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*Speaker: Honourable Scott Reid, MHA*

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**MR. SPEAKER (Reid):** Admit strangers.

Order, please!

Today in the galleries, I am pleased to welcome Gail Thorne from the STAND for Hannah foundation, as well as Sarah Pittman and Frankie Ralph.

Also in the public galleries, I welcome Ms. Murphy's grade eight class from Amalgamated Academy in Bay Roberts.

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

### Statements by Members

**MR. SPEAKER:** Today, we will hear statements by hon. Members for the Districts of Conception Bay South, Mount Scio, Mount Pearl North, Lake Melville and Stephenville - Port au Port.

The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

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

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

On Wednesday, October 23, I had the pleasure of attending the eighth annual Bright Business luncheon awards ceremony at the Manuels River Hibernia Interpretation Centre.

This annual event is hosted by the Town of Conception Bay South, and it's a great opportunity for local entrepreneurs to network and showcase their individual businesses in our community. Since the inception of this event in 2012, the town has recognized the achievements of 372 local businesses.

The Bright Business Achievement Awards help recognize the contributions of local businesses that have gone above and beyond. This year's award winners are: Beautiful Business - New Found Inn and Suites; Community Pride & Partnership - Sisters in Fitness; Dave Murphy Leadership - Eastern Safety Services; Noseworthy Award - Sandra Walsh for Michael's Jewellery; Established Business - Bill's Muffler & Brake Shop Ltd.; Main Street

Business Improvement Member of the Year - Regular Power Clarke Bennett Lawyers; New Start Up of the Year - Ninepenny Brewing.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the award winners, nominees and sponsors. Conception Bay South has grown significantly and it's great to see that the business community has also shown tremendous growth.

Thank you very much.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Mount Scio.

**MS. STOODLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize last week, November 3 to 9, as National Francophone Immigration Week. J'aimerais reconnaître que la semaine passée a été la semaine nationale de l'immigration francophone.

Among the accomplished schools in the District of Mount Scio, I would like to recognize l'École des Grands-Vents. Cette école francophone est spéciale parce que, en plus d'être une école, le bâtiment abrite également tous les organismes francophones de la province.

La semaine passée j'avais l'opportunité de visiter cette établissement, en particulier l'Association Communautaire Francophone de Saint-Jean.

When I was learning more about the francophone residents of the province, I discovered how welcoming and inclusive the community is. To be a member, you only need to have an interest in speaking French.

Je suis fier d'avoir ces organismes dans le District de Mount Scio et je tiens à remercier les dirigeants pour leur direction dans notre communauté, particulièrement en reconnaissant la semaine nationale de l'immigration francophone.

I am proud that Mount Scio is the administrative home to the francophone organizations in the province, and I would ask my colleagues to join me in thanking our French speaking leaders for

creating an active and inclusive community for residents no matter where they're from.

Thank you.

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

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

**MR. LESTER:** Mr. Speaker, during this year's inaugural Best in Mount Pearl Awards ceremony, three lifelong best friends were nominated: Agnes Murphy, Barb Predham and the late Bernice Miller.

The calibre contribution and commitment to the community of these ladies has been so great that the selection committee could not pick one and, therefore, awarded collectively the 2018 Life Time Achievement Award to all three.

Agnes Murphy was the founding member of the Mount Pearl Figure Skating Club, and the Frosty Festival in 1982. She has also served on many other volunteer groups over the years.

Barb Predham was an active member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus for 40 years, as well as an active member of the Mount Pearl Skating Club committee. She too has served with various other boards and organizations over the years.

The late Bernice Miller served with the Frosty Festival for over 27 years and also served with the 2000 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games, Knights of Columbus Women's Auxiliary and Scouts Canada. Miller also was awarded Citizen of the Year in 1992, and served on the Mount Pearl City Council from 1997 to 2003.

I ask all hon. Members to join with me in congratulating Agnes, Barb and Bernice for all they have done for our community.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

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

Without doubt, the most inspirational group in Lake Melville is that of the Howling Huskies, a Special Olympics Team that has been active for 20 years. The team is part of a global movement where every single person is accepted or welcomed, regardless of ability or disability.

Any team is backed by inspirational leaders, and the Howling Huskies are no different. No team can operate or compete without volunteers, family, friends and many partners who themselves show great community spirit.

For the last six years, Susan and Kevin Lamond have led this team in athletics, bocce, figure skating and snowshoeing, depending on the season. The team enjoys great profile, whether at regional or provincial sporting events, the Law Enforcement Torch Walk, or anywhere there is a dance.

As the Lamonds have decided to relocate to the St. John's area and have passed the baton on to others – on behalf of a grateful community, I wanted to thank them for their dedication – providing opportunities for athletes to build confidence and make our community a better, healthier and more joyful place.

The Special Olympics oath should inspire all of us: Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

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

Kathleen Jean of Harmon Sea Side Links in Stephenville, for the second time in four years, has claimed the triple crown of provincial women's amateur golf championships.

According to Golf Newfoundland and Labrador, Kathleen scored a 76 for the low round for the day to capture the women's amateur, mid-amateur and senior titles with a three-day total of 241. The tournament was held at Glendenning Golf.

Kathleen moved to Stephenville at the age of eight years old. At 10, a neighbour brought her to the golf course to try the game. Even though she didn't like the game of golf at first, she didn't give up, and by the age of 12 she played in her first provincial junior championship.

Two years later she made her first provincial team and represented Newfoundland and Labrador at the nationals. This was the beginning of a very long and impressive golf career.

Kathleen has won 17 provincial titles, along with representing Newfoundland and Labrador over 30 times. She is truly a great ambassador for the sport of golf in our province and country.

I ask all hon. Members of the House to join me in congratulating Kathleen Jean of Stephenville on her remarkable golf career in our province.

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

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

#### Statements by Ministers

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this hon. House to recognize the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims.

This annual event honours the memory of those who have been tragically taken from us or injured on Canadian roads.

Mr. Speaker, I doubt there is anyone in our province who has not been touched in some way by a motor vehicle accident. Individuals and families have had their lives forever changed because of incidents on our highways.

We are constantly improving the *Highway Traffic Act* to ensure that roadways are safe for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. In fact, just last week in this House, we proposed changes to the act to allow for highway cameras to be used as a means of increasing compliance with the rules of the road.

We will remain vigilant in our efforts, Mr. Speaker. Together, with law enforcement agencies and all stakeholders, we will continue to bring the importance of road safety to the forefront.

Every time we consider making changes to strengthen the *Highway Traffic Act*, Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the people I have met and their stories of pain and loss. I invite all Members of this hon. House to join me tomorrow as I stand with family and friends in honour of road crash victims.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** I thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement.

Mr. Speaker, the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims is an important event that honours those individuals who have lost their lives or been seriously injured on our roads. Road crashes have a profound impact on individuals and entire families that last forever. Road safety is a shared responsibility, and I encourage all road users to adopt safe behaviours while sharing our roads.

Thank you.

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

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

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

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

I echo the minister's sentiments that all of us in this hon. House and across the province have been affected in one way or another by a tragic road accident. Friends, families, co-workers, we all know someone lost to our highways. We must keep working to make our roads and highways safer for everyone.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation.

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

I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate Genesis – known to many as Newfoundland and Labrador’s innovation hub – on being named a Top Challenger in North America by University Business Incubators Global at the World Incubation Summit held in Doha, Qatar last week.

A Top Challenger is a university-linked incubation program that stands out from its peers due to its impressive overall impact and performance achievements relative to its respective regional peers. Only three such organizations are recognized in each continent in the category.

Located in the Emera Innovation Exchange at Memorial University, Genesis is certainly tuned in to the needs of the province’s business start-up community. It provides a supportive, mentor-driven environment where companies can thrive, with supports for pre-incubation and business model development, through to investor readiness.

For over 20 years, Genesis has proven to be a leader in building and strengthening the province’s emerging tech sector. They have a growing list of graduates which include many home-grown companies such as: Verafin, Mysa, Rutter, Genoa, HeyOrca! and so many more.

Mr. Speaker, supporting business start-ups helps create new jobs and opportunities and fosters innovation in our provincial economy. Through our Business Innovation Agenda and Technology Sector Work Plan, we are partnering with organizations such as Genesis to provide supports to innovation and entrepreneurial companies and to help create new businesses and employment opportunities.

Congratulations once again to Genesis.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

**MR. PARROTT:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

On behalf of the Official Opposition, I join with the minister in congratulating Genesis on being named the Top Challenger in North America. This is indeed a tremendous accomplishment. I am also reminded that last week we recognized Memorial Centre of Entrepreneurship for their amazing successes in the House of Assembly.

Memorial University serves not only as a centre of education in this province, but also helps to channel energy, resources and creativity to develop new business ideas and industries in the province. Genesis is an impressive example of this.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate those who support and avail of the programs offered by Genesis and I encourage more young innovators in this province to get involved. Innovation and business creation helps to develop our economy, create jobs and ensure a bright future for our province.

Thank you.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I like to thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I join with all hon. Members in congratulating Genesis on a well-earned international recognition as a leader in innovation.

This province’s growing tech sector is something we should all be proud of. We

support the vital role in fostering the growth and innovation at Genesis.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

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

This government requires that all natural resources projects in Newfoundland and Labrador have benefits agreements which include gender equity and diversity plans. These agreements maximize job and business opportunities for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

In our province, more than 14,000 people are directly employed on projects including White Rose, Hebron, Hibernia, Terra Nova, IOC, Vale, Canada Fluorspar Inc., Tacora and the Lower Churchill Project. More than 90 per cent of those are residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

We take a strategic, project-specific approach to everything we do. We are committed to continuous improvement and work diligently on behalf of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Mr. Speaker, over the last two years, we have had over \$18 billion in investments announced for mining and oil and gas in our province. Through *Advance 2030* and *Mining the Future*, we are focused on plans for growth and development of our natural resources industries. To meet our vision and to maximize our benefits, we must globally compete, innovate and be environmentally responsible.

We will do this with the support of our industry partners and community leaders throughout the province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

**MR. BRAZIL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement.

While the minister speaks today of benefits agreements for all natural resource projects, the government should go a step further in ensuring that all residents and our workers benefit from all projects that take place in our province. That is why we have argued that the government should require community benefits agreements to be included with contractors' bid packages for every incidence where the new public facilities are being constructed by using public funds.

Mr. Speaker, requiring community benefits agreements would assist with the employment of apprentices, underrepresented groups and the development of the local labour force. It would provide certainty for the local supply and service industry and ensure that our communities are the true beneficiaries of the economic activities created by public funds.

Mr. Speaker, it's time that we all stand up for the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**MR. BROWN:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement.

This province has a great abundance of natural resources: mining, forestry, oil and gas, fishery. We are a very rich province in this regard. It's vital that these resources benefit Newfoundlanders and Labradorians first. We owe them this.

We must continue to work with all residents to make benefits agreements standard on all projects now and into the future.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

**Oral Questions**

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

**MS. EVANS:** Mr. Speaker, racism has been the focus of much of the conversation this week. Why wasn't racism raised last month when the former minister and Member of Lake Melville had to step down as a result of racially charged comments directed at the Innu Nation and their request for translation services?

Indigenous people in Labrador, especially speakers of their language, have asked me: Why is he still allowed to sit in the House of Assembly?

If racism is truly an important issue to this government, I ask the Premier to show leadership and remove him from the Liberal caucus, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Well, first of all, for those that are watching, I've got a lot of blue on today, but it's really about World Diabetes Day. And like racism, Mr. Speaker, we really need to see this. It's not tolerated within our society.

Mr. Speaker, I met with the Innu leadership on many occasions. The Member has apologized for what's happened. He was removed from Cabinet. And the Innu leadership then, we put in place a working group that we know will take quite some time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think all of us really do not want to politicize this. I've offered yesterday that we open up this very Chamber so that leader members could actually come inside of this Chamber and stand at the bar and talk to all of us decision-makers about racism and how we could deal with it. Let them have their say; they deserve that. That's a suggestion that I put out there just yesterday.

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

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

**MR. CROSBIE:** I, too, have dressed in blue, Mr. Speaker, in honour of World Diabetes Day. Perhaps even bluer than the Premier, since I don't have a white shirt on.

On June 12 – to get more serious – this House passed unanimously a resolution calling upon the Standing Orders Committee to take a hard look on the Standing Orders around Question Period with a view to reform and to report back in time for these recommendations to be considered by this House in the fall session. Well, here we are in the fall session and no such recommendations are forthcoming because, Mr. Speaker, the Committee has not been summoned to meet by the Chair.

When will this occur? Can the hon. House Leader provide us with a list of government Members of the Committee?

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

**MS. COADY:** Thank very much for the question.

The Standing Orders Committee did indeed take this very seriously. We know that the Officers have been doing a tremendous amount of work on this issue. As the Member opposite does know, I'm a very new House Leader and Chair of this Committee. I can assure the Member that this Committee will meet in very short order.

To his second point, I have already reached out to the Opposition Parties for their list of names for committees. If that's to which he's referring, that has already been in the hands of the Opposition and very forthcoming we'll be presenting that to the House.

Thank you.

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

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

**MR. CROSBIE:** In case this has been misunderstood, our list of Members has not changed. It remains the same.

The Jenny Wright affair has damaged relations between the minister's Office for the Status of Women and various Status of Women Councils around the province.

What plan does the Minister Responsible for the Status Women have for repairing damaged relations?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

**MS. HALEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I do thank the hon. Member for his question.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to say that our government had no interference in the departure of the former executive director for the Status of Women Council in St. John's. My deputy minister was a signatory to that letter. She brings with her some four decades of experience working with women's groups and organizations in this province. She has been a valuable asset to my department.

In fact, what I will say, she travelled with me over the summer and just a couple of weeks ago I believe the number of groups that we met with in this province, the Island portion and Labrador, are some 25 groups, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. HALEY:** All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that these meetings were very productive and those groups showed her the utmost respect.

Thank you.

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

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

**MR. CROSBIE:** Does the minister agree that those who work for public bodies should avoid any appearance of interference in private employment relationships?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

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

Again, I will say to the hon. Member opposite, government had absolutely no involvement in the departure of the former executive director for the Status of Women in St. John's, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to my deputy minister, as I've said, she brings with her four decades of hard work and experience to various women's organizations in this province. She is a valuable asset to my department.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to say that we are currently in the process of organizing and hosting another leadership conference. This time we will take it to the West Coast, since the first one was very much a success, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

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

**MR. CROSBIE:** The minister refers to the history of the present deputy minister in signing the letter that she referred to, the letter of complaint.

Is this history of her deputy minister interfering in any way with the task of repairing relations with the Status of Women Councils?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

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

Absolutely not. She isn't interfering at all, Mr. Speaker. As I said, she brings with her decades of experience working with women's groups in this province, many of which I have met with over the summer, some 25 groups. I am prepared to table those groups here to this hon. House today, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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



**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

**MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In April 2019, the Privileges and Elections Committee of this House produced its final report on the Development of a Legislature-Specific Harassment-Free Workplace Policy.

I ask the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women: Will this report be retabled and debated in this fall sitting of the House?

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

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

It's interesting, I have actually a resolution before me to actually bring that report back. We were waiting for all committees to be reassessed and redeployed. Mr. Speaker, that will indeed be a part of our agenda this fall.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

**MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** I thank the minister and the Government House Leader for that information. We look forward to this being presented, especially given that fact that it has been seven months.

Thank you.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this year both Labrador ferries went into service with deeply-concerning results.

I ask the minister: Will he table an analysis conducted by his department to determine the suitability of these ferries for both the Strait of Belle Isle and the North Coast routes?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

Mr. Speaker, the report I think that the Member is referring to was a report by Poseidon, and I can certainly get him a copy of that report.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, many members of the public have expressed concern over these ferries and their suitability for these routes. It's our understanding that these ferries were purpose-built for two crossings to islands in the coastal waters of Estonia.

I ask the minister: What does he know about the conditions of those two crossings?

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

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

Mr. Speaker, these ferries are actually 1A Ice Class, something that we hadn't seen before in the use on the Strait of Belle Isle or the North Coast. So these are ferries that were built for northern climates.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges that's been had, even by the previous administration when they went out to try and find replacement vessels, because you have to remember, the vessels we were replacing here, the *Apollo* was 49 years old. There's a very limited market in the world that contains passenger ferries and roll-on, roll-off ferries to ice class. So these ferries were built for 1A Super.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, both ferries were purpose-built for very shallow crossings. The average sea depth is 4.7 metres. This is shallower than the deep end of the Aquarena pool.

