



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FORTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Volume XLVIII

FIRST SESSION

Number 41

HANSARD

Speaker: Honourable Tom Osborne, MHA

Monday

14 November 2016

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Osborne): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

I welcome to the Speaker's gallery Mr. Joseph Janson and Mrs. Margaret Janson – and I'll explain a little later why they're in our public gallery, but I will say that they were here once before in the 1970s. So welcome back.

We have two new Pages in the House of Assembly today. Mr. Mohammed Ali Bakshi, he's a native of Kabul, Afghanistan, who is pursuing a master's in educational leadership at Memorial University.

Welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: And Ms. Tresha Moorhouse, a native of Walkers Wood, Jamaica, who is also pursuing a master's of educational leadership at Memorial University.

Welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: And welcome back as well to Crystal Snelgrove, who is now our senior Page.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Elizabeth Duff, former Clerk of this House of Assembly, who recently passed away.

Ms. Duff, known to most as Bettie, had a long career with our civil service. She was private secretary to Premier Joseph Smallwood for 23 years, following which she served as executive assistant within the government, and then within the House of Assembly and Speaker Gerald Ottenheimer.

In 1977, she was appointed as Clerk of this House, a position which she held until her retirement in 1991. Ms. Duff was well-respected by all parties.

It is notable, that Ms. Duff was the first female Clerk of any legislature or parliament in all of Canada. During her tenure as Clerk she became well-known throughout the British Commonwealth parliamentary circles and is fondly remembered for her achievement as Clerk and for her graciousness and mentorship at all times.

Bettie passed peacefully away on August 28 of this year, her 90th birthday, having spent the day celebrating with her family.

In particular, she leaves behind her nephew, Joseph Jansen, his wife, Margie, who works in the Office of the Legislative Counsel, and their three children, Joseph, Meghan and Maria, as well as numerous nieces, nephews and other extended family in the United States who all miss her greatly.

We pay tribute to Bettie.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we have Members' statements for the Districts of Bonavista, Mount Pearl – Southlands, Labrador West, St. John's East – Quidi Vidi, Harbour Main and Cape St. Francis.

The hon. the Member for the District of Bonavista.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Sonja Mills and Alicia MacDonald – owners and operators of the Port Rexton Brewing Company. These entrepreneurial young women have always had a passion for craft beer, but gained their brewing experience in Nova Scotia's craft beer movement.

Operating out of an old school house in Port Rexton, Trinity Bay, they realized their dream of opening a craft brewery and taproom in July. At that time it was only the fourth craft brewery in the province. Since their opening, business has been brisk with demand often exceeding supply for both beer and merchandise. The high demand saw new growth in their business, purchasing new brewing tanks in September. This growth allowed for consistent growler

service that allows patrons to enjoy the brews in the comfort of their own homes.

Although the taproom is closed for the season, that doesn't mean that Sonja and Alicia are any less busy. They are still producing beer, supplying many local bars and restaurants. As a testament to their hard work, they were awarded the People's Choice Award for their T' Rex Porter at the Atlantic Canadian Beer Awards.

Please join me in wishing them continued success.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Mount Pearl – Southlands.

MR. LANE: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to stand in this hon. House to recognize an individual who gave a lifetime of service to the citizens of Mount Pearl. Richard Levandier moved to Mount Pearl from Nova Scotia 44 years ago for what was supposed to be a two-year work assignment. Shortly after arriving, he joined the Kinsmen Club of Mount Pearl where he would subsequently hold numerous leadership roles and chair numerous charitable projects in the community.

Outside of Kin, he was a relentless defender of all things Mount Pearl and would be regularly engaged in promoting, supporting and advocating for his community. Among the many hats that Richard wore, was the role of president of the Mount Pearl Men's Slowpitch Softball League. Earlier this year, he was recognized by the city and the league by having the new softball facility named in his. The citizens of Mount Pearl recently mourned the loss of our great friend Richard who fought valiantly with ALS. Even in his final days, he insisted on continuing his involvement with Kin.

His final Kinsmen meeting took place in palliative care, with his fellow Kinsmen gathered around his bedside. This speaks volumes to the type of individual that Richard was: a Kinsmen and a dedicated volunteer right to the very end.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all Members of this hon. House to join me in offering condolences to

Richard's wife Deirdre and his family and in celebrating the life of an individual who is gone but will never be forgotten by the people of Mount Pearl.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LETTO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate the Labrador City Fire Department on their 50th anniversary. The Labrador City Fire Department is a combination of career and volunteer firefighters, with a total of 45 firefighters on active duty protecting the residents of Labrador West, including the Town of Wabush, the Iron Ore Company of Canada and response services to the Trans-Labrador Highway.

Over the past 50 years, training has been a top priority for the fire department, and I can honestly say that the Labrador City Fire Department is one of the most highly trained departments in the province. With three major forest fires and several serious industrial fires in its 50-year history, their training has been tested and proven beyond any reasonable doubt.

I speak highly of the men and women of the Labrador City Fire Department because I have seen them in action and witnessed their professionalism. The residents of Labrador West are fortunate to have them.

I ask all hon. Members to join me in congratulating the Labrador City Fire Department on their 50 years of service and wish them well in the years ahead as they continue to protect the residents of Labrador West.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I could never grow tired of celebrating the youth of our province. Today I am happy to share the accomplishments of two boys from St. John's East – Quidi Vidi who received the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards last Tuesday in a ceremony at St. John's City Hall.

Mayor Dennis O'Keefe presented bronze awards to, among others, Adonias Mohammed from the St. John's Boys and Girls Club and Colin Nolan from the Waypoints Leadership Resilience Program.

The Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award is the first of three levels for these awards. It takes at least 26 weeks – half a year, Mr. Speaker – to complete, and often much longer as teenagers balance all the competing interests in their lives.

Adonias, Colin and all the other recipients have demonstrated their commitment to the three core values of the Duke of Edinburgh Program, participating in activities that fall under the categories of service, skill and physical recreation. The program also includes an overnight adventurous journey or expedition.

Mr. Speaker, our youth today face challenges many of us cannot imagine. I invite all hon. Members to join me in applauding Adonias Mohammed and Colin Nolan, Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award winners.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Harbour Main.

MS. PARSLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate the participants of the 2016 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games. This year's games took place in the scenic Town of Conception Bay South. The games were held from August 13-21 and saw over 1,400 athletes and 600 volunteers converge on the region to show their skills in various sports while promoting a healthy, active lifestyle and, above all else, making friends and having fun. We were also delighted to welcome the very first Aboriginal delegation to participate in the festivities.

I would like to extend a big congratulations to all the staff and volunteers who made these games possible, as well to this year's organizing committee within the town and Mayor Steve Tessier for his council's outstanding support for this year's event.

Without such amazing community support, such as is found within Conception Bay South, events like these would not be possible and would not have been such an unforgettable event for the many athletes, coaches and parents that took part in the games.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize the Pouch Cove Volunteer Fire Department for 41 years of service to the residents of Bauline and Pouch Cove.

At the firefighters' ball on 24th of September, it was nice to see a full house at the Pouch Cove Lions Club. Departments from all over came out to celebrate with Chief Derek Sullivan, along with the 32 members, four junior firefighters and firettes. The firettes host many fundraising events throughout the year.

Fire Prevention Officer Shawn Wall was presented with his 20-year pin for his dedication to the department. Chief Derek Sullivan was also recognized for 25 years of service. He received a gift from the town, as well as the firettes.

The Pouch Cove Volunteer Fire Department is very well trained and the members take great pride in their work. The department also has a junior firefighters program which encourages young people to get involved in the department.

I ask all hon. Members to join with me in thanking the Pouch Cove Volunteer Fire Department for 41 years of service to the residents to Pouch Cove and Bauline.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

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

MR. KIRBY: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to recognize National Bullying Awareness Week, which takes place November 14 to 20. This year's theme is "*Stand Up*" to bullying.

Bullying Awareness Week is an opportunity for students, educators, parents and communities to discuss and learn about what we can do to prevent bullying.

Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of all of us to speak up against bullying. We encourage schools to review the Safe and Caring Schools Policy and its Bullying Intervention Protocol; we also encourage students to "*Stand Up*" when they witness bullying and to tell a teacher, a friend or a parent so that together we can put an end to bullying.

Every child and adult deserves to feel safe, protected and accepted for who they are within the school environment, in the community and, indeed, in all aspects of their lives regardless of appearance, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and beliefs.

Mr. Speaker, our government supports a proactive approach to eliminating bullying. Annually, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development recognizes students and schools for their work to promote Safe, Caring and Inclusive School communities.

The provincial Safe and Caring Schools Policy promotes the elimination of all forms of bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour. The policy also provides guidance on the development of a bullying intervention protocol and a school code of conduct.

I ask all hon. Members of the House to join me and promote National Bullying Awareness Week.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. We, too, join with the government in recognizing National Bullying Awareness Week.

Mr. Speaker, much work has been done to create safe and caring schools in our province, but we understand much more remains to be done. It is only with the co-operation of students, staff, administration, parents and leadership that we can rid our schools of bullying. We owe it to ourselves but, more particularly, we owe it to our students and our children.

We know children are better able to learn when they feel safe and respected. We must ensure every child has that benefit afforded to them. As legislators, we, too, can promote safe and respectful spaces ourselves. While unfortunately we stray from those ideals sometimes in here, we should strive to be positive examples. It is incumbent on us as leaders to lead by example.

I'd like to thank the students and staff in my own district as well as all of those from our various schools around the province for standing up to bullying. You are creating the change we need. You are to be commended.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. We too often hear of situations where it appears bullying is still going on in spite of all our efforts, and also where children who have been bullied don't feel they've been listened to and still feel afraid.

It's not enough to have intervention protocols and codes of conduct, though we need them; government also needs to provide sufficient resources to ensure they are fully implemented and to bring more prevention programs into the schools as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to commend the work of communities, residents and staff with Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Transportation and Works on working together in the lead up and during the rainstorm on October 11 that affected so many areas of our province.

I congratulate communities and emergency management partners as they followed best practices for emergency response and utilized their emergency management plans to support residents in their time of need. This event demonstrated the importance of sound emergency preparedness and highlighted the progress we have made as a province in terms of our ability to respond to major events. Following the storm, Premier Ball, along with the Minister of Transportation and Works, all MHAs representing affected districts and I travelled to the impacted communities to survey the damages and meet the families that were impacted by the storm's devastation.

In the response phase of this emergency, teams followed protocol and were on the ground within hours of the event. We were in constant contact with officials throughout the response. Services, schools and roads were opened quickly and individual community needs were addressed efficiently.

Mr. Speaker, we worked closely with the federal government to ensure an early rollout of the Newfoundland and Labrador – Disaster Financial Assistance Program. All municipalities have been advised of eligible criteria requirements under the Disaster Financial Assistance Program.

To date, the Department of Municipal Affairs has received 145 private sector claims, which include individual claims, small businesses and not for profit. All of these claims are being processed by the Disaster Financial Assistance division.

Mr. Speaker, the total estimated costs for municipal infrastructure damages are between \$6 million and \$7 million. The province continues to work closely with the federal government to ensure all necessary federal approvals are in place to access federal funding.

I would like also to thank local women and men who assisted their neighbours in their time of need, and I want to acknowledge the hard work of all municipalities, first responders, employees, town councils and the RCMP for their efforts. Our government will continue to work with all levels of government, organizations and homeowners in the recovery phase of this storm.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Before I recognize the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune, I remind Members of the Legislature that we can only refer to another Member by district or their title.

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

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement and for his prompt assistance during our plight, along with our Premier, who came to visit right away. So on behalf of myself and residents of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune, we thank you.

We, too, in the Official Opposition office join with the government and express our sincere appreciation to all those who provided assistance during the rainstorm. From the emergency responders to those who helped reopen roadways and bridges, and to the volunteer and not-for-profit groups who supplied hospitality to

those individuals stranded on our roadways, we offer you a heartfelt thank you.

Mr. Speaker, my district was particularly impacted by the Thanksgiving rainstorm. The rain and flooding caused serious damage to local infrastructure, roads and bridges were washed out, and many communities were isolated for several days. During the days that followed the storm I received many calls from residents needing assistance.

On behalf of those residents, I would like to thank the local officials, first responders, service crews, volunteers and residents for their tireless efforts and care. I would also like to extend a very special thank you to those individuals who helped and are continuing to help restore the infrastructure in Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune and across affected areas of the province.

Thank you all so very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Fire and Emergency Services did great work during the recent October rainstorm. We all commend them. I also congratulate municipalities for the support they provided in their communities. With the advent of climate change there will be more and more extreme weather events. I hope the minister has a plan in place to ensure municipalities get all the resources and support they need as they face the realities of climate change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, for more than two years the Premier has been saying that he had a plan for Newfoundland and Labrador. He promised the LEAP plan, the Liberal Economic Action Plan. He promised a plan from The Road Ahead tour. He, through the election campaign, promised *A Plan for a Stronger Tomorrow*. And just last week they unveiled *The Way Forward: A Vision*.

A full year in office without a plan. The people of our province remain concerned about the state of our province and the leadership of this government. They're worried about heightened tax fees put on them by the Liberal government. They're worried about the economy and the future of our province.

I ask the Premier: Why should people buy into your latest promise?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I would guess one reason why they should buy into this commitment and this vision, this plan that we put forward is because it's really the only one that they've seen in the last 12 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, what we laid out to the public over the last number of weeks was really a part of a process that started last January. It saw the engagement of over a thousand Newfoundlanders and Labradorians from the business community, from the labour community, from our communities in general. So there was quite a piece of work that went into leading up to the release of a vision.

What we did put in place – very different than what we've seen from the previous administration – is actually put targets in place. What we would be doing in the first six months, what would happen in six to 18 months, and then 18 months and beyond. First and foremost, the foundation for any plan, I say, Mr. Speaker, is to put in place a secure financial foundation. Because what we've known from the past administration is one that was weakened by their mismanagement and their poor planning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So the Premier hasn't provided any reason why people should actually buy into his plan. He likes to go back in history lessons. We don't mind doing that as well, Mr. Speaker, because I can tell you, there's a lot of good that happened over the last decade. I don't mind standing here and saying that as well; but, Mr. Speaker, no doubt there are challenges in the future for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and in the province. We are the only party who talked about that leading into the election last year.

I ask the Premier, on his new vision that he disclosed last week and shared with the people of the province, he also took the time to highlight savings.

Premier: What savings are you referring to, and what do they amount to?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we laid out last week was indeed a seven-year plan to return this province to surplus. That was laid out, and a matter of fact, just a few weeks prior to that the Minister of Finance laid out where we were in the fiscal updates. So, Mr. Speaker, there's an ongoing plan here, as we know, not only to reduce expenses, to reduce the footprint of government. We've laid that out there. What we've seen is we've seen a

government prior to the last government change, is when you had to deal with an issue, what they did is they opened up an office, and they just continue to make a strategy about strategies, I would say.

So what we continue to see is a footprint of government becoming much larger. We know, based on the jurisdictional scan that we are doing, some of this, based on the geography, merely of what we have in our province, this is a very expensive way to deliver the services that people want. So we will always look for ways to put in place good, efficient government services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So there are no details on savings. If you can't provide details on savings, I ask the Premier this: Are you confident that this plan is going to save taxpayers money or will it cost them more?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: What we'll see this plan do, Mr. Speaker, is it will create sources of revenue. We will diversify the economy with this, but we've already put in place – the previous administration, when you look back at where we were, we had the same number of deputy ministers that we've seen as the Province of Ontario. So we've been able to reduce that by 19 per cent. We've seen the same thing within the communications department where we've reduced that by nearly 30 per cent. We've seen it also within the ADM level.

So what we've seen from the previous administration is a very expensive model to deliver services. Quite clearly, I will tell you that people in all our engagements said this: Do not waste our money. Make sure that the footprint of government is one that fits the services that we depend on.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing with this *Way Forward* vision statement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So the Premier can't say if it's going to save taxpayers money or cost them more. Mr. Speaker, recently the Muskrat Falls Project was shut down for several days while the Premier sat idly by.

I ask the Premier: What was the cost resulting from the shutdown of the Muskrat Falls Project?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I take exception to the fact that the former premier says we sat idly by. That was not the case. We were involved in this for every minute, every hour that this was an active file.

Indeed, the former premier, after a 12½-hour marathon meeting that we had with our Aboriginal leaders, should be ashamed to say that someone was ever sitting idly by because if they had to have done their work and planned for this project, Mr. Speaker, we would not be in this situation that we're into.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: Keep in mind, this is the person the day after, prior to looking at this, said he wasn't familiar with the issue around methylmercury as it affected Aboriginal communities. He didn't even bother when he was the premier of this province to make himself familiar with the science that was going on.

So I take exception to the fact that this former premier thinks that someone was sitting idly by. It was not the case.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Premier, there's no need to be angry here today. We're only asking questions on behalf of the people. Your own minister agreed with our assessment and our plan on methylmercury back in June, but changed his plan this fall, I say to the Premier.

So, Premier, if you can't tell us what the cost is resulting from the shutdown of Muskrat Falls, are you able to provide the people of the province with an updated timeline on the project itself and the construction of the project? If you don't have the cost resulting from the shutdown, can you give us an update on the timelines? Do you know that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind all hon. Members that the only person I wish to hear from, especially during Question Period, is the person that has been recognized to speak. I don't want to start this session off on the wrong foot. I'm not going to tolerate Members interrupting other Members' speaking time.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, there's no doubt any time you see a major project that was shut down as a result of the actions that took place on that project a few weeks ago, there were significant costs. The costs are not fully developed or finalized yet. It's too early to tell. What we do know is it will impact schedule and it will impact cost. Once the numbers are determined, of course, these will be shared, as we normally get with updates on the Muskrat Falls Project.

I would also say, Mr. Speaker, when you look at what we've had to deal with on the Muskrat Falls Project, it really anchors us back to the fact that they were not prepared, the proper amount of preparation that was required on this megaproject – when you look at companies like Astaldi, the contracts that were put in place, they were put in place, sanctioned by the previous administration.

Keep in mind, we did not support this project; we inherited this project. There's a significant investment made here now with public funds. Our job right now is to get it back on track and get the schedule back in place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. P. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier hasn't provided an update on cost or on timelines. Now, the CEO this morning made an estimate; he said there was an impact of two to three months on the construction project itself. He estimated a \$200 million to \$300 million impact. Now, obviously the Premier is not aware of this.

I'll ask the Premier: When can you provide an update to the House of Assembly?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, there's a big gap between \$200 million and \$300 million. What he asked for was: What were the costs? Well, I could easily say between \$200 million and \$300 million; that's what was reported this morning, but that's a big gap. I'd like to have numbers – that is kind of like the way they budgeted before. Remember, it was them who said it was going to be around \$1.1 billion and it was \$2.2 billion. So I'm not surprised they would not be concerned about the details when it comes to budgeting or a schedule, Mr. Speaker.

