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*Speaker: Honourable Scott Reid, MHA*

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(Night Sitting)

The House resumed at 6:15 p.m.

**MR. SPEAKER (Reid):** Is the Government House Leader ready?

Opposition House Leader ready?

Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I call from the Order Paper, Order 3, Concurrence Motion, the report of the Resource Committee.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The motion is that the report of the Resource Committee be concurred in.

The hon. the Member for St Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows.

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

It's a pleasure to speak to Concurrence on the Resource Committee. As Chair of the Committee, the Resource Committee debated the Estimates of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation; the Department of Industry, Energy and Technology; Immigration, Skills and Labour; and the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture.

I want to commend the Members of the Committee and all Members that served and asked questions, and ministers and their staff. It was certainly a very valuable experience. I think it's absolutely critical at this time, when we look at where we are in Newfoundland and Labrador we ensure that we make the best possible decisions moving forward with the resources that we would have. These departments reflect our resource that we would have in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I just want to touch on, under the Department of Industry, Energy and Technology, Mr. Speaker, one of the critical things that comes up in our province – and it was raised by the Member for Bonavista earlier as well – and that's the importance of investing in broadband and

cellular infrastructure. Telecommunications infrastructure is absolutely vital. Although it is not one that is of provincial responsibility – although the provincial government can be a partner and can support – it really is under the federal jurisdiction regulated by the CRTC. The CRTC does have a fund, of which they've been working with telecommunication providers, to accelerate and create investment for broadband services across the country. We look forward to seeing that investment here in our province.

When I first got to this Legislature in 2011 I know that there were more than a dozen communities in my own district that didn't have any access to broadband. The definition of broadband at the time was 1.5 megabits per second and now the goal is to have all communities at 50 megabits per second by 2030. We're shifting at a rate of which we need to go to be competitive in both rural and urban areas and to attract people across our province, whether they work remotely, and look at creating those opportunities.

One of the unique things that this government has done though, Mr. Speaker, is that we created a cellular service pilot program a couple of years ago where we had put forward up to \$1 million to see projects covered and cellular service expanded by partnering with community or non-profit groups, as well as the provider. The provincial government will put in 25 per cent.

I know the Member for Bay of Islands talked about how pleased he was to see investment going forward and that cellular service would happen in Lark Harbour and York Harbour. We've seen it in Lord's Cove, King's Point and on the Great Northern Peninsula in 17 communities, with towers going up in Raleigh and St. Lunaire-Griquet in my very own district; and across southeastern Labrador, from Red Bay in a UNESCO World Heritage Site, all the way up to Cartwright.

There were significant investments being made and those are going to unlock opportunity and potential for tourism, for small business and for educational opportunities. These are where investments need to be made. We need to be continuously working with providers, finding community solutions, collaborating with all levels of government because that's absolutely

vital. That came across and came up in the Estimates as well. So I'm pleased to see that this program is up and running. Certainly, I've been working with the Town of Conche because they see opportunity as well to see cellular service expanded on the Great Northern Peninsula.

Like any area, we certainly have opportunities and there are some gaps in areas as well. One region of which we've seen necessary – if you're going to develop industry, you also need to have good infrastructure. Transportation infrastructure is so critical. If you look at investment in our airports, in our port infrastructure as well as road infrastructure, it's absolutely vital. I'm pleased to see where there has been significant reinvestment in our road infrastructure on the Great Northern Peninsula in recent years. Thanks to my colleagues, the current and former ministers, for seeing and realizing that investing in roads make great sense. Having a multi-year Roads Plan is making all the difference.

The Town of Port au Choix saw a 58 per cent increase in visitation at the national Indigenous heritage site, that's Parks Canada run, for two years in a row. Thereafter this year the numbers are quite different, but the numbers are quite different, I think, everywhere when it comes to tourism. That's why government was swift to react with a Tourism and Hospitality Support Program. This year's budget also has \$30 million to support both non-profits and small business in a \$5-million and a \$25-million fund. Those details were released. These were discussions we would have had in the Estimates.

There's so much potential for our small businesses in every region, every nook and cranny of Newfoundland and Labrador which, over the course of being an MHA and a former minister, I've had the opportunity to visit all communities in our province. I have to say that some areas have tremendous amounts of mining, like in Labrador West or Baie Verte - Green Bay District, where I've had the ability to tour the mines and see the economic impacts. Now we see where Marathon Gold is looking to move forward in Central, in Grand Falls-Windsor. These are all positive messages and there's been lots of prospectivity happening in Newfoundland and Labrador. Continued investments there make great sense.

On the Great Northern Peninsula, although there isn't any active mining there has been increased prospectivity. We've seen where there has been copper, gold, zinc, lead and other precious metals. This is why it's really about balance. The Minister of Environment spoke briefly about the WERAC committee. I think it truly is about finding a balance when it comes to protecting and preserving land and for traditional uses. Also, I know on the Great Northern Peninsula there are a number of people that would like to see economic development such as mining taking place.

Whenever government makes a decision it needs to take into that balance as to the opinions and the information of people who reside in that region and look at the opportunities that exist. I do believe there are tremendous mining opportunities on the Great Northern Peninsula. Let's not act too swiftly without looking to pursue those opportunities.

One of the other areas of which we've seen some significant investment by government is in the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture. I'm so very pleased to see the Minister of Agriculture investing in community gardens. In my very own district, Port au Choix, St. Lunaire-Griquet, Port Saunders and Bartlett's Harbour, Englee, Roddickton, Main Brook, St. Anthony, we've all seen where there's interest in growing local, whether it's at a small scale, but there are opportunities to scale up.

Although my district doesn't have the farmland and the level of activity that some other regions of the province would have, I do see where farming can play a bigger role for employment as it did in the past under Dr. Grenfell when they had the Grenfell Gardens. So I say to the Member for Mount Pearl North, I hope we can only continue to see more farmers and more young farmers take place all throughout our province.

What I would say is that I know it was asked and raised many times in the Estimates around the fishery. We debated that Estimates for almost five hours. I will say the Great Northern Peninsula probably has the greatest reliance of any district on the fishery. We have a significant number of fish processing plants, whether it be in Anchor Point, Port au Choix, St. Anthony,

Conche, River of Ponds. We've seen where there have been multi-species, and there has been some discussion around the Royal Greenland deal where Clearwater had not operated the plant this year with SABRI, they weren't going to operate it into the future.

If there wasn't some approach taken, we could've seen permanently more than 100 people unemployed in this community. It has a state-of-the-art cold storage facility, an incredible asset. To see where we are today, if you go to CareerBeacon or you go to some other job advertising site, there are dozens and dozens of jobs being advertised for workers in St. Anthony. That's a very positive piece when you look at the impact it would have on a district in terms of where we are right now.

That plant had been struggling for the last three, four years where government had to provide support in terms of a fish plant worker support program so that workers could qualify for just 420 hours. This can breathe new life and new opportunity going forward. I see that as a positive measure. Unfortunately, with great loss of the Black Duck Cove plant which was devastated by a fire, I do hope the owners will build something back there that will create jobs and opportunity.

The Great Northern Peninsula has seen a significant increase in the amount of lobster and lobster catch. There is opportunity there in this region.

We have seen where government under a \$1.3 million Fisheries Fund has supported fishers in the region. I applaud the Minister of Fisheries for investing in the fishery on the Great Northern Peninsula because it is such a vital employer.

I want to also highlight forestry. I'm very pleased to say the Main Brook sawmill, which was operated by the Coates's family for decades, has new ownership. It's going to see reinvestment which will hopefully see more employees and longer employment, more sawlogs and more lumber being produced on the Great Northern Peninsula. Because that's something that we've only seen a downturn in the forest sector from 2007 onward. It's been gradual decline.

This is a glimmer of hope, and there's opportunity for other investment, whether it be a larger sawmill or other economic opportunities just like in Central Newfoundland and Labrador. It doesn't have to be one or the other. It's about finding opportunities and making investment in our province where it makes sense. The Hawke's Bay region would be a tremendous area which has a great fibre basket. We continue to work and look to attract investors in and around areas of our province where this investment can take place.

One area in the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation that I was very pleased to see is the \$1-million increase in arts funding to the Arts Council, because we have creative talents in every nook and cranny of Newfoundland and Labrador, very professional artists doing major tours, some of them going nationally, international. We need to continue to support the arts on any level that we can because it's who we are. It's about our culture and it's about significant job creation as well, but there are times when you need to support the creation of art for the ability to be creative and to create art. We must support that and support our youth and others.

The film and television industry is being heavily supported. I love turning on Citytv and watching Rex in its season and continuing to be filmed here in this province. It's something that, if you never get the opportunity, you should see what we have here, to go to NIFCO, to go and see the type of production that's actually taking place because it is phenomenal.

You can go to Bonavista and you can see the site of *Random Passage* and how it became a film set, or Joe's Place from *The Grand Seduction*. We basically have a little Hollywood of the north out there with Maudie's place and the Tea Room now, with Selby Mesh's store. I've had the privilege of touring all those sites again this summer.

There's a part of arts in the film and television industry that promotes our province but also promotes tourism. Things are very interrelated. It's very synergistic when we talk about tourism, small business or even investments in recreation and trails.

I've done, myself, about 300 trails, I believe, since COVID in our province. There are so many more to do. The investments, whether it's through the Department of Industry, Energy and Technology supporting it with ACOA or through Immigration, Skills and Labour through Job Creation Partnerships or other investments, we have incredible, natural trails.

I am just starting to experience the beauty of the East Coast Trail. To the Member of Cape St. Francis: I'm coming your way to see lots of beauty and natural landscape. That's another area that's also benefiting from cellular coverage as well, and I had the privilege of being out there with the Member opposite.

When it comes to skills and skill development, the budget has supported and continues to support our College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University and make investments to support technology. I was very pleased to see how our college system – prior to COVID, an announcement was made by government to see investment with our advanced care paramedicine, ACP, and to also see LPNs and PCAs. It was very forward-thinking with the Minister of Health and Community Services to work with CNA to see these programs rolling out throughout our province. These people are being trained now so that we have newly educated personal care attendants, practical nurses, these front-line workers that we certainly need. I was pleased to see that we had these programs added to St. Anthony and also Port Saunders on the Great Northern Peninsula. Quite a nice pilot project there.

The Association for New Canadians continues to do great work and partnership. We need to have the settlement services and the integration services in communities. St. Anthony has been welcoming communities for quite a long time. They've advertised a welcoming community coordinator with the Association for New Canadians – great partnership. Immigration will play a key role and Newfoundland and Labrador is such a welcoming place and an incredible place to work, live and raise a family. We must continue to promote expat Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to come here, but also encourage others.

We have significant skill gaps in certain areas. The Leader of the Third Party talked about that quite a bit in her questioning. I think we all need to look at where the opportunities are and have the best possible information forward when we do make decisions and invest in skill development so that we're training people for jobs that will exist or, in some cases, that we're training people for jobs that don't exist yet when it comes to the tech sector, because things are changing at a rapid pace.

That's what excites me a lot, that the new president of Memorial University, Dr. Timmons, and the new president, Liz Kidd, at CNA, they talk about micro-credentialing; they talk about accreditation agreements. They talk about lots of opportunities and partnerships that exist. If we work together we can see many positive things happen in and around our communities.

I see where Saint Anthony Basin Resources Incorporated, providing them with a former school building, which they took down. They took on that liability and now they're building 26 seniors' housing on site. They're not receiving money from government to build them. It's quite significant, the impact that it will have on the community of St. Anthony.