I ask the minister: Are you 100 per cent confident that these ferries were the right choice for both Labrador routes, considering the people who rely on these ferries are saying otherwise?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much, and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is the numbers on these ferries this year are all up. We've delivered over 2,100 extra tons to the North Coast.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is one year ago when shipments were stopped being received at the freight shed in Goose Bay and in Lewisporte, there were five trips remaining to get the supplies to the North Coast. As of the close of shipping last Friday, November 8, there are three trips left. So we're ahead of schedule from last year.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it's our understanding that these two ferries were moved from their shallow routes along the coast of Estonia to service a river in Germany. Obviously, this is also a very shallow and protected route.

I ask the minister: Are you 100 per cent confident that these ferries are able to navigate

the Labrador seas? If so, why then has the *Kamutik W* not been able to keep its schedule since September?

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

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

The reality here is these vessels are Transport Canada certified, and in order for a vessel to navigate these waters and navigate these conditions, there's a Transport Canada certification required here. These vessels have met the Transport Canada certification, Mr. Speaker.

For the first time, we have vessels on these runs that are 1A Super. We didn't see this before. We didn't see anything coming forward from cancelled RFPs in the past. It didn't get us anywhere. These vessels are quite able to do the run.

You have to realize some of the challenges we face. Today, the *Kamutik W* is in Nain, and we're facing, I think, 12-metre seas today. Is the Member opposite suggesting that we take our crews and the passengers on those ferries and subject them to those conditions that aren't going to assure safety?

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Our concern is safety, but there's also reliability. These ferries are a dismal failure. This week alone, I think the *Qajaq* has ran the Straits probably two days of the five. The minister needs to look at his own records and talk to his own people. We're hearing this from others; we're doing our homework. Maybe he should do his.

Mr. Speaker, a report prepared by Aker Arctic Canada outlines a ferry's suitability for ice conditions and mitigation strategies. However,

there are no analyses on sea depth, wind conditions, wave height or horsepower. These factors are critical for the navigation of the Labrador seas.

I ask the minister: Did his department award a tender for these vessels without analyzing these factors? If an analysis was conducted, will you table it?

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

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

I need to remind the hon. Member that the analysis on the replacement of these ferries was done sometime in 2013-2014. This is not something that was new to the department. The department, it existed, Mr. Speaker, when we were actually – there was an RFP done, Mr. Speaker.

The Member opposite talks about a record when it comes to ferries and ferry design. The reality is today, if you were to go to the St. John's dockyard you will find the *Veteran* on dry dock again, Mr. Speaker, and it was this Member who was in the department at the time all that analysis was done.

The reality here is there was a report done. These vessels are Transport Canada –

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

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

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

The reality here is these vessels are 1A Super Class, they're Transport Canada certified, and we delivered more freight to the North Coast this year than we have in the past.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

**MR. WAKEHAM:** Mr. Speaker, over the past decade there's been an average of 2,400 housing starts annually in this province. When you factor in numbers for 2019, it's expected to drop well below a thousand. That's a 50-year low. The average sales price of a home has dropped more than \$8,500 when compared to a year ago. This is a consequence of a weak economy.

I ask the minister: What do you say to the people of the province who cannot afford to buy an existing home or build a new one because they're afraid of what the future holds?

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

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

There are two sides to this question that I'm going to answer; one is the stress test that was put in place by the federal government, the local building industry will say that is perhaps the largest impact on new home starts. The real estate industry is actually picking up.

In terms of people not knowing what the future holds, Mr. Speaker, that's something this side of the Legislature inherited. The reporter this morning on CBC I think did a very balanced story. Part of that story, he said everybody he asked said the bogeyman in the closet was Muskrat Falls.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

**MR. WAKEHAM:** Mr. Speaker, Muskrat Falls is the problem of everything, apparently, in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has allocated \$22 million in a contingency fund for unplanned expenditure in *Budget 2019*.

I ask the minister: Has anything been transferred out of the contingency fund in this fiscal year?

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

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

The preamble to that question is Muskrat Falls is the problem to everything. Mr. Speaker, our bond-rating agencies tell us it's the biggest contingent liability. Our lending agencies, every time we meet with them, tell us it's a concern.

This year alone, we have paid \$98 million in interest on the borrowings to Nalcor for Muskrat Falls. Mr. Speaker, yes, it is a problem.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

**MR. WAKEHAM:** Mr. Speaker, I asked about the contingency, the \$22 million contingency fund and whether anything has been transferred out of it this year. At the same time, we heard earlier that this is World Diabetes Day. We know that Diabetes Canada says that by expanding the program for insulin pumps, the program will not only pay for itself, but will provide the province with a net savings of approximately \$1.3 million.

I ask the Minister of Finance: Will he commit funding from the contingency fund to provide full coverage for insulin pump therapy, given today is World Diabetes Day?

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

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

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

It is indeed World Diabetes Day. I have my blue ribbon on to show support and solidarity.

Our diabetes action plan has many threads to it. We've started with foot care for the elderly. We have a diabetes registry. We have an interest in and a desire to reduce the number of amputations and we have plans under each of those.

We were asked to lift the age cap on the Insulin Pump Program, and we did that. We have engaged in buying modelling to see if we can get better value for money. We wish to expand that

program. We'll do it as and when we can from a fiscally sustainable point of view, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

**MR. TIBBS:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance's vote had just as much clout in Muskrat Falls as everybody else, I can assure you that.

My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment. Mr. Speaker, last week the community of Lodge Bay was left scrambling after every piece of equipment in the fire hall failed during a major blaze. Thankfully no one was hurt, but three buildings were lost and in neighbouring fire departments, one travelled 80 kilometres to assist. Residents of Lodge Bay, including many seniors, are fearful of what may happen if there's another future fire.

Mr. Speaker, what is the minister doing to address this emergency situation?

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

**MS. DEMPSTER:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to answer that question because I was in the community of Lodge Bay on Saturday. I met with the chair of the local service district, I met with a good many members of the community and I did a number of household visits to seniors.

What's important for the public here to know, Mr. Speaker, is that the community didn't have a fire truck nor are they asking for a fire truck. They had some equipment that failed at that time. They've reached out. They're looking for a couple of generators to pump, Mr. Speaker.

They're seven kilometres from a much larger community, Mary's Harbour, that have agreed to provide support. I spoke with the chair of the local service district again yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and we are working with them. There was no active application in the system in advance of this fire. We're certainly working with the community. Our thoughts and prayers

have been with the community because they did go through a difficult time, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

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

Aside from the total failure of their equipment, media reports have noted the fire brigade lacked proper basic protective gear including pants, coats and boots that did not fit properly.

Mr. Speaker, this is an urgent and critical matter of life safety for residents of Lodge Bay. What is the minister doing to address this situation on both short term and long term?

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

**MS. DEMPSTER:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes, and especially in rural communities, when things happen, you realize that you have to go back and you have to take a deeper look. Lodge Bay is a community of around 70 people, many of which are older.

On Sunday night past, the chair of the local service district held a meeting and they saw a need to restructure their local fire brigade. They now have 22 members of that community – a population of 70 – 22 members who are on the local. This is what they're doing.

I've already reached out to a number of partners. We're bringing some partners to the table and we're confident that we're going to be able to meet the needs of what that community is looking for right now, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

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

Mayors, town managers and clerks are living with fear of being hauled off to jail for not meeting the new federal waste water regulations; 86 per cent of waste water systems in Newfoundland discharge untreated water. This issue is bigger in Newfoundland than any other province. For municipalities in this province, compliance is practically impossible.

What is the minister's plan to address the requirement for municipalities across the province to deal with waste water issues?

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

**PREMIER BALL:** Mr. Speaker, this morning I spent four hours with community leaders across our province. We spent four hours going to every single table asking members what the number one priority was amongst their communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Not one of them – not one leader in this province today, at the municipal level, brought up a fear of them going to jail – none.

As a matter of fact, they very much appreciated that this was the opportunity for the first time in the history of this province, no other premier has done this, Mr. Speaker, and not one of them brought up a fear of going to jail over waste water.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

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

Just last month, we attended the meeting at the Holiday Inn up here, where it was on every municipalities' mind. This is a huge, huge issue that needs to be addressed both federally and provincially as well. It's something that we have to get ahead of because people are really scared.

There are approximately 200 communities across this province with boil-water advisories. These municipalities are more concerned about clean drinking water; waste water concerns are secondary.

What is the minister doing to ensure that all municipalities across the province have clean drinking water?

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

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

**MR. BRAGG:** Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the question.

As many here would know, I've spent a lifetime working in the industry of dealing with boil orders and issues in small towns. So we are very concerned about the number of boil orders.

We are at a record low, but I'm not going to shock you because I'm going to give you the details. The record low is appalling. The record low is 190 boil orders in this province. On any given day, 190 boil orders. It is a major concern.

The Premier alluded to earlier about the session this morning. I sat to a table this morning where the lady said the last time our boil order was lifted was 1964, the year I was born, Mr. Speaker. Fifty-five years on a boil order. It is a major concern; it's a major concern to everybody who lives in this province. We are determined to make a difference to that.

Thank you very much.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

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

**MR. J. DINN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In a 2018 ATIPP licence application from Northern Harvest Mowi, the plan for dealing with high water temperatures and low oxygen levels was blacked out.

I ask the minister: Will he release that plan or direct Northern Harvest Mowi to do so?

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

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

Our Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act is very specific. Whenever there is a third party harmed, there is a provision for a redaction. If there's ever an issue or dispute about whether or not the act is being applied, there can be a reference to the Commissioner and there are further recourses that are available.

The act has been debated and has been passed on the floor of the House with the revisions. This is not the Bill 29, this is the new bill. It does provide methods that if there is a dispute as to whether or not a disclosure should have been made under the requirements of the act, it can be asked for. I would encourage that all methods be available.

I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, we have a suite of additional methods that provide further protections to the environment and to the aquaculturists themselves. I would be happy to (inaudible).

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

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

**MR. BROWN:** Mr. Speaker, the independent chairperson of the Minimum Wage Review Committee sits as an executive of the NL Liberal Party.

I ask the Premier: What is the best interest in appointing a highly placed party insider on this committee?

Thank you.

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

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

We have a statutory requirement every two years to review the minimum wage here in Newfoundland and Labrador. As a government,

we made a commitment that we would look at minimum wage and we would tie it to an inflationary measure. That was the last minimum wage review that took place and it was tied to a CPI.

We right now have committed to striking a committee in September. The committee was struck. It's led by an independent chair and it has a representative from employers and a representative from labour. It's a very balanced approach. The chair is eminently qualified, has been the mayor of a municipality, deputy mayor of a municipality, councillor, served in various boards and provincial –

**MR. SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

**MR. BROWN:** Mr. Speaker, I ask again, this independent chairperson on the Minimum Wage Review Committee is an executive of the NL Liberal Party.

I ask the Premier: Is this in the province's best interest?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Time for a quick answer.

The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour.

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

In terms of the Minimum Wage Review Committee, there's a terms of reference that was constructed and the independent chair, along with a representative from labour and a representative from the employer council, which are public names Brenda O'Reilly and Allison Doyle, along with Steve Tessier, will serve, and they will do a tremendous job. They will provide the balance between employers and employees and present a report with recommendations.

They're going to seek input from stakeholders and provide that information so that we can make a decision on minimum wage here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

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

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

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of concerns raised by the parents with children attending grade six J. J. Curling Elementary in my district. There are two grade six classes with 31 students in one class and 32 in the other. These class sizes are over the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District policy of the soft cap of 28 students and the hard cap of 30.

These overcrowded classrooms are causing concerns, affecting proper instructional time, safety concerns should a fire occur and against the department's own guidelines. I have been there in these classrooms and they're very small and cramped spaces. The parents have requested a meeting with the school board but were rejected.

I ask the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development: Will you review these concerns and put the extra resources in place to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for these students, because the concern now is what they proposed is just not working?

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

**MR. WARR:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member for his question, very important question.

Mr. Speaker, teaching resources are assigned in May with regard to provisions in the collective agreement. Because student enrolments can change over time, the allocation model allows flexibility for those allocations.

Mr. Speaker, the situation at J. J. Curling is that one class – the information I received, one class exceeds the cap by one student. The Member is saying something different. I will check on that.

The school district has been working with the school administration to actually have a look at that situation. We've added the extra teaching supports, Mr. Speaker. To my understanding,

three-quarters of a unit right now. I will check that and get back to the hon. Member.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**MR. LANE:** Mr. Speaker, child care operators provide a very important service to many families throughout our province, allowing families to earn a living while at the same time providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment for their children. Like any business, in order to operate these centres depend on timely receipt of revenues in order to pay for ongoing expenses, including mortgage on the facility, electricity, children's snacks, employees' wages, et cetera.

One important source of revenue for these centres comes in the form of child care subsidies from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. A number of centres have reached out to me and indicated there has been an ongoing problem in this regard where centres are waiting several weeks and even months to receive payments from government.

I ask the minister: What does he plan on doing to address this serious matter?

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

**MR. WARR:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member again raises a very important question with regard to child care subsidies and the child care centres that we have throughout the province.

We value these valuable resources to families throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, and I've had the opportunity to speak to the hon. Member on several occasions now that he's addressed concerns. I think the hon. Member would agree that I've taken the time to address every one of his concerns and we've gotten back to him in a timely manner. I will continue to do that.

Thank you.

**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.

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

Pursuant to section 26(5)(a) of the *Financial Administration Act*, I am tabling one order-in-council relating to a funding pre-commitment for fiscal years 2020-2021 through to 2024-2025.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further tabling of documents?

Notices of Motion.

### Notices of Motion

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

**MR. WARR:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Provide For Damages And Recovery Of Opioid-Related Health Care Costs, Bill 17.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I give notice that I will on tomorrow move, pursuant to Standing Order 11(1), that the House not adjourn at 5:30 o'clock on the afternoon of Monday, November 18, 2019.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move, pursuant to Standing Order 11(1), that the House not adjourn at 5:30 o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, November 19, 2019.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move, pursuant to Standing Order



11(1), that the House not adjourn at 5:30 o'clock in the afternoon of Thursday, November 21, 2019.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further notices of motion?

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

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

Further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

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

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

I rise in this hon. House today to present a petition on behalf of Route 450 in the Humber - Bay of Islands. I'll just read the petition:

WHEREAS the rainstorm of January 2018 caused major flood damage to Route 450 South Shore Highway in Bay of Islands, and there are areas of the highway that still has not been repaired including pavement repairs to sections of John's Beach, clearing of debris from gabion baskets, the tender for Cammies Brook Bridge replacement and other necessary work throughout the region was not done, and where the condition of the road is causing safety concerns for motorists;

THEREFORE we, the undersigned, call upon the hon. House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to ensure all urgent repairs and other upgrades are included in the Department of Transportation and Works tender call for the 2020 construction season and carried out immediately in the spring to ensure the safety and well-being of the motorists using the highway.

Mr. Speaker, I asked a question last week of the minister and I just want to make it quite clear to

the people, I was not trying to embarrass the minister. I actually gave the minister a copy of the question because I wanted answers.

I know the minister now, we had a chat about it since. One of the statements he made – and I don't know which official or how he got this information – is Route 450 was given \$6 million, the flood damaged area.

I just want to read where that money was spent. It was spent on Lewin 450A. Route 450A on the site, also known as Lewin Parkway, is an alternate route of 450 to the City of Corner Brook. The route runs from 450 through downtown Corner Brook.

There was not \$6 million spent on Route 450 where the damage was. In actual fact, I say to the minister, part of Route 450, just within, probably about three-tenths of a kilometre – I asked that it be spent because that was the worst rutting in the area. On one side marine contractors were doing Route 450A. On the other side they were doing some water and sewer, federal money, to put in a water – and in between that was the worst part of the whole section. It wasn't done.

There was no money spent on Route 450 out of the \$6 million. I know the minister understands that now and I thank him for that, but the part about that is – I asked the Minister of Tourism, he was down last week and, of course, I sent pictures to the staff. The gabion baskets are just not cleaned out. There are rocks on top that are coming down the hills. They're hitting the gabion baskets. If they're not cleaned out behind, they're going on the road.

There were concerns last week just before I asked the question. I sent pictures, I called the minister's office and I was down with the staff. I stopped with the Minister of Tourism and I said: if you don't believe me and you don't believe the pictures, ask the Minister of Tourism who was down there.

I asked the Minister of Tourism when we were in Lark Harbour – and I thank the minister for coming out to Lark Harbour and doing that. That was great news. I asked the minister, what was the number one concern that you heard on the

way out for tourism in the area? Was the concern –?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Member's time is expired.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you.

And I thank the minister for his (inaudible).

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

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

First and foremost, I do apologize to the Member. Last week I did refer to Route 450A. I wasn't aware of the As. It wasn't in the information I had at the time. The other thing is the Minister of Tourism just verified the comments of the Member opposite.

Mr. Speaker, this fall we did have an approved business case under northern and rural for that section of John's Beach on Route 450. I can assure the Member that in our first group of early tendering, this coming construction season that will be in the first tenders called.