This project right now, there's no doubt about it, has come with significant challenges to the people of this province. Also, if you remember, it was a previous administration that said we would not have to worry about borrowing for Muskrat Falls because, as a government, they said this: We are flush with cash. I wonder how he feels about that statement today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, since *Budget 2016* we've seen reversals on closing of libraries, closing of courts and health care decisions.

I ask the Minister of Finance: What is the net effect on *Budget 2016* and these changes, and where will these costs be made up?

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

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

I thank the Member opposite for the question.

As we shared with the people of the province, and certainly the Members of this House on October 27 as part of our fall fiscal update, we revised our deficit for this fiscal year from \$1.8 billion to \$1.58 billion, which is a reduction of \$250 million over what we had forecast.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. C. BENNETT: That number comes from an improvement in revenue and also from an adjustment to the revenue risk adjustment. As well, we've been able to reduce our borrowing requirements by \$500 million.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

She wasn't able to answer the question.

Mr. Speaker, *Budget 2016* identified cuts of 450 FTEs in agencies, boards and commissions and 200 in core government.

I ask the minister: How many of these 450 FTEs represented jobs? Have all of these people been terminated and what is the net savings?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I would take exception to what the Member opposite said in his preamble to his question. The information I provided to him was an explanation of where we are, at a very high level on the expenses and on the revenues for the province as part of our fiscal update.

I'll take great exception to the fact that the Member opposite likes to refer to the fact that he believes people can't answer questions. I'm very prepared to answer his questions. On the information he asked around the FTEs, I will make sure that I have the exact information for that Member and provide it to him in the next day or so.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So let's be clear, the Minister of Finance is telling us she had 450 FTEs in her budget last spring that she was going to take out of the public service. Today she stands in the House and she can't give us details on those 450 FTEs. No wonder we're in the state we're in in the province, Mr. Speaker, right now over the past 12 months.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: I'm restarting the clock.

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Finance: Are the Liberal appointments of deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers and communication directors replacing prior FTE cuts from *Budget 2016*?

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the Member opposite is inferring that I'm not aware of information inside my departments, and I can assure the Member opposite quite unequivocally that the operations inside the Department of Finance, as well as the Human Resources Secretariat, get my full and undivided attention. So much so that this year our government has been able to say to the people of the province that we had a \$1.8 billion deficit that we expected we would be achieving, and we were able to come out at the mid-year and say we had improved that number by \$250 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. C. BENNETT: Quite frankly, I think that's performance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So on top of it, she couldn't tell me what the 450 full-time equivalents were or if they would be terminated based on the budget in 2016.

Mr. Speaker, a budget is a plan, or may I say a vision of how to lead forward. In *Budget 2016* you advised people of the province of a supplementary budget to address expenditures.

I ask the minister: The Premier disagreed with this we understand, why the fiscal change on this?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, let me assure the people of the province who are watching this today, and the Members opposite, that our government is extremely unified in how we intend to solve the financial situation that we as a people must face.

Last week the Premier announced the vision, *The Way Forward*, which is a sustainable plan with 50 initiatives in it, Mr. Speaker, that we

will implement and we will report with a scorecard on our implementation process as part of budget '17-'18. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I believe the people of the province – the feedback has been positive, and with 50 initiatives with very clear outputs, we're very proud of that piece of work.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Quebec is receiving \$10 billion in equalization while forecasting a \$2 billion surplus. Nova Scotia is getting \$1.7 billion; yet, Newfoundland is running a deficit and not seeing a penny in equalization.

I ask the Minister of Finance: Have you made any effort to advocate for equalization from the federal government for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador?

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to stand in this House of Assembly and speak to the incredible work that our Premier and our colleagues on this side of the House of Assembly have been doing with our federal counterparts – successfully, I might add – to help lighten the burden of the financial situation that we're faced with in our province.

Recently, there was an announcement of a \$2.9 billion enhanced federal loan guarantee which will help reduce the costs associated with the Muskrat Falls Project, Mr. Speaker. In addition to that, we've seen actions that are very broad, including things like removing the tariffs from the boats that were purchased by the former administration without even considering the tariffs on those boats.

We have been working very hard with our officials and colleagues in Ottawa and we will continue to do that. We will continue to bring back results.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The minister didn't indicate if she was advocating on behalf of Newfoundland and Labrador. All that she referenced in regard to funding from the federal government, we certainly applaud that, but there's a federal program under equalization that we should have access to.

In her fiscal update, the minister talked – it wasn't a supplementary budget, it was an update. The minister herself acknowledged the unfairness of the current equalization program.

So I ask her again: Why are you not talking to the federal government about a fair share of equalization for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, not only are we advocating, but we're getting results. I just listed a large number of them, including a \$2.9 billion loan guarantee that this government has been able to bring to fruition for the people of the province against the Muskrat Falls Project which is a huge success.

When it comes to equalization, Mr. Speaker, I would remind the Member opposite that the equalization formula as it is implemented today was negotiated and agreed to by the former administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Economic diversification was mentioned quite often in the Liberal's 2015 election campaign.

They even promised a LEAP plan which doesn't exist. One year later, still no real plan.

I ask the Premier: When can the people of Newfoundland and Labrador expect to see your plan to grow our economy?

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the Member opposite for the question. Our Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development is very active in taking on initiatives to talk to business in the community, to grow the economy. With the Premier's *Way Forward* and the vision statement, we're taking on a number of initiatives to work to grow broadband in the economy so that people have more competitive business.

Also, we're improving our service standards, looking at our programming. We are looking at ways of which we can attract and grow more business in Newfoundland and Labrador in many cases throughout the province and we're seeing success.

We have been working with the arts community as well when it comes to status of the artist legislation. There are a number of initiatives that the Department of Business is taking to grow and diversify the economy right here to deliver tangible results.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The minister's department is indeed busy carrying out initiatives that were launched by the previous administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: I ask the Premier: What specifically has your administration done to

strengthen the economy since taking office one year ago?

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I can speak quite candidly that we've delivered broadband Internet to 16 communities across the province in Newfoundland and Labrador since January of this year. We've also invested \$6.2 million to leverage 20 additional million dollars in various programs for market, business development. We've been working with a number of business clients to grow and diversity the economy.

Our tourism numbers this year have been tremendous when it comes to initiatives undertaken. We did a new launch of a tourism ad. We've been taking a number of approaches when we work with our operators.

We have a vision to get through destination development planning and product development to really grow and enhance our tourism industry, and all other aspects of the economy. We're really going to be doing things on innovation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about tourism and rural broadband. I thank the minister for proving my point.

The Liberals are projecting that our province will lose 33,000 jobs in the next five years.

I ask the Premier: Do you have a concrete plan to support job growth? Can you show it to us, because it's certainly not in your vision statement?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Mr. Speaker, I would say to the Member opposite that no government owns the tourism industry or owns an infrastructure aspect.

We're taking on a number of strategic initiatives that we're doing here as a government when it comes to innovation, when it comes to regional pilot projects. We're working with the small business sector because we believe that small business is the backbone of the economy. We will map that out and make sure there are additional jobs created with small business. Working with my colleagues, the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, when it comes to looking at the College of the North Atlantic and how we modernize, and work with business incubation, work with the social enterprise, when we talk with my colleague for Seniors, Children and Social Development.

We're a government that's working together as a team: Natural Resources, Fisheries and Agrifoods. We're going to grow the economy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today is World Diabetes Day.

I ask the minister: Can he please provide an update on the Liberal's promise of diabetes prevention and management program?

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I welcome the question. The program development is proceeding. The issue currently with us is converting a registry into a database for diabetes management. We are drawing on some legislation to try and deal with the privacy issues about converting what is a database into a

registry. The gentleman opposite will remember some of those challenges from his time, I'm sure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier campaigned on if you can't listen, you can't lead.

I ask the Premier: Will you listen to the NLTA and the hundreds of teachers requesting that you remove the Minister of Education from Cabinet?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, the answer I will tell you now is no. I will not be replacing the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, I can give you some very good reasons. In the minister's mandate letter we talked about actually putting in place a Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes. The minister has done that. Also, around school board elections, something that the previous administration said they were going to do, often said they were going to do. Then they said they were going to do it again, but guess what, never did it. The minister has delivered on that on November 22 of this year.

We have a number of people around our province that showed significant interest in this. I encourage people to get out and participate. The minister has delivered on that, also, on full-day kindergarten. So the minister has done a very good job in some very trying times, but he has my confidence.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My understanding is you're right, a number of people do want to run. It's because they need to help fix the education system and the state it's in right now.

The Minister of Education received a mandate letter from the Premier to act with integrity in all aspects of his service. Based on the responses from the school councils, the Child Care Coalition and the NLTA, does the Premier think that the Education Minister has shown integrity when dealing with stakeholders?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When you look at where the education system is in our province, we've made a big commitment. Education is a priority for us. As a matter of fact, if it wasn't for the fact that we find ourselves in a situation where debt servicing is now surpassing education, based on where they didn't prepare our education system to where it is today, there would be more money to spend on education.

Education is a priority for us. We respect the fact that we have teachers that are working very hard to deliver the education where we need to be in our K to 12 system as we do with early childhood educators, Mr. Speaker.

These are very difficult times within the system right now, but the Minister of Education is doing a very good job in these very challenging times. We've put in place an offer to meet with the NLTA and that offer still exists.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island for a very quick question.

MR. BRAZIL: Mr. Speaker, when will the Minister of Education meet with stakeholders, particularly those bus operators, to ensure that

all school buses carrying children are safe in this province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs for a very quick response.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, we take bus safety very seriously in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. We thank all the workers who are out inspecting our buses.

I'll have a further question later – if you want to question tomorrow on the inspection process, Mr. Speaker. We all, on this side, take buses very seriously, the safety of our children very seriously, Mr. Speaker, and we work very hard with all stakeholders in the province to ensure that the buses are safe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Last week the Premier presented what he called a vision statement which says nothing about job creation objectives. With 6,500 jobs lost last month and unemployment increasing monthly, government speaks only of cuts and firings.

I ask the Premier: After a year in power, what plans does this government have? What is his vision to address the job crisis?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, the plan did not just address where we'd need to be in putting in place a leaner, flatter way of delivering services within our province, which is what really taxpayers, the people that actually use their hard-earned money to pay for the services, which they have told me in vast – in many, many occasions – in making sure that you run an efficient government. They have said that un-categorically, no matter where we'd go.

Creating the new sources of revenue is really within *The Way Forward* documentation in many, many ways. We've put in place targets around agriculture, around how we would use forestry, as an example; how we would work with our offshore industry, how we would work with small business in general. That is within this document. As has been mentioned, there are nearly 50 initiatives there; how we reduce health care costs, making sure we have health in all policies, as an example, Mr. Speaker. There are lots of good examples here of how we would create employment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Looking for the word jobs in that statement is a real job, Mr. Speaker, I say.

In his mandate letter to himself, the Premier says, "... building a stronger, smarter economy requires diversification, job creation and growth."

I ask the Premier: After a year in power, what has he done of any significance for diversification, job creation or growth?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, when you look at any business application, whether it's a community, it could be an association, it could be a business, as an example, one of the things that you have to do is establish secure financial footing. You have to do that. It is essential.

We have worked very hard this year. When you look at where we were with a \$2.7 billion deficit, we would have seen debt-servicing costs in our province create further – we'd create more damage, I would say, and we would see more job losses, in fact, I'd say, Mr. Speaker, based on where we were going.

So we had to put in place a financial footing that could be dependent. Well, we've done that. We've reduced from \$2.7 billion currently down

to just shy of \$1.6 billion. That has been our focus this year, I would say, so far. We've done a very good job. We're working with all Cabinet and caucus in getting that secure foundation in place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, in September our community was shocked by Scotsburn's announcement they were closing their ice cream plant in St. John's Centre, losing over 170 well-paying jobs, also resulting in a significant economic loss to the province.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: Did he or any of his ministers meet with Scotsburn management to see whether anything could be done to address the company's concerns and prevent the loss of these valuable jobs?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agrifoods.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the hon. Member for the question. The answer is yes, as a department, we did meet with Scotsburn on the closure of the ice cream plant here in St. John's; and, like you, we were disappointed by the decision. Scotsburn did assure us that this decision was one they made as a company and, at this time, they weren't going to revisit the decision.

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

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: What was the outcome of his meeting with Scotsburn? What, if anything, anything at all, did he do to try and protect these manufacturing jobs?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agrifoods.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Like I said in the earlier response, we met with the company. The company made it clear this

was business decision that they weren't, at this time, prepared to revisit. We're working with the dairy industry, the Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador, to ensure a successful transition as we move forward with the industry in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister, what is he doing to concretely help these workers who have lost their well-paying manufacturing jobs. What are they doing for their way forward?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agrifoods.

MR. CROCKER: Again, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We're working diligently with the Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador to find outlets for our industrial milk in this province. It's not easy, but we will continue to work with the dairy farmers in the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Tabling of Documents

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

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

Pursuant to section 26(5)(a) of the *Financial Administration Act*, I'm tabling 10 orders-in-council relating to funding pre-commitments for the 2017-18 to 2022-23 fiscal years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: In accordance with section 19(5)(a) the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, I hereby table the minutes of the House of Assembly Management Commission meetings held on September 22, November 6 of 2015; March 16, March 23, May 30, June 29, July 15 of 2016.

Further tabling of documents?

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Works, Services And Transportation Act, Bill 40.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act, Bill 42.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Create Safe Access Zones Around Facilities And Homes Of Doctors And Service Providers Providing Or Facilitating Abortion Services, Bill 43.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville.

MR. B. DAVIS: I'd like to give notice of a motion for a private Member's resolution:

WHEREAS the upgrading and development of road infrastructure is of paramount importance to the economic future of Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS the traditional approach to road construction has led to momentous traffic backups, delays and frustration for citizens, tourists and businesses alike; and

WHEREAS it can be shown that night-time paving will significantly reduce the negative impact of road construction through traffic slowdowns and travel delays;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House supports the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's initiative to implement a pilot project early in 2017 which uses night-time paving as its primary method of completing of work.

This is moved by the Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville and seconded by the Member for Harbour Grace – Port de Grave.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 63, the private Member's resolution just read by the Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville is the one to be debated this Wednesday.

MR. SPEAKER: While it's unusual for speakers to give notices of motion – this is, I think, the first time for our Legislature. But according to the legislation, I give notice that I will tomorrow place a resolution before the House of Assembly as follows:

WHEREAS section 85 of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015* provides that the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner be filled by the Lieutenant Governor in Council on resolution of the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS section 85 further provides that the Speaker establish a selection committee for that purpose; and

WHEREAS the Selection Committee was established and that Committee submitted a roster of qualified candidates to the Speaker of the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS section 89 provides that the Lieutenant Governor may, on the recommendation of the House of Assembly Management Commission, appoint an acting commissioner if the office becomes vacant; and

WHEREAS the office was vacated and Mr. Donovan Molloy was, on the recommendation of the Selection Committee, appointed in an acting capacity on July 22, 2016;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Mr. Donovan Molloy be appointed as the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl – Southlands.

MR. LANE: 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 many students within our province depend on school busing for transportation to and from school each day; and

WHEREAS there has been a number of buses removed from service over the past few weeks for safety reasons, calling into question the current inspection and enforcement protocols for school buses in this province; and

WHEREAS there have been concerns raised by members of the busing industry regarding government's tendering practices as it relates to the provision of school bus services in the province; and

WHEREAS there are many parents throughout our province who have raised both scheduling, as well as safety concerns, regarding the English School District's 1.6-kilometre policy, the courtesy-seating policy, the new double-bus run schedule, as well as overcrowding on school buses;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to strike an all-party committee on school busing to consult with stakeholders and make recommendations to government for the improvement of the school busing system in our province.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I think the petition is pretty self-explanatory. There are a number of issues that have been raised now around school busing. In fairness to the current administration, pretty much all of these issues existed when the other administration was in power but changes weren't made. The issues continue today.

Certainly it's been exacerbated, the issue about the 1.6 kilometre rule, which apparently wasn't being applied in a lot of areas of the province is now being applied. There have been changes around that; implications on courtesy seating, and certainly the new double busing run and the implications that is having on families is a concern as well.

Whereas there are so many issues around busing, they span different departments, Service NL as well as Education, then it's suggested, Mr. Speaker, that the best solution would be to have an all-party committee to look at all of the busing issues in the province, make recommendations to improve it for the children of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 government has once again cut the libraries budget forcing the closure of 54 libraries; and

WHEREAS libraries are often the backbone of their communities –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, I can hardly hear myself here.

Thank you.

WHEREAS libraries are often the backbone of their communities, especially for those with little access to government services where they offer learning opportunities and computer access; and

WHEREAS libraries and librarians are critical in efforts to improve the province's literacy levels which are among the lowest in Canada; and

WHEREAS already strapped municipalities are not in a position to take over the operation and cost of libraries;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to keep these libraries open and work on a long-term plan to strengthen the library system.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition, this group of petitioners are from Greenspond, and the idea of a public library in Greenspond was born at a public meeting on March 27, 1946. So that was quite a while ago, and they have the objective of creating a sustainable memorial to five men from Greenspond who lost their lives in combat during World War II. So for them, their library was an important, crucial part of their community and they did it in honour of these men who lost their lives in combat. It was officially opened as a war memorial on July 22, 1949.

Mr. Speaker, one might think, why are people still signing petitions? Because they have no confidence in this government right now to do the right thing and keep their libraries open. We know there's been an ongoing consultation with many communities about the roles their library plays, but most citizens were absolutely shocked that this government decided to close half the

libraries in the province – we, with the lowest literacy rate in the country.

So, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province have no confidence in this government to do the right thing. That's why they're still signing petitions, that's why they're still having community meetings, and that's why they're still asking us to stand in this House to speak on their behalf, to petition this government to do the right thing and not close their very valuable libraries.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fitting to present this particular petition from the people of Greenspond, because of the origin of their library. Why the people invested their own time and money to open their library – it was so important to them and continues to be so.

Thank you very much.

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

MS. PERRY: 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 the people of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune need to have access to adequate health care; and

WHEREAS the local clinics in rural areas are the main source of medical assistance for our people; and

WHEREAS the government has reduced funding and closed the Hermitage clinics and downgraded services;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reinstate the services to health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, since the clinic in Hermitage has closed, over the last few months we've seen a significant increase in anxiety, particularly for our seniors who now, with facing winter

arriving, are very, very worried about what will happen to their medical care.

We have issues around people not being able to get to Harbour Breton to get their blood tested, and they're on medications, Mr. Speaker, like warfarin. This type of regressive cuts to health care will do nothing to improve our state of well-being as a people.