So if you were to look at the communities, the regions and you look at the particular departments that make up the Resource Committee, it's really important that we make investments in our resources and in these particular departments all throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. If we look at our natural resources, I think it was former Speaker Roger Fitzgerald that had written a piece talking about 95 per cent of the natural resources are outside of urban centres. They're in rural communities in rural communities, in rural regions. That's something that can't be missed.

In order to have a strong Newfoundland and Labrador, we need to have a strong urban and rural economy all throughout our province, and we can lift each other up. We can create and invest and build for a brighter future here in Newfoundland and Labrador. The onus is on all of us as parliamentarians, as Members of this House of Assembly. If we have ideas, if we have an ability we should be bringing them forward so that we can make a difference in our own

community throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

To me, it's been such a pleasure to chair the Resource Committee and to hear the commentary that was put forward and the line of questioning for the accountability purposes because that's very vital as well.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I realize my time is winding down. It's truly been an honour to have the ability and the privilege to serve as chair of this particular Committee. I previously held a section of each of those departments in some capacity. It's very near and dear to my heart.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

It's indeed a pleasure again tonight, to be here to represent the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis and the beautiful people in it.

I tell people, especially our new colleagues in our side of the caucus, that when you get into Estimates, it's probably where you learn the most about politics because you really do get into the nitty-gritty. You get to ask questions that answers come over from. I've been on both sides of this where we were in government and in our place. First of all I really want to thank all the people in our public service that come out and give the answers that we need. When we go to Estimates, they do a fantastic job.

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

**MR. K. PARSONS:** Again, I know the former Speaker, the Chair, we went five hours in ours but there was a lot of interesting things there. I know that for me, the fishery is a very, very important part of who we are as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I believe it's probably the one industry that will keep us here as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, but we have to make sure that we manage it properly

and we do the proper things so that the future is bright.

We've gone through the moratorium, where people looked at the fishery, as the old Newfoundland saying, she's gone b'y, she's gone. Well, she wasn't gone. People used other resources. They used what they knew, how to fish on the water to bring our fishery to where it is today.

Our fishery today is a billion-dollar industry. It's an industry that I know most people look at it and say it's rural Newfoundland, but I look at it as saying it's Newfoundland and Labrador; it's all sectors. There's a fishing industry here in St. John's. There are probably more fish landed in St. John's than any other port in this province. I know I was pretty familiar with it this year.

I became involved in the fishery myself. I always had great respect for fishers, harvesters, plant workers and processors because I know the type of work that it is. I grew up in a small fishing community where my dad was a fisherman, my grandfather was a fisherman and everyone around me were fisher people or harvesters, but it's an important industry and it's important that we do things right in the industry.

I had the opportunity this week, actually – or last Thursday – to ask some important questions on the fishery when it came to some deals that have been done in the industry. Those questions are not to say something is done wrong or we need to do this or blaming people for doing anything. My questions are to make sure that we all work together as the minister, as the department and as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to ensure that we get the most out of our natural resources. That's something we always do, no matter if it's mining or if it's offshore or the fishery. We have to be very mindful that we do things that are going to be in the best interest of our industry. It's a very, very important industry, like I said. It's over a billion-dollar industry.

On the way in this morning, Paddy Daly was on. Part of his preamble was about the fishery and that the demand for fish is going to increase in the next number of years. The demand for fish is going to increase into the future and we're going to need to be ready. I don't believe there are any stocks and there may be some that are not in

really high demand, but most of the demand we have, like crab, shrimp, cod, lobster and those fisheries, the demand is high now. I believe that we have to make sure that we do proper management of our resources. I mean, by proper management, we have to make sure that those resources are there for the future.

I know as the Fisheries critic now for the last number of years – I've been, I think, Fisheries critic ever since I was in Opposition back in 2015. I look at a couple of PMRs we did. We talked about joint management. Joint management means that gives us the say at the table. Because right now when we're dealing with quotas or we're dealing with anything off the wharf, it's basically the federal government that has the say on how our fishery is managed and who gets stocks, whether it's foreign vessels, or how it's marketed and things like this. It's very important, I think, that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have a say in that. That's why we talked about joint management.

The *Fisheries Act* was revitalized only probably a couple of years ago, and the biggest thing that was missing from that act was adjacency, which means that if I'm down in Green Bay and there's a stock off my shore, I should be the first to be able to avail of that stock. That's why it's important when you look on the West Coast and in the South Coast when we talk about turbot and different fisheries that our fishers, because they're adjacent to it, they have the first right. Not saying the only right but they should be given first preference to any stocks and allocation of stocks.

I don't care what side of the House you're on; I don't care what it is, but I believe that joint management should be a right of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, to be able to have a say in the management of our stocks. That's something everybody in this House, on both sides of the aisle, should be fighting for. I believe that we should all be fighting for adjacency, making sure that the people who are opposite those stocks are the ones that benefit most from it.

I had the opportunity this summer to travel around the Island a little bit and visit different communities. I had a great visit in Bonavista

with my colleague from Bonavista. We went down and met with a few harvesters. We also met with OCI's plant down in Bonavista, met with the manager down there. It was very interesting to learn, because as we know, through this pandemic, that when it comes to species like crab, there was a huge concern that our markets are going to be gone, because a lot of crab markets go to places like restaurants with buffets. That's probably one of the biggest markets. The next biggest markets were cruise ships.

Due to who we are as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, we produce a great product. The market changed to packaging our crab in smaller blocks so that it would go to the retail market. My understanding right now is that there was a huge concern that a lot of the crab stock would be put into cold storage because the markets weren't there to avail of it. Harvesters had the fear that, okay, if it goes into cold storage this year, then that means that there's going to be an abundance of crab next year; therefore, the price went from \$5.38 last year down to \$3.18. Then next year it's going to be even worse. But that wasn't the case. The retail market in the United States, in particular, took nearly all the crab that was available.

It was interesting to talk to people in Bonavista because they saw the need; they saw how things were going. To change your whole line, like if you're on a line in a crab plant, you got a job to do; everybody got a job to do on that line. Here it was they had to come in; they put all these screens up, had people spaced so far apart and everything else like this, and people adjusted to it.

There was great fear in plants all over this province: How are we going to do this in a responsible way? I applaud the processors. I think they did a fantastic job in ensuring the people that work in those plants were safe. We had a great crab fishery this year. Speaking to people in my area, landings were up way more than they were last year; and speaking to people in the processing industry, the markets were great and they were able to handle what came in. I think most areas of the province did very well when it came to crab.

Now, when I talk a little bit about shrimp – and I'll just talk because I know I'll go all day. Anyway, when talking about shrimp, the problem this year with the shrimp industry was there was a delay because of the dispute over pricing. This is where it comes into – and I spoke to the minister about this – my concerns or one of the concerns I have about a foreign-owned government owning a foreign company that's catching the same species we are. When we have a problem here, whether it's due to pricing, that people are not going harvesting, yet that country is out catching shrimp and using the same market, that's an issue I have. I don't know how you address it, I really don't. But it is a concern. I spoke to shrimp fishermen that had the same concern in the last number of weeks about this.

I look at our cod stocks. I'm a little bit worried about our cod stocks because to me cod is king. I would love to see us go back to the day that every wharf in this province has the activity of young people cutting tongues and people with the hustle and bustle as it was with the cod fishery. I don't think we'll ever see it again. But I think there needs to be more science done on cod and to ensure that we're doing the right things when it comes to quotas and how we're catching cod and whatnot.

I know that I met with some people from down in Baine Harbour down on the Burin Peninsula with my colleague and their concerns were like in 3Ps where the stock is both for the offshore and the inshore. The management of that stock had huge concerns for those people because what happened is they were allotted about 30,000 pounds, yet they weren't given the time because they had to catch the crab. They weren't given the time to get that stock and then it was cut off. There are some concerns there, but we need to do more science when it comes to our cod stocks because it's very important. Like I said, I hope someday I'll see that the cod will come back to half of where it was before '92.

I want to mention the sealing industry. I know that people in this province, a lot of times when you talk about the fishery, they don't associate sealing with the fishery. I have a great friend and I only met him through becoming the critic for Fisheries, a gentleman from La Scie, Mr. Keith Bath. If anybody in this House wants to know

anything about sealing in this province, it's the gentleman that you can call. I have a regular conversation with him and I know my colleague from his district, he also speaks to him on a regular basis. A great bit of knowledge, great to know what his thoughts are on the sealing industry.

I know it's difficult with the European market right now and down in the United States and stuff like that, but the sealing industry I still believe can be an industry that we can do a whole lot more in. We're looking at the Canadian government with humanitarian aid all around the world. There's nothing better than a piece of seal meat when it comes to protein or anything else. I believe that's something that we could be marketing. People are starving all over the world and you could give them a great food like seal. I think it's something we have to be looking at.

It plays a special part in my heart. I was at a function there last week and I got up and told a couple of stories. When I came down, this old fellow looked at me and said: You're almost like your father for telling stories. My father's greatest stories were about his trips to the seal hunt. It's who we are as a people that I'd like to see us come back to; I'd like to see the tradition come back. It will be a different hunt, there's no doubt about it, but I believe that if we can make smart decisions when it comes to seals and marketing and whatnot, it's something that can make us world renowned for doing great things, great things in humanitarian ways and everything else. Seal meat is fantastic. Seal meat is great.

Mr. Speaker, I know all Members in this House of Assembly have some concerns about the federal programs when it came to the fishery this year, in particular with EI claims and stuff like that. I spoke to the union a couple of times about this. It was promised that, especially in the crab, last year your EI would be based on your 2018-2019 T4. For example, if you didn't make enough money this year for a high claim for unemployment insurance, you could revert down to 2018-2019.

There are still a lot of questions. I'd ask the Minister of Fisheries to really look into that because harvesters in the province are still



asking questions about it. It's a program that came out, I'd say, probably May or June that people are very, very concerned about. I know right now most harvesters are getting claims on the EI that they used this year, not the ones they got in 2019, which they were promised. I think it's still within the federal government so I think that it's something that we should be helping our harvesters with and looking into and trying to get some answers for them.

When it comes to the fishery, I heard my colleague from Placentia West - Bellevue talk about the plant out in Arnold's Cove. I had the opportunity to go there also. It's a thing with me when it comes to the fishery just to talk a little bit about secondary processing. I believe that's where we have to be. I really believe, when it comes to the aquaculture industry and it comes to what we're doing, it's worth your while to go out and have a look and see what kind of plant is out there. It takes every part of that cod from the head, the skin and right through. There are machines out there, people working. The quality and the product that's coming out is second to none. I applaud Mr. Wareham and the people out there that are working. It's fantastic what they're doing.

Mr. Speaker, again, I had a little concern with the Royal Greenland deal and I expressed it to the minister. I'm not saying that's not a great deal or anything else. My problem is that I want to make sure that we do it right, that we do the due diligence that needs to be done to ensure that our harvesters and the people in our processing industry can be sure that their jobs are going to be stable. This may be a great company; maybe it's going to do great things for the province, but I'd like to see more reassurance that every bit of the product is landed here.

I know the minister will say if you know any controlling agreements come tell me about them, but I know the industry. I think that my main concern is that our quotas stay with Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and stay here on our shore. We have a natural resource. It's a natural resource that we have here, our fishery, and I think that we all have to work together to ensure that natural resources gets the best usage it can for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I know we had people here before the Europeans, but I would imagine that anyone that came to these shores, the fishing industry was the reason why they came here. I still believe it's the reason why we will all stay here in the future because it's a great natural resource. I think we have to do our absolute best to ensure it stays the resource that it is.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak a little bit more about different – I'm just going to touch on it, I haven't got much time. I'm just going to touch on a couple of areas of the Resource Committee. I want to touch a little bit on the land resources, because I did sit in on that also with my colleague from Exploits.

