budget was \$530,000; last week they passed a budget of \$1.1 million. That is amazing when you look at the small communities and how they have grown. The Northeast Avalon, I have to say, the communities are doing really well. They are big numbers for towns down our way. I want to congratulate them. They are volunteers, too. All of the councillors and the people who do that kind of job, as I am sure lots of people here in the House have had the privilege to work on council, be mayors and whatnot, it is a great privilege, I tell you right now, and it is a great job.

Part of my district is St. John's, and I am very glad, too, last night that they did not have any tax increases. That is huge for the people in St. John's, part of my area.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about – I missed the first couple of weeks of the House of Assembly. When you are home it is wild to watch the House of Assembly. Everybody has a different perspective, this side, that side. They are anti us and we are anti them. It is pretty interesting to watch it on TV. I applaud everybody who does it every day.

I had a conversation today with the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace about the fishery. I really respect his opinion on the fishery. We talked a little bit about the cod and what effect cod has on crab and stuff like that. My brother is a crab fisherman. We truck thousands and millions of pounds of fish every year. That is what we did when we were growing up. The fishery was huge. The fishery is very interesting.

The only thing I wanted to say is that back in 1992 it was like a billion-dollar industry, and then we lost the cod. Today, in my area, fishermen are doing way better than they have ever done before. Today the fishermen – and there are no plants down there. The plant workers are a different thing altogether. The fishermen who are crabbing, my brother does it, my son does it, they are doing very well in the fishery. It is a good fishery. It is \$1.1 billion. If you told me in 1992 that we would still have a \$1.1 billion industry in 2014, I would not have believed it. It is good to see that it diversified like it did.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Burgeo – La Poile stood up and talked about dialysis machines. I can remember back in the day that the Budget was announced, there was a dialysis machine announced for Port aux Basques. The former member applauded and said thank you very much, the people in Port aux Basques do need that dialysis machine.

He also talked about how he listened to Dr. Josie. I did not have the opportunity to go to the Canadian Diabetes thing there last week, or the week before last, but I did have the opportunity to speak to the lady who is in charge of diabetes in Newfoundland. I went and I talked to her about it.

What she explained to me – I said sure, obviously prevention is always the best thing. If there is anything you can do to prevent it. She also explained that 56 per cent of the people on dialysis have diabetes. She said it is so important for us to be able to put dialysis machines in Bonavista, Port aux Basques, and down in Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune. I think the member – I understand what he is saying, but still it is taking care of the people. Prevention is definitely the best way to go.

Mr. Speaker, I really started to laugh the first day the House was open and they were debating, I think it was Bill 25. We were talking about the two by-elections and how there was a little mistake and we had to bring in some legislation so that the gentlemen who were elected would be able to sit here in the House or we would have to go through another elections act.

The hon. Member for Mount Pearl South stood up and said, I do not care what it is, I am going to speak on every bill in this House. As long as I get up here, I am going to speak on every bill in this House. Mr. Speaker, do you know what? He was over here on this side and we could not shut him up. He was over here with us and he was speaking on every bill. I have it here in Hansard. He was up, Mr. Speaker, and he was saying – the Premier of the day at the time – I am going to stand next to her side by side, shoulder to shoulder, because I believe in the same values as she does.

Mr. Speaker, he is over on the other side and he says I am not going to shut up. So what is the

difference? Is his word good here or is it over there? Nowhere.

Mr. Speaker, I stood up in the House and I can guarantee you that I will tell the Premier of this Province that if I decide to leave or if I decide to do something I will do it face to face, because I will be a man of my word, and that is what I expect of every member in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. K. PARSONS:** You need not worry about that. He did not wait for anybody to go on holidays before he made his move.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move that we adjourn debate on Address in Reply.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved that we adjourn debate on Address in Reply.

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 resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2.

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

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt 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 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2". (Bill 37)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** I am sorry.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

**MR. EDMUNDS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will just look for some clarification from the hon. minister. From time to time there are certain bills that come out where there is a clause that is interjected in relevance to the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.