Looking at the vision document last Thursday, I have some fears and concerns about what that means for health care – particularly rural health care – for the entire Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I encourage every, single citizen of this province to take a keen interest and a close eye, and to voice your concerns about what you see happening in health care.

We, in rural Newfoundland, do not need more people who can deliver presentations or more managers. We need more front-line nurses and doctors, and more nurse practitioners. That is where we see, as livyers in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, the greatest need for health care. You can send us a brochure about how to eat better. You can send us Facebook notices and emails. There are all kinds of ways of getting the message out.

What we need in health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador are doctors and nurses and clinics. We need them to be open; we need them to be accessible. We are geographically spread out as a province and we need those front-line services in our communities, or certainly within close proximity, and I don't mean driving an hour or two over highways that are not even snow cleared.

So, Mr. Speaker, we call upon government to seriously evaluate what it's doing with health care and to look at improving it, not eroding it.

Thank you so much.

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

MR. PETTEN: 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 policing is vital to the protection and the service of our province's communities;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to increase the presence of law enforcement in the Conception Bay South area.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the number, but this has been numerous, numerous of these petitions I've presented. Through my travels through the district, it's still a big issue.

Recently, a few months back, I spoke publicly on it. A lot of people in the district had a lot of concerns, raised a lot of concerns. By a few recent, I guess, serious crimes now, more policing wouldn't have stopped those crimes from happening, but it just reaffirmed people's belief that they don't feel as safe in their communities as they once did.

A lot of that is the evolution of the town; it's one of the largest municipalities in the province. And with that comes increased crime and whatnot. But most people in the community don't feel there's adequate policing. There has been improvement, there has been more presence, there's no doubt, but a town the size of CBS does require – I think it's earned the right to have – its own dedicated detachment office.

I know there were some public comments made in the media shortly after I spoke publicly on it stating that there was an office there that the public didn't use; therefore, that's why it was closed. Just to add to that commentary, because I never responded at the time, but I will now. That office was not really a public office. There was a little sign over the door. It was more meant for officers to come in and complete their work via computer.

As we all know now, computers are readily accessible in the police vehicles; they no longer require that building. But anyone requiring any

service of any sort from the RNC had to either go to Mount Pearl or Fort Townshend. That office didn't provide service to the public as was stated. So that was somewhat misleading and I just wanted to clarify it.

People come to you and you speak to them on a daily basis – not only daily, but I mean you run into them and the topic comes up – their views have not changed. And there's an acknowledgement that there is an improvement in the number of police vehicles patrolling the community.

Response times are everything, Mr. Speaker. If anyone is familiar with CBS, if you have an incident in Seal Cove or Topsail, both at various ends of the district, and another police vehicle is already gone to Fort Townshend, you're operating most times with two, three if you're lucky. The response times to get to those from one end of that town to the other – as we all know, it's a large district. I think response times are a problem on certain crimes, not all, but it's just a matter of more police presence. I believe that a town the size of almost 27,000 people does deserve the proper attention, to have its own detachment.

I call upon government, as I've done many times in the past and I'll probably continue to do with these petitions – I have a lot of them – to give some serious consideration to that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, 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 fisheries policy regulations link harvesting quotas to vessel length for various species; and

WHEREAS many harvesters own vessels of various sizes but, because of policy regulations,

are restricted to using smaller vessels, often putting their crews in danger;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the government to make representation to the federal government to encourage them to change policy, thus ensuring the safety of fisheries harvesters in our province.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

This is a petition that I presented several times in the last session. Mr. Speaker, I know that this is important in your district, as recently we saw the devastation in the community of Shea Heights where they lost four members of that community out fishing in a small vessel. It seems like every year we come back to the House of Assembly there's always a tragedy that we talk about on the water.

Some of these tragedies can be avoided. It is so important – I have friends of mine that fish the crab fishery, for example, and they use six different boats to go out and catch crab. The cost alone to getting those boats ready and everything else but if you look at what they have in their vessels from the six boats from their best vessel to the worse one they got, we should be ensuring that our fish harvesters are out on the water in the safest vessel possible. It's too late when we see what happened here in St. John's, and that could happen anywhere else in the province when people are out in small boats and tragedy happens.

Again like I said, the fishery today – and I know the Minister of Fisheries, because we spoke of this several times, does agree with me. I just want to see us put regulations in place and encourage the federal government to put regulations in place that our fish harvesters are safe. They have to go home to their families.

I have family members that do fish and every time that they are out on the water, it's always concern. It's not only in rural Newfoundland; it's right here in St. John's. I was over to the Prosser's Rock there the weekend having a look at some of the boats over there; the place is absolutely blocked with fish harvesters. If you

looked at the good boats that are there, you'd say, okay, I'd have no problem going out in that one; but there are some boats over there that I wouldn't want to be in when out on the water in rough seas.

I encourage and ask government to really put this forward, the safety of our fish harvesters – the people who go out on the water every day should be paramount to all of us. We should really encourage the federal government – I understand why some of these policies came in place. I understand when we went into the crab fishery and shell fishery that they had to take care of different sectors, but right now, we have too many fishermen out on the water in boats that are not safe and they shouldn't be out there. They have vessels to be safe out on the water. I encourage government to continue with the policy on this, please.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: 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 the education of children is one of the important and vital investments that can be made in the success of our children; and

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador should be choosing educational options that will provide all students of our province with a higher standard of education and enhance the learning experience for our youth; and

WHEREAS the government's decision to make cuts to teachers and to our education system will have a negative effect on the students;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reverse the decisions effectively immediately.

Mr. Speaker, as we've heard here, there's a trend around some of the issues that are going on within government and this administration has brought in recently, particularly around education.

As my colleagues here for Southlands, Mount Pearl North and also for St. John's Centre had noted here, there are major cuts in our education system and there's a real awareness here. There's a trend going on here. The trend is they're hearing it in their districts. They're hearing it from school councils. They're hearing it from administrators. They're hearing it from parents. They're hearing it from the business community. Even the business community now are stepping up and saying the investments that are being taken away from our education system is going to have a detrimental effect in the next generation's ability to be leaders in the education system but also in the business sector.

We've heard it from every sector here around the impacts that we're having. We're hearing it around changes to our busing, the impact that has on stress on families. The impact it has on students being able to be part of extracurricular activities; administrators themselves having to coordinate these types of efforts. We're seeing it around safety. We're seeing around core French. We're seeing it around the issues, particularly around blended classrooms and integration in certain programs and services. We're seeing it from the direct cuts.

There's a trend here. There seems to be a commonality here around the fact that our education system has stepped backwards in the last decisions made by this administration, and everybody sees that. What they're asking is open up your minds, open up your eyes and see that we need to take a different approach here.

There's no doubt there are fiscal challenges here, but this is not the way to deal with those. You're going to have an impact negatively on our society. It's not in the best interests of students here. It's not in the best interests of parents and definitely not in the best interests of our society.

We're trying to attract families to stay here. The first key thing that people look at from a family moving into a neighbourhood is the quality of

education. One time it was about the type of school you were in, the amenities it had; now it's about directly the type of programs and services you offer.

If you're not offering those to the quality that people expect here – we've come a long way in the last couple of decades, let's continue that trend. We can't do it when we're continuously cutting education and when we're continuously not open to listening to the stakeholders about their input to what should be done and how we should better serve the education system here.

So I'm encouraging the House, I'm encouraging the government, I'm encouraging the Minister of Education to go back and look again at the cuts they've made, see how detrimental they are to our society and ask that they look at the petitions here and heed the advice given.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I call Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Judicature Act, Bill 39, and I further move that the said bill be now read the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded by the hon. the Government House Leader that they shall have leave to introduce a bill, Bill 39, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those against?

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General to introduce a bill, “An Act To Amend The Judicature Act,” carried. (Bill 39)

CLERK (Barnes): A bill, An Act To Amend The Judicature Act. (Bill 39)

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

When shall the said bill be read a second time?

MR. A. PARSONS: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 39 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, Order 1, Address in Reply.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, it’s an honour for me to rise here today and give my maiden speech as a relatively new MHA for the historic District of Bonavista. Being an MHA is a lifelong dream of mine that came true on the evening of November 30, 2015 and was fully realized on December 18, 2015 when I was sworn in along with the 39 others here today.

I’m going to start with a little story, and I hope you get a chuckle out of it, but my maiden speech is certainly not going to hold a candle to the Member for Fogo – Cape Freels. I think that was quite the maiden speech. Growing up I was a sea cadet, and I’ll talk about that further in my speech. After I finished my time as a cadet, I decided I would help my corps whenever I was available because I was going to MUN at the time.

Anyway, in the spring of 2000, RCSCC Golden Hind had their annual ceremonial review in Catalina. I was feeling pretty good about myself, wearing a beautiful blue suit – I got to get that out there for my friends across the floor – that my parents purchased for me for my cousin’s wedding two years prior, and I was waiting for the event to start.

One of my friends who volunteered with the corps, Dexter Hicks, was always known for his sarcastic remark or some put down, all in good fun of course. Figuring that I would get some sort of put down or insult, I decided to get ahead of it by saying to Dexter, “It’s amazing what a cheap suit and shower can do for a man.” His only response was, “Yes, Kingy b’y, I spose.” Thinking I dodged the bullet, I had a conversation with Mrs. Jean Elliott who was the president of the navy league, who’d I’d known for many years as a cadet.

Mrs. Elliott asked me what I was up to these days, and before I could get the words out of my mouth, Dexter said: King’s a salesman for cheap suits. So here I am 16 years later, still wearing a cheap suit but instead of selling them, I’m representing my district in the House and trying to sell my constituents on legislation and government policy. I probably should have been a haberdasher.

Growing up I lived in Catalina, Trinity Bay, which is where I currently reside. Catalina, when I was young, was a very prosperous town until the collapse of the cod fishery in 1992. Almost immediately you could see and feel the devastation that the cod moratorium had on mine and neighbouring communities, which is in some instances are still being felt today, 24 years later.

We went from an economy where anyone who wanted full time, year-round work at good pay and benefits could have it, to an economy where there are mainly seasonal jobs at the minimum or lower income wages. This is the case for most of rural Newfoundland. After sitting on the sidelines, I decided two years ago that I wanted to become an MHA to try to make a difference in the lives of which I serve.

As a youth, I attended Catalina Elementary and Discovery Collegiate in Bonavista. My interests

included sports, mainly volleyball and hockey, the outdoors – thanks to my Uncle Max I became an avid fly fisherman, much like our Premier, and my Uncle Bruce, a moose hunter – politics and student government, and sea cadets. Each of my four years at Discovery Collegiate I served on student council, during which I was president in grades 11 and 12. That's one of the reasons I got interested in politics, and I'll get into that interest in a moment.

My biggest passion growing up was being a sea cadet with RCSCC #84 Golden Hind in Catalina. I spent most of my free time for five years being active as I could within the corps, becoming coxswain during my last year. As a cadet, I attended sailing camps in Cornwallis, Halifax, and St. John's, finishing as a sailing instructor with HMCS Avalon here on Quidi Vidi Lake in 1999. I had an opportunity to do seamanship training off the interior coast of British Columbia, Vancouver Island. As well, Golden Hind received a trip to Plymouth and Bristol, England, as part of the Cabot 500 celebrations in 1997. All this led to a pretty good career with the Royal Canadian Navy. I'll discuss this after I speak to two very important people in my life.

My parents have always been a big part of my life. Edward and Linda King are truly two remarkable people who provided me with a wonderful childhood. They've been there for me when times were tough, especially when I was battling with depression and anxiety a few years ago, and they have made countless sacrifices for me. Those sacrifices mainly come from my military deployments, including Afghanistan and Libya, where their fear and worry was probably a lot worse than what I was feeling. When in the theatre of war, your primary focus is on the task at hand. It is those left behind that patiently wait for an email or phone call to know that you're all right, pay the bills, and take care of all other things that we're unable to do.

As a single guy and an only child, it was up to my parents to man the home front. A little over two years ago I found it necessary to invite my parents to live with me in Halifax. My father had just had kidney failure and required dialysis three days a week. Knowing the hardships they faced by travelling over an hour from Catalina to Clarenville, I invited them into my home to ease

their burden. That was all well and good for six months or so, but I had other plans and my parents would have to make another sacrifice. I was going to get into politics and move back home to Catalina to seek the Liberal nod for Bonavista South; thus, they would have to make the move back. Now don't feel too bad for them, they were the ones who got me interested in politics.

A few months after returning home, dialysis was opened in Bonavista. Getting back to my interest in politics, in the early '90s my parents were active volunteers and friends with former Trinity North MHA Doug Oldford. I vividly remember the by-election in 1991, where I was nine years old going around knocking on doors and hanging out in campaign offices throughout the district.

Once Doug got the victory on that cold February night, I was hooked on politics. As I mentioned, I was active in student politics in high school. I was also elected as VP Academic for the Marine Institute Students' Union for the 2003-2004 academic year, often fighting tooth and nail against MI's administration on numerous issues.

I'm probably one of the most unlikely MHAs to sit in the Legislature here today. At a recent social event our Education Minister said to me: Neil, tell me how you did it. What he was referring to is the fact that when I announced I would seek the Liberal nomination on July 28, 2014, I was living in Halifax and was a relative unknown to most constituents in the old Bonavista South district and within the Newfoundland and Labrador Liberal Party.

I wasn't on anyone's radar, no one was courting me. What I did bring to the table was a strong work ethic and an ability to relate and make connections with people in over 20 years around party politics. I held several positions with my local federal and provincial Liberal district associations in Nova Scotia, being president of the Halifax Atlantic District Association during the NSLP rise to government in 2013.

What I gained most from this time was campaigning on both losing and winning campaigns, both in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia. You learn quite a bit on the hustings and I brought that to my own campaign.

My proudest moment prior to my own election was the evening of October 8, 2013, when we helped get my friend and mentor, Brendan Maguire, elected as MLA in Nova Scotia.

Anyway, I've gotten off topic a little bit, but that's what politicians like to do, get off track and talk about themselves. During the initial Bonavista South nomination, there were five of us seeking the nod – pretty hard odds to overcome. However, based on my campaign experience I put together a strong team, knocked on every door in the district and got out to as many events as possible that I could to raise my profile and make myself accessible. I still do this today because I truly believe that an MHA must be available for his or her constituents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: At that point, I had signed up over 2,200 supporters. However, a day before our nomination was called, our former premier who gained the position by a couple of hundred delegates in the ballroom at the Delta decided he had a mandate to conduct electoral reform and try to save his party's skin. We all know how that worked out.

Anyway, so that delayed our nomination and the newly minted District of Bonavista was formed, which took in all of the old Bonavista South district as well as parts of Trinity North and Terra Nova. I took a short break to recharge, going on a trip with my friends to Montreal to see my beloved Habs. After that, I was hard at it again for the next six months and, on July 9, I won the Liberal nomination in the District of Bonavista, gaining over 65 per cent of the vote against two other competitors.

The work didn't stop there. My team grew and I grew as a person, because you are truly affected by those you meet on the campaign trail. That paid off on November 30 when I was elected as the first MHA in the District of Bonavista, defeating three other candidates, including the incumbent MHA. I won that evening with 67 per cent of the vote, but that's not a direct result of me, that is a direct result of my campaign team and volunteers.

Words cannot express how deeply thankful I am for your hard work and dedication. I will do my best not to let you down.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Everyone has a career before becoming an MHA; I'm no different. My friend for Placentia West – Bellevue is the same as well; he had one. I proudly served as a Marine Systems Engineering officer in the Royal Canadian Navy for 14 years. My path to being a naval officer is almost as unlikely as my path with politics. In high school I had given some thought to a career in the Canadian Forces by applying for the Regular Officer Training Plan, ROTP, which would pay for my university degree, with a five-year commitment to the military afterwards.

I went to see my guidance counsellor and he told me not to waste my time applying because I would more than likely not get accepted, so I didn't. I applied for engineering at MUN and got accepted in the fall of 1999. In January of 2000, I headed to the recruiting centre in St. John's for a cadet officer interview. I wanted to help out my old corps and earn a few bucks teaching sailing at cadet camp in the summer. I sat down with recruiting officer and he looked at my high school marks, my extracurricular activities and the fact that I was taking engineering in university and then proceeded to ask me to if I heard of ROTP.

I told him about my high school guidance counsellor story and the recruiter asked for his name. I'm sure he gave the counsellor an ear full. He told me to consider the interview a formality and, less than six months later, I was accepted to the highly competitive Regular Officer Training Plan.

Given the length of my engineering program, I had to change it to fulfill the obligations of my contract. So I completed a Diploma of Marine Engineering Technology at the Marine Institute in 2003 and a Bachelor of Technology from MUN in 2004.

In January 2005, I moved to Halifax and my career in the navy took off. That included training in Esquimalt, Halifax and Portsmouth, England. I had shipboard postings to Her

Majesty's Canadian ships: *Fredericktown*, *Halifax*, *Charlottetown*, *Montreal* and *St. John's*. The *St. John's* is where I finished my career in October 2014 as head of the department for the Marine Systems Engineering department, months away from being promoted to Lieutenant Commander. I had shore-based postings at the Canadian Forces Naval Engineering School, the Fleet Maintenance Facility and Engineering Operations with Maritime Forces Atlantic.

I had several people which helped me through my naval career and I feel I should mention them. These people include Dave Hooper, Pete Lebel, Jean Francis Seguin, Brad Pelley, Mark Brake, Bob Steeb and Bob Jones.

The highlight of my career, which formed a lot of my perspective I have here today, is my deployments. I've been deployed to West Africa and the Caribbean for counter-drug operations in 2006 and 2007, the Coast of Libya for Op Unified Protector in 2011 and to Afghanistan in 2009-10.

My deployment to Afghanistan was truly remarkable because I was a naval officer and I never thought in a million years I would end up there because it's a landlocked country. B'y, was I wrong. Usually when you get called up to the commander's office, you're in trouble; however, I couldn't think of anything that I did wrong and I had just got an excellent performance review.

On July 2, 2009 I got called up to Commander Bob Jones's office. He broke the news to me that one of my colleagues did not make it past his pre-deployment screening and the Fleet Maintenance Facility would have to provide another officer. That officer was me.

I quickly got sent to Kingston, Ontario for three weeks of training and on September 16, 2009 was on my way to Afghanistan as the interpreter manager for Regional Command South in Kandahar.

Being in charge of interpreters was like herding cats at the best of times; everyone wanted their services but there were limited numbers with appropriate qualifications to do different classifications of work. It wasn't the easiest thing to do when you have to tell a higher

ranking officer that they couldn't immediately have interpreter services because there was a higher priority. This was especially true for the senior British staff officers. To them, their task was the most important, even when others have more pressing matters. As well, they didn't like to be told no by a colonel navy lieutenant – and Dr. Haggie knows what I'm talking about.