When I look at the forest industry – I recently got back last week from up in Millertown. I had 10 days up there, had a great moose hunting trip; got my moose. Got my moose, it was a great trip. We got two nice moose; I have to say it was a fantastic trip.

When you drive through Central Newfoundland and just see the availability of forestry in this province, it's amazing. Most of the wood that I saw going out – and I talked to a few harvesters in the area – is going for firewood, a little bit going for logs to be cut and stuff like that, but I still think it's a resource and I know it's a resource that we should be able to process a little bit more and bring jobs to Newfoundland and Labrador.

There were some questions asked in that about Crown Lands. I know as MHAs on both sides of this House, we all get questions when it comes to Crown land. I'm just wondering where we're to with a lot of it because I know that everyone I'm talking to when it comes to Crown Lands and issues with Crown Lands, it seems like there's a long wait and people are waiting for years to get the land. I think it's something that we should be pushing a little bit faster, ensuring that people – if availability of land comes, they should be able to get the land rather than wait for years.

I'm going to touch a little bit now – because I'm getting down there – on tourism. I had the opportunity last week to speak to a couple of outfitters up in the Millertown area. That is an industry – people don't realize what they bring

to this province. When you're talking tourism and the outfitters, you have the opportunity to be up on a hunt and run into some Americans that are here and they just tell you what a beautiful land you have. I spoke to a guy a couple of years ago, he told me that he's hunted all over the world and the most beautiful place he's ever hunted was Newfoundland and Labrador and really enjoyed the hunt here.

Those are people that are needing our help and needing our support. That's where some of our money should be going, to help those people out. They are small businesses; they employ a lot of people in Newfoundland and Labrador. Again, I try to always support local. I think that if you get an opportunity and you want to use an outfitter and you're local, go call up a local. It will be unbelievable what you'll get from that resource.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my time is up.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation.

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

I'm very happy that I'm going to get the opportunity to speak to the Resource Committee and the great work that was done during that Committee. I'm just going to take a couple minutes now of my time here to address that.

First of all, I'd like to thank the Committee Members for being here throughout the whole process and asking the very thought-provoking questions, probing questions to make sure we went line by line through the Estimates for Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation, which was a new department that was created in August. We're quite happy that we got the opportunity to go through that.

I'd like to thank the Chair for his excellent work in the Chair, quite literally, for the Resource Committee. Also, I'd be remiss if I didn't say thank you to the great work he did in this department, the Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation file. I know Recreation wasn't in his portfolio at the time when he was here, but I

know he did a great job. I'd like to say thank you to him for that.

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

**MR. DAVIS:** The hon. Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows talked about broadband and cellular coverage. I think it's an important piece to highlight because it transcends all districts, all industries, all departments in government that we really have to have a whole-of-government approach. It's not just here in Newfoundland and Labrador where broadband and cellular coverage is really, really important; it's right across the country.

I know that the federal government has put an initiative on to ensure that every part of the country of Canada – the entire, vast country of Canada – has a 50-10 level, which is really, really important. When we get to that level in this province – and I think we will get there – I know that the business development and the business growth potential that will exist all over our Island and in the Big Land that would come from solid broadband and cellular communications. The tourism potential in each of our areas of our province would be significant.

Not only to mention those, which are really important in and of itself, but the health and safety side, which is one of the important pieces that the Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows talked about with York Harbour and Lark Harbour with the investments.

I had the pleasure in that department to go down and meet with the councils down there and with the MHA to discuss how important that initiative was. I'm glad they are starting to put the infrastructure in place, albeit a little late. I'm very happy they're putting it in place for safety, which is one of the big aspects that the town councils I met with down there with the MHA were talking about. Outside the business development which is great, the tourism potential which is great and the economic development, that's awesome, but the health and safety is really important. That was a key point they talked about with respect to that.

It's also nice that I follow up on the colleague from the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis,

who talked about the fishery and the important aspect the fishery has for our future in our province. All of that is very much true. I'm so happy that he's so focused on the fishery, which is great, because I know our government on this side is as well. In my previous position with the industry and innovation side, there's an opportunity for the fishery to use that technology and innovation to grow and make the products that much higher value secondary processing, but also make it easier for those fishers that are participating in that industry. I know the minister responsible for that is working very closely on that. I thank him for his great work on that. That investment is what's going to help drive those industries to the next level and make us much more sustainable longer term.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to jump in to a couple of things within the department. I know a couple of the questions that were asked in the Estimates process were regarding the budget of 2020, of course, and some about our overarching policy within the department. I'll try to address some of those throughout the discussion here today.

In *Budget 2020* we talked about the expansion to the Tourism and Hospitality Support Program, which was a very good, well-received program for the industry. In some cases, people in the industry, on the tourism and hospitality side, applied for and received funding in less than 48 hours. I know that wasn't always the case but I know we pride ourselves on trying to get that money out the door as quick as we possibly could and be as far reaching as we could with that money to hit those operators and hospitality supporters that needed it right away.

One of the things we wanted to do with *Budget 2020* was expand that program to include professional artists and musicians who were impacted by COVID-19 as well, which was, we thought, a very good use of that resource, based on the fact that they play a very large and vital role in the cultural fabric of our province. The artistic creation that they give is top notch. Some of our country's finest artists, writers and performers are right here in this province. We have to value their worth and their value to the tourism product and the hospitality product, why people come to Newfoundland and Labrador.

We know that the pandemic has hit them directly and the cultural community pretty hard. That is why we wanted to expand the THSP program, or the Tourism and Hospitality Support Program, Mr. Speaker, to include those professional artists and musicians so that they could access that program. I know that in the next little while those programs will be released. We'll do some press coverage on that to make sure everyone is aware of that and encourage those professional musicians and artists to apply and get that money out as quick as we possibly can.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows stole a little bit of my thunder in his preamble, talking about the \$1 million additional investment in ArtsNL which is bringing that provincial investment to almost \$4 million – \$3.9 million. I think that's an important investment for what our artists are doing in the community. I look forward to seeing how that growth and development will occur, not just here in the capital city and this region, but across our entire province.

I know that from visiting all of our province, like the Member for Cape St. Francis highlighted that he had the opportunity to go to some parts of the province, as did I and as many of my colleagues did over the summer to ensure that we got to see some of our province. Either for the first time, like Sandbanks Provincial Park for me, or re-loving our province for the 10th time. If you had a spot that you went to as a kid or as child and you wanted to go back and see that again, it was a perfect opportunity to see that.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we also included \$4 million in support for film and television productions and \$3.45 million for cultural economic development programs. Those are very important – if I speak to the film for one second, how important that is. Currently, in this province we have two prime-time television shows being shot simultaneously for the first time in our history. I'd encourage anyone, my colleagues on both sides of the House, to get the opportunity to visit.

If you see a bunch of big trucks lying on the side of the road somewhere, that's probably where they're shooting. Just take a second, slow down

and stop and look at the number of employees, the number of people that are being employed, to provide that amount of product to the marketplace. It's hard to believe that a show like *Hudson & Rex* or *The Surrealtor* would be employing a couple of hundred people on each set every day. Hard to believe that's how many people are behind each and every one of those 30-minute, or 40-minute or 50-minute shows that are appearing on our prime-time television networks. It's amazing until you see it in real life.

These are not low-paying jobs; these are high-paying jobs, highly skilled labour. We've developed that industry here in this province. It started with the *Republic of Doyle* and others before that, and started to build it little by little, making sure we had the background of the employees and giving them the skill sets so we didn't have to bring them in from different parts of the country or parts of the world, we were able to develop that resource in this province.

One of the big things I want to focus on is seeing if we can grow that industry to make it our next megaproject in this province. We have lots of beautiful scenery, as every one of my colleagues in this House of Assembly can attest to. Each and every district is slightly different; it's different beauty and it's absolutely fantastic to see. The people in the world are starved to see what we have and take for granted, in some cases. So getting that to be seen on a national stage is important.

I've had the ability to tour those sets. I sign autographs on Thursday afternoons for the cameo that I made in *Hudson & Rex*, as well as the minister of Justice at the time back in the day. I know from my standpoint it's an amazing feat to see how many people are employed and what they're doing within this province and how it showcases Newfoundland and Labrador to the rest of the world. In the *Hudson & Rex* case, it is international markets – Germany, Australia and others – that are looking at that show each and every time it comes on every week and looking at Newfoundland and Labrador in a different lens. We think that's going to help drive our tourism product even further. Those investments that we make in film development, movies and documentaries are investing in our people in this province.

I thank the hon. Members for asking questions about that during our Resource Committee meetings and the Estimates process. I encourage them to support the industries each and every day when we stand up in this House of Assembly, and encourage the investments that we can make in those industries to help them grow. It's not government that's growing the industry there. Government is aiding and helping, but it's the industry executives and the industry skilled labour that's there that's driving that initiative. I can talk all day about the film and development side, but it's an interesting piece that we're starting to grow in our province and a lot of opportunity based on where we've been as a province.

I'd also like to talk about tourism in general. The tourism industry has been impacted quite heavily by COVID-19, as many industries in our province have been, and not just in our province, but globally. Each and every day the tourism industry has been hurt, and the hospitality industry. Anything we can do to support those industries, we will try to do. We take the opportunity to encourage businesses to apply for the Tourism and Hospitality Support Program that we have out there and any of the small business programs that we've just recently announced in this budget as well.

We're consistently working as a government – I know I am and I know my colleagues are – with the ministers federally to extend those programs, to ensure that the employees that are impacted by these industries and COVID-19 are supported to the best of our abilities, not just in the short term, in the longer term. I think we're going to need that approach. I think some of my colleagues on both sides of the House have talked about the long-term aspect of COVID-19 has had on the economy here in the province. It's going to take a little bit of time to get over it because it has been impacted quite heavily.

One of the things we do in the department is the tourism marketing arm of the department. One of the things that everyone would know – and I know my colleague from St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows would know – how the award-winning tourism ads that have been developed through our department and our partners and the impact they've made right across the globe in encouraging people to come to this province.

We have to be ready. When the borders open and when the public health requirements are lifted and eased, we have to be ready to come at those marketing aspects to ensure that we don't lose our place in people's mind – top of mind.

Newfoundland and Labrador is not a location that you decide on a Thursday that you're going to hop on the plane or hop in the car to come to for the weekend; it's a bucket-list destination that a lot of people have on their bucket list. It's not cheap to get here. It's expensive and it's well planned. The average stay here, as the people in the industry have told me, is between 10 and 12 days, which is longer than any other jurisdiction in Canada. Those are some things that we have to make sure we maintain.

I know each and every district in our province, all 40 of us in this House of Assembly, see the benefits of tourism. I don't have to look any further than the Member for Bonavista, who has a great product going down on the Bonavista Peninsula. It's a fantastic area for tourism. I know that's an area that a lot of other parts of the province are trying to emulate to ensure that we get our fair share of tourists that are going to come to those places as well.

I can't be remiss and stop at Bonavista, because I knew that would be the case if I started naming one, I'd have to name them all. There are so many: Twillingate behind me here. The Southern Shore, Labrador, all of these places, the Great Northern Peninsula, all of these places have their own little niche and there is something for everybody to do in all of these locations. Whether it be checking out the history of flight in Gander or whether it's checking out

—  
**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible.)

**MR. DAVIS:** Admiralty House, yes, for sure.

We all could stand up and talk during this Resource Committee about the benefits in each of our districts. I think it's really important to say that each and every one of us have a huge amount of impact that tourism brings to it. Tourism employs some 20,000 people. It also has some 2,700 businesses that operate in Newfoundland and Labrador.