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Also, Mr. Speaker, as the Member alludes to about the gabion baskets, he did provide me with some information again this week showing some of the work hadn't been completed. That is work that we can do immediately, Mr. Speaker, and we certainly will.

Obviously, as the Member would understand, slope stabilization is a big challenge on Route 450, and we're dealing with it on a regular basis. I can assure the Member that the work – and there is work remaining from the January 2018 storm – all has been tendered, though, with the exception of the Cammies Bridge. I can also assure the Member, that route was one of the first –

**MR. SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

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

This petition is about the Bull Arm site, and the background of the petition is as follows:

WHEREAS there are no significant current operations at the Bull Arm Fabrication site; and

WHEREAS the site is a world-class facility and has the potential to rejuvenate not only the local economy but the provincial economy; and

WHEREAS residents of the area are troubled with the lack of local employment in today's economy; and

WHEREAS the operation of this facility would encourage employment for the area and create economic spin-offs for local businesses; and

WHEREAS the site is an asset of the province, built to benefit the province, and a long-term tenant for this site would attract gainful business opportunities; and

WHEREAS the continued idling of this site is not in the best interest of the province;

THEREFORE we, the residents of the area near the Bull Arm Fabrication site, petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows:

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to expedite the process to get the Bull Arm Fabrication site back in operation. We request that the process include a vision for a long-term viable plan that is beneficial to all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Furthermore, we request that government place an emphasis on all supply, maintenance, fabrication and offshore workover for existing offshore platforms, as well as new construction of any platforms, be they GBS or FPSO in nature.

Obviously, we saw in the last few days, Mr. Speaker, of the amount of people that were here in the gallery, they were very concerned. This is

a fabrication site that we've already invested in. It's an asset to the province. To let them see what's happening out there right now is a disgrace, to be quite honest. We have a world-class facility that we're letting deteriorate to the point where it's not going to be usable without a lot of money put into it to get it back up and running.

There are so many people that will depend on this. It's not just for my District of Placentia West - Bellevue, but Terra Nova, Bonavista, Harbour Main. All these districts have quality people, quality workers that can do quality work. We have a history of doing it already and, as I said yesterday, we have a history of being able to do it throughout Canada. It's about time we picked up our bootstraps and started doing it for ourselves.

The economic spinoffs alone will prop up these towns and this area of my district tremendously, but the people that are tradespeople, 16 unions – and now we're trying to split up the unions and get them to pit against each other. That's not what's in the best interest of the province, Mr. Speaker. What's in the best interest of the province is to get our people working on our projects.

Like the Member for Terra Nova said yesterday, to have 110 workers working in the Kiewit facility in Marystown and have 750 working in Corpus Christi, Texas, on the same project is obviously not in the best interest of our province.

I would, through this petition, call upon the government to do better and to give us more significant work and utilize the assets we already have in our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I completely agree with the Member opposite when he says we need to have people in our province working on projects in our province. I

completely concur. That's why we have *Advance 2030*, Mr. Speaker, that does lay out a plan for how to grow the oil and gas industry in this province. I know the Member opposite will be supportive of that plan to ensure we maximize the return of the resources we have in this province. We also have *Mining the Future* that does exactly the same thing for the mining industry.

To speak specifically to the Bull Arm site that the Member mentioned today, there is a very short-term lease at the Bull Arm site to retrofit a rig, a small change out of a thruster, Mr. Speaker. This is new work for the province. Most importantly, keeping that rig in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, ready to go right back to our offshore rather than sailing away to some other jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, this is not about pitting one union against another. This is about ensuring the people of the province have work, and we're going to continue to make every effort possible to ensure we maximize the benefits to this province.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

**MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to present a petition on restoring flights to Ireland. The reasons for this petition are as follows:

It is critical that non-stop international flights to strategic locations be reinstated, particularly in the era of the CETA agreement. The Dublin non-stop connection is essential for forging and maintaining international business opportunities, growing the tech sector of Newfoundland and Labrador and broadening our tourism industry. This connection would help retain our youth, stabilize and possibly grow our population, and in order to achieve this, the connection should be year round and not on a seasonal basis.

THEREFORE we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows:

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to advocate to the St. John's International Airport Authority to strenuously lobby for the reinstatement of the non-stop flights from Newfoundland and Labrador to Dublin, Ireland.

Mr. Speaker, in early 2018, Nova Scotia announced Halifax Stanfield International Airport –

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

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

**MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** – would have \$11.1 million to attract new flights from Europe and other destinations.

In November 2018, WestJet cancelled its non-stop flight from St. John's to Dublin. In April 2019, WestJet began its inaugural non-stop flight from Halifax to Dublin, a key link in the Nova Scotia-European engagement strategy.

The \$1-million McKinsey report warned us that our province, if we want to grow, we have to make air access a priority. This government doesn't have an active air access strategy and it shows. That has to change. It is critical that non-stop international flights to Europe and other strategic locations be restarted, particularly in the era of the CETA with the EU, so this province stops getting left behind.

The Dublin non-stop connection is essential for nurturing international business opportunities, growing our tech sector, broadening our tourism industry, and ultimately expanding our economy to retain youth and grow our population.

Tourism is a billion-dollar-a-year industry, Mr. Speaker, offering small and large communities a new lease on life, but only if we seize the opportunity. Without direct international flights to minimize travel time, many potential tourists are looking elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, lacking non-stop, year-round flights to Europe is a disincentive for businesses to set up here, expand or remain in our province. St. John's is strategically located as the gateway between European and North American markets.

Those are strengths we ought to capitalize on, just as McKinsey said.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's heed the call from so many in our province to fight harder, to restore the connections we had and make new connections so Newfoundland and Labrador can grow. We don't need to be losing out, we have so much to offer. Let's make it happen.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation.

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, thank you, and I thank the hon. Member for the petition.

I met with the petitioners on the front steps of Confederation Building a couple of weeks ago, received their petition. It's a priority for this government. I can't be clearer than that.

It was the Conservative government that she represents now that cancelled the Air Access Strategy in 2013. So from that standpoint, it was a priority for me, it's a priority for our department and a priority for our government. From that standpoint, it was early in our opportunity to be sworn in as minister, we realized how important it was. I've met with both Air Canada and WestJet a week and a half ago in Montreal. Very much good meetings with those operators.

In addition to that, I assured the petitioners that I would take their petition and bring it to the decision-makers that made the decision to cancel the flight in the beginning. I tabled that petition with both WestJet and Air Canada. It's not just about the Dublin flight, it's about air access. When I met with the individuals on the steps of Confederation Building, they all said it's about air access to the European market, which is so key.

I agree fully with the hon. Member from across the way that says it is important for our province and our people to have a direct access (inaudible) –

**MR. SPEAKER:** The minister's time is expired.

**MR. DAVIS:** – European market.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**MR. LESTER:** Mr. Speaker, in 2016, Advanced Education, Skills and Labour changed their policy to specify that in order to qualify for a bus pass, people need to have a minimum of eight specified medical appointments a month. This creates a barrier for low-income and vulnerable people to obtain basic necessities like food and essential medical services.

The requirement of eight doctor's appointments a month ignores the needs of those living with chronic illnesses and disabilities who may not need to see the doctor, but often have no ability to travel by their own means.

We, the undersigned, call on the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to allow bus passes to all income support recipients, all seniors who receive the Income Supplement and all low-income recipients who are in receipt of the NLPDP.

Mr. Speaker, I presented this petition last week and I was most pleased to hear the minister in his response saying that this is in the plan of this current administration. As a matter of fact, it was a part of their party platform for the 2019 election.

I took some time to read through this document, and by way of accident I came across a 2015 party platform. Mr. Speaker, as the minister has said, this was part of their election promise platform. So I started looking through 2015 and I realized that I'm a little bit hesitant to believe that this will actually take place.

There was opportunity, when we came back in the House after the election, to put this money-saving, lifestyle-changing program in place for

the people who need it, but it was ignored. It was deferred –

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

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

There's too much noise.

**MR. LESTER:** As I said, I question the credibility of an election promise versus an administrative action. Let's think about some of the election promises that were made in 2015 that were not kept. Let's think about the HST. The HST was branded by several Members as a job killer, economy killer. That was going to be rolled back immediately. Guess what, that didn't happen.

The administration was going to simplify the tax system –

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

**MR. LESTER:** Yes, they did. They create, the people pay. Not only did they not touch the existing tax system, they complicated it and burdened the people further.

Mr. Speaker, while the minister, I'm sure, will get up and say we didn't know what kind of a situation we were facing, I think everybody in the province knew it. I look forward to the minister's response.

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

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

As I said the last time a petition was presented in the House, in 2019 it was the Liberal Party that made a commitment. We formed government. We are firmly committed to providing all people on income support in the St. John's metro area with the option for a bus pass through a pilot program. This cannot just happen immediately.

Our staff at AESL has had to meet with the City of St. John's; they've had to meet with Metrobus to have discussions and dialogue as to how this program will roll out and be available. It is our goal to have this available to all income support

clients in the St. John's metro area region by early 2020, and we're assessing our options for delivery.

This is something that is really important, because if you give people an opportunity to be able to have access to transportation options, they'll be able to not only get to medical appointments, but to assess other opportunities for work or employment, to look at opportunities to avail of prices of things that may be of lower cost, given that people are on very fixed incomes. These are opportunities, and we're all about finding better opportunities here, Mr. Speaker, for people in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Member's time is expired.

The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Mr. Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, Order 2, second reading of Bill 5.

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

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

As I like to say, it's always a pleasure to get up in this House of Assembly, which it is. It is a privilege to speak on any piece of legislation, especially legislation, I guess, that – well, all legislation has an effect on the masses, and some more so than others.

Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act, it's an interesting piece of legislation. For the most part, I think it's a good piece of legislation. A lot of things in it, I think, we all in this House and throughout the province agree with and support. Cameras within school zones, construction zones; those things are issues that are out there and they're prevalent, and you hear a lot of conversation about it.

For example, I know in my own district, the local media carried a story a while back, and it was almost embarrassing, actually, that it happened, but it was a fact that people were just

passing school buses with their signs out for stopping. In the school zones, we got increased patrols constantly in our school zones throughout my district, because Route 60 runs right through several elementary schools. It's a huge concern.

I know as an MHA, I get constant calls coming in the spring and in the fall of the year, especially with schools open, worried about line painting, and I'm sure the Minister of Transportation and Works hears those complaints a lot. You're limited by the number of crews, but a priority has to be on school zones for the reasons of protecting our children, the most vulnerable in our society.

Having camera technology to monitor people passing school buses within school zones, I applaud that and I think most people would. As for construction zones, I guess I could say the same thing with construction zones. We've had unfortunate instances over the last number of years of several serious deaths in our construction zones throughout the province, some actually provincial government employees. That's difficult – that's very difficult. It's not something you ever want to happen. You want to eradicate but there's no eradicating that, unfortunately. You try to mitigate, you try to minimize everything of that nature but, unfortunately, they are accidents – most are preventable but they are accidents and they will occur.

I think putting cameras there will give people more awareness of their surroundings. Right now, I use construction zones as probably a bit behind, which shouldn't be, but let's be honest they're a bit behind where we are with school zones. School zones, should be anyway – I know it's entrenched in my mind and it should be in most people's minds, and it's getting there now, that you slow down.

The posted speed limit is only a guideline. In my opinion, you need to go below the posted speed limit. You're only looking at 200 to 300 metres and you get out of that area where kids are walking to and from school, especially our younger ones because they have less awareness of the roads. To me, that's where construction zones need to bring us to.

So there's a lot of awareness around school zones now. Bringing in the camera technology – because some awareness will never get you where you need to be. Bringing in the camera technology will help that and hopefully – hopefully – get to a point that we have this to the minimal.

My fear is – and it always has been and I stood in this House on many occasions and I'll stand here today, safety has to be your number one concern with most all of this. It's not about issuing tickets, it's making it so people can drive, walk, to and from wherever they're going in a safe manner.

I say it for the 1.6-busing policy, it's all about safety, it's not about politics. This here is a step in the right direction in protecting our children, making it safer. There's lots more government can do but you can't get it all in one day, of course. This here, with school zones, I think we all fully support.

To the construction zone piece, though, we're not there yet. We're not where we need to be. I'm probably going to throw a brick towards construction companies and maybe the department itself, maybe all of us collectively. Too many construction zones in this province – I'll be on record as saying this – signs are left up. I know the minister got up in this House and he said it's still a construction zone and I totally get where he's coming from.

We have some areas in this province, signs will stay up for two months and there's nothing, there's no activity, zero. Under the law, under the *Highway Traffic Act*, you're still in violation if you break those posted speed limits and the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour is nodding in agreement, and I don't disagree with that. I think we're all on the same page, but that's kind of a pet peeve to most of the motoring public. You can still post a construction zone, you can raise the speed limit a bit because that's where you get anxious drivers. I don't mind going through a construction zone and taking my time; I have no problem. I know it's a pet peeve to people.

Then you come to a point, you got two months, the signs are up and they're posted and there's nothing happening. So after 30 days of this, day

31 the crews are back working, so people got into their bad habits of picking up their speed and saying there's no one there and ignoring that and, heaven forbid, they're out working.

That's all wrong, by the way. I'm saying they shouldn't speed on day 30, no more than 31 or 20. My point is that's human nature. That's what we're up against. That's human nature.

I think a part can be played by construction companies and Service NL when it comes to occupational health and safety. Everyone can do this better together. There are ways around it. I don't have the answer here today, but I know that when you speak about this stuff, that it is an annoyance to most of the motoring public. I know Members of this Legislature drive a lot on the highways and experience this probably more so than me, but I know that's been an issue.

My time in the department with the former minister, my good friend and colleague next to me here, the Opposition House Leader, we dealt with that, when he was minister of Transportation and Works, we dealt with that issue. We talked about it, and the Minister of Transportation and Works, I'm sure, still deals with it.

It's a pet peeve, but I get the fact that it's a construction zone, but we have to do better and try to find a way when these areas are going be – it could be two to three months tied up. Find a better way to get the traffic moving at a better pace and prevent the possibility of something unforeseen happening because people get conditioned that way.

Bringing in camera technology in those areas, I think is a good move. There are lots of unanswered questions. A part of the problem is – it happens a lot in this Legislature – the regulations. We don't really know, we stand here, we debate, we discuss, we sit in our caucus and we debate issues and debate this. We've had a lot of debate on this amendment, this *Highway Traffic Act* amendment, but we lose sight of what is in the regulation. What are we really voting on? What are we really debating? That's a question we've asked, not only on this piece of legislation but on a lot of legislation. Regulations will come later. What will they be?

So you're kind of voting on something and you're hoping that it works out all right, but you don't have the full guts of what you're voting on. You're only voting on the frame of something. That can be problematic, Mr. Speaker.

We'll go through the rest of second reading, we'll go through Committee and we'll try to highlight those concerns through our debate, through our Committee. Those are issues that – I know we do it in this Legislature and I know how this works; I've been on the other side. I know officials from the minister's department watch these debates, they hear the questions we ask, people make a note of those questions and try to get answer, prepare for Committee to try to get the legislation through. I know, I've been on all sides of this equation. I do hope they listen to a lot of the questions, because a lot of good questions come up in second reading. Outside of our Committee stage, we're going down in our list of questions that we all do. That's not the first time I've seen this happen; I've watched it for a lot of years.

But it's about getting it right. We've had a lot of discussion, probably not so much here in this Legislature, I know we've had a lot of discussion behind the scenes with the Members, some Members opposite. I'm sure the minister is aware as well.

Putting traffic cameras on highways. So we're talking school zones and construction zones – we're okay with that. But putting it on highways, I'm not so sure how, outside the fact I do know our roads are not the safest – I do know there are tragedies happening. I've experienced them, I've witnessed them, I've been too close to some, and everyone in this Legislature have experienced it one way or the other.

I just think that's one you have to be very cautious with. You're putting cameras up – where are you putting them? If you're putting them in school zones and putting them in construction zones, we can live with that, and I think most people could because they're real problem areas. But to put them up on all our highways, different areas on our highways, are we getting to technology – and I mean, I have yet to see that be implemented in any province

yet that it hasn't been met with a lot of opposition, a lot of issues and a lot of concerns.

What about calibrating these? What about monitoring these cameras? What about the court time? Everyone's going to challenge it. That'll be the norm. The courts will be full of people complaining and challenging these tickets, testing the legislation. You have to look at that. These are the fallouts for these issues, these bills we bring in when you're doing stuff like that.

What role do the police have now? Are we cutting back on our police force? Is this a way of hiring less police officers? We're going to get cameras to do our work. Because that's really where we're going. You go into a supermarket now and you'll get three cashiers and 10 self-checkouts. Now you're going to go on the highway and you'll see less police officers and more cameras.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Valid point.