The good thing is my boss and mentor Aussie Colonel David Stanley always had my back. He would say Slick – he called me that because I once beat him at poker – don't worry about it; you're doing a good job.

Two things stand out to me the most about Afghanistan. The first is the ramp ceremonies, which everyone attends when a soldier that was killed begins his or her journey home. The first day I arrived in theatre, I attended a ramp ceremony for Corporal Jonathan Joseph Sylvain Couturier. There would be 10 other Canadian soldiers who would be killed over the next six months, as well as countless others from allied countries. They never get easier and I often thought and still think about their families that they left behind.

The second thing that stood out was how little people actually have. At the end of my tour, my replacement was in theatre early so I had an opportunity to do some mentoring with the Afghan National Army. A couple of times a week I would head from Kandahar Airfield, where I was based, along with a few others and drive the two kilometres down to Camp Hero. Although only a 10-minute drive and a couple of kilometres journey, it was very telling as to how the Afghan people live. There were no big houses or condos, grocery stores or department stores. They lived in buildings that were very, very modest, to say the least. They bought their goods from little roadside vendors.

While working with the ANA, I had an opportunity to talk to their sergeant major who, like me, was 28 at the time. I asked him what his goal in the army was. He told me that he wanted to be a sergeant major in the Helmand province, which he could have had if he paid the bribe. However, he refused and it gave me faith that some great leaders were going forward in Afghanistan.

I have one final thing to share about my military career before I finish off my maiden speech and spending some time on my district – and I'm getting a little short on time. While deployed with *HMCS Charlottetown* off the coast of Libya in the city of Misrata, the crew recognized the Battle of the Atlantic with a service on the flight deck. This was done the first Sunday of each May to remember Canadian sailors and ships that were lost during World War II. As each name of the ship was being read and the bell rang in remembrance, I could hear the bombs exploding in the background. This was the most surreal moment of my life.

As we're remembering those who lost their lives during World War II, there was Libyans losing theirs at that very moment. Afghanistan and Libya gave me my perspective that I have today in that things aren't always as bad as what they seem. Sure things could always be better, but until you experience places where people have absolutely nothing and constantly fear for their lives, you don't realize how fortunate we are to live where we are.

As I wind down my speech, I want to address my district. To the District of Bonavista and I usually preference this with historic, I'm blessed to live in a district that I called home growing up. We've had some ups and it seems like for the past few years we've had more downs, but what is always great about my district is the people that live there. I believe that the District of Bonavista is a great place too and has the potential to grow and be so much more. We've seen this over the past year as we've seen significant growth in our population, seen many new businesses start and grow, and have seen unprecedented investment from the private sector and from government.

When John Cabot landed in Cape Bonavista in 1497, he tossed a basket off the *Matthew* and pulled it up full of cod. I believe that the fishery is our past, it is our present, and will be our future. This fall is a great example of the return of the cod fishery, where fishers are able to catch 2,500 pounds per week and many today are still at it.

As we see crab and shrimp decline and our cod stocks grow, we must work with all stakeholders to ensure that we have the appropriate balance in

our fishery. The Bonavista Peninsula has always had a great agriculture and forestry sectors and I have and will continue to go to bat to ensure that we grow these sectors to their full potential. We have learned as a province that we cannot put all our eggs in the one basket and expect it to be sustainable. The fishery, agriculture and forestry are three ways in my district where smart investments will help us diversify.

Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the tourism industry in the District of Bonavista, which I believe is second to none. This past season was a banner year for tourism in our region and next year it looks to be just as good.

MADAM SPEAKER (Dempster): Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: By leave.

MADAM SPEAKER: By leave.

Continue.

MR. KING: Okay. Just a couple of more sentences, Madam Speaker.

This past season was a banner year – oh, excuse me, I just read that. I've got a bet with the MHA for Lewisporte – Twillingate about who would have the better numbers, and I think I'll win that dinner. As MHA, I believe that we need to continue to invest in this sector. We need to work with local stakeholders, the people on the ground, and give them not just the resources but the tools to provide long-term stability and growth.

I was at a conference this past summer and I was explaining my district to some other attendees. When I started to think about what I was telling them, it all of a sudden hit me that I'm one lucky MHA to represent the district which I serve. Most people pay thousands of dollars to visit, I have it for free by living there. For that I am truly thankful and fortunate.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Harbour Grace – Port de Grave.

MS. P. PARSONS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's great to be back, of course, after a long summer and a fall, and it's certainly an honour to stand here today to give my maiden speech. It's an honour and privilege to stand here in the House of Assembly as the representative for the strong District of Harbour Grace – Port de Grave.

Firstly, I would like to wish each and every one of you warm congratulations on becoming elected to represent your districts, and, of course, for some of you it's a successful re-election.

I grew up in Spaniard's Bay. I was fortunate to experience a beautiful childhood with my parents Ann and Wayne Parsons, and my younger sister, Erin. I can remember the very first day of what I consider to be my life career, and this moment was my first day of kindergarten. As I recall, prior to the school year my mom, dad, Erin and I went out shopping for all the supplies I would need; my clothing, of course, my Cabbage Patch book bag at the time. I remember we would meet friends while out and about, and when chatting with my mom, mom proudly said, yes, Pamela will be starting school soon. Then, I was asked, are you excited? Are you looking forward to going to school? And I would say abruptly, no.

At this time I knew change in my routine was coming. My mornings of *Sesame Street*, nutrition snacks prepared by mom, and following her around as she completed her daily routines were coming to an end. Finally, that first day of school arrived. I started at Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay, and Mrs. Joyce Bishop was my teacher. I had my Care Bear with me. My mom and Erin were also there. I remember the meet and greet with the teacher and the other students, and then the time came to take our seats. The parents were leaving, but I wouldn't agree to that. That's right, my mom and Erin, my sister, spent my first day of kindergarten with me in my class. I wouldn't let them leave.

Just as that first day of kindergarten, my family have been behind me, supporting me in everything I do throughout my life. As each one of us here in this hon. House, we each know firsthand, we could have not made it to here, to this very moment where we are, without the support and dedication of our families and our friends and the people who believe in us.

I remember when I very first thought about politics and about someday offering myself to the public, to run to hopefully become the representative for the people, it was in political science class when listening to the professor's lecture on Pierre Elliott Trudeau at the time. As we know, it is common for university students to change their minds a few times before determining the right direction with regard to a major. I changed mine several times, but it was when I first attended my first political science class when I knew I was home. Shortly after, I declared my major in political science for my degree. I knew then that someday I would run.

It was during my time as a student at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax during summers when I was a tour guide on the Harbour Hopper. The Harbour Hopper is an amphibious tour in Halifax featuring land and water. The vehicle used is called a LARC. It's a lighter, amphibious resupply cargo. They were used in Vietnam. Like a frog, a boat or truck, it toured the historic downtown area and then plunged into the Halifax Harbour; the second largest natural harbour in the world next to Sydney, Australia.

It was during my time as a tour guide when I realized I liked to talk for a living to an audience. Upon graduation at university, I felt I needed to do something else. Throughout my childhood and my high school career, I've always dreamt about being on TV working in the broadcast industry.

So following the completion of my degree at Mount Saint Vincent University, I applied to the radio and television arts program at Nova Scotia Community College, Kingstec, which is located in the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia. I then went on to start my program where I majored in journalism. The radio and television arts program was a two year discipline. It was an amazing program where I studied television

production, radio production and journalism broadcasting for both mediums.

Some of the best times in my life were had during this time of my academic career. In the second year, graduation was fast approaching and I felt that gravitational pull – as most Newfoundlanders feel, of course, when we're abroad wherever we are – to return home to Newfoundland. I knew without doubt, that this is where I wanted to be, to utilize my skills and, of course, my education.

I had three work-term placements at CBC TV in Halifax, CBC Radio in Halifax and CTV Atlantic in Halifax as a student, but I put all of my energy and focus on applying for employment back home here in Newfoundland. I was hired at CBC *Here and Now* in St. John's by Doug Letto in 2006 as a summer relief journalist, where I stayed actually for two years reporting both for TV and radio at CBC. At the time, in 2006 CBC Radio was located down in the old building on Duckworth Street here in St. John's.

Soon, an opportunity at Rogers TV, *Out of the Fog*, came up and I accepted the contract. And it was during this year, while reporting for *Out of the Fog*, when I was offered a producer position at Rogers TV in Owen Sound, Ontario. I knew it was a valuable experience, but I also knew that I wanted to be in Newfoundland. So prior to leaving for Ontario, I contacted Fred Hutton at NTV and arranged a meeting. I explained how I was going away to avail of this experience but, eventually, I want to come back home and, when I do, I'd like to work at NTV.

So, of course, I kept in touch with Fred. He heard from me frequently. Within that year, an opportunity at NTV Newfoundland Broadcasting brought me back home to our province. Once again, I was homeward bound to embark on another leg of my journey.

My job as a reporter and a video journalist was to gather facts, truth and communicate with people. And, in this way, I believe journalism and politics are the same. It is our duty as an MHA to communicate and present the truth and facts to each and every one of our constituents.

During my time as a journalist, I was approached actually to run for a PC nomination from the district of then Port de Grave. This was during the 2011 election period. I wasn't quite ready to leave my journalism career at the time. The timing wasn't right, and I felt it wasn't quite the right fit for me.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. P. PARSONS: So instead of running in the election, I continued reporting and covered the election live that year from then Shawn Skinner's headquarters. But, as time passed of course, my desire to become involved in the public grew stronger and stronger.

Remembering my university days in Halifax and the lessons on Pierre Elliott Trudeau, I felt in my heart and soul that the Liberal philosophy and culture best matched my own personal values. I made the decision to jump into the political world. I was hired to work on the robust 2013 leadership campaign and, following this, I made the decision that I was going to seek the nomination in my home district of Port de Grave.

There were six strong candidates in total, and it was a long summer. With the help of my supporters, my family and my team, I secured the nomination. Some other colleagues who have become some of my best friends, the Member for Placentia – St. Mary's and the Member for Placentia West – Bellevue, Mark and Sherry –

AN HON. MEMBER: Cape St. Francis.

MS. P. PARSONS: And Cape St. Francis.

Well, they've had similar experiences with their nominations. Finally, the three of us secured our place to carry the banner for the upcoming election but, to our surprise, we quickly learned that the nominations would once again open due to an abrupt electoral boundary change to be squeezed in just before voters went to the polls.

So it was time to tackle yet another storm and like the weather in our great province that we call home, politics, as we know, can be very unpredictable; but fortunately, of course, we

made it here and here we are to do the very best for our people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. P. PARSONS: The strong District of Harbour Grace – Port de Grave consists of many communities, colourful communities, such as Hibbs Cove, Port de Grave, Bareneed, Coley's Point, Bay Roberts, Country Road, Otterbury, Shearstown, Butlerville, Spaniard's Bay, Tilton, Bishop's Cove, Upper Island Cove, Bryant's Cove, Southside, Harbour Grace, Riverhead and The Thicket. Each town is enriched with history and pride and a true sense of community.

As I've gotten to know my constituents, of course, travelling around for the past several years while working on the nomination and the election campaign and then becoming the MHA for the district, I've witnessed the strong sense of community spirit first-hand. Let me tell you if someone falls on hard times in any community, those communities, they come together and, boy, we band together and that helped is delivered.

There is a lot of great history as well in the District of Harbour Grace – Port de Grave. As a matter of fact, the first time that the Stanley Cup came to the province it was Riverhead, Harbour Grace native Danny Cleary who brought that cup home here to our Island for the very first time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. P. PARSONS: We also have a gold medalist from Harbour Grace who happens to be my cousin, Mr. Jamie Korab. Amelia Earhart graced her presence in Harbour Grace, Peter Easton, and, of course, our district has a strong connection to the fishery, both the inshore and the offshore.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. P. PARSONS: Also, as we know, with a strong connection to the fishery and to the ocean in Harbour Grace – Port de Grave, I would like to take the time to recognize and to thank our Trudeau-led federal government, the great relationship that we have with our federal

government, the reopening of the Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. P. PARSONS: As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker, there was a young fish harvester from the community of Port de Grave who quickly realized how important it is to have a good, strong team of search and rescue here in our province. As we remember – I was a journalist at the time – when the Harper government ordered that our Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre be closed down at a cost savings of only \$1 million.

I remember when Quebec was also slated to lose their Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre. That didn't happen; however, we sure lost ours. I was a journalist; I was assigned to cover the rallies and the stories leading up. And it was amazing to witness first-hand how Newfoundlanders and Labradorians came together to rally for that important cause. Because as we know, it's an essential service that we need and we live here in a beautiful province surrounded by water. So who better to need those services than Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

It was a great day last week to hear our counterparts Minister Dominic LeBlanc, Minister Foote and our Premier there to reopen that centre. So a round of applause for that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. P. PARSONS: And thank God for the great relationship that we do have with our federal counterparts, the Trudeau government.

Not only is politics a blood sport, as they say; it is a team sport. No one can get elected all by themselves. I would like to sincerely thank Ivy Anthony who has strongly supported me from the very beginning; George and Donna Warford; Debbie Hutchings; Mike and Paula Reynolds; Rubin Peach; Kay, Jordan and John Crane; Donna and Mike Hewson; Patrick Whalen; Hayward Butler; Judy McCarthy; Carol Hunt; Rosalyn Greenlen – now a little story about Rosalyn.

Rosalyn is an older lady living in Coley's Point, her and her husband Gordon. And they were strong Liberals. They have a long history of

supporting. And I must say, they stood behind me and they were amazing. Unfortunately, however, they both passed away from the time I started as a candidate to the time I became an MHA. But I know they're still here in spirit and I'm really grateful for the support that I had from them.

Also, I would like to thank Mr. Howie Smith and Marilyn Smith; Lorie Lynn and Darryl Sharpe; Eileen Smith, my constituency assistant – and of course our office is located in Bay Roberts – Glenn Thorne; Ken LeDay; Ryan Steeves; Tonya Power; and the many supporters who helped me in every way. I certainly could not have done it without you. We got out there in all sorts of weather because we experienced every season a couple of times before it was time that the election was finally called.

To my family, my mom, dad and Erin: my circle of genuine support started with you, and this started the day I was born. I'm blessed to have you.

To my grandmother, Nora Healey: I'm grateful, at age 94, you are still here to see me in the House of Assembly, and to have been there by my side on the nights of my nomination and my election.

My other grandmother, Emmy Parsons, passed away at age 68 when I was in university. But I'll never forget – she used to babysit us, my sister and I, and me being, I guess, a mommy's girl, I would go to bed when nanny was babysitting. I figured the sooner I went to bed, and when I woke up my parents would be back home. That necessarily wasn't the case at just 10 or 11 o'clock at night. I can remember those nights when nanny was babysitting and I would come down over the stairs to see her watching Peter Mansbridge, the news. I'll never forget her keen interest in news and politics. Although she is gone from this world, I know she's still watching me.

Colleagues, whether we think we can or we think we can't, we are right. Because what we dream about, what we think about, we can bring about. I sincerely believe that.

To all the young women out there, the young girls with dreams of taking on careers, their

wildest dreams, whatever they want: I encourage you, don't ever give up on those dreams or aspirations. Have your courage. We may have setbacks, we may make mistakes but we'll learn from them. They make us strong. They contribute to the people that we become.

I am proud to say that I am the very first female representative, female MHA for the District of Harbour Grace – Port de Grave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. P. PARSONS: Thank you.

So, of course, by working together we achieve the greatest results.

To my caucus team, and to my colleagues across the House: I am committed to working with each and every one of you to do the best we can for our province.

To the Harbour Grace – Port de Grave District: I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It is a true blessing to be your MHA. I look forward and I hope to work with you for many years to come. The promise I will make to you is that I will work hard, I will be honest, I'll be your voice and I will certainly do the best I can.

We will accomplish wonderful things, from infrastructure, agriculture and our fishery. And I look forward to finally celebrate the day when we have our long-anticipated Coley's Point Primary school.

Well, colleagues, thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Speaker recognizes the hon. the Member for Gander.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'm going to try and not be too controversial and stick to the UK style of maiden speeches. It seems very much that the place for me to start is with thanks. It may turn into a little bit of an autobiographical romp later on, but I think no one, as my colleagues have said, gets here by themselves. We can talk about how that process started, but certainly the campaign of last week in the news made me kind of revisit my own campaign. Although, it was nowhere near as nasty or as harsh. In actual fact, we had so much fun with the nomination we did it the second time with an even more spectacular win.

To list off all the people who were involved in our success in Gander would be invidious and I think rather than try, I'd use a short hand and I'll use – for the campaign team, Randell Mercer was my manager and put in long hours, as did everyone else of what was a small but mighty team. I think that reflects the level of support I had in the community.

I think a short hand for friends and family, I would have to give credit to my partner and mentor in many respects, and fashion consultant, Jeannette. She is the short hand for, again, a small but really enthusiastic group of friends and family. A modest in size group but, again, we all get here by different routes. I think to try and list off a long list of names would only embarrass me by leaving somebody out, and I'd feel bad about that.

So I came here via a different route. As you might notice from the accent, this is a really old Newfoundland accent.

I grew up in an extended, blended family in a very urban area in Manchester; population three-quarters of a million. So it's not exactly a small town. It might come as no surprise for people who regard me as maybe controversial and a bit provocative to know that my maternal grandmother was brought home more than once by the local constabulary in the '20s for wielding signs. Actually, I think she hit a constable over the head with it, which said: Give women the vote.

She got the vote. She got it first in her 30s because she was a married woman; married to someone with property, and that was gradually rectified over the time. She was the politician in

the household. We'd get into it on a Sunday over lunch and that would cause agitation with everybody else.

My father passed away when I was young. I was raised by my mom and her younger brother, who is an historian. He's the last surviving member of the clan. That's why I often start spouting history, much to the sort of eye rolling of my colleagues behind sometimes, but I find it useful, and I blame him.

I was a local recruit to medical school. In those days you would get direct entry from high school. The idea was that you would be recruited locally. They had this big, new medical school and you would stay there and practice locally. It, kind of, sounds familiar. It's a thing that keeps cropping up; but, in actual fact, it worked because I stayed in that area, in general, in Manchester for 10 years, thereabouts.

Apprenticeship was more of the word for surgical training in the UK at the time. It didn't have any defined end. At some point it was felt appropriate that I should actually go into full-time research for a couple of years, and I did that. In actual fact, that's the MD degree that you see behind my name. It's a medical PhD. It's not a registerable – the basic qualification in the UK is slightly different.

MR. BYRNE: You'll get there one day.

MR. HAGGIE: I'll get there.