In addition to that, in 2019, it was a \$1.14 billion industry. I have a goal, and I know our government has a goal, to make sure we grow that, not just to \$1.2 billion but to \$2 billion and \$3 billion and so on and so forth. We have the skilled operators in the province to do that. The tourism industry itself has come a long way in the last decade of satisfying the needs of what the tourist wants. When they come here you want to make sure the tourist's requests and what they're looking to achieve is what's being delivered. You want the promise to meet the brand.

From our standpoint, we've done a lot of work with our operators and they're the skill in this area, that's the tourism department, not me and not our people in the tourism department, it's actually the tourist operators that are out across our Island.

I'd be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to also talk about Recreation and Sport. It's a new add-in to my department but it plays a huge role in the health and well-being of our population and it goes right across our province, in each and every district as well.

This year, we've invested more than \$6.4 million in a variety of programs that will support athletic development, sports development as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles and people of all ages. You don't have to look any further than the 2025 Canada Summer Games. I look to my colleague from Harbour Grace - Port de Grave who's chairing our government's response to that and working closely with the big committee on the 2025 Canada Summer Games, which is expected to bring somewhere in the vicinity of 20,000 visitors to this province in 2025 with a huge economic activity of about \$110 million.

These are huge numbers. It's big for our province and it's big for – and not only are they going to come for the Canada Summer Games, they're going to come and they're going to stay a little longer. They're going to come a little earlier and they're going to spend some of that hard-earned money that they make in other parts of the country in this province. It's also about 550 jobs that'll be created by this.

Outside all of that, we look at the key aspects of Canada Summer Games, is the legacy that it leaves behind. We don't need to look any further than in the '77 games, which was before I was born, but Minister Crocker was old hand there at that when it was on the go. In the '77 Summer Games, the legacy piece that was left behind was – the huge legacy piece was several assets that are still around today. I don't have to look any further than the Aquarena. The amount of impact that has made on the people and the well-being of health and mental health in this province has been amazing.

I look forward to what's going to happen when we bring those investments forward. I look forward to the City of St. John's becoming successful in their bid process. I know they're working through it. As a St. John's MHA, along with my colleagues from St. John's here, I'm sure we're looking for it to be a massive success. In unfettered Newfoundland and Labrador patriotism, hopefully, we'll be able to bring home significant medals and do some real good work there. That only happens with us pushing, collectively, as a group in the House of Assembly to try to support our athletes in any way we can. Whether that means the bake sales that they're going to have or making sure they get to go to the high-level competitions that are important.

Many of us around this House of Assembly have been involved in athletics at a high level. Not so much me, but there are some other people in this House that have been. I've been involved from a coaching standpoint. It's a real important piece that we can all be involved in.

As these games get closer – and I know the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave is going to speak a little bit more about this, I'm sure, when we get to that point when the bid is awarded – I think it's going to make a big impact on this province. I look forward to what we're going to be able to do together as a group of well-meaning individuals to bring this to the forefront.

Mr. Speaker, I know my time is expired. Thank you very much, and I look forward to further debate.

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

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

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

It was great to be a part of Estimates again this year. Actually, it's my second time, so it was great to be a part of it, along with my colleague from Cape St. Francis. We did spend five hours there. Probably that's why we spent the five hours there; it was because of the Member for Cape St. Francis. It was great to be there. I appreciate the minister for bringing in the public sector to help us out with the Estimates and answer the questions.

I'll start breaking down some of the things that the Chair of the Resource Committee, the Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows – just start breaking them down as he mentioned them. He mentioned forestry. Forestry, certainly, in our area was a big contender and still is, of course. It's been known as the fibre basket. Abitibi, of course, was there for years, since 1905. Now, forestry has just been taken basically from the Central area, from our resources, and it's going to the West Coast; it's going to the Bonavista Peninsula; it's going to Twillingate area, that area.

Again, I'm not knocking that, Mr. Speaker, because it's certainly creating employment for all areas of Newfoundland. We all want to see Newfoundland survive and we all want to see jobs and create employment for all parts of Newfoundland. If that means forest product from that area being used in other areas, that's fine. It's like the fishing down in Bonavista or wherever: You have one enterprise mixing with the community people in there. We all have to work together to make things work and make things happen.

The problem with our area – and I'm sure the minister does realize this – is that when the product is going to the West Coast, when the product is going down to Bonavista or whether the product is going down to Twillingate area, Summerford, you have general contractors in the area that are seeing this happening and they're saying: Why can't we get more of this product? Why can't there be something used, basically, in the Central area as a secondary processing unit,

something that can be used there to create more employment in our area?

That's what people see. When they see the trucks leaving our area, going out over the highway with timbers and logs being used in other areas, it creates a bit of frustration. I'd like to see more happening with that in our area, Mr. Speaker. We could use the employment in our area as well. There are things we can look at.

I know the minister in Estimates did say there's a pellet plant going to Summerford. That's taking some of the fibre products out of Central to go down there so they can make the pellets to create fuel for a couple of government buildings, which is great. You're creating a bit more employment down that way. Then I have local commercial harvest cutters that are being turned down for permits. That creates another animosity, that sort of stuff, amongst the forest industry because you have permits that are being taken away from contractors.

I had one call me only two weeks ago. He did have a permit for that area, only to find out two months later that they've taken the permit away from him. They find it hard to understand. I know with the 280,000 cubic metres – the permits that were released from Abitibi, all those permits are gone. Two hundred cubic metres is gone. They're gone to the outside area; they're not being used in Central.

General contractors are not getting the chance to avail of permits, permit areas, to get the allowable cuts that they need in their area. I have them from Millertown right on down to Botwood, Peterview, in our area, that's being rejected in regard to permits, when you're seeing truckloads of timber, truckloads of logs being driven out over the highway and it causes a lot of animosity. That's something we can hopefully work to create more employment in our area in regard to the forestry sector and keep things in the Central area, or diversify some way to keep everybody happy, so many permits of each kind. We need to be able to work with that industry in the Central area to create more employment and I'm sure we can, Minister.

I'll jump to farming. Farming is another big industry, certainly, of the Exploits District. During COVID, of course, food self-sufficiency

became a big priority. It was a job of wondering if we were going to get enough food to the Island. That was earlier the spring when we didn't have our crops growing, when we didn't have much food availability, wondering if we were going to have enough food to get us through the summer. Of course, then our farmers came on stream, our crops started growing and then they had a great year regarding the crops. There's more we can do in that area in regard to farming.

The Wooddale area, of course, is a big area for the farmers in the Central region. With that being said, I know the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation mentioned the need for cell service and that stuff. For the farmers in Wooddale, they need the Internet. They need cell service. They need to be able to have coverage just to be able to do business, Mr. Speaker, so that they could avail of products, avail of new initiatives; new ways of doing things, new areas they can tap into; ways they can sell, the ways that they could market their products. All that is done through the Internet and things today and it would be a great tool for those people to use. I'm sure the Internet in that area would be a big help to the farmers.

Not only that, there are dairy farmers. We've mentioned the vegetable farms. We have slaughterhouses. I did have a meeting with the minister this morning. I appreciate the meeting with the minister this morning to take a farmer in. We discussed some of his issues with regard to a farm that he has, the animal farm. With some help there for our farmers in Central, maybe we can make this work a little bit better. Take some worry off the farmers, help them out a little bit more and keep them employed so they can employ other people as well.

Farmers are a big asset to our communities. They keep us fed, they keep us employed, they keep others employed and they're hard workers, Mr. Speaker. They're probably one of the hardest workers in our province, and the fishermen, of course. They're up from daylight to dark. They work seven days a week when they're getting ready for what they do.

With a little bit more help, again, Wooddale – I've heard irrigation seems to be a little bit more of a problem in the dry seasons because their

water availability is not all that great. They utilize as much as they can. It's another way that we could help out the farmers in the Central area. When farmers are away, when they're hearing announcements on the West Coast with regard to farmers over that way and new buildings and new farms being used over there, a little bit more in the Central area would be appreciated as well so that we could work with the farmers and keep everything working fine and everybody being employed. That's another area we could tap into.

Another area that was mentioned by the Chair was the Crown lands. Crown lands, of course, are another big issue, and my colleague from Cape St. Francis just mentioned it. Crown lands are certainly a big issue. I get calls from all over the province in regard to Crown lands, as far as applications taking too long being approved. From what I've seen, some applications have been there four or five years and still not approved. It is a bit long. The problem with it, of course, there are too many departments, not that it's not needed.

There are a lot of departments involved before it gets the actual approval of Crown Lands: You have to go through Water Resources; you have to go through Service NL and you have to go through the Department of Transportation, all of those, and there's a list of them. By the time each one gets back – I think they might have a 30-day time limit for each one to get back, but I don't know what happens in that 30 days because that 30 days certainly turns into two and three years some fast.

It's something that has to be looked at there to get those Crown land applications moving a bit faster, Mr. Speaker, so that it can create more employment. Crown land areas, they want to build cabins; they want to build houses. There's probably other construction they want to do, and that also creates employment. That keeps the economy moving, keeps the hardware stores going. People want to get that going. Approvals of faster Crown lands, Mr. Speaker, would be a big asset to Newfoundland as well, and especially the Central area and the Exploits area. I've heard a lot of people with a lot of complaints in regard to Crown lands.

Another one mentioned, Mr. Speaker, is tourism. I know tourism and outfitters probably sort of go hand in glove. The outfitters this year certainly have had one of the worst seasons they've ever had. That was due to COVID, of course. We all know that. This year, there are no hunters coming in from the States or other parts of Canada. They can't get in here. That was big employment. A lot of money was coming into the outfitters, to the guides, to the people that use it, to the grocery stores, that sort of stuff, who make a spinoff from the outfitters. That's an area that needs to be taken serious.

I'm getting a lot of calls from outfitters; they want to be helped in some sort of way; maybe not even this season. Maybe they can afford to keep themselves for this season, but next year probably where they lost all their licences. I know each outfitter probably has 25 to 30 licences, something in that area. Maybe instead of not having any licence this year, maybe they can increase the licence for next year.

If they had 25 or 30 or 20, whatever the numbers are, instead of going with 25 that they had this year, maybe they can step theirs up to another extra 10 or 15 licences for next year so they can have a chance to get back some of the costs they've lost. That's something that can be probably looked at. We're all feeling for the outfitters. I'm sure the minister has had calls on this side as well, but that's something we can look at. We have to look at rebounding our economy with the outfitters and that's probably a way to look at it.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, the minerals, of course. This year, yes, we've had a good report from our mineral resources. Marathon Gold, of course, is moving in the Central region and that's great to hear, it really is. It's going to create a lot of employment for our area. We've heard up to 200 workers, that sort of thing, and that is great news.

If we could get our Crown lands going in that area, get our minerals going, get our forestry product going, I think Central Newfoundland would be in a very, very viable position on keeping itself sustainable and maybe even getting more people coming to this area and making a living here and staying here, Mr.



Speaker, because it is a beautiful area to live. It's a great area to be.

Again, on tourism, we have one of the best salmon fishing rivers that's on the Island, Mr. Speaker. We can certainly avail of that to keep people on our Island. There are a lot of things that could happen.

We have to get our minerals and our resources all tapped in the one time. If we could do that, Mr. Speaker, I know this would benefit the Central area of the province because that's where we have our forestry. That's where we have our minerals. I'm not saying the rest of the province doesn't have it either, of course they do, but it seems like there's a lot of it combined in the Central area. There's forestry, minerals, farming, outfitters, which is the animals and the moose.