**MR. PETTEN:** I think it's a valid point.

Again, I know people listen and watch this debate that goes on – those are questions we're going to be putting out to the public if this is the way this legislation progresses. So I think that's a fair point – that's a fair point. That's the world we live.

I realize as you move with the times – I mean, my children might tell me differently, but I try to move with the times. But some of this stuff is a challenge. Really, at the end of the day, what are we gaining? What are we accomplishing?

I've been here long enough now to know that certain things I've stood up and debated and probably voted on, and when I left after, when it came into practice and different things, I probably should've read it closer; I probably missed something. I don't know if reading close – I think we all kind of try to do our work here, but you miss stuff and you say, after the fact, I wish I would've picked up on that. You almost feel bad because we do have an obligation here.

We're lawmakers. You're bringing laws that affect every single person in this province. It's 40 people affecting 500,000. Think about that for a second. Forty people here can change the



laws of 500,000 people. That's pretty powerful numbers.

As the Members opposite like to point out on occasion, I was attached to the former administration. I wasn't in this Legislature, but I was close. I was friends with most all of them and I had some input – not a lot, but I had some. We've all done these things. We've all come in with trying to make the right legislation. You're in government; you feel like you have all the answers, and the Opposition feels like they want to try influence itself on you. It's the way it is.

Government is opposed to Opposition; Opposition is opposed to government. At the end of the day, though, we have to try to do what's best. I know that sometimes it's hard, and in this environment in this past week there's evidence of that. It's very difficult at times. We have to try to do the best piece of legislation.

I'd like to go back, and give me 30 seconds, Mr. Speaker, on relevance. We've debated the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* here. That was what I believe it was called. That was the title. There was a lot of really, really good debate. There were some things we wanted changes to, we felt strong about. Everyone supported the legislation, but there are certain issues that people feel strongly about. We're dealing with our children, our youth.

Through the debate, we actually arrived somewhere. We got to a place that we said we could all live with the legislation. We all applauded this legislation, and the Child and Youth Advocate has been very happy about the legislation – I think everyone generally in this Legislature. That's one example.

I know there are different times you feel this is working, this Legislature is working. We're in a minority government now – minority Parliament. We got a long ways to go, but I think there are possibilities we could still make this Parliament work.

By us proposing changes or asking for changes or asking for improvements in a piece of legislation like this, we're highlighting concerns we have. There's no government going to fall on this. There's no government going to form on this. It's about a better piece of legislation.

That's all. There are no politics involved. I think they're valid concerns that we express. Whether I'm expressing them or any other Member on this side expresses them, I think everyone's concerns are valid.

When we look at this legislation, outside of raising fines – another moment I think is important to highlight, too, and it's never lost on me. You see families coming into this Legislature, you read it on the news, who lost a loved one. My own colleague here last week was very emotional talking about his own brother. That's never lost I don't think on me, and no one in this Legislature. How could it be? It's never lost. We've all had personal experiences, some we're closer to than others.

In no way are we saying we don't agree with cameras on the highways; everywhere on the highways, are we saying we're against improving safety on our highways, absolutely not. We think there are things that could be done to improve it. Maybe more enforcement, maybe better policing. I don't say it in (inaudible) because I have a huge amount of respect for our police forces – more policing. I don't think we can get too much policing, to be honest with you, Mr. Speaker.

I have serious concerns about having cameras on every corner, and I'd like to be on record. I will stand on record wherever I stand on that issue, because I think it's a very controversial issue. I don't think we're ready for that yet. Maybe we need to start with construction zones. Maybe we need to start with school bus zones. Let people get into the process. Too much, too quickly is never good on anyone.

Change is always a problem. We all suffer through change. Change is a bad word to people. As we start to get older – and, unfortunately, I'm getting there – change becomes very difficult.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** You're getting there.

**MR. PETTEN:** My colleague says, getting there, but he's older than me. So I'll forgive him for that.

We have to get it right. I think by saying we need better enforcements as opposed to cameras, we're not condemning this legislation. We're

applauding lots of the legislation. I do want to make a point – to anyone who may be watching, listening – anyone who experienced the death of a loved or had a bad experience on our highways, we do all sincerely on this side of the House, and I think in this Legislature, our hearts go out to you.

We're not going to be opposing anything in this bill that's going to cause grief to anyone. We want to make this legislation better. Will it prevent those serious things from happening? Maybe not. Again, I'll say it's about minimizing, lowering your risk. I don't think you ever eliminate that chance.

In my final couple of minutes, I want to applaud government for a step in the right direction on school bus zones and construction zones. I'd like for them to go a step further and eliminate the 1.6 busing policy. Again, every opportunity. I had a petition on that today, but I figured I'd spare the minister and I'd throw it in when I was on my debate of this bill. Me and the minister spoke many times, both ministers and I speak a lot to him about it. Safety is a huge concern of mine in our school zones. Again, I won't get elected or whatever; that's not about politics when it comes to that. We'll talk politics a lot of times in this House, but when I think about the safety of our children, it's paramount.

I always say this, and I say this openly, seniors and our youth, our most vulnerable people, we have to protect them. We have to protect them. Forty of us in this Legislature are responsible for 500,000 people. If we don't look after our seniors and our youth and let them live in a safe environment, we're failing our 500,000 people, Mr. Speaker, because it's all a broader family.

So on that note, I will take my seat. We have lots of questions for Committee, and I look forward to listening to the remainder of the debate.

Thank you very much.

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

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

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

It's a pleasure to speak on this. It's very important that we do put the safety of individuals on our highways and in and around school zones. This also protects pedestrians, too, especially children walking to and from school buses, people running red lights, things like that. Pedestrians are around. So this also protects motorists and pedestrians.

We also have to look at the importance of using technology in this kind of sense. Privacy of individuals and stuff must be also adhered to. Like the Member, my colleague said, we can't rush into it and put cameras everywhere. We do have to be very cautious with that as well.

I do agree starting with construction zones and school buses is a great way to implement such technology. We also have to look at the importance of convincing motorists, also with this as a deterrent, but we also have to look at other options, too, to convince individuals to slow down, pay attention and follow the simple rules of the road.

There was a New York-based research from a corporation that did analysis on this kind of issue. They said that as a result, they saw a reduction of accidents, injuries and loss of life, regardless of enforcement. So it also shows that this technology does have an impact on the individuals and an impact on motorists to slow down, follow the rules of the road and abide by them.

Another quote there, they did a similar study in Edmonton. They said the complaints of dangerous drivers was a big issue for the City of Edmonton. Then they moved forward with this technology and they saw a large reduction of road accidents and also collected a large amount of fines from people evading the law. So now with this they have a deterrent in place to keep people from being reckless and use their brain to actually make decisions that are in the best interest of everyone around them.

I have seen people fly through construction zones. I've seen people run the stop sign on school buses. I've seen people run red lights. This is an epidemic in this province. We need to move forward in enforcing rules of the road. We have to move forward in this. We also have to work with our partners, with the police forces,

municipalities, construction companies and associations so that we can implement such technology.

Even the department here with TW have had incidents with people disregarding the rules of the road, tragic incidents. So this is upon us now to work towards, but we do need to make sure that every precaution is in place, every respect to technology, data collection and photographic data collection. We have to make sure that we're not harming while we're trying to do good.

I support the idea of this, I support it 100 per cent, but we have to make sure that when we implement this, and when it rolls out that the individuals and everything are – all the key parts are in place.

This is good stuff. This is what we want. This is what we want to see. We want to make sure that we have every absolute thing at our disposal to enforce the rules of the road and the law. We can't not do it, and that's the big thing about it, we can't not do this; but we need to make sure that when we do that, it's rolled out in a fashion – the regulation is there that makes sure that everybody, every single person in this province, has the protections and has it all in place, that we don't see anything – so that's the key is the regulation behind this to make sure that it's all in place, that the identity of individuals are protected, all the data collected is collected in a fashion that is protected, but also pedestrians and motorists, alike, are protected.

That's the cusp of all this. This is the key part of all this. That's where I feel that we need to make sure that everything – our i's are dotted, our t's are crossed, this is done in a manner that there are no qualms about it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat now.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I'll just stand and have a few minutes and support this piece of legislation. I know when I was minister of Service NL there was a very serious movement afoot to come up with cameras in these areas for protection of the children, for the protection of the workers.

I have a few brothers that work in the industry and they say it's a serious situation, the number of cars that go by at high speeds and refuse to obey the people who are actually doing the work on the road and also the people who are directing the traffic. We all know about the school bus incidents in the province. With the timing of when school opens every year, we always get people to stop for the red arms that come out and the lights that come out, and we're all in support of that.

I hear some of the concerns from the few Members of the Opposition about are we doing the police officers' work. I don't think we could take the job of the police officers, but we can put deterrents in. Mr. Speaker, if we knew that there are police on the road on a May 24 weekend, we have a tendency to slow down. If we know there are going to be cameras in the important areas like the school buses and also on the construction areas where there's a potential for danger for the workers, if we know that – I know one of the changes that we made back a while ago is that if you get a licence plate and it was changed, some can say I wasn't driving, it was somebody else.

With the change to the licence plate back then, it showed, okay, whoever owns the car, so we'll find out who was driving because we're going to get whoever owns the car, they'll get a ticket and pretty soon they will tell you it wasn't me who was actually driving the vehicle. So that's all good.

Mr. Speaker, I had one concern and, to be upfront, I already brought it to the minister and the Government House Leader on it, is the registrar. I'm going back to an issue – and it was not from me. It's definitely not from me but it's an issue that's going to relate to this. I'm going back to the Kubota issue. The issue that I'm raising here is what regulations are put in place for the registrar. It says here in this section that the registrar can lift it and give 15 days, and I'll explain why this is a concern for me.

Under 60.14: “The registrar shall confirm or set aside the suspension and provide reasons for his or her decision in writing within 15 business days after the hearing.” So if someone comes in and wants to appeal their suspension, are there guidelines set up of what you can appeal? Are there guidelines set up?

I’ll give you the reason why I’m asking this. I’ll tell you the reason why and I think people in the province understand the Kubota issue that’s been ongoing. There’s a lot of (inaudible) in people’s district, I know they’ve been talking to and I just spoke to a couple of individuals again out in Chapel Arm that has major concerns about this.

I’ll explain this. This is not me personally. I’m out of the issue, but it’s the other people. There are going to be major concerns if this is not addressed now and the answers aren’t given to the House of Assembly, I can assure you. I’ll just tell you why.

When the Kubota issue came up, the minister – and I have to just let the people know I already gave the ministers my concerns. This is not standing up trying to embarrass anybody. It’s not standing up trying to blindside anybody. I actually went over and told the Government House Leader here’s my concern; get your information together for it because it is a concern for me.

When the Kubota issue comes up, under the all-terrain and snowmobile act, Kubotas aren’t allowed on the road. That’s under the act, passed in this House of Assembly – illegal to be on the road.

In a letter from the minister, it was dated March 20 from the Minister of Service NL, Kubotas travelling were viewed on the Lewin Parkway in Corner Brook during peak times. Operation on public roads increases the risk of the vehicle being involved in a crash with cars and vehicles. While passenger cars can have safety features designed to protect occupants from a collision, such as crumple zones, side impact protection and airbags, all-terrain vehicles do not. If a collision occurred, the driver could be killed or severely injured. Can’t be on the road.

Then here’s another one: The assessment decision of the registrar was communicated to the registered owner that the Kubota could not be used on the road because it falls under the all-terrain snowmobile act. I just want to repeat another one here. This is, again, from the Minister of Service NL to an individual concerning it: Accessories such as lighting, snow kits and snow blower attachments added at the dealership does not change the manufacturer’s specification of these vehicles.

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

We ask that you stay relevant to the bill.

**MR. JOYCE:** It is.

**MR. SPEAKER:** To which section?

**MR. JOYCE:** No, this is about the bill because what it is – by the time I’m going to get to the point is that the registrar overruled the all-terrain snowmobile act, overruled the Minister of Service NL. The Minister of Transportation and Works just wrote a letter to the City of Corner Brook saying they can’t be on the road over on Route 440 on the North Shore Highway. He just wrote that letter to the City of Corner Brook.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is if the minister is stating that they can’t be on the road, if the act says it can’t be on the road, but the registrar says she has the authority to put them on the road under this section of the *Highway Traffic Act*. Under the *Highway Traffic Act* it says: “The registrar shall issue, in respect of a vehicle that has been registered, (a) a numbered vehicle licence in a form prescribed by the registrar; and (b) one or more identification plates as determined by the registrar.”

So what you find here is that we have an all-terrain snowmobile act approved by this House of Assembly that these vehicles cannot be on the road. I have seven or eight letters from the Minister of Service NL saying they can’t be on the road. I have a letter from the Minister of Transportation and Works to the City of Corner Brook saying they can’t be on the road, but you have a registrar saying, no, no, I have the authority to override the minister, the act, the House of Assembly.

My relevancy on this is that under 60.14(1) of the bill: “The registrar shall confirm or set aside the suspension and provide reasons for his or her decision in writing within 15 business days after the hearing.”

Under that act I’m saying, what restrictions does the registrar have? What are the guidelines for the registrar to do that? Because if I go in tomorrow – if I have a suspension, I can go in tomorrow to the registrar – what are you saying the guidelines are going to be, say, for me? I’ll tell you why I say that; I tell you what I said under the act.

Under the all-terrain and snowmobile act, it can’t be on the road. The minister stated it seven or eight times in letters, okay. The registrar just approved one in St. John’s, against the act, against the minister – two ministers – in this House of Assembly. So if the registrar can make their own decisions, what’s going to happen if someone comes in with these suspensions? What’s going to happen? Are there guidelines in it for suspensions, or do you just say, I know you, here, go on and make up.

This is my point on this here, this is my point. Is if the registrar already did it – and I have proof and it’s public knowledge, and I have it here – and the reason why the registrar did it: unique commercial needs. Yet, you have a letter from the minister – and this is very important, Mr. Speaker, because it relates back to the duties of the registrar and the ability of a registrar to make decisions affecting everybody’s life. Here’s a letter to a Minister of the Crown: Will the vehicles purchased for commercial use be allowed to be used on the road?

Here’s what the Minister of Service NL wrote back: The intended use of the vehicle is not considered on the registration process. Vehicles are registered based on their design. If an individual purchased a vehicle designed for off use only, then the vehicle is not eligible to operate on a highway, regardless of the intended use of the purchaser.

But he registrar just approved one –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** We’ll give you a little leeway.

**MR. JOYCE:** And that is my point, is that the registrar just approved it. The minister was either wrong in these letters, the Minister of Transportation and Works is wrong on these letters, on the letter that he wrote the City of Corner Brook, or the registrar has more power than the House of Assembly and the ministers in this House.

What gives me or any person in this House any assurance that if someone passes a bus, they move on and someone almost gets hit, because you know – this is no reflection, this could be a registrar 10 years down the road, 15 year down the roads. What gives me any comfort or anybody else: okay, you almost hit a kid, but, listen, I’m going to be a bit lax on you now because I might know you or know your friends or your mother or your father; okay, I’ll write up something that I can delay the decision a bit.

That’s my concern. That is my concern, and until I get that rectified, until I find out what guidelines are in here to protect people – what this bill is intended to do – have a deterrence for people to make sure kids are safe on school bus routes when they’re getting on and off the bus; making sure in construction zones, people who are working, that they are protected. This is one of the concerns I have with this.

So, how anybody could stand up in this hon. House, and I ask either one of the ministers, because both of them are right now being –

**MR. SPEAKER:** Talk to the Chair, please.

**MR. JOYCE:** Pardon me?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Direct your question to the Chair.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes, I’m just saying, either one of them could stand up and answer how the ministers of the Crown could write letters to the general public saying, no, and here’s the safety reason for it, not allowed on this road; but, the registrar can turn around and say: unique commercial purposes, we’re going to allow one now. The hell with you, ministers; the hell with you, regulations, the all-terrain snowmobile act; the hell with you, the House of Assembly. That’s the concern, and it’s a fact.

If anybody wanted any of these letters to prove what I'm saying, they can have these letters. If you want the email from the registrar, I could also provide the email from the registrar where, on behalf of the people in Chapel Arm, I wrote and said: They have businesses.

One in particular called me, he said: I use it all the time going back, I got a little shop set up in the summertime selling a bit of food. He showed me water in the back. It's great, haul it down. I could drive it down. He's been using it for four or five, six years, not a problem.

I wrote on his behalf, and said: Can he use it for commercial? The Minister of Service NL said: No, he can't because the design of the vehicle is unsafe. It's unsafe to have it on the road.