Anyway, what happened after that was, it was suggested that I try academic surgery as a career. So I moved to Liverpool. It was a disaster, quite frankly. I learnt an awful lot about politics within the department of an academic surgical unit, who to talk to about what and who not to talk to, or at least not let on whom you had spoken about things. I was awful.

That was the final straw that made me look elsewhere. Fondly enough, in the '80s I had been in conversation with a fellow from a place called Carbonear, which I had never heard of at the time.

MR. CROCKER: Hear, hear!

MR. HAGGIE: For one reason or another, connected with family, I decided not to set foot there. Nothing personal, it's a lovely spot.

MR. BYRNE: What a fantastic recruiter.

MR. HAGGIE: That's right, yes.

Anyway, some years later, I answered an ad for a group called the Grenfell Regional Health Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAGGIE: After a visit one January, actually, to look around the place, and a couple of snowmobile rides – which I thought were really great; I had never been on one of those before – the rest, as they say, is history. I arrived in St. Anthony just about the time or just after the time the cod left. I don't know whether the two were connected in other people's minds.

A lovely place, but the nearest girls dress shop was 6½ hours' drive away. With three daughters, that wasn't going to cut it for any great length of time. I had a blast though. I actually went and did clinics up in Labrador. I'd go to Nain. I wasn't allowed off the plane in Davis Inlet for all sorts of reasons I never really understood, but I think that was down to Grenfell, the RCMP and the band at the time. There were some disagreements there which I never really understood. Hopedale was my other favourite place.

Amongst other experiences, I remember taking a medical student from London, England, caribou hunting with Jimmy, the maintenance man from Hopedale. She never got over that and I never saw her again after that. Punching a caribou on the ice was something that was quite outside what she had expected to see. She wasn't particularly good in the OR either, so I think surgery probably wasn't her forte.

But, anyway, a chance –

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you leave her?

MR. HAGGIE: No, I put her on the plane. We shipped her back out to the UK.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not tell your knitting needles story.

MR. HAGGIE: No, I won't tell the knitting needles story.

Anyway, a chance vacancy ended up with me going on to the board of the Medical Association in the province. Part of it was because I couldn't understand how the system worked, so I kept on asking questions. And then I realized nobody else knew how it worked either. But I did think somewhere there would be a room, a committee, where the answer would appear. I haven't found it yet, but that started the quest.

So I got involved with the system in the province and learned a lot. Then, that kind of led on to the national level, the Canadian Medical Association, and that I really enjoyed. But the catch is from a political point of view, it was very much a non-partisan affair. I came out of the Liberal closet only after I was off the executive of the CMA to avoid any disconcerting revelations for them. But it did get me used to the role of advocacy and communications and the use of the media.

I went back to work thinking surely something is different than when I left two years ago, and really the final straw there was that things hadn't changed. Between the jigs and the reels and a fellow called Scott Simms that was how I ended up going the provincial route. I really have absolutely no regrets about it at all. Whether or not people on the other side share the same view or will share the same view and whether my district will in four years, three-and-a-bit years' time, I don't know; but I'm trying to do this from the point of view of what actually was 11 months ago to the date when I was sworn in as a Cabinet minister, an opportunity, again, once in a life time. I'm trying hard not to fool it up.

In terms of the district, I represent a kind of different district. It's rural, but it's actually a very compact district. It's not many rural MHAs who can drive from one end of their district to another in just over an hour and really only has five communities, but it represents a whole diversity of traditional industries. We have logging and guiding and hunting, all the way up to aviation and some really new non-traditional exciting opportunities. I mean, one of the things

that I really reveal in, at the moment, is learning about the new things I get exposed to.

I retired from surgery, hung up my knife, much to my colleagues delight because I keep telling him stories about when I hadn't hung it up – and he doesn't like that; he gets nervous. Gander was founded on aviation, but the things I've learned about birch sap in the last couple of weeks are absolutely astounding. There is a \$9 billion global market out there on birch sap and the last great stand of birch trees on the Island in the centre is smack in my district.

It is really exciting stuff. So you talk about opportunities that I would never have known about; there is one of them for sure. Craft brewing, another subject close to my heart, is on the horizon there. There's a family physician's husband who is a pilot and is a brew hobbyist who's looking to start that. And again, I don't know an awful lot about the brewing industry. What's really interesting from my point of view is one of my constituents actually wants to grow grapes and we'll have some red wine.

I know there is a berry wine in Twillingate but the idea of grape-based produce really appeals to me, personally. I'm looking forward to getting intimately involved in the helping forward with that.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. HAGGIE: I'll do the quality control; that's right.

Really, for me, moving from one career to another has been a real interest. It's been exciting. It's a challenge. I was a person whose previous career – I could have told you exactly what time of the day it was and what day of the week it was by what I was doing. It was that regular and that organized and regimented. I now come into the office in the morning – when the House is not sitting, I really don't have idea, with any certainty, of where I'm going to end up in a couple of hours' time.

The parade of people who come through, who I get a chance to see, both in my district office and through the department, are a fascinating crew. I realized, looking back, that one of the things you do, even as a surgeon – and some of my family

physician colleagues would take exception to the idea that surgeons actually talk to people. But you do develop an affinity and an enjoyment for that. And certainly it's given me a chance to put that set of skills into a completely different perspective.

I suppose, in a sense, I'm the ultimate *Come from Away*. I was one of the 25 per cent of international medical graduates who actually stayed beyond the two years, which is fairly typical. And really, I have to say that where I live and work now has never made me feel *Come from Away*. I don't think anyone has ever mentioned that to me. It rolls into one other thing, which I think has been highlighted recently, and I don't know how many of you – I know the Member for St. John's Centre, let me get that right, actually had the opportunity to attend the *Come from Away* performance in Gander at the arena there. They did two performances. It was an interesting genesis as to how this musical came about, but it started out life as a project for a performing arts college up along and they have really run with it.

It's been a raging success on the stage. What they did was they adapted this to what they call a concert venue. So instead of having the scenery and all the rest of it, they have the band at the back and they had the 12 performers lined up with their microphones, a quick change of clothes, a cap or a jacket just to highlight a change. And it was incredible. There were other people here who were there and enjoyed it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAGGIE: It was a marvelous thing.

I think it wasn't just about Gander, though. It was actually about the whole province. I think the mayors of the communities that actually were mentioned in it and some of whom were caricatured in the performance – very well, I might add – were very keen to point out they were just examples of, not the only ones who did.

I think it opens tomorrow night in Toronto and then, in February, there will be a run-up to a Broadway launch sometime in March. I've certainly been very keen in my discussions with colleagues from tourism that once that hits the

screen – people actually have come to me and say: We didn't believe Gander existed. We didn't believe there were people like this. It was a real eye-opener.

My sole contribution to 9/11, along with an obstetrician and gynaecologist, was actually making a chili and that was probably the single biggest health hazard that most of them had in their entire five-day stay in Glenwood at the time. But the story of the chili came out from Nav Canada in the end because they made more chili for more people and it was Gander not Glenwood, but we won't go there.

Again, I'm very proud of the district I serve. I have regrets that I can't spend as much time sometimes as I would like to there. Certainly, it's always a challenge when the House is sitting. Again, like my predecessors at the microphones, I think it's really important that I state here now that they are reason I am here. The other titles I have, courtesy of the Premier, are an honour and a privilege too, but I am here in this House only because I was elected to do a particular job and that's to represent the people of Central Newfoundland, specifically the District of Gander, not just the Town of Gander. To the people who elected me, thank you very much.

I'm not going to prolong the agony this afternoon. I think you've heard enough of me now. I'm reaching the limits of what I can say and not be controversial or provocative. So the best thing to do now is probably for me to thank again the people of the District of Gander and my family and supporters, and assure you I will continue to work for as long as you put me here.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Speaker recognizes the hon. Member for Cape St. Francis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

It's a privilege to get up there today – as I always do and always say – to represent the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. It's also a pleasure here today to listen to my colleagues across the way give their maiden speeches.

When I go back to my first maiden speech, I wasn't used to getting up in assemblies and doing any speeches at all. I can remember the night before being pretty nervous. My colleague for Ferryland, as I was ready to get up, he went over and snapped off the speaker in front of me and I made a roar at him and asked him to put it back. He said, oh, he better do it because I looked pretty nervous at the time.

I want to congratulate these speakers today for getting up. The Member for Bonavista; I listened to your speech, as I do. I try to listen to all the speeches here in the House of Assembly, especially your maiden speech. It really tells you who you are as people and the reason why you want to come here.

He mentioned his parents, his family and everything else. That's such an important part as MHAs that we do have support of our families. My mom and dad are gone now but I know when I became an MHA, they were the two most proud people in the world for me to do it. I'm sure your parents are proud of what you've done here and representing the areas that you represent.

You said in your speech that you are probably the most likely MHA to be sat here in the House of Assembly. I'd argue with you because if people told me 30 years ago that I'd be an MHA in the House of Assembly, I'd say they were nuts. Most of the people down in Cape St. Francis would also say the same thing.

You have a lot of interests that I do, the same thing, and I'm going to speak a little bit about it today now. We talk about the fishery and rural Newfoundland. I don't consider my district really rural Newfoundland. But there are a lot of things that are in my district that are in all districts and I'm going to talk a little bit about it today.

I want to congratulate the Member for Harbour Grace – Port de Grave. I've got to know her over the last little while. She's a hard-working MHA

just like we all are in here. Her concerns about her district, you hear it every day. Good for her to do the job that you're doing there.

You mentioned the people that helped you along the way. I'd have to do a list. I think it'd be – I don't know – hundreds of people to be able to thank. But it's nice to be able to hear you thank the people that helped you get where you are today. Again, you mentioned about family and the fishery. I will talk about the fishery a little bit in my speech too.

The Member for Gander, the surgeon – and he talked about the caribou. We could have probably used you up the fall punching the moose for us. It will probably be a good idea to have you around. I'm sure it was a great experience up with the caribou and everything else. I congratulate you on your speech.

The similarities to mine, you said you have five communities in your district; I have five in mine also. My district is a little shorter than yours. It takes me only about 25 minutes to get from one end of her to the other end.

This weekend with the Remembrance Day celebration, I have five communities and everybody knows which community I'm going to be in because I do it every time whenever I get time. I'm in Pouch Cove this year, next year it's Bauline, then it's Torbay. That's how we do it and get out to all the communities, but five communities, we are very fortunate to be able to only have five communities because there are MHAs in here with a whole lot more than what I got, and it's a job to get around, like you said. So I want to congratulate them on their speeches today.

In case people are looking at this on TV and might say: Why are they all up today? Today we're doing Address in Reply. Address in Reply is basically a response that we have, a chance to get up on your feet, and it's like a money bill. You can talk about anything. You can talk about your district and you can talk about anything, but it's a response to the Throne Speech. Like I said earlier, there were a lot of similarities with previous Members that got up, and I'm going to talk a little bit about the fishery.

The fishery is very important to me. I grew up in a household where, during the summer months when the cod traps were out, we ate fish every morning. And many parts of Newfoundland and Labrador enjoyed the fishery, enjoyed the putt-putts going out through the harbour and listened to the 4 Acadias or the 6 Acadias. It was the sound that you heard all over Newfoundland.

It was a proud sound. It was a proud people that went out on the water and fished every day and went to haul the cod traps, or if they had gill nets or trawls or whatever, but the sound and the hustle and the bustle in rural Newfoundland – not only rural Newfoundland, I don't know if you consider Flatrock and Torbay and Pouch Cove really rural, we're pretty close to St. John's, but those were the sounds that we heard. And the pride of our fishermen and the pride of our people that took part in the fishery are still there today. We have to be aware of what's happening in the fishery. There are some big changes coming in the fishery, and my concern with what's happening in the fishery today is how prepared we're going to be.

I have a brother who's involved in the crab fishery and I know this year down to, we call the South Coast, but they call the south area of where they catch crab to down off Fermeuse and that area, the crab this year was minimal, none. They had a very small quota down in that area and never caught any crab. In other areas the crab was good; the crab was fairly good on the inshore part down off our area, I call it, off the east end, but on the north coast – I spoke to a colleague across the way – it was very, very spotty.

When you look at what's happened to the crab fishery, fishermen will tell you that the crab and shellfishery, they don't combine well together. We caught a cod this year and when we cut the cod open, there were eight small crabs inside the cod. So as the groundfishery comes back, what happens is that the shellfishery is going to be hit really, really hard. That's what's happening with our fishery today. If you talk to fishermen today they'll tell you as the cod comes back, there's going to be a huge effect on the crab fishery, shrimp and crab mainly.

What we're seeing now is with the quota cuts that were done even in the shrimp; we moved

the shrimp quotas that were in the P6 area. That area got cut big time this year. The reason being is because of what's happening with the ground fishery coming back.

My suggestion to the government and to the minister, and I've spoken to the minister and I'm sure all rural MHAs and people like the Members that got up today and talked a little bit about the fishery, explained to the minister how important this is for our districts.

In my district right now, we've never had a fall fishery like it is today. We have boats going out right now – on Friday one of the boats went out and had 1,500 pounds of fish in four gillnets. At this time of year that's unheard of. It really is unheard of to see the cod still around and so much cod to be around at this time.

The biggest problem the fishermen have in the area, and I talked to a good few of them this weekend, is they have nowhere to sell the cod. The markets they had the fall was mainly a fillet market. They can sell their fish off the wharf now to most people and that was it, but there are no markets. We have no fish plants that are able to do large amounts of cod.

Next year when the quota comes into effect, I think you're going to see the crab quota really cut. Maybe in some areas it will stay to where it was this year but there are other areas where they are going to have to cut the crab because there'll be no fishery in the future, but we're not ready. We're not ready for the cod fishery to come back or the ground fishery whatsoever to be ready. It's so important that – we can count on and say it's the federal government's responsibility.

I know last year both the processors and the union got together and did a huge announcement saying that they're going to develop markets and they're going to develop this. We're a very small portion, a very, very small portion. We may think we're large when it comes to the fishery worldwide. Our markets that were there in the '70s and '80s when we sent most of our fish to the New England market, that's all gone

We need to make sure we have something in place because our fishery is going to come back. Listen, we're always looking for diversification.

Government is looking to diversify the economy. People are looking to say, what can we do? We understand the oil industry is only going to be there for so long.

We understand the effects a barrel of oil has on our economy, but the fishery is something that – we as a culture, it's who we are as a people – has been there since John Cabot came to our shores and put baskets over and started hauling it in. It's coming back and we need to be ready. Right now, we need to develop markets. The markets are going to be a little bit different. They're going to be a different market. Quality is going to play a major role in the fishery market of the future.

The days back in the '70s and '80s when people were out catching cod in abundance – I can remember boats in my district coming in with 35,000 pounds of fish in a boat and then hauling it up on the wharf and getting it in the back of a truck. I used to drive one of the trucks, actually. There used to be the grey tubs in back of the truck. You'd put a little bit of ice on it and you'd go to the fish plant up in Witless Bay – or Bay Bulls is where we trucked most of our fish. You could be there sat down in the truck for four or five hours. The fish would come out, get put into the plant and by the time that fish was processed, it could be up to 20 hours.

Today that market and the market that, I think, the processors are going to be looking for is going to be a fresher market. It's going to be a market where you're not going to be able to come in with 35,000 pounds of fish. You may have to come in with 1,500 pounds or 2,000 pounds, but the fish is going to have to be better quality. The fish is going to have to be iced. If we want to compete with Iceland, Norway and these companies that are sending fresh fish to the American market – which is the biggest market in the world right now that we can send to – we need to be able to compete, but we need to put something in place.

As the Department of Fisheries, we should be working with our stakeholders; we should be working with the fishermen on the wharves. We should be working with whatever union is involved. We need to be working with the processors and understand that these are the markets that we're – my fear with the fishery is

that I think people think it's four and five years away. I believe it's only a couple of years away. I believe the fishery next year, once they come down with more quotas – this year they increased the quotas to all of the commercial fishermen in the area and they had no problem catching it. There was lots of fish.

I think that we really need – if we want to diversify our economy, if we want to save rural Newfoundland like we've known it for years, to bring back the culture, to bring back that buzz that I talked about in our rural areas, not only in our rural areas, in communities like I'm from, Flatrock and areas like that. I can remember on the wharf cutting out tongues. I can remember the hustle and bustle everybody felt in that area because it was an industry. It's an industry that we can put forward and can be very proud of like we were in the past and we're very proud of today.

Our fishermen today are harvesters, and they're professional harvesters. They're professional people that go out and catch fish. I had the first opportunity of my life. I went down one day, my brother asked me to go get him a net down on the side of his garage. I went out and I got the net. I brought him out to process rock and they were going out to set a gillnet. I went out and said, gee, I've never seen a gillnet getting set before, and I've been involved in the fishery all my life.

I went out and we set the gillnet. I was very interested in how it just went off the boat and where they put it to. They made sure it was going a certain way against the tide and everything else. The next day they were leaving at 6 o'clock in the morning and I was on the wharf because I wanted to see what was in the net when we got back. When we hauled the net, we were back in at 8 o'clock, and the net was full. There was that much fish there, it was unbelievable.

I believe if we're looking as a province and we're looking as a government, that we really have to put the emphasis back on our fishery. I think it's too often that this government across the way doesn't bring it up. It's very small in your book that you brought out last week, your vision. We should be talking about what the fishery can do to rural Newfoundland. We

should be talking about what it can do to our people, what it can do to bring back the pride that we always had.

I believe that we look at a lot of young people that want to move away and stuff. I believe if the fishery becomes what I think it can become, that we'll see people want to stay in the fishery. We'll see young people want to go out on the water. It's who we are as people. It's who we are as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It's almost like it's bred into us.

I'm very active in the food fishery. I want every chance that I can go out and catch a cod during the food fishery, I'm gone. I have my own boat. I just love getting out. I had some Members out with me here on the other side and they enjoyed it. Anytime you take anybody out it's just a feeling of – you bring back the pride of who we are as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Our fishermen and our sea is who we are.

I did a Member's statement today earlier and I talked about vessel size. There are too many issues in our fishery today that we can't control. I believe as a province and as a government, and as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, we should have more control of our fishery. We should have more control of our stocks. We should have more control of our quotas.

I talked today about vessel size. I know of harvesters that are out there with six different boats to go catch crab. Some of the boats are great boats, are great vessels on the water. Some of them are not. Some of them I wouldn't want to go out in myself to be able to go fish. I'd be nervous out there.

So we really need to make sure we get control of our fishery. I believe our fishery is the key to survival of Newfoundland and Labrador. A lot of people look and they say how bleak the future is. I don't look at it that way at all. I believe the fishery is going to come back. I believe it's going to be an industry that it was in the past. I think it's a way that we can really make Newfoundland and Labrador world renowned again when it comes to fishing and comes to their fishery.