We have a lot of resources to tap into, it's just if we can utilize it all at the one time – so much at a time, not all at one time, but utilize so many pieces of it at a time, that way we can create a lot of employment for the Central area, for the Exploits District especially. That's my area. That's my district that I'm concerned about, but it's all a big region. It all goes around a big region. If we could do that, Mr. Speaker, and tap into all those at the one time, it would be a great benefit to Central Newfoundland, a great benefit to Exploits and a great benefit to Newfoundland as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, I'm just going to speak a little bit about my district, seeing I have the opportunity. I sat here last week in regard to roads in the district. To have all this, certainly, we need good roads in that area. I sat here during Question Period and I heard the minister slap his hand on the table to say there's not a district in the province that hasn't had roadwork this year.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm the one that must have gotten left out because I didn't have a bit of roadwork. I can correct the minister on that one. I'd like to see roadwork done in our area. I've already talked to the previous minister of Transportation, so that department already has our issues that we have, and I said that to the minister. I'm open to having another chat with the minister on that.

Health issues; again, Mr. Speaker, I can't help but not acknowledge it. The 24-hour service in the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Care Centre, the lab services in Grand Falls-Windsor. I can listen to the Minister of Health, the Member for Gander, talk about the testing that's going to Gander and money going in to rebuilding the academy. He has a 30-bed long-term care unit in Gander as well. We have one, yes, 20 beds in Botwood, but he has a 30 beds as well in Gander. With that, he has a \$4.5-million project announced for a sports complex in Gander. It's great for the Member for Gander, actually. I wish I could say the same thing for Exploits.

With regard to the Estimates Committee, Mr. Speaker, it was great to be a part of the forestry and Crown lands and speak on that. Maybe myself and the minister can have some conversations concerning that and hopefully come up with some ideas. We can probably take a ride around the Central area. I know he's familiar with it. He just takes the turnoff just before he gets there, that's all, so he doesn't have to cross the Bond Bridge to get there. He's more than welcome any time at all. I would certainly take him around. We can have a visit to the communities and we can take a look around and see what's happening in the district and tap into some of those resources and see what we can get going to help the industry and help our Central area to develop into a thriving area that it used to be. It seems to be an aging population. We would like to bring in some youth; we would like to bring in some younger families to stay in our area, to help us grow our area and to develop our area.

With that, Mr. Speaker, my time is just about done. I'll say it's just been great to have been a part of Estimates and I look forward to having another chat on the district issues at another time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Like I said, it's a privilege to sit in this House on behalf of the wonderful people of Labrador West. It's a very unique district. Like I like to say, we're as west as you could possibly get in this province. I don't have any saltwater in my district, but we do like to play in the dirt and that's what we do really well in Labrador West. We like to make big holes. I have the last remaining train in this province as well, so if anyone is looking for that train tourism, you can head up my way.

I got to sit on the Resource Committee and go through Estimates there on that. I want to thank everybody that participated in that. It's a great experience. I know last time I wasn't quite sworn in through all the Estimates, so this time I got the full experience. I want to thank my Committee Members and that for that. It was a great few evenings, I have to say, even though some of them went long. It is quite a learning experience and you do get a deep dive into each department and that. It's a good, new perspective and I recommend it to anybody.

I want to say, like I said, if I didn't talk about mining first. I came out of the mining industry myself. I grew up in the mining industry and I have a long history in Labrador West with the mining industry. Both my grandfathers went up to Labrador West in the '50s. It was a different time then. Everyone was looking for work. We just joined Confederation.

My grandfather Ricketts, he went to work up in the railway in the '50s to build the initial railway that went right up to Schefferville. He always used to joke that everyone would take a break but he'd go fishing because he was taking advantage of being up in Labrador at the time, so he'd go trout. He said he ate well while he was up there and he ate a lot of trout. My other grandfather, my grandfather Brown, went up in '59 and he was one of the first crews in, at the time, the Carol Lake project.

We have a long history of mining in Labrador West. Like I said, myself and I know some of my other hon colleagues like to see who is the mining capital of this province. But you know what? We all have our great attributes and we've all contributed to this province in mining and that's the thing, too: People don't realize we

have a long-standing history of mining in this province.

There are some copper mines that are so many years old. If you want to go right on back –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Tilt Cove.

**MR. BROWN:** Tilt Cove, yes, that's right. Tilt Cove is one. But if you want to go really far back, there's a Ramah Chert quarry that's ancient. Indigenous people of this province were mining at one time.

This is a thing that this province has is a lot of rich resources in this province. The first inhabitants of this province were actually mining. Ramah Chert is found in Ramah, Labrador, but evidence of it has been found right throughout North America. We, as a province, and even before we were actually a province, mining is a part of the aspect of human nature and we want to continue to develop this industry. There's so much great potential in this province when it comes to mining.

For a person who came out of the mining industry, it's actually quite exciting that we have the potential. We know that a lot of these resources are in this province and there are markets for all of it. There are markets for all of this potential, like an old school teacher used to tell me: Put your thinking hats on, and we can come round and we can actually find solutions find markets and find ways to markets these minerals. We can do it in a sustainable way with minimal impacts on the environment.

The other great aspect of this province that we have is our technology sector. There's a lot of potential there in different types of technologies, the exploration of mining techniques that are a limited impact on the environment. There are people in this province that are looking at this, researching this. We have some bright minds in this province. Just down the street from this House of Assembly are some very bright minds of this province, just there at Memorial University. We have the potential. We have the industries. We have it all here.

We can segue that into the other industries of this province, other historic industries of this province. If you look at the fishery, forestry,

these are natural renewable resources. Mining at one time, once the mineral is out of the ground you can't put it back there; it won't grow back. But when it comes to the fishery, forestry and farming, these resources are renewable resources. They have the ability to renew, but we have to make sure that we put everything in place and do our research and our homework, when it comes to this, to make sure that they do renew.

There's a bright future in forestry; there's a bright future in the fishery; there's a bright future in farming in this province. All these industries have potential. They all have a bright future ahead. These are industries that potentially could last a lifetime. We just need to make sure that we do it in a sustainable way, make sure that we have the best in technology and research going into it to make sure that we leave something for the next generation and an industry for the next generation.

My family went into the mining industry and the forestry industry. I don't have much family when it comes to the fishery industry, so I don't, unfortunately, have the insight that some other people do, but the people I do talk to say there's a bright future ahead for all these industries. It's just that we need to put our thinking caps on and realize the potential of what we have.

We live in a very beautiful province. We're very lucky to live in this province because we have so much potential surrounding us; we have very bright minds. Even having Memorial University in our back pocket is a blessing to us because they do some amazing work. They punch well above their weight. It's internationally recognized. They have a wonderful group of people and teams down there that are doing research; they're looking at new ways.

They all have this perspective because there are only half a million of us; we almost know everybody. I'm sure you can walk into a room and find out you're related to somebody in this province. This university has the perspective of talking to more people and getting that first-hand knowledge. That's why we're so fortunate where we are.

We're ready to face the future as a province. We've come through some challenges as a

people and I'm sure we can get through this. There's no doubt about it. We just need to make sure that we all work collaboratively and we work together for the best interests of all these things.

My hon. colleague here talked about tourism. I'm a big fan of the tourism industry. I sat on a few boards in my previous life because I see the tourism potential of my own District of Labrador West. It's not historic like beautiful Bonavista or Twillingate but it's a different type of tourism, it is adventure tourism. There's a whole industry out there, there's a whole group of people out there that want to just see natural, pristine beauty. They just want to step out of their vehicle and see nature as it was left, the way it was just made.

That's the beauty thing we have here in Labrador. We have a substantial amount of beauty and natural beauty left. A lot of places in the world don't have that blessing but we do. The opportunities and tourism in Labrador are phenomenal. It's a whole different world and it's untouched, but it's also an untapped market. With the right investment and the right people in the right places, it's something that we can develop. It's a tourism package that we can develop to market to the right group of people who are looking forward.

It gives us another ace because it expands our market; we have more potential to market ourselves to a broader audience. That way, no matter who we're sending the message to, it appeals to a lot of different people. That leaves us more room to grow as an industry. That's what people want. They want a mixture. They don't want one or the other; they want a mixture of things to do. So that's where we are.

When the Trans-Labrador gets fully paved, that's going to be a game changer for us for sure. Also, if we can convince our Quebec counterparts to finish paving their end of the highway, then it'll be even more so of a game changer for us, because that way you can drive from large urban centres on the Mainland right through Labrador and then on to the Island. This will open up a new market to a more casual tourist.

We have that there. It's ready to go and we just need the right investments in the right places to the right people and we can open up another whole market. Like my hon. colleague said, too, once we're out of these difficult times and restrictions start to lift, I'm sure a lot of people who had their dreams and their hopes of coming to this province will show up, because we know that they were there. Before COVID they were ready to come, but also during COVID they were still kind of beating at our doors wanting to come in. Hopefully, they will still be there when these times change and we can allow them in to experience this wonderful province we call home

During these unfortunate and interesting times that we are in, we also have a few things that reared their heads up, especially with access to the Internet. As I'm sure a lot of hon. colleagues in this House understand, some places are still not to a point that is required for this modern world. Especially in the business world and the education world, we still need access to reliable, high-speed broadband Internet. This is something that we really need to take into account. We really need to add some perspective and investment because a lot more things have moved online during these times, but some things may stay online.

To stay competitive as a province but as a people and to stay on top of our education stuff, we need to make the key investments to make sure that no matter if you're in Nain or if you're in Gaultois or if you're somewhere in Bonavista or Labrador West, that we're all connected with a reliable service that people can use. It can also open up a lot of doors for rural places that may have a business idea they can do from home, or they can get an education from home if they're unable to attend in person. This opens up a whole new world for people to advance themselves as a people.

Home businesses have become a more commonplace thing. We see a lot more people moving to a home-based business. Having reliable access to the Internet also creates these smaller businesses in rural areas. Sometimes they may even advance the ability that they may be an online business, but they can hire a friend or two with their business. It creates some small gainful employment in rural areas. Access to

broadband now is not just a novelty like it used to be; access to broadband Internet is now moving to shifting as a requirement for the business and education world. We need to make sure that we have these abilities to be able to access Internet in a way that seems more accustomed in other places.

I do want to touch on the arts and culture area as well. I notice a lot more people during these times actually have taken up more writing, more visual arts and these kinds of things as a business, as well as a way of expressing their culture and also for a host of other reasons. Continued investment in the arts and in the culture sectors is a way to keep who we are as a people, as a province alive as well. Also, as a tourism point of view, too, it kind of works that way because a lot of people outside our province – and people that used to live in our province – are always looking for these cultural items and pieces, especially in the visual arts realm.

Continued investment in culture and in arts is always a good thing. It always gives people a means to express themselves as a people. It gives us, as a province, a way to show our art, our culture and who we are as a province to the outside world. It's very important that we continue to do these things and continue to invest in these things. Any investment in the arts and culture is a good investment in my opinion.

It works in the film industry too. We know that our film and television industry seems to be moving forward, especially in the last number of years. This is a great thing to see. Going along with the new movement in technology, these are things that we can do here more efficiently, more effectively. Then, couple that with our unique province and our unique landscapes as a province, we can capitalize on filming here in this province and building another industry tied in with arts, culture and tourism.

Investing in this industry, I think, is a positive because it builds on top of our arts and our culture. I'd love to see film crews even up my way. It would be a great expansion of an industry. If anyone wants some natural snow scenes I know a place to go, I know a place that has lot of snow right now. Any of the film crew out there looking for some snow, I can point you

in the right direction right now. I think I have 20 centimetres of it in my backyard.