The reason I bring it up, Mr. Chair, is because much of the legislation throughout the Province, in fact, maybe all of the legislation in Newfoundland, states that people on ATVs shall

not drive ATVs on public roads. Well, Mr. Chair, in Nunatsiavut it is legal because of a community bylaw. I think in the Newfoundland portion of the Province it also says that anyone driving an ATV must wear a helmet. Well, in Nunatsiavut the bylaw says you do not have to.

I am looking for clarification. Not that I am against this legislation. By all means, if it saves lives I totally support it, but given there are certain conditions that are implemented to much of the legislation, I just ask the hon. minister for clarification.

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

**MR. CORNETT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank the hon. member for the question. To the hon. member, my understanding is that municipalities can make bylaws to allow ATVs to use community roads or municipal roads. So that would be a bylaw of the municipality, and that is permissible is my understanding.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

**MR. EDMUNDS:** Okay, I thank the minister for his answer.

Just to re-verify, in the event that the community has worries regarding this legislation, what would be the route of action there? Would this supersede any community bylaws and be enforced as outlined in the bill itself?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will speak to it because I am familiar with the legislation the member raises. I had two communities in my district, actually Garnish and Fortune.

There is provision under the Municipalities Act. The legislation the minister is bringing forward here is an all-encompassing legislation for the Province as a whole. Within the municipalities' legislation, they are permitted to amend a bylaw or add a bylaw that permits the use of ATVs on

community roads only. That would not apply, for example, to a main provincial highway going through a community as I have in both my communities.

The process would be that the municipalities would have to engage in their own process within the community. Ultimately, their council will have to approve a bylaw. The process we followed, for the member's benefit, is it then has to be submitted to the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs for final sign off.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

**MR. EDMUNDS:** Okay, thank you.

It is still a little bit vague here. This legislation is proposed, I am assuming, for everywhere. Am I correct in assuming that the municipalities still can pass a bylaw that would be contrary to this legislation, given the fact that a lot of the changes in some communities have to be as good as the Highway Traffic Act? The bottom line is will Bill 37 be enforced in all areas in the Province, including those that are in the land claims area from April 1 forward?

Thank you.

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

**MR. CORNETT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, what we have done this afternoon is we are updating the Highway Traffic Act to make it mandatory for bicyclists of all ages to wear bicycle helmets when cycling on our Province's roadways, so wherever our Province's roadways lead. It will be mandatory on April 1, 2015 to wear bicycle helmets on all the Province's roadways.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North –

**MR. LANE:** South.

**CHAIR:** South, sorry.

**MR. LANE:** Mr. Chair, I am just wondering about the terms of the collection of fines, for

example, if the RNC or RCMP ticketed somebody operating a vehicle. Then it could be sort of attached to that licence plate, attached to that driver's licence in terms of if they did not pay their fine when they went to renew their licence, they would collect. How is that going to work if somebody just gets a fine because their kid was riding a bike without a bicycle helmet?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Yes, with the indulgence of the Member for Mount Pearl South, I want to go back to the previous one if you do not mind. We can come back to that. I did not want to leave that one for the Member for Torngat.

We will seek some clarification for you on that. Our understanding would be, coming from a justice perspective, the Highway Traffic Act would apply in all instances throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, unless there are other agreements, land agreements, or other municipal bylaws that might supersede that. Perhaps we can have a side discussion after and we can get some clarification specifically to the area you are talking about. I did not want to move on without addressing that point.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl South.

**MR. LANE:** Okay, well, if somebody can address my point, please.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Your question is respecting the collection of fines. I cannot give you a specific answer except to say that any fines administered attached under the Highway Traffic Act, we would follow the collection procedures that we normally would in the process of collecting any outstanding fines throughout the Province.

**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 through 4 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 4 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 4 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 Highway Traffic Act No. 2.

**CHAIR:** Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report the bill without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

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

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that the Committee rise and report Bill 37, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act No. 2.

**CHAIR:** The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 37.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

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

**MR. SPEAKER (Verge):** The hon. the Member for Port de Grave.

**MR. LITTLEJOHN:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 37 without amendment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole said that the Committee considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to carry this said bill without amendment.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

There is no need to vote. The Speaker's mistake.

When shall the report be received?