I want to talk a little bit about the food fishery this year. I went to the Capital Hotel there last

week and went up and listened to the proposal when it comes to the new food fishery that they're talking about and the tag system and the licence system.

Now, I'm not teetotally against tags or am I teetotally against the position of having a licence to be able to go out and catch cod. I believe that it's very important that we have some mechanisms in place that we know what we're taking out of the water so we don't go back to what happened in the moratorium in '92. We want to make sure that we're all on the one page and know where we're to and we should be seeing what the size of the fish is.

I can remember before '92, like in my previous job, that the fish were getting smaller and smaller every year. People should have realized that. What are we doing catching all these cod under (inaudible)? So I agree with the tag system and the licence for some way for the federal government or the Department of Fisheries to understand what's coming out of the water, but I don't agree for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians having to pay for that study.

If you want to give people that are going out on the water, give them tags, give them a book so that they can register and say, okay, I went out on July 15 or 16 and we caught our 15 cod and we tagged them and the sizes were. I'll do it and I'm sure most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will go and they will do a registry or whatever needs to be done. But I don't agree with us and the only province in Canada having to pay for tags and have to pay for a licence to go out and catch fish off our waters.

I went in that night and I listened to most of the people. Most of the people were like myself, they talked about going out and catching cod and giving it to their neighbours, going out and catching cod because they knew how much the senior down the road enjoyed a feed of fish. That's who we are as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I know that – I did a lot of fishing in the food fishery this year. If anybody wants a feed of fish, there's not much left in my deepfreeze because I've given it all away. That's what we are. That's who we are.

I believe that the tag system – and I hope that the Minister of Fisheries will listen to this and say

it's not fair for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to have to pay the cost when Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI and the rest of Canada don't have to do it. I mean, I have no problem for them to tell me to take a book and to write down the size of the fish that I'm catching, the amount of fish that I catch and stuff like this.

Again, we don't know what the tag system is going to be. The big question that a lot of them had: How many fish am I going to be allowed to catch? There were no answers. Now if you looked at last year the food fishery was open for 46 days, so you would think it would be 230 fish and that would be the number of tags that a person will get, but there were no answers to that or there were no answers to if the tags are going to cost us money. There are no answers to licences and stuff like this.

When you look at what we are, Newfoundlanders – now, there will be some people who will do the wrong things out on the water, but I look at all the things that happened this year, the infractions that happened out on the water and people who were out on the water this year, most of the people I know down in the community I'm from, they avoid it by catching five fish per person, 15 fish in a boat.

It was our tradition, it was out way of life, but we appreciate going out on the water. It's part of our culture. It's part of who we are. It's part of the pride we take as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The fishery is a very important part of who we are.

I'd love to see this government put a whole lot more emphasis on our fishery. I think if you're looking at diversifying the economy, if you want to see Newfoundland and Labrador survive – I'm very positive; I think the fishery is going to be the biggest industry. It is a big industry: \$1.2 billion in sales last year. It can be bigger. It can be the thing that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will go back to and it will make rural Newfoundland and Labrador a stronger place to live. It will bring back who we are as people. It will bring back the pride and everything else.

I just urge this government to put more emphasis on our fishery. Put more emphasis on something that can help rural Newfoundland and help

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and make our economy a better place to live.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Warr): The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Burin – Grand Bank.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I rise to address my colleagues on both sides of this hon. House, I am truly humbled by the trust the electorate of the District of Burin – Grand Bank has bestowed upon me. The journey to a seat in this prestigious Legislature is a momentous trek and the destination for those of us who have been successful should not be seen as a prize but as a commitment to those who work diligently to get us here. A commitment to those who saw fit to put their faith in us on election day when casting their ballots and, indeed, a commitment to work for every resident of our districts, regardless of a political affiliation.

Mr. Speaker, I send my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated team of workers who gave countless hours of their time to ensure my success almost one year ago, as I do to the almost 4,000 voters who supported me. I could not have been successful without them.

As I said on election night in addressing my supporters, from Confederation Street where I live in Fortune to Confederation Hill in St. John's, I'm ready for the challenge.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. HALEY: Mr. Speaker, I made no promises back then, except to work hard and demonstrate that their efforts and support were not in vain.

As appreciative as I am of all who were there for me during the campaign, and on election day, there are those whose guidance over the years has been so profound I would be remiss in not singling them out here today. First and foremost, my mother; no words can describe the support she has given me over the years, Mr. Speaker.

She is the epitome of strength. I wouldn't be standing here today if it weren't for her support and guidance.

Though very young when I lost my father, it was his example that profoundly impacted my life. He was a man who believed deeply in friends, family and community. It's his example, Mr. Speaker, I try to follow as I lead my own life and which gives me a sense of direction.

Mr. Speaker, I was first exposed to politics at a very young age and that was directly due to my grandfather, the late Gable Parsons. He was absolutely passionate about our party and it was through listening to him and working side by side with him on numerous campaigns that I too grew very passionate about what some would call this province's favourite sport: politics.

I know my grandfather and my uncle Charl are both smiling down today approvingly. Uncle Charl was an ardent supporter right up to the time of his passing five years ago, Mr. Speaker.

And, to my partner Craig, thank you for your many years of support and understanding as I have immersed myself in this political world. I come to this job with my eyes wide open. We all realize the stresses and strains of public life, and Craig's support has been unwavering for me and I am truly thankful.

Mr. Speaker, a person whose mentorship was largely responsible for my gaining the confidence to seek public office from the very beginning was the hon. Judy Foote. As her special assistant for many, many years I learned the true meaning of public service. It was during that time I became aware of the true needs of constituents, of the passion that is required to get the job done.

I spent and continue to spend countless hours in conversation with Judy, not just as my former employer but as my best friend. Undoubtedly, her knowledge and zeal for the job help mould me into who I am today. Thank you, Judy.

The District of Burin – Grand Bank was constructed of the entirety of the former Grand Bank district, as well as parts of the former Bellevue and Placentia West districts. I acknowledge the work done by the three former

Members who, until last year's election, represented the people I now represent. I honestly believe that regardless of political stripe or ideology, practically everyone who offers himself or herself for public service does so for the same reason. We love our province –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. HALEY: We love our province and we feel we can make a difference in moving Newfoundland and Labrador forward. Rest assured I will work diligently on behalf of the communities that comprise the District of Burin – Grand Bank. Ours is a district located on the southern and western parts of the Burin Peninsula, or the boot as it's commonly known, and part of the Heritage Run.

I invite all my colleagues to visit this part of the province, a region steeped in history where not so long ago fishing and trading schooners plied the waters. A place where you can still see the occasional orange or yellow Grandy dory tied to wharf or pulled up on the beach as the sun glistens on the still waters of Fortune Bay East or on the waters between my hometown of Point May and the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, a little more than a stone's throw away, Mr. Speaker.

Next door there's Lamaline, where I attended St. Joseph's Academy, along with my now colleague, the hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. HALEY: So much to see, the beauty of Burin and the surrounding towns; Grand Bank where several of its houses even today are topped with a widow's walk. Fortune, the gateway to the French islands and having the prettiest and most colourful cluster of fishing stages you'll ever want to see, Mr. Speaker, or stop by and read the storyboards that tell of the tidal wave that decimated much of the area in 1929.

Storyboards that tell of the tragedy and heroism of the *USS Truxtun* and *USS Pollux* disaster in 1942, Mr. Speaker. Storyboards that tell of mining fluorspar in St. Lawrence, and road signs that direct you to communities such as Jacques

Fontaine and Bay L'Argent, Point au Gaul and Port au Bras, Lamaline and Lawn, to name a few whose names remind you of the French presence when the area was first settled, Mr. Speaker.

If you happen to be in Lord's Cove, you owe it to yourself to visit the research centre where ground-breaking work is being carried out into wave energy and land-based fish farming. Yes, Mr. Speaker, so much to see, so much history and beauty, so many friendly people.

From bakeapple festivals to rolling seas festivals, from mummering and planking her down on Tibb's Eve, to potluck dinners on the menu of practically every restaurant and takeout, come visit for a truly unique experience. With the hard work and tenacity that mark the many trail associations in the area, it's only a matter of time before you can leave your car behind and take in an even more unique experience via your ATV or snowmobile.

Mr. Speaker, this past summer my colleague, the Member for Placentia West – Bellevue, and I hosted three ministers on the Burin Peninsula. If the Minister of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development hadn't already known about the tourism and business potential of the Peninsula, he knows now after the whirlwind tour we took him on in a 24-hour period he won't soon forget. How good is that, when you can take a Minister responsible for Tourism to Lord's Cove and a whale graces us with his presence about three or four metres on the wharf where the minister was standing? He got a chance to see what we have to offer.

I have to mention our stop in Burin, where the minister had the opportunity to see the tremendous work being carried out there in developing its tourism potential. One of the visionaries for that work was Burin native and well-known entrepreneur, the late Tom Hollett, who was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident this past summer, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Hollett will be missed, and I'm sure all Members join me in again sending our condolences to his wonderful family.

Mr. Speaker, the minister made a second visit to the Peninsula this fall when he was guest speaker at the Burin Peninsula Chamber of Commerce Awards banquet.

MR. SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MS. HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I hope you were as impressed with your visit as were the people of the area with you during your time spent with us, and I'm sure you'll never forget Sandy Cove.

Later in the summer, the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development also paid us a visit, and I was pleased she could take time out of her busy schedule to visit the Miner's Museum in St. Lawrence where she experienced first-hand how the skilled workers at 3L Training and Employment go about producing beautiful jewellery from local fluorspar.

I know she was extremely impressed by what she saw, as was the staff with her willingness to try her hand at the equipment. Thank you, Minister. Your visit with the workers at 3L Training and Employment was undoubtedly the highlight of their summer.

Mr. Speaker, we also played host to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. His visit was much appreciated by the good people of my district. He helped to officially open the new community centre in Lamaline. Thank you, Minister, for taking the time out of your busy schedule to be with us.

But I did more than play hostess to ministers this summer, Mr. Speaker. This wasn't a summer for me to bathe in the sun and relax. I, along with my colleague from Placentia West – Bellevue, have been very busy on files that have the potential to put the Burin Peninsula back on the economic map in this province.

Construction is underway on the infrastructure that will be needed to return St. Lawrence to its rightful place as a major player in the mining industry in this province. We have worked diligently on another file that has the potential to be a game changer for our area, the Grieg Seafarms project. We have also been involved in bringing parties together to get a deal struck on the Marystown shipyard, Mr. Speaker, and very hopeful that that will become a reality soon.

There has been much concern over the last few months that our fiscal situation will see

everything grind to a halt in this province. As we have seen with the many announcements for infrastructure projects, this is not the case, Mr. Speaker. We now have a new government in Newfoundland and Labrador and a new government in Ottawa who often see eye to eye and are determined to work together to revitalize this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. HALEY: I was pleased to be able to announce several important projects this summer and I know there will be many more to come.

Mr. Speaker, like all assembled on the floor of this hon. House today, I, too, recognize the tremendous challenges we as legislators are facing as we strive to steer our province through a very difficult economic time; however, we should not forget that ours has been a history of struggling against what often seemed insurmountable odds, yet surviving and on occasion even flourishing.

The area I represent is a prime example of this, Mr. Speaker. In the heyday of the fishery, the Burin Peninsula was the crown jewel in that industry as people from around the Peninsula took to draggers, their own inshore boats or found steady work at some of the finest fish plants in Newfoundland and Labrador or at the shipyard in Marystown.

With the collapse of the cod fishery, the workers of the Burin Peninsula did what so many of their fellow Newfoundlander and Labradorians have done for generations, they looked to the manufacturing centres of mainland, Canada, to the oil fields out west, to our own burgeoning oil industry, but they did not forget the place they call home. Our communities did not die because our people would not let them die, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of another economic downturn, but as always in time of stagnancy there is also opportunity. The downturn in the offshore oil industry should serve as a wakeup call to us all.

The proverbial all eggs in one basket scenario can only breed complacency and bring us to the point we are today. I know there are many cynics who cringe at the expression, diversify

the economy. That idea has been bandied around so long with with less-than-stellar results. But all good ideas have their day and I believe, as do my colleagues, now is the time to look at other opportunities to grow our economy, Mr. Speaker. We are a province rich in resources and we now have an obligation to develop those resources for the entire population.

Mr. Speaker, the economic downturn that has left the country reeling has seen much of our workforce without employment; however, this is not a time to throw our hands in the air and give up. I am convinced that through working with industry and hand in hand with my colleague for Placentia West – Bellevue and indeed with the whole of caucus, the Burin Peninsula can and will be revitalized and regain its position as an economic stalwart for this province. We are already seeing this starting to take shape with the projects I have already mentioned. I know through talking to my colleagues on this side of the House that each and every one of them has embraced that same attitude and is determined to work hard to rebuild every region of this province.

Our economic rebirth will take time, but the time to start that process is now, not waiting for the price of oil to rebound to some desirable level. It will take the commitment of every Member of this Assembly, every civil servant in our province and, in fact, a commitment from every Newfoundlander and Labradorian, Mr. Speaker. Our people do care and are only too willing to share their ideas and do their part to put us back on sound footing. We cannot allow negativity to rule the day.

Mr. Speaker, we are no strangers to rough times, sometimes made even rougher by tragedy, as we saw seven years ago with the crash of Cougar Flight 491, a solemn anniversary marking the loss of 17 lives, including Burch Nash and Wade Drake from my district. An anniversary commemorated every year on March 12. The tragedy that was the battle at Beaumont-Hamel where hundreds of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians fell and which marked its 100th anniversary on July 1; the tragedy of countless mariners and sealers lost at sea and on the ice fields, lost but not forgotten. A stunning memorial such as those at Grand Bank and Elliston attest. Yes, we have seen our share of

rough times, but we will persevere because perseverance is endemic to the Newfoundland and Labrador psyche as the salt water off our coast, Mr. Speaker.

We are sailing rough waters right now. Rough waters can be scary but made much less scary when one realizes there is a competent captain at the helm. Our Premier is known for his unassuming calm and collected style of leadership, yet underneath lies a passion and determination to steer Newfoundland and Labrador in the right direction and to get us back to calm waters. It is my belief, Mr. Speaker, as it was the belief of over 90 per cent of delegates in Gander recently, that our Premier is the right man at the right time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. HALEY: His message is simple: By working together, much can be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I do not come blindly to this job. I know the task for all 40 of us is immense, but it is job to which I am looking forward and my only pledge is to not shirk from my responsibility to work hard on behalf of those who elected me and, indeed, the whole province.

We can choose to resign our province to a state of perpetual despair, or we can roll up our sleeves and do the work we need to put our province on the path to a bright future. Mr. Speaker, I choose to do the latter.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's indeed an honour to stand in the House as we sit again for our fall sitting and welcome everybody back, but particularly congratulate and thank those Members who gave their

maiden speech. It was very positive, very open, no doubt very engaging and very thankful for those people who helped them get to this point, their families and obviously the people in their districts who supported them over the process.

Six years ago when I got elected to the House and when I had an opportunity to speak, I never really got to give a maiden speech; I had to respond to the Speech from the Throne. So it was a little bit more technical about what that speech was all about. I never really got an opportunity to do what my hon. colleagues across had the opportunity to do today. I compliment them, particularly for outlining those people who were instrumental in them getting elected, and their focus and their views on wanting to improve their districts and improve this province; it is honourable.

No doubt, we all come for that same reason. We all come to want to be able to do our part to ensure that the next generation and the existing generation has a better quality of life. There is no doubt, as has been outlined here, there are challenges. My six years in the House, I've seen challenges. I've seen decisions made that, no doubt, had a negative impact on people, but we collectively have to look at the real impact it is going to have and how do we look for a better future and how do we move things forward.

I'm happy to say that my tenure in the House of Assembly and where things have moved during that period of time, particularly in my own district, was an eye-opener, to get an understanding of what people's priorities were and exactly what was the particular things that would influence their quality of life and their ability and their want to be able to stay in this great province of ours, and particularly in my district.

As other Members have outlined here, I have a unique district similar to a number of people; half urban, half suburban and a lot rural and restricted and isolated. When you look at my district itself, Bell Island is a very historic part of our province, a boom-and-bust community for a number of times, one of the elite when it came to incomes for a period of time. Then, the bust period which, unfortunately, people with no sustainable industry had to either rely on income support or had to leave their respective

community. When a population goes from 16,000 to less than 3,000, then obviously you know you're in a boom-and-bust community.

But I give credit over there, they're very diligent. Their resiliency is about providing a good quality of life for those citizens who are still there. And the one thing about it in Newfoundland and Labrador, when we leave, we never really leave. We're always still from there. People who have been gone 50 years in Ontario, Alberta, BC or in the United States always talk about where they're from and that's where they're from. So that's again a testament to the people in this province, but particularly the testament from my home community of Bell Island.

When you look at the rest of my district here, Portugal Cove-St. Philip's is one of the largest walk-through communities. It's very large. From Bauline Line and Indian Meal Line right up to St. Thomas Line right up to Thorburn Road. A very unique community because it was two communities for nearly 50 years, that 20 years ago joined in amalgamation, joined to come together and provide better services for the residents in that area. And it's been a mishmash of getting people, the former livyers, to understand we need to become one community, as has happened up in the community of Conception Bay South.

I remember going up doing work there years ago as a civil servant and the ultimate eight or nine communities were all separated and had their own identity and had their own needs and, no doubt, had their own priorities. But I've noticed in the last number of years how they've come together as a community. It's now CBS. It's not Seal Cove or Kelligrews or Manuels, any of that, it's CBS. They're a resident of CBS.

So I'm hopeful that Portugal Cove-St. Philip's will become that in the near future too, the next generation. But to do that, you've got to have the amenities; you've got to have a connection to it. The biggest challenge we've had in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's has always been their schooling is done outside. They have to go to St. John's to be part of it. So their connection to the community, their connection to representing the community in competitions, in sports, in academic competition is relevant to a city school

and a city name that has no attachment to their community.

So I'm happy to be able to say that we're moving to that. The junior high school is only months away from being completed and opened. It's state of the art, second to none in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's. The next object, then, is a high school, which would be one of the priorities, to have a community like that self-contained. It's a full education process. It has its recreation facilities all in play. It's moving forward on a great business plan around attracting the amenities of a business sector and a community square; so all these things are very positive things.

It has a gateway to Bell Island with the new ferry that should arrive in the next few hours, the *Legionnaire*. That will be a great attraction for Portugal Cove-St. Philip's and a great partnership between them and the community of Bell Island; so a lot positive things are happening there.

Then when I move to the other part of the district I'm responsible for: Paradise. Now, there's a very dynamic community, growing in leaps and bounds. It has moved completely into one of the top five communities here when it comes to attracting young families, having the amenities you need for a community, having the ability for growth, having a sustainable plan.