Expanding our film and television industry is a good way to showcase who we are as a province and build a unique industry here too. I know other jurisdictions in this country have built up that. I know a fairly interesting statistic. I was told one time that right now Canada is sucking up all the film crew jobs out of Hollywood. As a country, as Canada, we are filming more major films and more major television shows in our country than our American cousins. We can capitalize on it as a province, as well, because of our untouched beauty, our unique landscapes, things like that.

If you know of any major film production, we should get a slice of that pie, as well as filming of – major motion pictures and television shows are moving north of the border into Canada. It's great to see that we are moving forward, but a little bit of investment here and a little bit invested in the technology sector, I think we could really capitalize on this industry as well and move into a great thing.

Before I close, Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about my district a little bit more. Labrador West, we're a unique place in this province and a very unique province we are, too. We've seen some hard times; we've seen some great times. During these COVID times, it's amazing to see that, as a district, we continue to move forward and progress. It was a busy summer in my district. A lot of work that I didn't think was going to get done in the mining industry, the mining companies managed to get done. It was great to see that we managed to stay safe and keep people employed and keep people working. That was great to see, but that took a lot of hard work, it took a lot smart thinking and a lot of dedication on a lot of people's parts. We want to make sure that all those people that did work hard to keep Labrador West safe – thank you and keep up the things you're doing because it's great.

We still have our challenges when it comes to health care, retaining doctors and things like that because the uniqueness of our district also causes a resource strain on our district. We need to make sure that all the resources are in place to make sure that we can retain the services that we

need on top of being there. I like to call it the Fort McMurray effect where a lot of good-paying mining jobs sometimes outweigh the public service jobs and the essential worker jobs. We always have to pay attention to these things, that we make the right investments in regions to retain the certain services that we require as residents of the region and as residents of the province.

We want to make sure we keep our focus and that we're providing the services to the people of a district. Hopefully, we can overcome these things. I ask to make sure that we keep an eye on these things as we move forward, that we will be able to retain services and stuff in the strange situation that makes up Labrador West when there's a mining boom on. I know, like I said, we always have our challenges with social housing and stuff.

I also want to take a minute to make a point here about mental health and addictions. It's always an ongoing issue in my district. Thankfully, it's a more talked about thing now. It's not something that's hidden; we actually openly talk about the mental health and addictions issues that always face the residents of Labrador West. We seem to statistically always have a higher prevalence in my district, so we want to make sure that we continue to provide those services and the availability of these services to people who require them.

Also, I want to let those people know that if you're in a mental health crisis or you have an addiction, don't be afraid to reach out to somebody because there's always someone listening and there will always be someone there to give you a hand up, so don't be ashamed and afraid. If you're in crisis, make sure you reach out to the right people so that way you can get the help you need, and we're there to give you the help you need.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**MADAM SPEAKER (P. Parsons):** Order, please!

The Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

**MR. LOVELESS:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I'll take my time, I guess, to speak now, to talk about departmental issues, but before I do, I want to say I represent the most scenic, rural district in the province, which is also beautiful.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I just want to reference two individuals who celebrated 72 years of marriage this past week; 72 years to Chesley and Ada Loveless. I just wanted to mention that before I move into –

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

**MR. LOVELESS:** Yes, absolutely, it's worth clapping, I guess, for 72 years.

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

**MR. LOVELESS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to talk about the fishery – it's been talked about before tonight – and certainly reference some of the comments that were made by Opposition Members.

The Member for Humber - Bay of Islands also mentioned earlier today about the potential for redfish quota; he mentioned Bill Barry, who's a big player in the industry and has been around for a long time. There is potential there and I look forward to seeing what this redfish quota will mean for the industry.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to focus on the traditional fishery. I want to mention and talk a little bit on the Atlantic Fisheries Fund and the significance and importance it is to this industry in this province. Before delving into that, it's always beneficial to mention the value of the fishery, which is at \$1.4 billion. That's significant to this economy and employs more than 15,000 people in 400 communities in this province. It was said earlier that we were founded on the fishery and it will keep us for years and years to come, but we need to do it right. Absolutely, we need to do it right because it's too important to those communities.

In talking about the Atlantic Fisheries Fund, across the Atlantic provinces there have been received 1,200 to 1,300 applications to date, and applications from Newfoundland and Labrador

alone equal 532 applications, which account for approximately 44 per cent of the applications. That shows that we are involved in that process because it definitely is very, very important. The applications received were the highest and the number of projects approved to date is 276. If you go through this province you'll see evidence of the approvals of those applications. Some of them are small projects. They can range from automatic jiggers to insulated tubs and even research and development. This all goes to improving the resource and the product in the fishery, which is very important.

Also, the larger projects; I know some Members mentioned the Arnold's Cove fish plant. If you want to witness an application approved, just walk into that plant and you'll see how the Atlantic Fisheries Fund is certainly helping that company and the people that work in that fish plant, which is 400-plus and consistent. Madam Deputy Speaker, the Atlantic Fisheries Fund is certainly a great investment into the fishery.

I mentioned before, this year's fishery, no doubt challenged by COVID-19 but overall it's been – as harvesters would say, many that I've spoken with – a good year. Were there challenges? Absolutely. There were many questions at the beginning of the season whether it should get a go ahead or not, and it did. The harvesters, processors, fish plant workers and others adjusted to the challenges of COVID-19 and made this industry another good year.

I know in my district in talking to lobster fishermen, again, their comments were that it was a good year. They didn't expect it to be this good this year, so that was positive. Also, halibut – there are other industries within the industry. In my district, the halibut catch rates were up. I don't have significant crab fishermen in my district, but I know I have friends that are big crab fishermen that said – and I echo the thoughts from across as well – it was a decent year. That's good to know that with the challenges this year we're going to have a better year next year and the years to come, I believe.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I just want to touch a little on the Royal Greenland issue. I thank the Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows, too, who is very concerned and he echoed some of his thoughts in his speech about how

important it is for the community and moving forward. I know there are questions around it, but in the days ahead I believe it will prove to be a good decision.

The board certainly recommended that it was a good business deal. I take that experience on that board very seriously. I met with them, the board, and I also met with Royal Greenland after. I have to say, the conversation we had around what they're going to be doing in Newfoundland and Labrador is very optimistic and it was a positive meeting. I said before that they've been around for a few years now, 600-plus jobs with a \$21-million investment. So that's nothing to sneeze at.

The board also asked about giving consideration to the topic of foreign investment, corporate concentration. Right now, the board does have a mandate to look at corporate concentration. The board asked me, moving forward, to take a look at whether that's around a policy decision on foreign investment. I said absolutely, but let me make it clear that they did not say that foreign investment was of a concern in terms of not moving this deal forward. I've asked my staff, and as recommended by the board, to consult with stakeholders in the industry and to start that process. We are developing that plan and we'll be rolling it out very soon.

If I could, Madam Deputy Speaker, just referencing some of the comments that were made by the Member for Cape St. Francis, he talked about proper management, joint management, adjacency principle, and I agree with his words. I know he's quite versed on the fishery and I agree with the words he said.

He also referenced a VOCM story that talked about demand for fish. The story predicts that seafood consumption could see a significant increase over the next few decades. That's great economic opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador, which is certainly a good news story. Because as we all know, we need some good news stories after this year of 2020.

The article also referenced educating young people. We need to educate younger generations about fish, and I certainly agree with that.

The Member also talked about the price of shrimp. I certainly understand his point and I would even encourage him, I told him the other day, to encourage him to have a conversation with Royal Greenland around that concern. I really do encourage him to do that because I value his opinion.

The sealing industry; well, we know it has suffered and it's not where it should be. We hope we can restore some of that in that industry in terms of its return to this province. I know some Members talked about hard workers. Well, they were hard workers, too, and remain hard workers.

Madam Deputy Speaker, just to touch on agriculture a little. There's nothing like visiting parts of the province to witness the agriculture that's going on or fishery or whatever the case may be. I visited the West Coast in the last month and a half, the day they were pouring the footing on the cold storage unit on the West Coast, and another one in Labrador. Again, I talked about quality of product. We know that the better the quality of the product, you have a superior product, then you're going to get a good price in return for that product.

I visited Comfort Cove-Newstead and an older gentleman there, 81 years old, was still working away on the farms. He was very excited about his business and asking me to open more land to him. I communicated to him that I would do my best to open up those opportunities for him to supply food to our province.

I also visited the fish plant there in Comfort Cove-Newstead with the MHA. We had a great visit and talked about some of the importance to them. It's what it's all about. Those communities that are employing people, we need to keep those communities going because they are the lifeblood of those communities.

Also, with the same MHA, the Cottles Island sawmill there; very impressive with some of the finished products from their sawmill. The management there are very upbeat and enthusiastic about what they have there and what they want to do.

I visited the West Coast, the dairy farms, looking at secondary processing, which is also

crucial to that industry, and the potato farms and other farming operations.

I also visited the wildlife lab there. That wildlife lab is new and creating more opportunities to the support staff for research. As we know, research in any industry is important because it helps us, at the end of the day, to make better decisions regarding conservation in this province.

This past Friday, Madam Deputy Speaker, I visited Country Ribbon. I'm a lover of chicken, so I had a good time there. It's another employer – we talk about 300 jobs.

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

**MR. LOVELESS:** Was that funny?

The jobs are important, but also important is we talked about the food supply. Fruit and vegetables are a part of the food supply, but the Country Ribbon operation there is certainly important as well for the management and for the workers.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this past Friday I also had the opportunity to visit the Smiling Land Farm. If there are people here that have not been there, go there. I see the Member for Ferryland is smiling, so he must've been there. I know he has. I want to thank Larry Puddister and, certainly, his crew for taking us through. I know some Opposition Members were there. One was with me, as well, in our tour. If you leave the Smiling Land without a smile, you didn't listen or you didn't follow the tour, I guess. I know I left with a smile on my face, but also a warm heart.

If you listened to Larry's story and why he's doing it, it will certainly warm your heart, no doubt about it. He has a young son; I met his wife. We saw the horses that are there and the goats, ducks and the honeybees. That was certainly an experience as well, as we got a chance to taste some of the honey. In talking to the gentleman there, he certainly knows a lot about honey and honeybees and how important it is. For me, I love honey.

The long-term plan for the Smiling Land is impressive and it should be supported. As minister, I told Mr. Puddister I would do my part

in making sure that his end goal is reached. At the end of the day, he'll put lots of smiles on lots of people's faces, no doubt.

Crown Lands, I guess I have to talk about it.

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

**MR. LOVELESS:** I hear the Member across, but I do have to thank the staff at Crown Lands because I know it's stressful. We get a lot of complaints about Crown Lands. They're doing their best.

We hired an additional assessor recently that I believe will help out with the backlog as well. We all know around the application process, there are a lot of referring agencies and departments and that can run into a long time. When I hear that applications have been in the system for years and years and years, it's bothersome. How I fix that or we fix that or we come up with a solution, I'm open to ideas from other people. Constructive criticism is always welcome.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** You're doing a wonderful job.

**MR. LOVELESS:** I heard the Member across saying I'm doing a wonderful job. I appreciate that.

I know the Member for Exploits referenced outfitters hit hard. I met with a group this morning, after I met with the Member for Exploits. We talked about important opportunities and they, certainly, in a very respectful way, expressed to me the challenges they're facing. It's an industry that is one of many that's been challenged by COVID-19.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I'll also reference some of the comments made by the Member for Exploits. He talked about taking from Central to other parts of the province. I take his comments very seriously. I know what Central Newfoundland and Abitibi-Price – my father worked with Abitibi-Price and forestry seemed to be a central area, used to be the focus and the centre of forestry in our province.