This is my point, Mr. Speaker – I know you're paying attention very attentively, and this is why I'm saying it. Here are the people in Chapel Arm, who I wrote on the minister's behalf, and the Minister of Service NL wrote back and said: No, you can't do it. Someone here in St. John's put an application in, and the registrar said: Because of unique commercial purposes, I'm going to approve it. A double standard. An actual double standard, Mr. Speaker, and this is my concern with this act.

This is no reflection on this registrar. I have to say, this could be any registrar. If there's any reflection on this registrar, it's not, okay? It's just the documentation that I have where both ministers have said, no, you can't do it, but the registrar is saying, no, because you're in St. John's, Sir, I'm going to approve this one in St. John's for unique commercial purposes. Anybody else in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker, can't go under unique commercial purposes, only if you live in St. John's. That's the ruling of the registrar.

Now, all documentation – this is not me. I use the Member for Baie Verte - White Bay. What happens if someone almost hits a kid down your way because they're speeding and pass the red arm stuck out? What happens if you find out a week later they got their licence back because the registrar happened to know somebody? How would you feel? How would anybody in this House feel? This is a serious question that I have.

This is not me; this is the documentation I have from other people to proving the fact that – I hope it's in the act. I don't know if it's in the act. I'm asking the minister if it is in the act – either one of the ministers, Mr. Speaker, either one of the two ministers – if it's in the act. Because I can assure you one thing, the act that we approved in this House of Assembly, the all-terrain snowmobile act, the registrar says she can override it, and she has done it. She has overridden the act, and even with the minister – her own letter sent to the people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, that you cannot use it for commercial operations, but if you live in St. John's, you can get it done. That is wrong.

I'll sit down, and hopefully the ministers will come up with assurances that, yes, she cannot or he cannot – the registrar, whoever it is – override the legislation in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Because if we're going to put in safety for the children in this province, if we're going to put in safety for the workers, we have to make sure the act is enforced.

I, for one, Mr. Speaker, don't want to say because I know someone, I can get something done, released off the suspensions. I definitely don't want that done. I just need assurances that it won't be done as it has been done very recently and I can tell the people in Chapel Arm that if you move to St. John's, you can get special treatment. If you live in Chapel Arm you can't get special treatment and you have to go by the act, but if you live in St. John's we can overlook the act for you.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER (Reid):** The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

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

A pleasure and a privilege to stand and engage in the debate on this particular act. I go back to last week in the first reading. I know the Minister of Service NL had stood and said we'd begin the debate, the dialogue on this, which is wonderful.

I know the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port had stated: What tools do we have in our

box, what else can we deploy with this act or give thought to? He also stated that education needs to continue and is paramount, which is wonderful.

My colleague from CBS had stated that safety is the number one issue. The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development stated the same thing and then my friend and colleague for Labrador West stated the same thing. I concur. It's a wonderful initiative that we amend the act because anything we do to increase safety, that is paramount and we will.

I just want to throw out a perspective. Within that realm of where we're going with the *Highway Traffic Act* and, in particular, school bus safety and construction zones, I just want to throw out a perspective in relation to the dialogue that we started today.

The Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development mentioned last week – she had stated that there were many people in the province that are watching. I think she referenced her own district. I was surprised at the number that are engaged and watching as to what we discuss and what we state in the House.

I can't help but think today that, for example, a constituent in Bonavista is most interested in the *Highway Traffic Act*, Joshua Clarke. He has a child RaeLynn who utilizes the bus safety and always provides feedback. To him, I'm sure, safety is paramount as well.

In order to bridge – just my perspective and for the dialogue, if I can share just one occasion, a story that does mesh in with what the perspective would be on the act. I, like many administrators in the last years of my tenure as a school administrator, would meet the children and the parents each morning in front of the school doors.

In our complex, which was Clarenville Middle School and Clarenville High School joined and sharing one lot, we had 14 buses that came each morning. Between the two schools there was in excess of 780 students; some driving their own vehicle, being dropped off by parents.

When I first started in front of the door, there was a crossroads where the pedestrian traffic

dropping the children off would cross with the school buses when they dropped off the children that would leave the lot. On this one particular morning there was a vehicle with children aboard that missed the stop sign that was emblazoned in on the pavement and when they passed in front of the school bus, the school bus operator – the school bus was vacant at the time – had stuck the horn down on the driver of the vehicle who had two children aboard.

They pulled up in front of the doors to drop the children off, the bus passed and I greeted the occupants of the car. It was two grandparents dropping off the two children when their daughter and her husband was away. They weren't familiar with the parking lot. They missed the stop sign that was on the parking lot and I would think that we can probably forgive such an occasion as that.

When we talk about the education, like the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port had mentioned, part of the education was that maybe those who are not familiar with that school parking lot will miss, occasionally, the stop sign. So the education would be, what can we do differently?

We started that year, we met with the 14 drivers and contractors each year. At the start of each year, we met with them and the perspective would be: People don't purposely pass bus stops or buses. Sometimes they are distracted by something other. There's something, either they're not familiar with it, new to the area or there's something that's occupying their mind. When the bus drivers met, they engaged and said there were strategies they could deploy to enhance the safety at the bus stops. They discussed it.

While we talk about cameras, yes – and I agree because if cameras enhance the safety, it's good, but what these bus drivers came up with and said that we need to make sure we give every vehicle operator that is approaching that bus ample notice that that bus is prepared to stop. What they all discussed was that a significant distance ahead of that stop, they would activate their red lights to give people the indication that they were approaching the stop. They never let children out when the bus stopped. The arm

went out; when traffic was to a full stop, only then did they let children off the bus.

In 2008, there was legislation brought by the government at the time that each bus would have an additional set of lights on it, which would be amber lights, along with the red lights. The amber would go on before the red for the purpose of alerting the drivers, the vehicle operators, that they are getting close to a particular bus stop, and that's a good thing. I think there was a 12-year period that was given from 2008, which, if it is 12 years, it would be about 2020 that every bus that we would have in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador would have the amber lights in addition to the red lights – a very good practice.

It was stated last week that – again, just a perspective – people blatantly pass the bus. I'm not sure of that. I don't think that's the case. I know that the piece that we ought to be looking at is what can we do in addition to the cameras to make it safer at these stops. If I ask the Amalgamated students that were here today that if we sit at bus stops in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, if we had a digital sign that was flashing, as opposed to a sign that would be 12 by 18, what do you think would capture the vehicle operator more. I would think those students from Amalgamated would say, surely goodness, the flashing digital sign would better alert that there is a bus stop occurring and there needs to be caution in relation to that. I would assume that would be the case. I think that would be safe to do so.

So when we look at a lot of things we're going to put into the *Highway Traffic Act*, I appreciate the dialogue and I know here's our chance to make sure that what we can do to an act to make it safer, not only on the punitive side, but to what we can put in there as a province to make it safer, this is a good opportunity to do it.

To give you a little bit of data; I stated that we met 14 buses deliver to Clarenville Middle and Clarenville High per day. Twenty-eight runs, some from an hour away that came into Clarenville to drop the children off. Twenty-eight each week, that's 140 runs. In the course of 185 school days we're looking at over 5,000 runs, as a sample. Sixteen years as an administrator, there weren't too many that came

up in those meetings concerned about people passing the bus with the practices they had.

Now, keep in mind, I know the Member for Cape St. Francis spoke well about four-lane highways. We don't have those in the District of Bonavista. So I know there are different perspectives in different areas and always the same does not cover everybody, but in those areas where we have it, we found that wasn't an issue. The issue was often a behaviour on the bus that was concerning, or the child who was in fear of having an anaphylactic reaction that might be 45 minutes outside of town, and that could be an issue. Those were the big ones we grappled with.

So while I appreciate the concern with the school bus stops – and I concur, because just one incident is one too many that we need – we just want to make sure we're comprehensive in how we look at all this, and the education continue. I think that is what we do.

The last note before I take my seat; the construction zones, I know it's been said. My colleague from CBS just mentioned about if the signs are not removed from construction zones, then I would say there is a greater probability, regardless of how miniscule that greater probability may be, that someone is going to think there's not a lot of action or not action on that particular site. If it is 1 or 2 per cent increase in the odds, that's 1 or 2 per cent going in the wrong direction.

So I would say, why in the world if it's not construction ongoing, why do we have the signs erected? Maybe if there is no construction and not a construction site, then those signs should be taken down and mandatory they be removed at that time to not give someone the false expectation there was work, when really there isn't.

Anyway, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL, if she speaks now she will close the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Service NL.



**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Over the past several years our government has made public safety a top priority. We've made a number of improvements to the *Highway Traffic Act*. It is our government's belief, Mr. Speaker, that any attempt to improve road safety should be done now.

Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the debate earlier in the week. I heard the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands, specifically, and I went back to my department and spoke to my staff. I really took his concerns to heart because I truly understood what he was talking about.

Mr. Speaker, in an effort to keep the momentum going in this very important piece of legislation, I will be introducing an amendment here today. Right now, I would just like to say that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador takes highway safety extremely seriously. We look forward to continuing making our highways, our roads safer for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Is the House ready for the question?

**MS. COADY:** Ready.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The motion is that Bill 5 be now read a second time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

**CLERK (Murphy):** A bill, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act. (Bill 5)

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

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

**MS. COADY:** Presently.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Presently.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 5)

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, for leave to introduce a bill, An Act To Amend The Public Trustee Act, 2009, Bill 11, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded the hon. Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Public Trustee Act, 2009, Bill 11, and that the bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Trustee Act, 2009," carried. (Bill 11)

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Public Trustee Act, 2009. (Bill 11)

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

When shall the bill be read a second time?

**MS. COADY:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 11 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Enforcement Of Canadian Judgments Act, Bill 12, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Enforcement Of Canadian Judgments Act, Bill 12, and that the said be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Enforcement Of Canadian Judgments Act," carried. (Bill 12)

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Enforcement Of Canadian Judgments Act. (Bill 12)

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

When shall the bill be read a second time?

**MS. COADY:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 12 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, Bill 15, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, Bill 15, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act," carried. (Bill 15)

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act. (Bill 15)

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

When shall the bill be read a second time?

**MS. COADY:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 15 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Registered Nurses Act, 2008, Bill 16, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Registered Nurses Act, 2008, Bill 16, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Registered Nurses Act, 2008," carried. (Bill 16)

**CLERK (Barnes):** A bill, An Act To Amend The Registered Nurses Act, 2008. (Bill 16)

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

When shall the said bill be read a second time?

**MS. COADY:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 16 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

**MS. COADY:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Service NL, the House

resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 5.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that I should now leave the Chair and that the Committee of the Whole consider Bill 5.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

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

### Committee of the Whole

**CHAIR (Bennett):** Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 5, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act." (Bill 5)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd just like to ask a few questions here but first, before I start, I'd like to thank the minister and their office for giving us a briefing before we started. I certainly appreciate that.

We went through the same process with the *Real Estate Trading Act*. For a first-time MHA, in doing the *Real Estate Trading Act*, I thought it was a really good opportunity for new people to see how the system works. I was really appreciative that we could get in and give our voice. Whether you change it or not is a different thing, but it's good to get in there and be able to speak on it and have your voice in there for sure. I certainly appreciate that.

Rather than define an image-capturing enforcement system, the proposed amendment simply states that the definition will be provided in the regulations. What is that?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, the regulations will establish the following: It will define the image-capture enforcement systems; the information that can be reproduced to be admitted as evidence; calibration and testing requirements for the image-capture system; prescribe the sections of the act for which image-capture enforcement systems can be used.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** How would you define an image-capturing system? Is it photo, is it radar, is it ...?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, actually, I do have a photo here that I can table. What this photo shows is that the system will actually capture the plate, and then the registered owner will receive the ticket.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** We were told that both the Department of Justice and Public Safety and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner have been consulted on this legislation. Who has also been consulted in drafting the legislation?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

Mr. Chair, last year in construction season 2018 the Department of Transportation and Works did a pilot project using this technology. We used three different sources. Leading in for us to even do that pilot project, there was an extensive piece of work that we had to do with the Privacy Commissioner. All the way through that process

for our pilot project that we did, we consulted with the Department of Justice.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Will there be public consultation on these changes?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, there has been significant consultation already completed. We've consulted with groups like MADD, STAND for Hannah. We've consulted with individuals who have lived experience, shall I say, in speeding and accidents on our highway. We've consulted with the Heavy Civil Association. We have done significant work on this piece. RCMP, RNC have been engaged. There has been a lot of consultation completed.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Just for a point of record there, we are definitely interested in the safety of everybody. So these questions are just general questions and to make sure that we're covering all bases. We are totally on the side of safety for sure.

Did you complete a jurisdictional scan on this issue?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, Mr. Chair, a jurisdictional scan. Just for the record I will enter the fact that BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec are using this type of technology right now.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you very much.

That answers my next question of where you had to model it to, so that's good.

Can you provide any information on how these systems would work?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, this is technology; I'm not the technologist. As I indicated earlier, they will capture the plate, and then the registered owner will be ticketed.

What I can say is that some jurisdictions have, in fact, reported positive impacts in road safety because of the use of these cameras.

Saskatchewan has reported that these systems have had a positive impact on driving behaviour, and has seen speed reductions by drivers ranging from 3.4 to 17.7 kilometres per hour.

Saskatchewan has reported positive impact on the frequency and severity of collisions as well.

I can also say that Alberta is reporting an overall reduction in collision rates of 29.35 per cent over a 10-year period, and the technology was a factor – not directly attributable, but it was a factor in decreasing the accidents.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you very much.

Will these mobile units be fixed to an existing traffic light? Will it be in the City of St. John's, or will it be in small communities? I'm just wondering if that would be something you would be able to answer.

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I thank the hon. Member for the question.

I guess it depends on the application. I know, from the Transportation and Works side of things, it will be mobile because we'll be using them in construction zones. If you think about school bus safety, my understanding is they would be fixed to the stop arm, so different technologies for different purposes.

I know, in our pilot project, it was obviously mobile systems, and we tried three different systems, quite successful. I can certainly provide him with a copy of the findings from our pilot project, and then he can see more about the technology that we used.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you for that.

Will these systems be focused? Will they be on, like I said, highways? Obviously, with school buses, I think that's a great idea. We cannot have any of that happening in the school zones for sure.

One question would be if you're on a four-lane highway, like Mount Pearl, and you stop on the inside and the arm comes out, does that mean that the two outside lanes going the opposite direction will stop as well? Because some people don't know if they should stop or not, so that would be a question that I'd simply like to have answered for sure.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** I believe the question that the Member is saying is regarding school buses and when the arm goes out. You have to stop when an arm goes out and the lights are flashing. Point blank, you have to stop. That's the law now as it exists.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** I'm not sure if I asked the question right. Like, in four lanes in Mount Pearl, you have two lanes here and somebody is getting out on the side of the road. I just want to be sure that in the opposite two lanes they do stop, because I see that. I come in there every morning and they don't stop, and that's what I'm asking.

Maybe it's a fine they should be getting, but I'm not sure of that. So that's why I'm asking that question.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, you do have to stop – the answer to your question. In actual fact, yes, it is a fine they should be getting, and hopefully with this camera technology we will be able to use this technology to, in fact, give those fines out.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** How many enforcement sites do you think you will be setting up around the area? Do you have any numbers on that?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Again, thank you, Mr. Chair.

The reality I guess from the Transportation and Works side, and I can speak to that because we were the first ones to pilot this technology in the province.

We would certainly want to be doing it in construction sites, primarily in high traffic, high-speed areas. We will also want to use it, not only with our contractors but with our own employees, and then we will also focus that on higher-risk areas.

I think if you look at some of the unfortunate incidents that Transportation and Works has had over the years when it comes to accidents and harm to our employees, they've primarily, unfortunately, been in high-speed, high traffic areas. When we look at it from the Transportation and Works side, we'll be looking at high-speed, high traffic areas.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** I know you did some research and you're checking other jurisdictions along the way – basically, Ontario, Manitoba. If you go in and do some research on it and check all the incidents, they've had them; they've had them taken out.

We just want to make sure we're doing something that's proper and that's not going to cause us more grief down the road, but we have some people who have installed them and then have taken them out again. So I'm just asking the question to make sure we have our proper information.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** What the Member opposite is alluding to is some incidents that occurred within municipalities, and those were

municipalities that had enforcement officers and could use these cameras in those specific ones.

Some of the technology, too – he's also referring to – they had issues or concerns with, so they have adjusted the technology. This is 2019, we'll be using the most current technology available.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Do you plan to use municipalities in the area to do this?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** No, there will be no provision in this act for municipalities within Newfoundland and Labrador to use this technology.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** How will a vehicle owner be notified of a fine or notification of an incident?

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It would be through the mail, as you would see in other jurisdictions. One of the things we looked at, notifications for this have been done through the mail. That will all work, obviously, through the court system.