**MR. KING:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, report received and adopted.

**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:** Address in Reply.

The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to get up in my place in this House of Assembly today and speak to Address in Reply. Yes, it has been a while in regard to the Speech from the Throne being delivered in this House. It is never too late to have some comments in regard to Newfoundland and Labrador, the position of government, the vision of government, and the innovation of government over the last number of years.

First, before I get into the body of my speech here this evening I would like to actually touch on some remarks that were made in Address in Reply by the Leader of the Third Party. She talked with emotion in regard to poverty and poverty reduction in this House of Assembly this afternoon and in the Province.

When I reflect back on this government's record and looked at the investments that we have made under the Poverty Reduction Strategy, I think it is about \$172 million per year in poverty reduction. Also, in regard to my own ministerial

position, the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, we have about \$219 million dedicated to Income Support. Then, when I look at Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, they have about \$120 million dedicated in regard to the programs that are contained within the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing mandate that all really support people of low income and people of poverty.

What the hon. member mentioned was noble, but in this world we live in – she talked about a society that will be totally equal. In other words, each and every soul who was born in Newfoundland and Labrador, born anywhere for that matter, will be equal. They would enjoy the same things that we do in regard to our homes, in regard to food and all that kind of stuff.

There is no member in this House who would not want that, Mr. Speaker, absolutely not. Can we ever achieve that? I am not really sure if we can. Many societies and many types of governments have tried to change that in the past, an equal society for all. It has been done, but really it never has been achieved. Democracy, in my opinion, is the best form of government in the world today. There are other forms, as I just said, such as communism, socialism, and all those types of government, but it does not really address the needs of those most vulnerable people in our Province.

I want to impress on the people of the Province that we have made strides in regard to addressing those issues. We have had programs in regard to affordable housing. As a matter of fact, I think there is a current program under Newfoundland and Labrador Housing now that is worth \$129 million, Mr. Speaker. That will address some of the issues with regard to affordable housing across this Province.

We had another fund, I am not sure how much it was, but that was expended in years previous. This is a new agreement that was signed last year, but going forward. The other program addressed needs right across this Province.

As a matter of fact, one of the projects that was funded under the affordable housing project was funded in my District of Gander in the Golden Legion Manor, which I was a big part of. I served on the board of directors as the Chair of

the board of directors. It is probably one of the first affordable housing initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador. As a matter of fact, we started that project way back when, close to forty years ago, addressing affordable housing needs for seniors going forward, especially veterans as well which we honour to this day.

We are not living in a perfect world, absolutely not. I wish we could live in a perfect world. I wish we could take all the worries and challenges that people have in their lives away. It is a complex issue, Mr. Speaker. It is an absolute complex issue. In regard to poverty, it is fed by many aspects of a person's life. In regard to why they would find themselves in poverty, it could be complex issues. It could be drug issues. It could be issues in regard to disabilities and so forth. Even from that perspective, Mr. Speaker, I know there are programs within all of the departments, across all government that tries to address this need and tries to address things that would be of a challenge to a person of poverty and then also address the need in regard to the complex need they may or may not have.

I remember back – I will go on to other parts now, Mr. Speaker, and there is a very important piece. I take great – not pride I guess, but I am trying to search for a word in regard to my own need to talk about poverty, because I have seen it first-hand growing up. Growing up on the Southern Shore, I have seen many people in need. As a matter of fact, I remember my father talking about hard times, talking about hard times back in the 1920s and talking about hard times shortly after the war, then getting much better as we went forward in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen hard times as well. I do not mind saying it. As a matter of fact, it was a struggle in Newfoundland and Labrador to carve out a living. That was in the 1990s. It was hard times. We were not in government then. It was a Liberal government at the time. I saw about 70,000-odd people leave Newfoundland and Labrador during that time.

Were there challenges for that government of the day? Absolutely, there were challenges for that government of the day. I recognize that, Mr.



Speaker. It is the same thing when we look at poverty. People are born with different challenges, complex needs; some of them, their life takes certain turns and twists and the challenge is created for them because of certain issues they have along life's path.