I'm open any time to sit down, from any Member, to talk about how we can improve



Central Newfoundland when it comes to forestry or any industry. I certainly appreciate his comments. He also referenced some permit holders and the opportunity or, I guess, not – less opportunities for them. I welcome any time, if you want to come over at any point and sit down, we can certainly – if you want to give me that individual permit holder, I would be willing to listen to them and what their concern is and to see if I can help out in terms of our department.

Farming, the Member also talk about farming from a perspective of food security and we are striving, I guess, to do better. We can always do better.

I know several Members have also talked about cell coverage and how important cell coverage is and broadband. Down in my district, I know we're making some investments in it, but it's something that needs to happen, if we want industry to grow in those rural parts of the province. Down in my area with the aquaculture, those aquaculture companies are out on the water and stuff and they need the cell coverage, they need the broadband because, as the Minister of Tourism referenced as well, we need technology in any industry, especially in rural Newfoundland to make sure that it thrives.

Madam Deputy Speaker, my time is running down. I would like to thank all the Members opposite and on our side for comments around, whether it's fishery, forestry or agriculture. I appreciate their comments. With that, I will end.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Thank you.

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

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

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

It's great to finally have the opportunity to say a few words today. I don't know if anybody can remember *Welcome Back, Kotter*. I feel like Horshack down here today: Ooh, ooh, ooh, Mr.

Kotter. But he wasn't listening, but anyway I got my chance.

Madam Speaker, it's great to speak to Estimates and, of course, we're talking about the Resource Estimates. I will have a couple of comments on those, specifically, but I do want to go back, I guess, to a couple of general comments as it relates to the budget, which would include all industries and all aspects of all these committees and sectors. I don't want to sound like a broken record, as much as maybe I do, but I think it's important to add to this discussion and throughout the entire budgetary discussion a couple of very important facts.

One fact being that we're going to be borrowing over \$2 billion – with a B – again this year; the fact that we have a net debt now of over, I believe, \$15 billion. I don't believe that includes Muskrat Falls or any of the implications of rate mitigation or anything else.

On top of that, we're into an over \$15-billion net debt and, again, borrowing over \$2 billion this year. In all likelihood, more borrowings of more billions of dollars over the next few years because, of course, we were supposed to have a balanced budget by – I think it was 2022 was the original plan. That plan, of course, has been sort of thrown out the door now, so God knows when we will be to a point where we will be projecting a balanced budget or any sort of a surplus for many years to come. We can only look forward to that \$15-plus-billion net debt to actually increasing to a much larger number as we proceed.

Of course, we also know that we had issues and concerns that were raised by the former premier as it related to this year's budget and his letter to the prime minister about the fiscal situation we were in. I believe he said the time has come, or whatever the words he used. It certainly spoke to the fact that we were in big-time trouble. Certainly, the way it was put out there is that if not for the Bank of Canada stepping in, we would be very challenged on our ability to even borrow money.

Interestingly, and I suppose a little bit of an education to myself and others, when we went to the Estimates and spoke to the Minister of Finance and officials with the Department of

Finance, they did clarify that it's not that we couldn't borrow any money. I think clearly the impression that was put out there, either intentionally or unintentionally, but the way it was certainly interpreted, perhaps by the media, perhaps by other people in the province – and not to say that it's not a serious thing, because it certainly is. The impression was given that we would not be able to borrow.

Finance officials said, no, that's not true. They are confident we would have been able to borrow, but we would have been borrowing at a much more higher interest rate. That's what they had indicated – higher than what we're already paying. To suggest that we couldn't borrow at all, they're saying it is actually not factual, but that does not take away from the overall fiscal situation that we're in. I think it's important that we continue to raise this, continue to remind ourselves of the dire fiscal circumstance that we're in, that we were in prior to oil prices dropping out of her, prior to COVID-19, but certainly it has gotten much worse. Of course, now we're seeing all these issues again with our oil industry, not just the impact on royalties, but now we're seeing the huge impact on jobs, whether it be with Husky and our other oil projects, or whether it even be now our oil refinery. It's very, very concerning. Of course, we heard about the Grieg project and what's happening now with Grieg and more jobs that are going to be lost there.

I think it's important that this continue to be a focal point within the debate and the commentary that is made. That always has to be in the backdrop. I understand; I do. As an MHA myself, obviously if there's a government program out there, if there's a piece of money out there, whether it be capital infrastructure, I'm going to make sure that Mount Pearl and St. John's – Southlands and so on – is getting its share. Every MHA is going to do the same thing. If there are any grants out there, recreational grants and so on, and there's a pot of money, we're going to make sure that organizations in our district get the share of that pot of money. I'm not suggesting otherwise.

That's part of the MHA's job. That's a big part of the job. We all get that, but I think we have to temper some of the – when I see some of the more generalized comments that I hear

throughout debate – not necessarily this evening, but over the last few weeks – about we should've had this in the budget and we should've had that in the budget and there's not enough money for this and there's not enough money for that and so on, I get it, but again, we have to put it in context of where we are to financially as a province.

I don't envy the government. It's not this government or past governments or any future governments. I don't envy anybody who now is sitting in the seat of government, the Premier, the Minister of Finance, all the ministers. I don't envy them. It's a lot easier to govern when you've got all kinds of money and the biggest decision you're going to make is what are we going to spend the money on. That's a totally different circumstance. But, b'y, when we're into a situation here where there are critical services that are required and we just don't have the cash to do it and we're borrowing and borrowing and borrowing, I don't envy the government. I really don't.

The can has been kicked down the road for far too long. It's been kicked down the road for far too long. Something is going to have to give. At some point something is going to have to give and everybody knows it. Everybody knows it. It kind of brings me to my colleague in Mount Pearl North, when he spoke there before supper and he referenced some of the tough decisions that are going to have to be made. He's not wrong in what he's saying but I did hear a number of people, when he was saying it, saying: Oh, shut down rural Newfoundland; it's against rural Newfoundland.

It's not against rural Newfoundland, at least not from my perspective. I have all kinds of family in rural Newfoundland. My mother was from Wesleyville, Bonavista North. I spent all my summers there. That's very, very rural. All my wife's family are from St. Mary's. I was down there the weekend, moose hunting. I never got my moose. I'll get him. I didn't get him this weekend. I'll get him though. I have family all over this province, all over: the East Coast, the West Coast and Central. My father was from the Northern Peninsula, Englee.

It is not about being against rural Newfoundland or anything, but we have to be realistic about if

we're going to tackle the debt and the deficits, there are going to have to be things that are going to have to change. A lot of that might change in the urban regions too. I'm not saying that the urban regions are going to be left out of all this, definitely not. We have to find efficiencies though and we have to start doing things differently.

You have this task force now with Moya Greene and I think you're living in la-la land if you think that she's going to come back – what do you think is going to be in that report? When she finally comes out with that report of that task force, does everybody think that she's going to say status quo? We're not naive enough to think that she's going to say status quo, are we? Of course she's not.

Something is going to have to give. Something is going to have to change. We have to try to do it in a thoughtful way. We have to look after the most vulnerable citizens. We have to be outcome-based and make sure whatever services people need, they'll receive them. Maybe they'll receive them differently but they'll receive them. Technology is going to have a role to play in all of this. There's no doubt about it. Virtual care, things like that, absolutely, it's going to play a role, but some things have to give. Some things are probably going to have go. That's another reality. I know nobody wants to talk about it, but it's a reality.

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

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Having trouble hearing the speaker.

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

Some things are going to have change, and some things are probably going to have to be consolidated and they're going to have to go. That's just a reality. I know nobody wants to hear it and I know if it was something that's going to be in my district or anyone else's district, they're going to fight for it. That's their obligation, to fight for it.

I'm not talking about tearing apart rural Newfoundland. I'm sure the Member for Mount Pearl North is not talking about tearing apart

rural Newfoundland, but there are some things that they're either viable or they're not viable. I can remember even in Budget 2016 – now, I'm not saying that now to go beating up on the government. It is what it is. That's the past. I can remember in that budget they were talking about the libraries. I'm going to use the libraries as an example. They were going to shut down a whole bunch of libraries and everybody went off their head: Oh my God, you can't shut down the libraries. And there was this movement against it.

I understand why people would be against shutting down libraries and the value of libraries and books and reading and learning and all that. The reality of it is: What did we do? What did the government do? They paid a million dollars to a consultant to do this very extensive report and consultation. It was a very good report and, no, it didn't recommend to shut down all those libraries they were going to shut down, but there was a recommendation to shut down some and to expand others and improve others and have different ways of delivering books to different communities.

I can remember a Member – I won't name the Member – on the government side – still there now in the Cabinet – who said to me at the time: Paul, they were going to shut down seven or eight libraries in my district and you know what? If they had come to me first, we could've shut down half of them and there wouldn't have been a blink, because we had a couple of libraries where there hadn't been a book taken out in a full year. Not one book taken out.

There was another one there where there was a library, or they called it a library, and I believe it was either a government building or a town building that they could've easily taken it out and put it over. There was part of it not being used; they could've consolidated the two buildings or the two things and made a library. They would've kept a small library but got rid of another facility that wasn't needed. It was costing money and so on.

There were things that could've been done, but instead they hired a consultant, spent a million dollars, took it, put it on the shelf and forgot that it even existed and did nothing because of the backlash at the time. The reality of it is these are

the types of things that have to be revisited. I'm sure these are things that Ms. Greene and the other task force are going to come up with any number of things.

By the way, I don't think she's going to come up with too much that hasn't already been discussed or Members haven't thought of themselves or talked about. I'm sure there's going to be a lot of stuff that's going to be recommended that everybody already knows what it's going to be, but there's not a will there to do it.

If we're going to do it, if we're going to do what's right, there has to be a will on behalf of all Members, all parties, to take the politics out of it. I know that's a big ask. I know it's a big ask but you can't go on the one hand saying something – the Opposition, I'll just say as an example. The Opposition can't be on the one hand saying we're in the hole, we have to do something to save money but then the minute the government does it, then dump on them for it and say I wouldn't have done that. It can't work that way.

If we're serious about it and we really want to work together, then we have to look at some of these things, look at the recommendations. As long as people are still receiving the services, maybe in a different way and it makes sense, then we all have to come together and kind of agree. We're all going to have to take a collective hit in some of these areas. We're all going to have to take a collective hit politically to do the right thing that needs to be done. I think it's really important we start thinking about it that way.

Madam Speaker, I have five minutes left, so I just want to speak to one of the specific areas that's in here under the resource sector. You're probably going to say now, why is he going to talk about the fishery? A guy from Mount Pearl, what would he be talking about the fishery about? Well, I'll say, Madam Speaker, we have one wharf and I think four vessels in Mount Pearl; it's in Mount Pearl North. The wharf is in Powers Pond and the vessels are four canoes they have in the boathouse that they do in the summertime. That's it. That's all we have.

I can say this, if you go in to Donovans Business Park and Kenmount Business Park, as an

example, or along Topsail Road and so on, you would be shocked. Maybe you wouldn't be shocked, but there are a ton of businesses in Donovans and Kenmount Business Park that are either solely or partially impacted directly by the fishery. They service the fishing industry in one way or another, either solely or in part.

The fishery has an impact on Mount Pearl. It has an impact on St. John's. It has an impact on all of the urban areas, whether it be businesses that supply the fishery or offer services to the fishery. If somebody is working in the fishery and they're earning a living in the small rural areas, where are they going to spend their money? A lot of the money is being spent in Gander or Grand Falls or Lewisporte or St. John's or Mount Pearl or Corner Brook or whatever. That's where they're going to spend money. That's where their money is getting spent, a lot of it, not to mention it's a billion-dollar industry and the overall benefit to the province as a whole. If one part of the province is doing well, we're all doing well. The fishery is important to us all.