Just to add to an earlier question about how it's applied in jurisdictions, typically there's a 10 per cent allowance. So the capturing systems, whether it's photo radar or not, there is a 10 per cent allowance for people going 10 per cent over and they wouldn't be captured.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** The amendments proposed are related to consolidating fines as well. Can the minister confirm there's, in fact, no change to the fines amount in this legislation?

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, that's correct. The fine you will receive is the fine that's presently enacted, I believe. There's no change to the fines, as they exist today.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** We were told in the briefing that the amendments proposed are to reorder the impaired driving section to make it easier to follow and understand. Can the minister confirm that there has been no change in policy with specific sections?

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, Mr. Chair, I can confirm there's been no change. As we know, we are updating the *Highway Traffic Act* regularly, so this is to make the readability of the act more consistent. There's no change.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Cape St. Francis.

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

Just one question now on the awareness and public education. I'm just wondering if there's going to be any campaign to let the public know.

Also, will there be anything in the schools to make people aware? I'm just wondering what notifications will go out so the public will be aware of the changes that are being made and where the cameras and everything are located.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Member for the question.

In our pilot projects, one of the things we did was we wanted awareness, because one of the things that's actually, hopefully, going to slow people down is this as a deterrent. When it comes to notification, absolutely.

It's my understanding – again, from the pilot project – if you're going into a zone where there is a camera, notification has to be given. When we did our notifications, when we did our pilot project – so you have your sign: construction

ahead, you also have to notify the motorists that there's photo radar enforcement ahead. In any case where you would be going into a zone with photo radar enforcement, the motorists would be given an early warning of that enforcement.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cape St. Francis.

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

I noticed in previous legislation that we did a lot of consultation with other provinces in Atlantic Canada. It's interesting to note, no other Atlantic Canada provinces are involved, when we look at Manitoba and Saskatchewan and stuff like that.

I'm just wondering why, because usually what we did when we did the driver's licences, we did it as a group. Is there any reason Atlantic Canada provinces weren't included? Are they not doing this? It's just a question.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Nova Scotia presently does have legislation in place, but they don't have any data on camera use yet.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Thank you very much.

The question I get asked, on these systems and all the systems that are going to be installed, how are the systems going to be tested and how are they going to be maintained? Who will be responsible for that?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The calibration will be done through Service NL. I mentioned this in a previous answer, one of the allowances for calibration is certainly around the fact of the 10 per cent allowance, but Service NL would be guiding or would be overseeing the supplier to make sure they are calibrated properly.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Okay. So Service NL are going to be the ones who require and do the testing and the maintaining of all these systems. Does that mean we're going to need to hire people to do this? Is there going to be a separate – we have highway enforcement officers, I don't know if they have enough time to go out and be checking these systems. Is it something that will be added to the department so that we have someone hired? What qualifications will they need to be able to do the job?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, that's a question I often get when I'm bringing in new legislation. What I would like to say to the Member is within the Department of Service NL, as we identify new technologies and new ways to do business, we kind of rearrange our staff. We do have highway enforcement officers, and if there is training required, which I'm sure there will be, this is a new use of technology, we will endeavour to ensure that our staff are trained.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Thank you very much.

My concern is these systems, that they're in place, and anytime anyone gets a ticket or anything, to make sure that the calibration is done properly because we don't want to see people getting tickets for – that's a concern, making sure we do have people, because I noticed it says their certificate doesn't need to be signed and stuff like that.

My question now is: What other offences could image-capturing enforcement systems detect? Are there any other offences that they'll detect?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** No, Mr. Chair. As is outlined in the bill today, speeding, stop signs, school zones, construction zones, those are the

areas that these cameras will be used to detect if the speeding is there to issue the ticket.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** It was only recently I followed up a car behind me, I drove up behind a car and I noticed – and minister you know this; it's really often that you address this: the peeling of the licence plates. Sometimes they're hard to recognize.

How will this system work? Could it be an offence to the person that has a licence plate like that if you can zoom in and see who has that? Is that something that will happen or will this be a fault in how the system is going to work?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, Mr. Chair, so I understand what the Member is asking. He's asking can we use this technology for anything else other than what is presently in the bill. As we move forward, Mr. Chair, I'll be bringing in an amendment to ensure that we can only use this technology for the five areas I have identified.

As it pertains to peeling plates, right now in the province we do have a system in place where individuals can return their plate and get the appropriate one. Mr. Chair, that was during a year that the plates were issued, a whole batch of plates peeled.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** This is a question. You can borrow a trailer from somebody and the licence plate on it, you can't see the licence plate on the vehicle but you can see it on the trailer. So would the registered owner of the truck that's towing that trailer – not saying I did it now; don't be laughing about it.

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

**MR. K. PARSONS:** But would it be the registered owner of the trailer or would it be the truck that will be getting the ticket for this offence?



**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Well, I thank the Member for that trick question.

I'm actually going to find the answer out to that, but the trailer would be registered to somebody and I understand what he's saying. If we capture the trailer and not the vehicle that's towing the trailer, and that's what's speeding, do we actually issue the ticket? I will find that answer out for you momentarily.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It sounds like someone is talking from experience.

I'm going to go back to this because I want to be on record. I'd like to get some answer from the minister on it as well. He probably knows what I'm going to ask; it's about signage in construction zones. This is a bigger issue than most people realize. It's a conversation many people have and I'm sure all Members opposite here from time to time. I know from a previous life, when the Member next to me, my colleague for Conception Bay East - Bell Island was minister, this issue we tried to address as well. We never accomplished it, obviously.

How can you deal with this? That issue, I think, is a real issue. You bring cameras there in construction zones. Even though the signs are there that define a construction zone, when there's no construction happening for an extended period of time, is there a way of making it incumbent upon a construction company or whoever gets the contract – even if you take it from a 50 up to a 70 as opposed to bringing it back to 100 if it's a construction zone, is there a way of modifying that right now?

Right now, you can go through stretches – and Terra Nova National Park is a prime example when it was getting a lot of upgrades done a few years back. You went through a long stretch of road and I went through several times and there was nothing. There was not even a vehicle

parked with no one in it, there was nothing there, but you had to realize it was a construction zone.

I wonder is there a happy medium you can find. It is an annoyance to the travelling public when there's no construction happening. I don't agree with putting it back to 100. Is there a middle ground you can find? Because I find now you're going to put cameras in there and people get lulled into that comfort zone – I think it's worthy of noting. You might realize – it might be one of my pet peeves, too, which it is, but I'm not alone. It's more than me so I'd like to see what the minister has to say.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Member for the question.

It's one of my pet peeves, too. I can assure the Member opposite, no different than he said when he was in the department, every conversation we have or every agenda that we have with the Heavy Civil Association here in the province, that is one of the agenda items. Obviously, Heavy Civil is a very strong supporter of these changes to the act but, yes, we do need to do a better job at it.

It's actually in our contracts now, but it's a conversation that we're going to have to continue to have because it is a challenge and it's one of the things we hear all the time. I just want to point out one thing. If it was in the park, it wasn't a TW job. Not to make light of it but no, absolutely.

There is an onus back on those contractors too. If they want us to add this safety feature, layer of safety for their employees, we expect them to do their part as well, recognizing the fact that construction zones, as I said last week, don't necessarily need workers. The sign that should come down, if it's not an active construction zone, the actual person-working sign is the sign that should be removed. If you go into a construction zone, the sign that you should see removed is the person-working sign.

Mr. Chair, there is work to be done there and it's certainly something that we will continue to pursue with the Construction Association.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** I thank the minister for that answer. I agree with him. The only thing is maybe we need to – the speed limit sign, that's another question and I think we could make some adjustments on that, too. So take the people-working sign away and make an adjustment to the speed limit, because that's another problem as well when you have to go to the reduced speed and there's no construction happening in the area.

But I appreciate that he shares my concern, and I want it more to be on record, as opposed to anything else. I know it's an issue, and hopefully we'll come to some kind of resolution.

These cameras on the school buses, there's a backlash again – it happened in my district when they did a story on the people passing the buses. I don't think I copied the minister of the day – the minister of Education at the time – but I did send a direct email to the school district – I think the CEO at the time – because it bothered me a lot, and asked about putting cameras on the buses, dash cams. Because I know it was a story and there was a big Facebook post. That was what the bus driver suggested. I thought it was a great idea, so this is probably even better.

At the time, the district came back and told me – and I have the email, I could share it with the minister – that it was a privacy issue, which I was kind of at a loss. I said I don't understand the privacy issue. So generally with this piece of legislation now – I guess my question is probably to the Minister of Service NL – there was a privacy issue with this full camera, the photo radar, whatever you want to call it. So how is that addressed? Because I know this came directly from the CEO's office. They basically said we agree with you, it make a lot of sense, but it's a privacy issue and we have to stay clear of it.

So I'd like to know what the government's view is or what studies or what consultation they did to deal with that issue. Because obviously that issue never just came from the district, it was in consultation with government when I got that answer.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** So, Mr. Chair, I believe what the Member is asking has to do with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, correct?

We will build privacy requirements into the system, and we're going to work to ensure that privacy impact assessments are conducted during the procurement phase.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** I guess to be clear, I took it to be that with these cameras, with these dash cams you could be affecting – because you're getting children, you're getting youth on these cameras. You're getting innocent people that could be walking a road. Whichever way the angle got of the camera. So I took it to be – now, I stand to be corrected – it could be someone out in their backyard.

I mean, we're dealing with cameras, we look at the issue of a camera and getting the licence plate of someone and the speed limit of them is going to be stamped on the picture. All makes sense. There is other peripheral stuff that's going to be picked up on that camera. That's what I took to be the broader, the bigger question. Because when we take it in isolation it sounds fine, but when you broaden it out and what kind of ray any camera has – because as a politician, I hate to see cameras and phones come out in most places. I think all of us can agree on that.

So if you have them on a school bus and you're driving or walking up the road, or you're in a backyard, you really want to be – let's be frank about it and let's be honest, it's a reality. So I'd like to know how the privacy matters have been dealt with on that one.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**MR. WARR:** Mr. Chair, with regard to school buses, in particular, we met with the Privacy Commissioner because we've been talking about this stop-arm technology for quite some time, and I've had discussions with the school district.

Along with safety, we're also responsible for protecting the privacy of students. While some may welcome the cameras, others have concerns.

In keeping with the guidelines, Mr. Chair, and advice of the Privacy Commissioner, the decision to install a camera on a school bus is considered as a last resort and only done after a number of other actions are implemented to reduce any risks.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The installation of these cameras on these buses, who covers the cost of this installation and, I guess, monitoring of the cameras on school buses? Is it the school bus operator or is it government? Is it the department or a third party contractor?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, a couple of things. First, I just want to answer the trailer question. I'd like to say that the trailer owner will actually get the ticket but they can then contest it in court if they were not the ones driving at the time. Because, in fact, this technology again will only capture this. It'll only capture the plate. It will not capture anything else.

So as it pertains to privacy, it will only capture the plate of the vehicle that has gone around the bus when the stop arm is out and the lights are flashing. That's what we're talking about here today, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm not picking on school buses now, but I think they bring out a bigger question. I'm going through construction zones for a long time, too, but I'm going to spare the minister that.

You have a school bus and the camera is on the school bus, it's a moving object. So the bus is

moving with the camera and they're stopping to pick up children. With these cameras, is there any way of also making sure the bus is being operated in the proper manner and stopping in the right location?

It opens the door to questions. I start thinking, you got to put it on the bus to get people who are violating the stop zone, but is there any way also – because I'll be honest, I live up in CBS where a lot of school buses travel around. I don't have the beauty of Metrobus like a lot of people in St. John's, but I got a lot of school buses, and I'll be quite frank, there are different times on the four-lane highways that I question sometimes the operation of school buses as opposed to – it's hard for the drivers, but sometimes it's a two-way street with this stuff.

So when you're looking at, you're putting a camera there and you're going to fine a driver for passing – and that's perfect legislation – is there any way to also keep monitoring a school bus, the driver and operation of that camera? Because they're carrying a piece of equipment around now that's going to be used to fine people. So on the flip side, is there any way built into this, or is there any thought given to the opposite side of that argument?

The reason I ask this question – because people may wonder why I'm asking it – is when you get into courts. I can't speak for lawyers, we have them here, but that would be a challenge. The courts are going to be tied up with this stuff. It's going to be tied up constantly. It's going to be challenging, all those avenues. I'm not a lawyer, but I think it's worthy of question.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, I thank the Member for his question and I certainly acknowledge his concerns, but here with Bill 5 today, what we are talking about today in Committee is the use of technology and camera on bus stop arms and in school zones just to capture people who are breaking the law, passing the buses or speeding. That's what this technology today is to be used for.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the minister for that.

Yes, it's a broader question, but I guess the courts will decide that when it gets into practice.

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

**MR. PETTEN:** I won't repeat that.

One final question from me, Mr. Chair. It's an age-old problem in the province, collection of fines. We have a big problem that's been going on for a long time. Now we're going to add to collection of fines. People are going to get more fines, or that would be the hope. It's not about getting fines; it's about mitigating the behaviour, but we, in that process, are going to increase fines. You're going to have extra pressures on the courts to deal with this because there will be a pressure on the traffic courts, make no mistake about it. In the first year or two, there's going to be a big uptake in people coming and challenging every one of these tickets, or a majority.

What's in place for the collection of these new fines that are going to be coming in? Also, kind of twofold, is how are we going to deal with it in our court system? I think they're valid points and it's going to be an extra burden placed on our courts as a result of this new way of issuing tickets.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** The Member opposite has a justice question right now, and what I can say to the Member as the Minister of Service NL is that, in fact, we are moving towards plate-to-owner, and plate-to-owner will definitely help us address this situation.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

**MR. P. DINN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the minister for her answers on these questions.

Just a comment before I get into a couple of questions of clarification. The Member for CBS talked about construction zones and the signage there. One issue I get up in my district when it

comes to school zones is the signage. I believe the highway act talks to having a time limit in terms of when speeding is an offence and when it's not. In a school zone, I think it's the reverse. We should perhaps be leaving school zones as school zones 24-7 because activities happen in the evenings and so on, but that's just a comment that's related to this.

You may have answered these, so I apologize if I didn't hear you. You mentioned consultations earlier. You talked about talking to MADD, the Heavy Civil Association and so on. Was there consultation as well with the school districts?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**MR. WARR:** Yes, there was. This school-arm technology has been discussed now since 2015, if my memory serves me correct in the notes that I've read. It is something that until this technology has been brought to the House of Assembly, recommended, approved and put in legislation, we will address that as a school district once that legislation has been put in place.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

**MR. P. DINN:** Thank you.

I want to go back to a question the Member for Ferryland asked. It had to do with the four-lane highway and the bus stops, the arm goes out. It's illegal to pass a bus either way. What the camera captures is the licence plate. So a car passing in the direction of the bus is going to be captured.

How are we capturing the vehicles coming the other way? Will there be cameras on the bus facing that way as well?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Speaker, I understand what the Member is asking, it's an operational question. I can't clearly answer that right now today because, in actual fact, the legislation we're putting forward is school zones; wherefore in a school zone, a camera will be set up to capture any activity in a zone.

When it comes to the stop-arm technology, of course, we all know the range of a camera and it has to just capture the plate itself. That's my understanding of the technology that we will be looking for in the procurement process.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

**MR. P. DINN:** Thank you for that.

I just highlight it; it is a huge issue. If we're putting cameras on buses it may be something we also look at.

Last thing, and I know we have a long way to go in terms of costing this all out, but what would be the estimated cost of a camera unit?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I can only speak for what we did last year, as Transportation and Works, in our pilot project. To test the three systems last year, I think the cost was \$86,000. We went out and found three different suppliers from the transportation, from the construction zone side. That's what we did.

I think this is something that you will see us partner with private industry to actually provide these services. I know it's different when you get into school buses because it's a fixed – it's probably a one-time asset but from the TW aspect, it's something that we'll look at doing with private industry.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** I want to thank the minister for the answer to question that I asked earlier. It wasn't with my trailer, by the way.

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

**MR. K. PARSONS:** I'd like to know – and the minister was asked this by my colleague here from CBS. It was in relation to the school buses and putting the cameras on the school buses and who was going to pay for it and whatnot. I know a lot of the contracts – and I could be corrected

or not. The cost of installation like this on buses could be in their contracts. Contracts come every couple of years or something like that. I think you're going to implement this as soon as possible.

So, again, who is responsible for it, whether it's school buses or construction zones – let us know where the cost of that is coming from.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Again, I'll speak for the project that Transportation and Works did with regard to construction zones. At the end of the day, it will be an added cost to our capital construction costs when we do a project. No different now, we factor in safety plans and everything. Really, at the end of the day, this will be a cost, I guess, that will be built into the contracts.

It's a reality, there is a cost associated, but it's a cost that's associated to safety.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cape St. Francis.