Only last week I had the privilege, myself and my colleague from the District of Topsail – Paradise, to meet with the town council and have a great open discussion about what their plans are, how they've gotten to where they are right now and some of the challenges they faced, but particularly a discussion around how do we move things forward and still be cognizant of some of the challenges they're going to have.

You have old parts of Paradise and new parts of Paradise. There has to be a good balance there. I give credit to the council there. Myself and my colleague have had a great working relationship, and my former colleague who represented part of it too from Mount Pearl North. We always managed to be engaged with the council itself to find out the best routes to go, what the priorities would be. Would it be infrastructure? Would be it recreation? Would it be education?

We managed to do a balance so that you could still draw the citizens you wanted, you could still expand the community and you could still make the business sector want to invest. We've seen that greatly improved over the last number of years. Particularly the last three years, where big box stores have come in there, where small business grow, where manufactures – the manufacturing unit up there is second to none. It's growing in leaps and bounds. It's paying millions of dollars of taxes, but our discussions last week were around completing the other infrastructure.

When you have a community that's growing so fast, how do you not only engage the citizens but give them the infrastructure necessary to be able to move it to the next level. One of the key things is completing our education system, needing a high school to be able to address the needs so that our kids are not spread out in various other communities. That has to be one of the priorities. That's a priority of the town and I know of the school councils there.

It was also a combination of talking about their sister communities. One of those is the other part of my district, as I mentioned earlier, Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, having a working relationship and ensuring that for every action there is a reaction. If you do something with a road network in one community, it probably affects one in your neighbouring one. So I like the fact they were having a discussion around how do we engage the other communities.

We have that in my district. There's no doubt, I would hope and think it happens in most other districts here, that we can't do it in isolation. That was one of the processes we tried to start a number of years ago, about regional services and the benefits they have for people.

There are certain areas, there's no doubt, regional services don't work just because of the nature of isolation or the restriction to those communities. I have to note one of those. It's about libraries, how you can expect people in Fogo Island, Change Islands, Bell Island or in Cartwright to get to the nearest community, which is hours away, and has restrictions and has challenges, to be able to avail of that service.

I'm totally pro about regional services, collaboration and finding a better way to do things; and the old cliché, get more return on your investment. I have no problem with that, but there are certain things we have to be cognizant about and certain responsibilities we have to provide certain services. So we need to have a better dialogue with people, a better opportunity to engage their particular needs here, but particularly ask people around, how would we best sell this?

One thing I found about Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as a civil servant for over a quarter of a century, travelling to every small community and every large urban centre, and comparing that to our colleagues in other jurisdictions and other countries, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are very open to having that dialogue. If you ask them to help you solve a problem, they'll be the first one to jump up and give you a solution. It's not always a self-serving solution. Sometimes they're willing to take a hit because the right thing needs to be done. We have to find that opportunity to do that again, that opportunity to engage those communities and say here are our restrictions, here are our challenges. We've got these; these are real.

Most of our challenges are due to no control of ours but they're internationally woven. So how do we take that, use our citizens, our 500,000-plus citizens here who have all kinds of knowledge, all kinds of experience, all kinds of understanding about what the priorities are and ask them to be engaged, ask them to help solve our problems. You'll get a much better response. You'll get a better understanding.

There's no doubt, not everybody is going to like every decision, but the decisions will be, no doubt, best set out to be able to make sure the next generation and the generations beyond that are better off than the generations before. It's a good way to do it. It's a good way in business. It's a good way in a family having dialogue. It's definitely a good way in politics.

I've had the fortunate process over the last number of years, in my district things have taken off naturally. The partnerships were easily developed, and we managed to invest where it was needed. There was no frivolous things spent

that weren't necessary. We spent dramatically in education to improve the quality of life so that you draw young families, so our young people would be as competitive as anybody anywhere in this world.

Have no illusions, there's no doubt it's healthy to review our education system or any other system. We do our health care system and that. But I can tell you, our education system – and I've talked to administrators and I've watched them and I've talked to parents, but more importantly, I see the graduates. I see the quality of the people that graduate from our school system. So we are in a good place.

No doubt, there's room for improvement. There's no doubt there are new approaches. There's no doubt we need to develop new partnerships. Again, to do that we've got to have the proper dialogue with those people, the key stakeholders and they're the parents' groups, they're the community leaders, they're the administrators, they're the educators, they're the people who serve the special needs students. Those are all the stakeholders we have in this province that need to be engaged to best address how we move our education system forward.

So another opportunity for all of us here in the House of Assembly to engage our constituents, engage our responsibilities, and engage those people out there who are offering another way of doing something that works in the best interest and uses the taxpayers' money in the best interests so that we have additional monies to put wherever our other priorities are. No doubt about that.

I know you can't invest in every bit of infrastructure immediately. It takes time. There's no doubt, 20 years ago if you knew David Brazil and I was the chair of the ferry users committee, I was screaming and bawling that we needed new ferries. Everybody needed them, no doubt about it, but reality was you didn't have half a billion dollars to do that. So you started out with a process, and we're coming close to the end of that process.

I'm happy to be able to say when the Minister of Transportation gets to sign off on the *Legionnaire* and a few other things that I know the department are adjusting on the smaller

ferries for the South Coast, and when they address some of the issues in Labrador, we'll be in a much better place to be able to service those communities who deserve services, but it's not only about deserving services. It's about giving the supports to be able to grow those communities.

Have no illusion, most of these communities, if it's around industry, if it's around tourism, if it's around proper investments, have the ability to be very high contributors when it comes to our tax base here and our manufacturing and our draw as a community. So we need to be able to ensure that what we invest is spread out. You can't help urban Newfoundland and Labrador survive if you don't help rural Newfoundland and Labrador survive. One can't survive without the other. It's a reality. If you look at our history for the last hundreds of years, the rural communities sustained the urban centres.

The world has changed somewhat. The urban centres now are helping sustain the rural centres. We need to find that balance. Our investments around businesses, incentives, if it's food security, if it's the fishing industry, if it's manufacturing, if it's high technology, whatever it may be, there can be a balance between how rural Newfoundland and Labrador plays in it to what urban Newfoundland and Labrador plays in it, but to do that we have to have a full balance of engagement again. There are people out there who have that knowledge.

So I'm encouraging the government here – and I know we've been doing it as a caucus here, and I know the NDP have been doing it – asking their constituents, asking the interest groups out there: What do you think, what are your challenges, but, more importantly, what are your solutions? Knowing that there are no blank cheques – no blank cheques out there. When you're upfront with people and honest with them there are no blank cheques. Tell us how we can best provide the services or what are the priority services that we first need to prioritize.

Again, I keep reiterating, people are very open to that in Newfoundland and Labrador. We all want more, there's no doubt about it, but when we're given the opportunity and given the reality of where we are, people will give you some heartfelt, genuine advice as to what would be the

best things to get us over this hump. So let's engage those people out there. Let's have that opportunity for our citizens. Let's have that dialogue.

Over the years, too, we've been fortunate enough – and I look at Bell Island. I keep saying that because I think Bell Island can be the jewel here. We've now improved the infrastructure. If you notice what's going on over there with some of the new things that have been built, some of the investments by the private sector, there's a balance over there that people would have never thought 20 years ago. It's the first time in 50 years since the mines closed that the population has stabilized. It's not just retirees coming back but there are families with two and three kids.

There's a balance for that. When you can do that in an isolated community that had only one supportive business and that was a mining industry that doesn't exist anymore, then it tells me you can do that in the Straits of Labrador, you can do the North Coast of Labrador, you can do it on the Bonavista Peninsula, you can do it in the Burin Peninsula. Anywhere in this province it can be done, we just need to be able to find the proper mechanism and the right ideas. And they're out there. They're out there for the taking. It's just a matter of getting the people to give us those ideas and let them develop the partnerships.

Government is supposed to be the mechanism for things to prosper, not the people who write out the cheques or tell you what needs to be done. We're the mechanism, we're the support mechanism. The old cliché of a hand up versus a handout; that's where the government is supposed to be around when it comes to policy, when it comes to implementing support services and this type of thing. We need to get back to that.

No doubt, part of that whole process is, again, deciding where we're going to be able to offer the best types of services in which part of the province to ensure that everybody in this province of ours has equal access to particular services. If it's health care, if it's education, if it's recreation, if it's training; whatever it may be that's necessary, we need to be able to find that happy balance.

I would hope as we sit for the next month or so here in the House of Assembly, and as we do to continue over the next number of years in the House of Assembly, that's the debate we're going to have here. And between us all, that we come up with the solutions. Because if I present a petition or a Member from the government side presents a petition, that it reflects the needs of people. They're giving us an opportunity to have an open discussion around how we solve some of these issues. They're not driven just by politics. This is a House of politics, I realize that, but it's the House of the people, and the people should get the most influence on what we get back from it. We have that opportunity.

There's no blame on any administration, be it whatever party it was in the past. We'll leave that for the past. This is the present and we have to look for the future. The future opportunities we have here are, again, that open dialogue. We're not always going to agree. I have priorities that my colleagues here in caucus don't 100 per cent agree with. No doubt, they have some that I wouldn't agree with. No doubt it's the same on that side.

When it becomes philosophical about policies on particular political parties, there's no doubt there are going to be debates and arguments. But the more evidence that we show and the more information we put forward that citizens – be it my constituents, be it constituents from my colleagues in Lab West – that they are on the same wavelength, then we know we're on the right track. We just have to ensure our policies and our investments meet those needs.

Sometimes there's no doubt, you have to say right now here's a priority and the priority is in this area for this particular need. And no doubt, people will be a little bit perturbed for that period of time. But I found in my history as a civil servant and as a business person, and even as a politician the last six years, people get over that pretty quickly when they know you're being sincere and they know at the end of the day there's going to be light at the end of that tunnel. That's what we're asking here.

Any vision, any leap of hope, any plan needs to be shared. There needs to be open dialogue. It needs to have that opportunity to ensure people give you the best piece of advice.

And I say we flawed in one particular area here, but we've got an opportunity to fix that. And that's around the libraries. I'd be remiss if I didn't talk about that because it's something that's sincerely heartfelt for me because I look at the needs for libraries. I had an opportunity to meet with a number of the communities that have been slated to close their libraries and got a better understanding. I thought I knew a fair bit about the impacts libraries would have and what they offer people, but even I couldn't touch the surface until I started to talk to people.

And I had some of my colleagues from the government side. We attended one of the sessions and got a real understanding of, not only the history of it – and history is fine and history is very important, but history has to be built into a process where there's a benefit to people. Every story people told about the history of libraries and the impact, had an outcome. And the outcome was somebody was better off, somebody was better educated. The community benefitted from it, the schools themselves were of benefit. The leaders in the community benefit from it. It was an overall sense that not only their communities but the region had seen the benefits of those libraries being open.

I say that the flawed part of it – and this is not an attack on anybody in any way, shape or form. The process here would be – and most of those people we talked to realized there has to be a way of streamlining the business we do in government and the libraries are one example of that. Having a dialogue to point out how do we better use technology, how do we develop better partnerships with the private sector. How do we use our existing education system to better promote libraries and get the better use? How do we partner with existing government programs to ensure that process saves us money, improves our services?

In some cases, maybe there has to be an amalgamation of satellite units versus a full-fledged unit. I didn't hear anybody adverse to that. What I did hear them adverse to was don't cut us without understanding the benefits, because you're going to lose money in the end and you're going to hurt the people that you're set to support.

So I do ask in my closing note that we open up better dialogue and find a better way to do things for the people of this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's nice to be back in the House after an absence. Only it doesn't seem like five months ago, just the same, since we walked out after that four-day filibuster and here we are. My grandmother had an expression – she had many expressions, actually, and she influenced my life greatly. She used to say time and tide waits for no man.

I thought about that last night as I thought about it seems like yesterday I ran in a by-election in 2013 and joined a small caucus of five. I am now starting my seventh sitting, Mr. Speaker, and the only thing constant – as my colleagues have heard me say many times since then – has been change with the seven by-elections and the great results of the general election and then, I'd be remiss if I didn't say, a bit of a rough spring. But I think the tide is turning.

I'm not going to talk about the Liberal convention here, but I have to mention just coming off a great convention in Gander, 500 people at the dinner, and the momentum. I hope it put to bed some of the things that we were hearing in the media about is the party united and is the party behind the leader. I think, as somebody mentioned already today, coming out of that a leader, the Premier, with over 90 per cent of the vote, I hope that people know that we've rolled up our sleeves, we're here in the tough times. We're united and we're going forward together, just like our recent *Way Forward* paper indicated.

So I want to say welcome back to everybody. Welcome back to my team and welcome back to the Members across the way. The Member for Cape St. Francis, I always enjoy listening to him. He talked about the fishery, which is near and dear to my heart. The fishery plays a very, very vital, crucial role in my district, the

beautiful District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

L'Anse au Clair starts at the Quebec border and my district goes north as far Cartwright. Then I have the three unconnected communities of Norman Bay, William's Harbour and Black Tickle. So as I was listening to him mention the fishery, I wanted to say that myself and the Minister of Fisheries will be making our way on Wednesday morning, if all goes well, up to my district to attend the Shrimp Company's biennial. It is a huge event; they're a very key player in my district. It is companies like the Labrador Fishermen's Union Shrimp Company that are driving the success of the fishery in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I'm very proud, Mr. Speaker, that they are from my district; 35 years now, revenues of well over \$80 million annually; definitely one of our success stories.

I think that the Shrimp Company is a shining example of Labrador's potential and how the values of community, partnership, co-operation and passion can allow a region to be the best that it can be economically and socially, Mr. Speaker.

While I'm just mentioning the fishery, I want to say that the Liberal Party – and we saw a number of resolutions while we were in Gander – has always highlighted the fishery as a fundamental pillar of the economy and as a crucial renewable resource, a vital source of rural economic development and a sustainable engine of wealth generation for our province, with enormous potential for growth.

So I'm encouraged that I'm on a team that recognizes that the fishery is one of the fundamental pillars. I mean when we look at all of the rural areas that we have, and my district is probably as rural as any, so many challenges and the cost of providing service to these areas – people have heard me say before and I've said it in the media; I have communities, some wondering about their future. I think people have a right to choose to live where they want to live, Mr. Speaker, but it is not possible to have the same level of service everywhere you live.

With that in mind, we have to do all we can to support the industries and people like the Shrimp

Company that are such key players in those little areas that don't have a lot of opportunity with other industries.

I want to mention right off the top that this is World Diabetes Day. That's why I'm wearing my little blue pin, like many here in the House. Diabetes is near and dear to my heart. It came to live under our roof about 13 years ago and it's only when it hits close to home that you fully understand the complications. The Minister of Health would certainly understand the expense and the burden that it plays on our province.

I want to mention Guy Poole, also from my district; I am very proud of Guy, a man who's 72 years old and in September we got to walk the final steps with him towards St. John's. He walked from Labrador West to St. John's. He walked across sea ice in my district. He's just one man doing what he can. He lost his life's partner through diabetes complications. He's raised more than \$100,000. He's promoting awareness –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. DEMPSTER: – around diabetes and he's letting us know that you don't have to have money. No matter what walk of life, we can all get out and do our part to live a more healthy, active lifestyle. In turn, we're not only doing ourselves a favour – we're spending about 40 cents on every dollar in health care in our province.

I take that serious, Mr. Speaker. Even myself as an MHA, I think all of us as leaders that it's incumbent upon us that we model some of that health and well-being. How can you expect people to go the way if we don't really show them the way? I digress, and I'm good at that too, Mr. Speaker. I want to toss a bouquet to Guy and I want to recognize that it is World Diabetes Day. I started my day in blue for World Diabetes, but once you get in here and you're in court garb, I didn't have it on.

It's been a very busy summer since we left here in June. All of us have been out and about to our festivals and my district no different. I have lots of fantastic things that happened in my little area, from the bakeapple festival in the Labrador Straits; 37 years now these people have been

doing a fantastic event to celebrate the bakeapple – which, by the way, Mr. Speaker, the Labrador bakeapples are the best. I may be biased, but I think they are. Every time I come in people are saying can you bring me some bakeapples.

We have the Crab Festival in Mary's Harbour that has celebrated 20 years; some communities with small volunteer populations that have been doing this for a long, long time. It is commendable. Then we have the cod festival, the Golden Cod there in William's Harbour.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, when we talk about out and about at festivals, sometimes people say you're out, you're kissing babies again and you're shaking hands, but what they don't realize is two things. When we're out and about, that's when we get to engage with our constituents. How many of us have people come up to you and say I was going to give your office a call or I was wondering do you know of a program for my grandmother or my grandfather? So it's very, very important that we get out and about.

Also, in this job, you work for the people. It's a very high honour. For me, I had a by-election. I had a heavily contested nomination. I just had the general election. I take it very, very serious. It's an honour to be one of 40 people who stand in this Legislature and represent one of the 40 districts. I take that serious.

Once you go to work for the people, there's always the balance, Mr. Speaker. I think we'll all agree that we can spend seven days a week sitting at our desks and trying to push the community files and the individual constituency issues, but it's always that balance of getting out and about so that the people who elected you can see you and they appreciate seeing you at events.

We're just coming off the heels of Remembrance Day. I attended the ceremony this year in a little town of Lodge Bay. I think the population is just over 60. They have at least 20 per cent of their population that serve in the army, in the navy or in the military. Communities from all over Southeast Labrador converge on Lodge Bay for remembrance. It was a tiny group of military moms, 14 years ago, that decided they wanted to do something because

their sons were out serving. The event has been growing and growing – commendable. The whole back wall of that community centre is pictures of their young men and women that go out and serve. So I was really happy to be a part of that. I just wanted to mention that, Mr. Speaker.

What I'm really happy to talk about over the minutes that I have left is we took the reins of government at probably the most difficult time in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. Some of us, more than others, have had a very difficult time dealing with that, managing the people's expectations. I think that my team has done a very, very good job thus far.

I want to talk about Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair and some of the funding that has come into that district. As I look down through the list, I thought about Minister Foote when she was speaking in Gander last weekend. She said somebody said: Oh, there's a lot of money coming to Newfoundland and Labrador. Good for you; you're dragging it in. And she said: Why shouldn't I drag it into Newfoundland and Labrador? Why shouldn't it come to our province? We've been in the wilderness for 10 years.

I thought about that when I was gathering some notes for myself to get up. Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair has been in the wilderness for a long time, Mr. Speaker. We have a long way to go. We have our challenges. I know that there are services that we have in urban areas that we will never have in Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, but I can tell you over the last 3½ years, especially when the House is sitting – and when I leave here on a Friday morning and I fly back into my district, I am just in another world. We have a long way to go.