It is the same thing in regard to governments, Mr. Speaker. I do not get up here in this House just to say that we have done everything right and everybody else has done everything wrong – absolutely not. As a matter of fact, in this House of Assembly I have said many times that we have done a lot right, absolutely. We have done some things wrong, and we recognize that as human beings. That is all we are. We might be ministers, we might be MHAs and come from different walks of life previous to, but the bottom line is we are human beings and, like it or lump it, human beings makes mistakes. You learn from those mistakes and then you move on.

Luckily as well, as MHAs and ministers, we have the support of the public service. That really reduces the number of mistakes that governments make. Because they do some great work in our departments right across government, out in the regions, and right across Newfoundland and Labrador that helps us.

As a matter of fact, I have a great staff in Advanced Education and Skills. I have a great front-line staff right across the Province. As you all know, I deal with poverty on a daily basis with Income Support, and then people who are trying to better themselves and take advantage of the opportunities that are out there with our economy, with our labour market piece. As well, Mr. Speaker, I have a great executive staff.

As a matter of fact, I know all the ministers here certainly appreciate all their staff. I will go to say that I have one of the best staffs in government today, because I just know the work that they are doing and I certainly appreciate that. I know all the other staff out there, because I have been in a number of departments over the years, and each and every one of them always put that 100 per cent in each and every day, and I appreciate that.

We talk about those hard times, Mr. Speaker, and you look at our economy today. When we

started in 2003, we found ourselves in a very unique place. We found ourselves in a place of bankruptcy. You never really equate that to a province, really. You equate that to businesses, and you think they either survive or they go bankrupt. Very rarely does a province, does a country go bankrupt. We nearly saw that recently in about 2008-2009 when many of the countries in Europe – Greece, in particular, Portugal. I just mentioned a couple that had great difficulty in regard to the economic downturn that affected the world.

Only a few countries, Canada being one of them, really came out of that process or that era unscathed. We had some challenges in Central Canada, but Newfoundland and Labrador weathered the storm better than all the provinces out there – we did. That was because of the way the government had addressed fiscal management, as well as we invested in infrastructure putting Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to work, Mr. Speaker.

We have had some discussions over the last number of weeks and whatnot, and I have heard on Backtalk and the different media sources asking the question, or people making statements that we misspent the money. I have never heard anybody get up and say, well, what you spent in my district I did not want because that was misspending of money. I have never heard that from anybody, both in this House and outside, I will be quite honest with you.

I have been around in the districts. As the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I think I was in every community in Newfoundland and Labrador. It was a great time in my life. I met some great people.

As the hon. member before me just mentioned in Address in Reply, councillors do some great work, and mayors do some great work. They are mostly in essence volunteers, especially out in rural Newfoundland and Labrador where there is not enough revenue to pay a stipend. Some do get a stipend in regard to the bigger urban centres, but very few do. They do some great work. They do it with all their heart and soul, and all for the right reasons, Mr. Speaker.

I remember having chats with each and every one of them. I know they all come from

different walks of life as well. They also come from different political stripes. That is all accepted because that is the way the world is and that is the way the world should be. I have never heard a councillor or a mayor tell me, as the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that no, we do not want the money, we do not want the arena, we do not want the water and sewer, we do not want the fire truck, we do not want the fire equipment. My question is I guess when we have a look at that –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible).

**MR. O'BRIEN:** I am sure the hon. member would, because he has never turned me down. When the time of the year comes when I used to send out the sheets and say listen, here are all the projects that were submitted in regard to your district. Here is what I have, here is what I do, and here is what I suggest. Each and every one of them was very pleased.

I do not think really when it comes down to it, Mr. Speaker, when you look at it, there was any misspending in regard to infrastructure. It is the best and wisest investment you can make. Any economist would tell you that. As a matter of fact, when times are bad, one of the very things you should do is invest in infrastructure. You get two bangs for your dollar in regard to the investment itself, the improvements in the infrastructure, and then putting people to work.

I remember back in my days of pharmacy, when times were bad a lot of pharmacists – or a lot of owners I should say – the first line they would cut was their advertising line because it was a grey area. You would never see really the benefit of that. I listened to economists and people who advised me, and when times were a little worse than they were normally then I would really advertise in a big way. I would put a lot of dollars into advertising. The same thing in regard to investing in our people, the people of the Province, Mr. Speaker, in regard to that aging infrastructure.