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My talk is mainly with the school buses, that contracts come every couple of years or whatever. If we're going to implement this right away, if a person's contract is going to come up this year then it's going to go in the contract; but if it's a person that has a couple of years left on their contract, then that school bus might not have it on it. That's the point I was trying to make.

The bulk of the regulations are going to be done at the Cabinet level, I would imagine. Has any of the regulations been done so far? When do you expect to see the regulations finished for this bill?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** The answer to the question, have any of the regulations been completed so far, is no. Regulations are completed after, of course, the bill is passed in the House of Assembly.

I anticipate with the process in the Department of Service NL, the number of pieces of legislation that we're presently working on, maybe we could be looking at – I spoke to my staff – late spring, early fall in order to get the regulations in place. Therefore, just to allude to the school buses also, we anticipate with the Department of Education and Early Childhood that we will be doing a provincial pilot project first and foremost.

This is going to be new technology in the province and we really need to work out the kinks as we go through.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Cape St. Francis.

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

I'm just wondering – and one of my colleagues just mentioned it that time – about a conviction. How will the notice go out? If you're driving a vehicle and you get caught or whatever for doing what you shouldn't be doing, obviously there's going to have to be some notification go out. If I got a speeding ticket today, I would have the opportunity to go to court and contest that ticket and the officer would have to show up in court. If he didn't show up, then they'd basically throw the ticket out.

I'm just wondering how this is going to work and what notifications are going to come to the person that – a person has three or four points lost or four or five points lost and not know it and it affect their insurance or whatever. How would a notification come? How is it going to work when you get to court? How are you going to be able to contest this?

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, it's outlined in the act now. There are no changes to the contesting or appeal process. In actual fact, you'll receive the notification that you have a ticket in the mail.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Ferryland.

**MR. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you.

Just a question. Driving in the areas – and I'm sure they're in all districts – we have speed signs that will flash. They're in Mount Pearl when I drive through, they're in Bay Bulls, they're in Mobile and they work very effectively to slow you down. They're very effective.

Again, like I said when we started, I was in Portugal – and I think this would work in school zones. It's just something to look at; I really do believe it because it worked for us. If you're driving somewhere and the speed is not excessive but it's faster than the zone tells you you're going, the light will come on and you'll stop. In these signs where you are now, if you're going 70 and it says 30, then you could just go right on through. There's no one there, no one is looking at it. It's just trying to slow you down.

If you're near these signs and there's a red light comes on, you stop and then you start again. We've gotten some complaints; I got some in my areas in the school zones that they're going too fast. They're going too fast, the light comes on and they stop. They wait 10, 15 seconds, the light goes green and then they're gone again. It's slowing them and stopping the traffic, so I think it's something you could just look at for sure.

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Member opposite is correct, that is something that we have been doing, actually. From the safety point, some of our safety improvements to the Veterans Memorial Highway, Route 75, that's one of the things we've done is actually added those signs. They've been there now for about I'm going to say six to eight months. We think, anecdotally, that they are effective.

Those signs have a lot of capabilities, actually, because depending on the model of the sign, they can actually track numbers of vehicles, numbers of vehicles speeding. They can actually record the speeding of a vehicle, not the specific vehicle, but they can say, well, this vehicle went by at such and such a speed. It's something, certainly, that there's been a conversation happening between Transportation and Works and the Department of Education about how we

actually work with these signs in school zones – not only in school zones, anywhere where traffic counts or safety becomes an issue to actually look at having these signs installed.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm just going to stand up and ask a few questions about the actual – and I know when it comes to interdepartmental, there's always a bit of an overlap, like who's going to be looking after what part of it. The issue I brought up earlier about Kubota is a prime example.

Can I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works – both are involved – because the registrar is heavily involved in this act with the section of the act which says, on suspensions, they have the right to give suspensions or relieve within 15 days put in writing. In the act that I'm referring to, the snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle act, the minister was very clear that certain vehicles can't be on the road. I have it in a letter here three times. The registrar herself was on the record as saying they can't be used. People wrote and said they can't be used. It's all documentation. Yet, the registrar – outside St. John's, can't be used (inaudible).

Can I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works, because it falls under the *Highway Traffic Act*, how can the registrar override the all-terrain snowmobile act? Plus, Minister of Transportation and Works, this is going to be very important when it comes to suspensions, so are the people in St. John's going to be different if they need a suspension lifted to go to work –

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

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

**MR. JOYCE:** – and use their vehicle. Is it going to be different from outside or in St. John's because – and I ask the minister, how can that happen? How can the registrar override both ministers and the act?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Yes, I thank the hon. Member for the question, Mr. Chair.

The reality is if it's a provincial road – I'll use 450 as an example. If it's a provincial road, Transportation and Works, it's a road that's owned by the province, and we set the guidelines, we set the rules on that road. Not sure when you talk about individual cities, if it's not a road, that it's actually property of Transportation and Work. It could certainly be a city bylaw, but from my perspective, a provincially owned road would be most of the roads around the province, or a lot of the road around the province – 450, 420. I think the Member and I chatted about this earlier, but they're certainly within the jurisdiction of Transportation and Works.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** I guess I'll ask the minister because inconsistencies – I've been around government long enough, if there's an inconsistency with one act, you can rest assured it's going to carry on in other acts. I'll just read the documentation that I have, and I'll let the Minister of Service NL or the minister answer.

Will a vehicle purchased for commercial use be allowed to be used on the road? The intended use of the vehicle is not a consideration of the registration process. Vehicles are registered based on their design. If an individual purchases a vehicle design, off highway, then the vehicle can't be used on the highway.

That was signed by the minister; another one is signed by the registrar. The manufacture specifications of these vehicles indicate the vehicle is intended for off-road use only – very clear, and that is under the all-terrain snowmobile act, very clear – can't be on the road. Very, very clear. That is from the minister.

Here's another one also; this one is from the registrar herself. It says: vehicles regulated under the *Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles Act* are not permitted to operate on all highways as per section 6-3 of the regulations; therefore, they are not eligible for slow-moving vehicles.

We have two ministers, the registrar and the act, but here's what happened since – and this is very important. The registrar, the same person who wrote all these letters to 18 or 20 people across the province, the same two ministers who wrote, but here's what the registrar said: I'm responsible for licensing vehicles. The officials, the assessment of a vehicle, the registrar would communicate to the registered owner which is registered through a company which is used for commercial, unique needs.

So what's happening is the registrar is in here saying to the people outside St. John's: you can't be on the road. The minister: you can't be on the road. The Minister of Transportation and Works: you can't be on the road. But the registrar – and this is very important because I can assure you people, as long as I've been here, 10 years down the road it's what we're going to look at when someone takes this to court, what are the inconsistencies?

I ask the Minister of Service NL: How can the registrar override the act that was approved in this House, override the Minister of Transportation and Works letters and override your own letters to the people? Who is wrong in this matter?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will gladly answer the Member. The registrar cannot override the act, Mr. Chair. The registrar in issuing the plate for the commercial purposes under section 16(4) – to which the Member is alluding to – of the *Highway Traffic Act*, she erred in doing that. That was brought to our attention by the Member opposite, it was reviewed within the department and the plate that the Member is specifically referring to here in the House has been retracted.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Well, I applaud the minister for being consistent across the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I'll applaud you for that, because that's the way it should be

across the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Just on the question again on the – once you take the pictures, is there a timeline to notify the owner? For example, if I go across and I speed through a zone today, how long is it going to be before the owner is notified?

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, my understanding is when the picture is taken of the individual, that it has captured the image of the individual speeding, it will be issued in the mail immediately; however long it takes for it to get in the mail. It will be issued and put in the mail.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** I'll just ask the – and I use I think it's the 427 highway in Ontario. They have cameras also. It's a paid highway and they have cameras on there also.

In part of the cameras in 427, the fines are consistent. Are the fines here going to be consistent? Say, for example, if someone is speeding 20 kilometres over going through a construction zone, 30 kilometres over, 35, are they going to be included in the regulations itself?

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** The fines – I'll speak specifically to construction zones – would be the same as they are today. Just to remind everybody at home, they double. Any fines in a construction zone are double, as the sign tells you as you're going in the construction zone.

Yeah, they would be consistent with what they are today. Whether there's law enforcement present and actually lays a charge or pulls somebody over, or there's a photo radar ticket issued, they would be consistent with the fines of today.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.



**MR. BRAZIL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I only have a question or two. I'm just looking for some clarification. We know, and we all agree, in school zones the need for the cameras and in construction zones the need there. We talked about in speeding zones, and I'm probably going to ask for a little bit more clarification on exactly that.

My clarification is are we talking in areas, intersections where there are red lights or traffic lights, would there be cameras affixed to them to give out tickets?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** So, just let me be clear. The Member opposite is asking me questions about traffic cameras: are we going to use this technology in traffic camera areas? Is that correct? Are we going to use this technology where there are traffic cameras?

**MR. BRAZIL:** (Inaudible) red lights.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Red lights.

**MR. BRAZIL:** (Inaudible) there will be no cameras on the top of them (inaudible)?

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, there is.

**CHAIR:** The answer is not picking up on your questions back here.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Not stop signs, but red lights, yes.

**MR. BRAZIL:** Yes, (inaudible).

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, red lights.

**MR. BRAZIL:** Yes.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Yes, the technology will be used. Yes, that's outlined in the act.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

**MR. BRAZIL:** So on traffic lights there will be the technology to capture somebody who violates a traffic violation? It could be going

through an amber light, it could be they didn't come to a complete stop on a turn?

I understand speed zones, I understand that, or what we consider areas of speed concern. Highways, Veterans Memorial Highway, Outer Ring Road, fair enough. I understand where we're coming from that, and I can appreciate that. Noting if you're coming to an intersection on Topsail Road that now bodes into the city, are there going to be lights there at that traffic signal when they come to a stop to determine whether or not they went through it too quickly or their speed limit going through there into the city itself?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, just let me get some clarification for the Member, because I understood they were at traffic lights, but I'm just getting some clarification here, okay.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

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

First, I just have a couple of quick comments. I certainly applaud the move towards putting cameras on stop arms on school buses. It's certainly something I have written the minister about and so on. I'm glad to see that would be happening, but another piece that – all good. I'm glad to see that, but another piece that I think needs to go along with camera technology, or people passing school buses, that has been done in other jurisdictions is that in other jurisdictions they have actually raised the fines for passing school buses substantially.

Through a little bit of research here, I've seen in some provinces where that's actually happened, and there are a couple of news clips there, one where it said – I can't remember if it was Quebec or where it was and they said they doubled the fines. I think there are some places where it's like \$2,000 or something if you pass a school bus while it's stopped letting children out.

I know it's too bad because it's not part of this amendment and it's obviously too late at this stage of the game to do it, but I say to the Minister of Service NL that it's something – as one Member, I would like you to look into exactly what is the fine in Newfoundland and Labrador for someone who chooses to pass a school bus when the stop arm is engaged. Just do a jurisdictional scan, compare it to other provinces and see if, as a further deterrent, we should be looking at significantly increasing the fine.

When we talk about safety, we talk about children, there's nobody in this House would say – and I would have no problem defending it. I think I said, when I spoke to this last week, that if a parent came to me and got all upset or someone came to me and said I'm not going to vote for you because you just jacked the fine up, I'd say too bad, don't vote for me. Too bad, I don't care. There are certain things that we all agree have to be done. There is no defence for passing a school bus with the stop arm engaged and small children getting on and off – none. I say to the minister: I would appreciate if you had a look at that for further amendments down the road.

The other comment I wanted to make – because it was raised in second reading, somebody mentioned it – the whole concept of camera technology replacing police. I'm sure that's not the intent, but I would just add to that. Obviously, I would see this as a tool to enhance road safety and as a tool to help in law enforcement, certainly not to replace law enforcement. We wouldn't want to see officers that we have now dealing with traffic enforcement taken off the road because they're simply going to say we're going to replace them with cameras. If anything, this should be something to add to what we're already doing, add to the efforts to make things safer.

Now I just have a couple of quick questions. The first one relates to the speed cameras. I think the Minister of Transportation and Works talked about it would be mobile cameras in construction sites. I'll just deal with the construction sites first. With a mobile camera in a construction site, will there be a requirement for signage or something? I know it was asked about signage, and I understand if it's fixed, but

if you have cameras put up in a construction site, would there be signage in advance to say cameras – because it could be here today and not here tomorrow. I'm assuming it could be here. If a camera was put in a construction site, would it be there for the whole length of the project, or would you move it, say, to a different construction site even though the one you already had it in is still active?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and it's a good question.

In our pilot project, we did just that. We actually moved it because – actually, sorry, first. To the first question, yes. One of the signs when you went into construction when we were doing our pilot project was: Construction ahead. Photo radar enforcement present. I believe that's actually a requirement. Any time you put a camera in place, you have to actually warn of that camera. We're not out to trick anybody. This is not about fooling somebody so that we can catch them speeding.

Interestingly enough, it didn't work, because the data we had back showed 43 per cent of the people that were actually going into that zone were still speeding. That first sign, people didn't see it, but the sign was there.

To the second part of your question about mobility, in our project we did move that from day to day, from project to project, because, for an example, if we were doing a project on Route 1, somewhere between here and Whitbourne, we can have the camera there one day in what would be somewhat of a fixed construction zone, but maybe the next day we would want to move it somewhere where we had TW crews doing some pothole repair. Yeah, we would use flexibility in that, but again, there would be warnings to drivers that they're entering a zone with photo radar.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**MR. LANE:** Thank you, Minister.

With that in mind in construction zones, how do you see it in terms of enforcing speed in areas that are not construction zones? Speeding on the highway, as an example, I'm just wondering how you would see that rolling out. I would assume there's not going to be cameras on every kilometre of highway in Newfoundland. I would assume we're going to take areas – comes to mind, Outer Ring Road, Pitts Memorial, maybe the Lewin Parkway, Veterans Memorial, some of those areas. The camera technology that would be utilized there, would they be mobile cameras or would they be fixed cameras?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

From the conversations that I know Transportation and Works has had with Service NL and Justice, I guess, from our perspective, someone who has actually done a pilot project, it would be mobile. Exactly to what the Member opposite suggested, we would look at – unfortunately, the department has traffic data that shows where our trouble spots are. We all know Route 75, Veterans Memorial has been one of our trouble spots in the province and there are others.

We would look at where there are consistent problem areas we would use mobile technology along with law enforcement. We would certainly rely on our authorities to actually give us guidance in where they feel that we should be deploying these assets.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**MR. LANE:** Thank you, Minister.

I'm absolutely on board about the trouble areas and some of the ones I named and you reiterated. That's good. I just want to be clear, I'm just thinking about the Outer Ring Road. That's just an example. Anybody who travels the Outer Ring Road, as I'm sure most Members do, going back and forth here to Confederation Building, you can be on the Outer Ring Road and if you're doing 110 or 115 there are cars passing you like you're not even moving. That's fairly consistent.

I'm just wondering for areas such as the Outer Ring Road, would you not then be looking at some of these spots and saying, you know what, instead of moving something around we need two or three permanent cameras on the Outer Ring Road to deal with this ongoing issue. I'm just wondering what your thoughts are on that, Minister.

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the hon. Member.

Absolutely and I think that's what we'll find, as we start deploying technology, which would be early on mobile. If there are spots in this province where people are still having accidents and people are losing their loved ones, we will certainly use whatever we need to do to make sure that our highways are as safe as possible.

I agree with the hon. Member, some of our highways are being made unsafe because of negligence and poor driving, absolutely. Let's hope that we don't have to get to that but it certainly would be an option to use that permanent technology on some of our highways.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

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

I just want to touch on school buses for a moment, again. This is more to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

I'm just wondering what the rollout plan might look like for school buses. Obviously, we have some buses in the system that are owned by the school districts and there are other school buses that are contracted. Most of them are contracted or the majority I would think. That would be part of the tendering process for the services or the RFPs or whatever you want to call them.

Is the plan then to – someone might have already mentioned a pilot project. It was certainly something I had suggested when I had written you. If we're going to go with a pilot project, any sense on when that might happen, where that might happen, how many buses might be

involved? Has that even been thought about at this point?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**MR. WARR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The hon. Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands raises a great issue, an important issue. We've had meetings, Mr. Chair, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, with companies with regard to RFPs. We've engaged in our meetings but nothing has come out of the meetings. Obviously, this legislation is still a ways away, and getting involved in stop-arm technology with regard to our school buses, again, is some time away.

I certainly take note of the hon. Member's suggestions. With regard to a rollout program, we are looking at a pilot. It's been talked about in the department for quite some time. We are looking at a pilot. A rollout date, I really can't tell you, and what area of the province or what area even of the Northeast Avalon would be used, I'm really not sure. It's too early to tell, but I will make a note of that.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**MR. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

One question came up, and I happened to miss over it in my list. I know my colleague for Topsail - Paradise mentioned to the Minister of Transportation and Works about speed limits in school zones, and it's been an issue I've raised with the minister and his department and I know there have been mixed views on it.