So we started in June with an announcement in Mary's Harbour: \$63 million. That was cost shared by the feds. That's going to see two 80-kilometre paving tenders in my district, hopefully, by the end of the next calendar year. That is not just going to benefit Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, Mr. Speaker. That is going to benefit the entire province. And I'm going to talk in a couple of minutes about the tourism numbers that are up in the district.

People now, Mr. Speaker, now that the road is connected on through to Goose Bay and Labrador City, the numbers are growing exponentially of tourists that's coming in maybe across the Strait of Belle Isle on the *Apollo* and heading on north and going out through down Lab West in the district that my colleague represents. So that \$63 million is certainly an investment into the entire Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I'm always amazed with the number of emails that I get from people that live outside of Labrador that comment on the road, or when is your road being finished. So I think we're on track for 2019-2020 to have that done, and I certainly look forward to the day. So right now we're going to be doing 80 kilometres of paving north of Red Bay and Charlottetown branch south, we're doing 80 more.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I've been working closely with my colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I am more than delighted – I think it is 10 projects that are happening in my district. Ten projects where maybe around \$4 million has been the provincial contribution. I'm just going to run through some of them for the benefit of the people that might be watching.

We have Red Bay, a World Heritage UNESCO site, that I want to say is up 26 per cent this summer in the number of visitors – the highest it's been to date. They saw 11,000 visitors, which was an increase of 26 per cent over 2015. Red Bay is receiving, for the paving of roads in that community, a provincial contribution of over \$400,000. L'Anse-au-Loup is receiving a contribution of over \$200,000 for sewer upgrades – essential, basic work in that area. On down to Mary's Harbour we see under Clean Water and Wastewater Fund – again, federal-provincial cost shared – \$680,000 in pump house repairs and over \$200,000 in lift station repairs.

Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted that we have a minister that recognizes that, in 2016, there are seniors that still do not have running water. We talk about communities and the life of communities and the future and the sustainability and you have to consider all that before you make an investment; I understand that. But these are connected by road,

communities that will be around for a long time, yet those communities did not have water, did not have sewer, could not turn on a tap – things that we take for granted every single day.

Lodge Bay, I just mentioned, where I attended the Remembrance ceremony – \$123,000 into Lodge Bay, with a provincial contribution of \$49,000; a new water and waste water system for Port Hope Simpson, a \$348,000 provincial contribution. Here we have a situation where we had sewer that's been running out over the road for the last number of years, a health hazard, deplorable, children that live in that area. I'm so pleased again that the minister took that project and sent it up and got funds matched. The community is very excited to see this project finally funded.

Sanitary sewer lift station in St. Lewis, a provincial contribution of \$74,000; Charlottetown, my home community, we have a well drilling project and a phase of water and sewer happening in that community, with a provincial contribution of \$268,000 and \$143,000. So, Mr. Speaker, significant investment into communities in the most basic of infrastructure when we're talking artesian wells – which, by the way, we're learning that not everything has to be a phase of water and sewer, which is the most expensive way to go in these communities. We can have well and septic, and we can do some drilling of wells. It's a more cost-efficient way of giving Aunt Nellie or Uncle George water that's running from their tap.

In addition to that, we had a number of other wonderful things. My colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Works, who's very familiar with seeing my face, we had a number of extra crossings put on just because the traffic is up and we needed those extra crossings. I was pleased to see him do that. Just from May to October, we have had more than 75,000 people in that short window this summer, more than 75,000 people that went across the Strait of Belle Isle on the *Apollo*. Not just tourism, we have some big megaprojects happening in Labrador as well.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, a number of my other communities have benefitted financially over the last few months; Pinsent's Arm, another little town where the kids get on a school bus

and they drive 29 kilometres in to Charlottetown to go to school. I throw a bouquet to the Minister of Transportation and Works for recognizing that the road was a hazard; it was almost grown over. It was like driving through a tunnel with brush. He approved \$182,000 for those kids to be able to get on a bus and drive twice a day on that road safely back and forth to school.

I had a number of communities that received fire equipment, very essential, Mr. Speaker. My own community, when I look at what they have done – I mean, these are little fire brigades that are doing everything they can to try and help themselves. They're having their cold plate sales and their hot turkey suppers, but sometimes they need that little bit of extra help.

In my community of Charlottetown, we have the only shrimp processing facility in Labrador. So we have all of these boats that are tied to the dock, we have the shrimp plant and we have the neighbouring community of Pinsent's Arm that depends on them. It is so vital that we help them get some of the resources they need in the event something like a fire should happen.

Speaking of fires happening, the southern part of my district, L'Anse au Clair, lost a community centre which was a focal point in their community. We have been able to help them do some design work with the engineering piece and they are well on their way to putting a new building back into that community, Mr. Speaker.

Black Tickle, Mr. Speaker, has covered a lot of miles in the media. We thought initially that Black Tickle would be losing their nurse. I'm very pleased that I was able to work with my colleague, the Minister of Health and Community Services, and we were able to maintain medical services in that community in a more efficient, fiscally, prudent manner than was happening before.

Everything you'd seen with the prior administration, money was easy come easy go, and nobody really had handles on anything or how much money was going out the door. It looked like, for that community to have a nurse, it was going to cost us quite a bit more than we could afford but we worked through a number of things and I'm very pleased to say that I talked to the local service district a couple of days ago

and things are working really well with the new model of health care in the community of Black Tickle. They're quite happy to have a nurse there, Mr. Speaker, in that community.

I see my time is running out, Mr. Speaker. I had a whole lot more I wanted to say, but I'm just going to skip over. I have to make a comment on a question that came in Question Period where the Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier: What was the cost of shutting down the Muskrat Falls Project for those few days?

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you, as someone who was in the middle of that upheaval, I'm going to tell you whatever it cost to shut it down was far less than the cost of keeping it going the way it was. Here we were just hours and days before impoundment, and there were so many unresolved issues because the proper work was not done upfront.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't be more proud of the team I work with and led by the Premier, that 12-hour meeting with the Aboriginal groups where we definitely broke new ground, because we recognized the fact that this project had ballooned \$5 billion more than what they had initially said it would, that the health of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador trumps everything, Mr. Speaker. That's why we broke new ground and made sure that proper measures were in place so that the health of the people would not be compromised.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's certainly an honour and a privilege for me to rise in the House of Assembly here today and speak to Address in Reply for the Speech from the Throne.

As I heard my hon. colleague talk about a little while ago, she said this is her seventh session. This is my ninth year, I guess. If you're talking in terms of two sittings per year, I'm getting close to my eighteenth time here in this House of

Assembly. It really is quite an honour for each and every one of us to stand here on behalf of the wonderful people of Newfoundland and Labrador that we represent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to use some of my time here today to speak to the recent Thanksgiving storm. What an incredible experience it was. I've experienced many things since I've been in politics. My husband likes to sit down with me sometimes and talk about the many different experiences we have had. I will never say, well, nothing else can happen, because I didn't imagine in a million years that I would be MHA at a time of such massive destruction throughout my entire region. It was quite an eye-opening experience, Mr. Speaker, for each and every one of us.

Towards the end, I guess, I'll talk a little bit about some of the after effects, but during the storm event itself – and I want to say again, in addition to the minister, in his Ministerial Statement today thanked everyone for their response effort. I want to say again a huge thank you to all the people that really rose to the challenge in a time of critical need.

It was about 1:30 on Monday afternoon when we got the call from Fire and Emergency Services. They notified me as MHA and the mayors of the various communities that we knew would be impacted over the next 12 hours. To see the work that was done by the volunteers and local community officials was absolutely incredible. None of them were afraid to go out and brave the danger, and it was quite dangerous, Mr. Speaker, for several hours that evening.

They took proactive measures in some communities where they actually got out ahead of the rain flooding houses and actually dug culverts and diverted some water routes, and in the process saved probably 50 or 60 homes from being flooded as well. So it was certainly very proactive measures on their part to minimize the damage that was coming our way. Yet, none of us were prepared for or expected the extent of damage that we saw. In fact, it wasn't until the Premier came on Wednesday and we were touring the region that we discovered the actual number of washouts. We knew we couldn't get from Hermitage to Seal Cove because there was

a washout on that end and there was another washout from Seal Cove towards Hermitage. That day we discovered a third washout in between, Mr. Speaker.

We had four communities isolated for days. Kids couldn't get to school. We went to the store and I never experienced anything like this in my life. One of the storekeepers said there are a thousand people who live in the community, the store opened for a few hours two days after the storm and a thousand people went to the store during that few-hour period. There wasn't a loaf of bread to be bought; there wasn't a can of milk to be found. Even flour was flying off the shelves, Mr. Speaker. Everyone was resorting to the realization that we might have to make our own bread because there was no way in and no way out. Our bridge completely collapsed.

Now, that leads me, though, to something that's very, very, very important and that is the need for maintenance of critical infrastructure. I know and I will –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I lost my train of thought there then, Mr. Speaker, but certainly, like I said, I've never experienced that feeling of panic before of not knowing if there was going to be something to eat. We really didn't know how long we were going to be in that situation.

Officials, Mr. Speaker – and I think there's a lesson to be learned in all of this. Certainly what happened in Marystown a few years ago, I'm sure we learned a lot of lessons from that. As we move forward, it is absolutely crucial that our existing infrastructure is maintained.

I have mayors in my community very, very concerned about some of the bridges. The reality is it's a miracle that nobody died during that rainstorm event that flood. There was a vehicle about to cross that bridge when they heard a huge rumble. They thought they had a flat tire so they stopped. Had they inched along further they would have drowned, undoubtedly, Mr. Speaker,

because the bridge went in one fell swoop, the whole thing gone. It eroded from the edges.

The councils had been expressing concern for some time. We still have a number of bridges in the region that we're equally as concerned about, some of them with drops of well over a hundred feet should anybody be on them in the event of a natural disaster. So it is crucial that our infrastructure be maintained throughout the province and I, for one, would certainly support increased investment into our road networks throughout the province, Mr. Speaker. These are things that must be done in a timely manner. We cannot afford to wait.

It affected everything – the fish plant, nobody could go to work for a week. We had, I have to say, some incredible employers. There was no money coming in, there were no sales being made, there was no business activity, but employers continued to pay their employees for the duration of that week and didn't impose further hardship on the people, and it was quite impressive to see.

As we went through the storm event, Mr. Speaker, one of the things I'd really like to talk about here today is what we saw about the good in people. It was really, really encouraging for me. You live in the political world and sometimes you get a bit cynical about things. Events like that really emphasize for you and point out to you just how many good people there really are in this world. Absolutely incredible, the people that rose to the challenge, brought food for their neighbours. As the firefighters were out working all night long, there were people home baking bread and buns and muffins and bringing coffee and tea and cooking meals. Everyone chipped in to clean out the houses that were flooded.

Mr. Speaker, there was a flash flood in Morrisville and, by the grace of God, again, there were no deaths. What had happened, a few hours before, the culvert had blocked up and a few hours before that, though, there was some sewer backing up, which was actually a fabulous thing, in hindsight, because it enabled people to get out of their houses. Had they been in their houses, they would inevitably have drowned in that flash flood. It happened, the water levels rose eight feet in less than a minute. It was quite

a scary situation for the community. Cars were halfway out the bay, Skidoos out in the middle of the ocean, sheds in the middle of the ocean – all taken by a flash flood from a culvert that was plugged up above Morrisville.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward we certainly have to pay greater attention to routine maintenance as well in keeping our roadways safe and keeping our communities safe. But again, the people rose to the challenge and were incredibly, incredibly supportive of one another.

There wasn't a sense of panic, like you would expect, because everyone knew we were in good hands with the volunteers and officials from both on the local ground and provincially who all stepped up to the challenge and were there to help everybody out. So hats off to each and every one of you, and I'll speak a little bit more about that again tomorrow.

I'd also like to talk a little bit about the aquaculture industry. During those four or five days, when we couldn't get our fish out of the region, we certainly felt the loss of business for those four or five days. Aquaculture is an incredible industry with significant potential for rural Newfoundland and Labrador. It's a growing industry. It's still not without its challenges.

We started aquaculture down in my region in the '80s, Mr. Speaker. It was a lot of years of growing pains throughout the '90s. We've learned a lot and we've perfected, I guess, a lot of the methods of growing the fish, but we're nowhere near there yet. The potential for growth in my region alone, let alone in other parts of the province, but just in the Coast of Bays, we, alone, can produce up to 50,000 metric tons.

In the vision document that was recently released, I certainly would like to see a higher target because that number of 50,000 metric tons really encompasses my area because we have the capacity to grow to that and we have the infrastructure to grow to that. We have the existing companies in cage manufacturing. We certainly don't want to see any negative impact to an industry that has been 30 years in the making, that employs well over 2,000 people and needs continued support as we move forward and continue to grow the industry so

that we, as a Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, are global contenders in the food production industry for farmed salmon.

There are two trains of thought about farmed salmon versus wild salmon. I am certainly a proponent of farmed salmon, farmed chicken, farmed vegetables, any kind of farmed food because we cannot rely on having a food supply unless we farm. Farming of fish is going to be crucial if we are going to meet the demand for food consumption by 2040, especially fish protein, because we don't have enough of it in the wild. It's essential that we learn how to farm that fish as quickly and as cheaply as we can so we can ensure there is a continued supply of food for consumers of fish products as we move into the next century. So it's certainly an industry I strongly support and one that I know has very good footing in this province. We need to ensure it continues to receive support, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to talk a little bit about health care. As we look towards the future, I recognize that we have to look at every aspect of where we have expenditures, but health care in particular is crucial. It is so crucial. And health care in a province like ours cannot, cannot, cannot be regionalized. Sure, it makes sense to me that you can't get chemo treatment down where I live in the Coast of Bays region. It makes sense to me that I have to drive to Grand Falls or St. John's for that level of service; but, my gosh, if I'm having a heart attack, I need to know that there's a doctor within half an hour – ideally, closer – that would be able to save my life. That is the critical issue that we face in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. When we hear of regionalization it is very, very, very alarming, especially in the absence of not knowing what that looks like. We need health care professionals. We need the doctors, the nurses and the nurse practitioners.

All of the other aspects are well and good, and we need education – I have no doubt – about how to live healthier lives, but that education doesn't need to come in the form of a \$100,000 salary scattered here and there and everywhere all across the province. That education can come from many other forms of media at a much cheaper cost.

We need the money that health care dollars have allocated to them being spent in front-line services. We need it being spent where we can detect the cancer, we can detect the aneurism, we can detect the heart attack, we can stitch that wound which is eight centimetres long in the back of someone's head – these are the kinds of things that happen in the middle of the night that you need doctors nearby for.

You can't drive an hour with your head split open and expect to survive. These are the practical issues that we face living in rural Newfoundland. And it's well and good for people who live in larger centres – and, in my mind, there are parts of rural Newfoundland that I don't consider rural, like Grand Falls and like Gander. In my mind, if you have a streetlight, I don't know if that really constitutes you as a rural community, I really don't. But rural Newfoundland needs to have that front-line level of care and all of the tertiary services, if they want to be funnelled out to us from a regional centre, well and good.

But we don't need managers of managers of managers. We need doctors and nurses and nurse practitioners. We need clinics to be open. Mr. Speaker, we have now in Hermitage a situation where 600 people have to drive over an hour to see a doctor. On many occasions they get there only to be told, oh, sorry, your appointment is cancelled. They have to turn around and drive back. These are seniors who probably had to pay somebody \$40 to drive them to Harbour Breton in the first place. If it's one of their children, they probably had to take a day off work to get there. These are the types of issues, Mr. Speaker, that we're seeing happen with the closure of the clinic in Hermitage.

They will happen in other areas across the province as well as you lose your clinics. I truly hope, Mr. Speaker, that that is not the direction government takes because that is not going to improve the health care of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I firmly believe in rural, remote regions like ours, we won't be able to save as many lives as we can now with our health care where it is. We've seen a lot of cuts and we've seen a lot of erosion of health care and there really is no more room for any further erosion of health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker.

So these are some of the key issues that we face in Newfoundland and Labrador today. I truly hope that the people of rural Newfoundland and Labrador stand together and stand strong, that we will stand for no further erosion of health services to any of our rural communities, Mr. Speaker, or to any of our centres overall. I am sure there are many ways to find efficiencies without shutting down clinics and having people drive over an hour to see a doctor. There are other ways of finding these solutions, I have no doubt about it, and I am sure that any citizen can probably cite three or four of their own things they've seen over the years as examples of places to save money.

I'm going to wrap up, Mr. Speaker. My time is coming short on my Address in Reply. I'm going to talk a little bit as well about maiden speeches; my congratulations to those of you who delivered your maiden speeches here in the House today.

Like my colleague from Conception Bay East – Bell Island, I never did a maiden speech either here in this hon. House of Assembly. I am sure I've told the story many times, but on my way to the House for the first time I made it as far as Butter Pot Park, flipped over a few times and I spent the next four months in a neck collar. But I did come to the House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, against my doctor's orders. I was supposed to be bedridden and not moving and not lifting and not doing anything for six months, but against my doctor's advice – because I really felt terrible.

I felt here I was, elected as an MHA, you're new, you're energetic, you're all excited and here I was, I couldn't even move. I couldn't even lift my arm. I didn't have the strength to roll over. I couldn't even do that. Someone would literally have to roll me for about two weeks until some of my strength slowly, slowly, slowly started coming back. But I came to this House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, every single day for Question Period.

God bless my beautiful sister, who happened to be off that year. She took the year off to help look after our mom. Our mom passed away and she ended up spending the year looking after me, unbeknownst to both of us that that would happen. She would drive me every day. She had

to do everything for me. I couldn't even feed myself. She would dress me and she'd do my hair. We'd come and I'd sit in my chair for an hour, and after Question Period I would leave.

Every day I did that, I took a risk, Mr. Speaker. Because if someone rear-ended us, my fracture was less than a millimetre from my spinal cord, so I could have easily become a paraplegic with any accident during that four-month period, but I felt so strongly about being here to represent the people. It was quite an experience, but I have to tell you, when I came back then and spent the whole afternoon here in my fall sitting, it was quite a different experience and I was saying it wasn't so bad. I felt a little lost then too because first reading, second reading, third reading, I was a little bit behind everybody else because I wasn't on the learning curve that everybody else was.

I guess my point in all of that is how special of a privilege it is to be here, to represent the people you have. I never did my maiden speech, so I want to say thank you at this opportunity to all of those who have supported me, especially my parents. I think our family does influence us a lot when we take the path down to political life. Many of us are shaped by our siblings or parents. My brother, Pat, actually ran during the Peckford era. I blame him to this day as to why I am here in politics.

Thank you to all of my volunteers as well. You've been fabulous. Hopefully, we'll be around for a whole lot longer yet because this province deserves good representation. I think each and every one of us genuinely believes that we have that to offer.

Thank you to the people of the province for supporting us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, given the hour of the day, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House be now adjourned.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

This House now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 in the afternoon.

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