As well, I do not think really when it drills down to it – it is one thing to make a statement that you misspent the money, it is another thing to identify exactly what you are seeing there in regard to what you misspent it on. The simple reason is, I do not think anybody in this House is

going to say that one of the program under the Minister of Health, for instance, Health and Community Services, is a program that they would cut. I do not think so.

As a matter of fact, I look across the House and I know there is a project over in Corner Brook that is very dear to his heart. Number one, he wants the project to be built; and, number two, he wants the proper services to be within that envelope. That is very important to the people of the West Coast.

The minister is certainly in tune to that. The previous minister was in tune to that, in trying to get it exactly right in regard to the dollars we have to spend. There is not a bottomless pit of money. It has to be money that is well spent and well thought out, and well thought out by a lot of people, I say, Mr. Speaker. That is the way it is.

When you look at those programs and services that we have contained within our departments, and I look across to the Minister of Education. You look at all the programs in her department in regard to K-12. Then, as well, is the Early Childhood. All money where you are having a positive impact on the people of this Province. Our children, which is the future of the Province, as well, on their families, Mr. Speaker, because they can see that positive impact. Would I call that misspending? No, Mr. Speaker, I absolutely do not.

I think, again, back to health care, Mr. Speaker. I heard a while back my hon. friend from my pharmacy days, the Leader of the Opposition, talk about centres of excellence in health care. Explain that to me, because the simple reason is if you have a centre of excellence, nine chances out of ten there is going to be a change in service somewhere else. That is not going to sit very well with people who currently have a facility such as the James Paton Memorial Hospital, which this government has invested in heavily, and I mean heavily, since 2005, I believe, if I remember the first investment. As matter of fact, in regard to the numbers for the infrastructure piece, it is up around \$70-odd million since we took government. I would think it is probably up around \$15 million or \$20 million in equipment. As a matter of fact, some

of the most state-of-the-art equipment in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Then I look around and I see the hon. Member for Grand Falls-Windsor – Buchans and the investments that we have made in her district in her hospital, I will absolutely, absolutely say in this House, not enough – absolutely not enough. It services a great catchment area in the Province, a region that requires health care no differently than anybody else. That is a very old hospital. As a matter of fact, I have been there myself. I am a little bit claustrophobic, Mr. Speaker. When I go into the hospital, the ceilings are so low that I actually become claustrophobic waiting for the doctor to come in.

So these are all wise investments that this Province and this government has made in health care. I am not the Minister of Health, but I know health well, I can guarantee you. Then I look at other departments in our government. To be honest with you, I would love for somebody soon to tell me, please, get on a talk show, get on *On Point*, whatever way – take out an ad.

As a matter of fact, I do not know but I would pay for the ad, to be honest with you, personally, and tell me, tell us, the people of the Province, what are the investments that we should not have made. In Advanced Education and Skills when I give out the list of JCPs in the Province, across the Province, and it supports a lot of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with work and it also creates a lot of great projects in regard to communities, I never get a pushback. I never get a pushback from any, either, not one member in this House of Assembly who are a recipient of JCPs, Mr. Speaker.

I have been up here now for close to twenty minutes – nineteen minutes – and I have named off a bunch of departments and a bunch of programs, and I have not gotten anywhere with it, Mr. Speaker. I know you are looking at me bewildered; I will be quite honest with you, Mr. Speaker. You are, because you are bewildered, just like the people of the Province. I can see it in your eyes; you do not know either, because you know full well that all the investments that we have made in your district has all been worthwhile. You are out there really proud, number one, of yourself; number two, of your

district; and number three, of the government for making those investments. That is the way I see it.

I am going to wait. Mr. Speaker, I am down to nineteen seconds. It would be great Christmas gift. Seeing as we are in the spirit of Christmas, can I have a list of the investments we should not have made? That is all I ask for Christmas.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move that we adjourn debate on Address in Reply.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The motion is that 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 Fisheries and Aquaculture, 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.

This House stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m.  
tomorrow, being Private Members' Day.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned  
until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 2:00 p.m.