If you reduce the speed limit from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and then at 5 o'clock it changes back to the 50 or 60 kilometre an hour. I've asked and I'm on record – I think the minister may or may not know – I've asked his officials, I've advocated. I think we need to have school zones right across the province – speed limits reduced in school zones across the province on all our provincial roads.

In municipalities, I know up in my district there's a reduced speed limit on municipal roads. It's a huge issue. So while we're here in the process now of bringing in camera technology on the buses and trying to deal with school zones, which I totally applaud, it's a great opportunity to deal with that issue too. That is an issue right throughout, I think, the province. I know it's an issue in my district. It's a huge issue.

The town actually installed these electronic signs that flash to let you know your speed in all school zones. Even on the provincial roads (inaudible) pass the schools. It's an issue, and it's a great time – and I know it may be part of the *Highway Traffic Act*. It may need legislative changes, but I think government would be generally applauded if they were, in conjunction now with this camera technology, to introduce that as well. To me, it makes perfect sense; it's a win-win.

I know, and I can't stress it enough, it's a huge issue with speeds in school zones in general. You're going a good part of the way. I think if you did that right across the board, 24 hours a day, seven days a week – it's conditioning and it works. I've seen it in my own district. It actually works. It has to be implemented with patrols, with the cameras but have the speed limit introduced across the board provincially, 24 hours a day. I don't know if the minister has anything to say.

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Transportation and Works.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think the Member and I agree on this. How it's been explained to me, though, when I've raised this with people in the department and traffic safety people is it sort of somewhat relates back to the construction zone sites. If the signs are left there all the time, it builds a level of complacency.

You're in a school zone at 7 p.m. – and one of the challenges, and the Member opposite and I have had this conversation before. A lot of schools throughout this province are used more than just a school day, which is also a very good point. One of the counter-arguments to having

school zones 24-7, 365 is that it builds a level of complacency, because I'm going into that school zone on Sunday; I know there's no school. No different than going in a construction zone on Labour Day Monday and there's nobody there.

I absolutely think it's a conversation that's well worth having to weigh the pros and cons. I think if you talk to some of the safety people that I've talked to about this very matter, there are some concerns on the other side of building a complacency.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

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

On the issue of school zones, now that we're talking about them, I guess it could apply to any zone but I'm going to just talk about school zones in particular. As the Member alluded to, right now I know in the City of Mount Pearl and certainly in St. John's and a lot of jurisdictions, as was mentioned, you have these radar signs. I've come across them many times myself.

They do work in slowing you down, because you're driving up Ruth Avenue and you're trucking along there and all of a sudden the sign flashes, vroom, vroom, vroom and you're showing your speed. You're like, oh my goodness. I might be going five or six kilometres or whatever over the speed limit so your immediate reaction, of course, is to touch the brake and slow down. So it does work.

I'm just wondering, though, when we're talking about camera technology and we're talking about fines and so on associated to it, would the camera catch you – for lack of a better terminology – the minute you cross that school zone sign or would it be sort of partway through? Because if someone is going along, for argument's sake, and you're doing 50 down Waterford Bridge Road, is a good example – or is it Old Topsail Road – and there's a school down there just by the graveyard – I forget the name of it, or there was a school there.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** St. Mary's.

**MR. LANE:** St. Mary's, there you go.

You're driving along and then all of a sudden you're in a 30 zone. So it's the same thing. You're going along, you're doing 50, you hit the 30 zone and it's like, oh my God, and people will slow right down, but if that camera took their picture when they first hit that sign, they're going to say: boom, you got a ticket. If they were to capture you a couple of hundred metres up, all of a sudden your speed went right down and you're obeying the law and so on.

I'm just wondering how that kind of thing might work, if it's even been thought about or discussed.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, what the Member opposite is talking about is the operation of these cameras. Of course, with any type of technology there will be a request for proposals and there will be a sign up saying there is radar technology or camera technology in place. We will be notifying the individual that's coming into the zone, but I believe the Member opposite is saying there is a school zone and it goes then into a 30 zone. Am I correct? Is that what you're saying?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**MR. LANE:** What I'm asking, minister, it's kind of hard to describe, but what I'm getting at is you're going down Waterford Bridge Road, for argument's sake – I'll use that as an example – you're doing 50, okay? Right now, you're doing 50 and you hit the school zone, that's St. Mary's, and now it's 30, okay?

So, right now, if you're going down there, let's say, and they got one of those flashing signs and you say: Oh, my goodness, I'm in a school zone now. So you hit your brake and you slow down. Now you're basically 100 feet into it, you're recognizing it, you're obeying the law. You're slowing down and you're being safe. But if that camera had to have been at the very beginning, right from when it went from 50 to 30, they could nail everybody and not give them the benefit of the doubt. Look, let's move the camera in a couple of hundred metres to see if that person actually slowed down once they

realized where they were. Do you know what I'm saying?

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the hon. Member.

I do understand what he's saying, but if you think about going into a 50-kilometre zone or a construction zone, I'll use as an example, you're actually given a warning several hundred metres before, that you're going from an 80 to a 50.

I can tell you from the pilot project, to your point, we did position the equipment inside the construction zone. We didn't –

**MR. LANE:** (Inaudible.)

**MR. CROCKER:** Yeah, it wasn't on the border; it was well into or maybe a hundred metres or so into the construction zone. I get what you're saying, but again the reality is, if you're entering a school zone, there is a warning before you get to the school zone that you're getting so many metres before that school zone. We expect everybody to be at the speed limit the minute they enter that school zone.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**MR. LANE:** Thank you, Minister, and I do appreciate it.

I'm just asking these questions because I'm sort of thinking about the phone calls that I'm going to get and you're going to get and everyone else is going to get if this stuff gets implemented over time, where people are going to say: This was a total speed trap, it was a total cash grab and so on and there's no flexibility, whatever.

I'm not condoning doing 50 in a 30 or speeding through. I don't want to make it sound like I'm saying that's okay, because it's not. I'm just saying that there almost needs to be a little transition where it's recognized that someone says, okay, I'm slowing down and they are slowing down, that you don't nail them because they're going two kilometres over as they're slowing down or something. Different if you're

going from 90, now, to 30, but if you're at 50, you've got yourself down to 35 and then you say, okay, I'm in the zone; now you get down to 30 and there was a little transition of two or three kilometres as you kind of cross that line, that there would be some flexibility. That's all I'm saying.

**MR. CROCKER:** (Inaudible.)

**MR. LANE:** True enough, you got the 10 per cent allowance. That's a good point.

My final question relates to municipalities. Now, I asked the minister prior to this sitting of the House, and she did email me because one of the concerns I had – and she mentioned it again in the House. She said that this does not apply to municipalities per se, and I'm glad to hear that in a sense because one of the concerns, again, I would have if let's say the City of St. John's, I use as an example – we'll use City of Mount Pearl, I don't care. It don't matter. No, let's use Town of Paradise. I don't represent anyone over there. Let's use the Town of Paradise, right?

The Town of Paradise decides, you know what, we're going to stick up a camera on every single street in Paradise, and we're going to harass our citizens to death and so on and whatever, so that would be a concern. I'm not saying they would do that. I know Mayor Bobbett, a great guy, but I'm just saying. I just use it as an example. That would be a concern that I would have in this House: Are we opening up the floodgate for things to possibly get out of control?

The minister is saying, no, that's not the case. This can't be used, per se, by municipalities. I accept that. The question I have, if it's not being used by municipalities, as you say, then why is it that in subsection – if we look at 177.1(a) and it talks about, "An image capturing enforcement system may be used in accordance with the regulations for enforcing (a) subsections 106(10), (12), (14) and (16) ...."

Subsections 106(10), (12), (14) and (16), that's red light, left, green arrows and flashing red lights. If we're not talking of municipalities – and this is not meant for municipalities to start putting cameras everywhere – where on the Outer Ring Road, Veterans Memorial, Trans-Canada Highway, Burin Peninsula highway do

we have red lights and flashing green arrows that it applies to?

Maybe there is somewhere. I can't think of anywhere. By virtue of the fact that we're talking about red lights, green arrows, to how I see this, I can't think of too many provincial roads per se. Maybe there are some, but I can't think of any off the top of my head where this would even apply. This would almost seem like this is Topsail Road, Commonwealth Avenue and places where there are red lights and green arrows, not on the Trans-Canada or the Veterans Memorial. I'm just wondering about that.

**CHAIR:** The Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** First, I just want to go back to the red light question. While we know that municipalities do own the traffic lights, in actual fact these cameras can be used where there is a red light. As we move forward, like with the request for proposals, we could possibly look for technology where the camera comes on when the light turns red, that type of technology, but that would be outlined in the request for proposals. There can be an allowance to use this technology when the light turns red.

**MR. CROCKER:** (Inaudible.)

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** They didn't say that, no.

As it pertains to the municipalities question, if that's your last question I'll give you an amendment.

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

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Okay, I'll be serious.

In actual fact, when I started at the beginning I did note that I was going to put forward an amendment when we got to that specific clause. When we arrive at clause 6 and clause 7, I will put forward amendments to address the concern and the issue that you just brought forward in the House.

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

**CHAIR:** The Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**MR. LANE:** Minister, I thank you for that and I thank you for the amendment that you're going to bring forward. This wasn't something I raised prior to this and I'm not trying to all of a sudden just blindside you, I'm really not. I never even thought of it until I was just reading it. Again, it's like anything. That's why it's so important to have these debates and the importance of the details of legislation and to pick it apart, because you don't think of these things, sometimes. Sometimes it's on the fly.

So, again, I'm just trying to get my head around it and maybe I'm the only one who can't get my head around it. Maybe everyone is cool with this and understands and I don't. That's possible, too, quite possible.

Again, all I'm trying to say here, if I didn't make it clear the last time, is that by virtue of the fact that we're going to deal with red lights and left green arrows and flashing red lights, and if it's not applying to municipalities, which means it's applying to provincial highways only, and that the City of St. John's can't come in here now by virtue of this change and start putting cameras up – if that's the case, as you told me, they can't – well then, I'm wondering why we're dealing with red lights and green arrows, unless the province is planning at some point in time to start putting red lights and green arrows on provincial highways somewhere. It doesn't seem to add up for me somehow. I'm just trying to get some clarification on it.

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Member for the question.

I'll just give him an example, and it's in the district I represent. Route 70 going through Carbonear, for example, has traffic lights, but it's a provincial highway. So that would be an example. There are others throughout the province.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Gander.

**MR. CROCKER:** Yes, Gander would be another one where our provincially owned roads – Route 1 goes directly through.

So if you look at St. John's or Mount Pearl, we wouldn't have highway infrastructure. One that comes to mind would be Team Gushue, but obviously on Team Gushue we don't have traffic lights. But if there ever were, that option would be there on provincially owned roads that are within municipalities.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

**MR. BROWN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have just one question, really. Especially here when you're talking about the Schedule under 177.4(a) where it talks about obstructing a licence plate. Just one question with that is, being from a district that has a lot of ice and snow, you can sweep off your licence plate and 10 minutes later it's completely buried. The image capturing, obviously, would never capture a licence plate under that.

I'm just wondering: Would this be of a provision to put back front plates? Because I know normally they don't collect dirt and snow like a rear plate. I'm just wondering – or is there another option for this thing? Because if you had a traffic camera on the set of lights on the provincial highway in Lab West, you get a lot of blank plates, especially in the wintertime.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Mr. Chair, right now, the law is that you have to have your plate visible, your back plate. There has been no discussion about putting back front plates right now, but it's certainly something that I can discuss later with the hon. Member.

**CHAIR:** Seeing no other questions, shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** Clauses 2 through 5 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 to 5 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 5 carried.

**CLERK:** Clause 6.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Right now, I would like to enter an amendment in Committee of the Whole, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act, Bill 5, clause 6 of the bill is amended by deleting proposed section 177.1 and substituting the following: 177.1 An image-capturing enforcement system may be used in accordance with the regulations for enforcing (a) subsection 106(10), (12), (14) and (16); (b) subsection 110(3); (c) subsection 110.1(4); (d) subsection 110.2(4); and (e) subsection 137(1).

Mr. Chair, the amendment would remove the authority to make regulations prescribing sections of the act for which an imaging-capturing enforcement system may be used.

**CHAIR:** The amendment is heard. We are now going to recess to review the amendment.

### Recess

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

We have reviewed the proposed amendment, and the amendment is in order.

The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.



I'd also like to enter into the House an amendment –

**CHAIR:** No.

**MS. COADY:** Not yet. Do you want to speak to the bill?

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** No, I'm good.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

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

I just want to very quickly rise to support the amendment. I thank the minister for making the amendment. It's a great example of co-operation and actually taking into account the views of all Members.

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

**MR. LANE:** I think that's a great thing.

Obviously, without belabouring the point, the concern that I had at the beginning, which has now been resolved, was the fact that there was subsection (f), which was sort of a catch-all phrase, that said "... image capturing enforcement system may be used in accordance with the regulations for enforcing ... other sections of the Act prescribed in the regulations."

Basically, what would've happened had this amendment not have been made is that not only would camera technology apply to red lights, school zones, school buses, construction zones and speeding –

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

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

**MR. LANE:** – which is primarily what the focus is, but subsection (f) would have allowed any minister at any given time – not necessarily this minister, but any minister of any administration – the ability, totally on their own, without debate and discussion in the House of Assembly, to simply start adding other sections and other offences under the *Highway Traffic Act* to apply camera technology to.

That was the concern, that if we're going to start using technology, we have to consider all the implications, and if we're going to start adding other offences under the *Highway Traffic Act* for which camera technology would apply and should apply and could apply, then it needs to be debated here on the floor of the House of Assembly.

That was the concern. That was the objection. As I said, the minister has certainly taken that advice. She has acted. She's removed that section.

I'm now very happy to support this very important bill, which I will say, once again – I'll give credit where credit is due – when it comes to highway safety, the minister has done a really good job, I have to say, in bringing forth legislation to make our highways safer. Whether it be around speeding, impaired driving and a whole number of other things, fines and so on. Now, this piece of legislation, it's going to be another tool in the toolbox to help make our roadways safer for our children, very importantly, with school zones and buses, but also everybody.

We've seen too many people, too many lives lost on our highways, whether it be through impaired or whether it be through dangerous driving or outright negligence. This is going to help curb that. It's another thing we're doing to help curb that. I'm very proud to be part of it.

I thank the minister and I support the bill.

Thank you.

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

**CHAIR:** Seeing no other speakers, shall the amendment carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Opposed?

Carried.

On motion, amendment carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 6, with the amendment, carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Opposed?

Carried.

On motion, clause 6, as amended, carried.

**CLERK:** Clause 7.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 7 carry?

The Minister of Service NL.

**MS. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

At this point I would like to enter an amendment to clause 7.

Clause 7 of the bill is amended by deleting proposed paragraphs 186(1)(i.4) to (i.7) and substituting the following: (i.4) defining image-capturing enforcement systems; (i.5) prescribing information for the purposes of paragraphs 177.2(1)(b); (i.6) specifying a test or tests for ascertaining that an image-capturing enforcement system is in proper working order and when testing is required to be conducted.

Mr. Chair, again, this amendment would remove the authority to make regulations prescribing sections of the act for which an image-capturing enforcement system may be used.

**CHAIR:** This House will now recess again to review the amendment.

### Recess

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

We have reviewed the proposed amendment, and the amendment is in order.

Seeing no speakers, shall the amendment carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, amendment carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 7 carry with the amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 7, as amended, carried.

**CLERK:** Clause 8 and 9 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 8 and 9 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 8 and 9 carried.

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

**CHAIR:** Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

**CLERK:** An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act.

**CHAIR:** Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CLERK:** Shall I report the bill with amendments carried?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill with amendments, carried.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MS. COADY:** I move, Mr. Chair, that the Committee rise and report Bill 5.

**CHAIR:** All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

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

The hon. the Member for Lewisporte - Twillingate and the Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have carried Bill 5 with amendments.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have carried Bill 5 with amendments.

When shall the report be received?

**MS. COADY:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time.

**MS. COADY:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

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

**MS. COADY:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Service NL, that the amendments be now read a first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the amendments be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Against?

Carried.

**CLERK:** First reading of the amendments.

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

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

I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Service NL, that the amendments be now read a second time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

**CLERK:** Second reading of the amendments.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The amendments have now been read a second time.

On motion, amendments read a first and second time.

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

**MS. COADY:** Considering the hour of the day

—

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

**MS. COADY:** — I'm down to four or five minutes.

Considering the hour of the day, I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, that we now adjourn.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

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

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