I haven't heard a lot of discussion about the fishery in this House of Assembly, not nearly as much as we should. I say the Member for Cape St. Francis, as the Fisheries critic he has raised it a number of times. He has. He talked about the fact that he had a couple of private Member's motions. He did. I can remember the last time he had a private Member's motion a year or two years ago on the fishery and it was a feel-good moment. Everybody in the House of Assembly, we all supported it. Many people spoke to it on all sides and there was a collective clap and hear, hear! It was sort of like a feel-good moment.

Stand up for the fishery in Newfoundland. Wonderful. But what did we do? What happened? We all gave ourselves a clap and then we went home, and the next day we started debating whatever the next piece of legislation was. That was the end of it. How much follow-up was there? There was zero follow-up.

When I hear about some of the issues in the fishery – and I'm far from an expert, believe you me, in this, but I do know about the issues around the buddy-up system. I know about the foreign vessels, the overfishing and the issues

we've had and how they got there. They're there because Ottawa lets them there because of deals they make on other things benefiting other provinces.

When you hear about fish being dumped, it breaks my heart. I understand that if you're over – and I think it's Norway. I could be wrong, but I believe in Norway it's actually illegal to dump the fish. Here, in Newfoundland and in Canada, it's illegal to keep it. Over there it's illegal to dump it. The fish must be brought in. I believe the fishermen would be given – or fisherpersons or fishers or whatever the terminology is, harvesters – a certain amount of money so that it's not costing them money to bring in the bycatch. I think they get paid a nominal amount just to cover their gas and whatever, but they have to bring it in. Then that fish, I believe, goes to food banks or whatever they do with it, but it does not get dumped.

When you hear about the issues around fishery science, hear about issues around the seals, seal predation, and as John Efford said: the seals are not eating Kentucky fried chicken. And he was right. Issues around joint management, issues around having to cut your vessel up into pieces to meet some arbitrary vessel length to catch certain species. Then to have the nerve of the government to allow the animal rights groups in to clean up our ocean after they called us a bunch of barbarians and having them come here to Newfoundland. These are the things we should be collectively acting on, not just talking about it in the House of Assembly but actually acting on it.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Member's time has expired.

**MR. LANE:** Okay.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

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

It's a pleasure to speak on the Concurrence Resource Committee. Before I start my comments, I want to recognize the staff when we did our Estimates there a few weeks back. Their

input, their involvement and their answers to the many questions that were asked during Estimates, which is never easy. You don't realize it sometimes.

I had the opportunity to be on that side of the House some years back and I do understand what's required of the staff and departments preparing for Estimates; let alone the ministers, but the staff in general. There's a lot involved and it was something that was an eye-opener to me when I first went there. I do appreciate what they do and I want to thank them. I know the Committee for Industry, Energy and Technology, the staff and the minister's department did a great job. So I want to recognize them for that.

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

**MR. PETTEN:** Madam Speaker, as Concurrence debate comes up I guess we'll try to stay to task in the department and some of the issues facing the province, I suppose. When you speak of those issues, the West White Rose or we speak of Come By Chance, I guess you speak of oil and gas in general. You look at the refinery, you look at the West White Rose Project, you look at oil and gas in general, and we look at the iconic pictures of the Hibernia platform and the SeaRose and Terra Nova – I look at it in Conception Bay. I'll look at it tonight when I go home, I guess, if it's still there. It was there yesterday.

It's a beautiful view from the bay in the nighttime. With the lights on, it's absolutely stunning. Obviously, that's not where we want it. It's nice to see it where it is as optics, but it's not where it needs to be, obviously. It needs to be out pumping oil, employing Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

In this House we hear a lot of back and forth. There's a lot in the media, a lot of heated debates and a lot of conversations. Really, right now, oil and gas has become one of our mainstays in this province. We always hung onto the fishery and the fishery will always be a very important part of this province, hopefully until eternity. It's something that's near and dear to all of our hearts because that's our existence.

Oil and gas has played a very, very important role in the last 25 years, since Hibernia came on stream, to our provincial coffers and to the province. I mean, oil and gas is a big line item in the revenue. The mere thought of that not being – I suppose in existence but not being to what we need it to be as a province is kind of frightening. When you think of oil and gas, like I said, we talk about all those platforms, those projects and what have you, but it's the people in our districts.

I've said you have discussions, and even amongst your own caucus and all that sometimes you lose sight. It's the boots on the ground. It's the people that are affected. Nothing was more evident than that rally that was there a few weeks back on the steps of the Confederation Building. That's where it's at. Those are the people that are affected the most.

Sometimes we all, on all sides of this House, all politicians – current, previous – complicate the issue. I go back in time. Before I was an elected official, I was in with the previous administration, so as this all transpired and our oil and gas industry was developing, I used to always be puzzled how complicated things were made. A lot of smart people complicating something that should've been really basic, because it is about jobs; it is about the economy.

It's simple: You pump the oil from the ground; you sell it to markets, people employed. It's no different than taking fish out of the ocean. But if you listen to some of the debate that's happened in this House over the years, there have been filibusters, there have been endless, endless debates on the industry and you think this is pretty complicated. If you're listening to some of the way that it's going back and forth – we're getting complexities of royalty agreements and equity stakes – the average person does not get it.

I've heard this conversation and I've said it in this House many times – the Tim Hortons debate. Now, since COVID, that becomes less and less an option because the gatherings are much smaller and you can't do it now. I used to always remember – and I look forward to it happening again soon – going to Tim Hortons. There's a group of people – and we all have them in our districts, the regulars. They come

from all walks of life. They used to always make the point – they'd watch the House of Assembly or they'd watch the newscast and that – why is it so complicated? It's not that complicated.

Why aren't we being more clear about it? You'd sit down, you'd have a coffee with them, you'd explain it out in, I call it the layman terms, the Coles notes version. When you'd leave they'd be like, yeah, that makes sense, that's perfect and you'd feel better yourself. Then you come in here and you give yourself an hour or a half an hour of a debate or Question Period or a piece of legislation – and I used to feel I didn't have a clue. I'd leave – like, oh my God, what did I tell them? I was confused but I think most people in this Legislature can attest to that.

I've talked to previous ministers (inaudible) the opposite way when a lot of the debates went on and they've said the same thing. Now when we're faced with a very critical, crucial time in our presence right now, we get in here and it's debate. It happens and it's going to happen, but what's the end game? What are we really worried about? What's our number one concern?

The number one concern is the jobs. It's an industry. When I started off by saying I'm equating it to the fishery, you know the fishery. There's not a person in this Legislature, there's not a person in this province who doesn't know the value of our fishery and how an emotional topic the fishery is. Even when the fishery is at its peak or not at its peak, the fishery in general is a very emotional topic. I know for Members opposite and Members on my side, the fishery is a very big part of their districts; it's a very big part of the province. My reason for highlighting the fishery is the oil and gas is every bit as important. Then, sometimes, in some cases, dollars and cents wise it's one of the biggest revenue line items in our budget.

We go to Ottawa, we go through our government opposite, our ministers and the Premier and we look for support from federal MPs, we look for support from the province to go to Ottawa to support us to get this oil and gas industry back on the ground, get what's required, get the investments, get people at the table and most times you hear crickets, there's nothing happening. Over the years, when you look at our fishery, our fishery has gotten a fair

amount of help. It's been many times the fishery was on its knees. One time in particular was the shutdown of the groundfish which was catastrophic to the province; as everyone remembers TAGS came into being at the time. The federal government stepped up. They helped out. They retrained. They did what was required. At that time it was a huge cash infusion to the province.

Now we fast-forward to 2020. Based on a lot of other circumstances we're getting faced with an industry that's struggling to survive. There's a lot of concern there. We get a \$320-million cheque but you can do what you want with that. It doesn't matter what you do: pave roads, build schools, renovate hospitals, help pay for the mental health facility – whatever you want to do. It doesn't matter; you can do whatever you want with it.

Is that the answer? No, obviously it's not, but the answer is taking the oil and gas industry for what it means to this province, like it means to every other province in Canada that are oil and gas producers. They've gotten help over the years and we're not asking for anything different than every other province gets when they need help.

Why is it Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have to put their cap in hand to say thank you for whatever they are offered? That's not what Confederation is meant to be. That's not our place in Confederation. It never has been. That's not a part of Confederation. You go and you look at other provinces; namely, you look at Quebec. You look at what Quebec gets out of Confederation. It astounds me that we as a province have to say: \$320 million, thank you very much and we're going to move on. I think that's woefully inadequate.

I believe that you have this merger that's happening now and I've read some commentary and some social media points about it. The thing was you're asking a government to bail out Husky and they should've done this privately with this merger. This merger is irrelevant to us. That's a private business deal and that's not our concern.

We've always advocated that the government needs to help out the West White Rose Project

and help out the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador. What Husky and these other companies, these multi-billion dollar operations – that's not our problem. We're worried about the West White Rose Project and the workers that it employs and the workers that we hope it continues to employ, whenever and if ever it'll ever get off the ground again. That's what we're worried about. We're worried about Come By Chance Refinery and the 500 direct jobs and the probably 1,500 indirect jobs. That's what we're worried about.

We're not worried about we don't have any input because it's a private business. That's not our concern. Our concerns are those projects, the workers and the jobs in this province that mean so much to every community throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. When I go back, I'll equate back to the fishery.

We talk about the fishery and it affects all those little communities and all those small towns. The oil and gas industry is no different, but they've been handled totally different. One reason for that which comes to mind with me is – and I've talked to people that would be in the know – in Ottawa the mentality is this green economy, this green energy, the green initiatives. You can't do green without having the finances to do it. Oil and gas does provide that. We're not ready to go to a full green economy yet; we're not even close. How are we going to pay for these green initiatives? How are we going to convert?

Oil and gas is going to be with us for a long time. You can't close the door on oil and gas and think you're going to open a new door in the green energy. It's not happening. But the mindset in Ottawa is that we're going green and they really don't care about the oil and gas. They really don't care.

We care. People in this province care. We, as a party, care. We care a lot about it.

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

**MR. PETTEN:** You go out West. They care. Anyone that's affected by this – Saskatchewan, they care. Anyone that has this as one of their main budget lines, they care. It's unfortunate

that there aren't enough people in Ottawa to care to stand up for the people of this province.

There about a week or so ago, it was really disheartening when I watched the newscast and our Minister of Natural Resources – the federal minister of Natural Resources when asked about the Husky investment. Again, it's not about Husky as a company; this is about the West White Rose Project. When asked about any federal monies he said no, just no.

I'm sure people don't want to see federal monies being spent in this – investing money into an oil and gas project, but they can buy pipelines, invest in casinos, \$12 billion or \$14 billion to Quebec. The last time I was in Quebec wasn't that long ago and there was a lot of economic development up there. There are no real struggles up there. Billions for everything else but no, no, no, forget – here's \$320 million, now go pave whatever road you want to pave, build whatever school you want to build and if you want to give some to oil and gas, that's up to you, but we're done. This minister of Natural Resources is actually one of our seven Newfoundland MPs. He's one of ours.

Madam Speaker, as a resident of this province – forget about my position right here at this table – that's insulting. That's insulting to me and it should be insulting to each and every Newfoundlander and Labradorians out there that thinks that this answer is adequate.

I understand that the minister may have his hands full dealing with the mindset in Ottawa; I get that. I've been told from various sources that is a big problem he's faced with. The best thing he could do and the most supportive, we'd all applaud it, tell everyone so. Tell the people why he's having so much trouble.

You can never go wrong when you stand up for the people you represent. If you're Newfoundland's representative and you can't get something through and everyone in this province knows how important it is and you can't get through, forget about your minister's post, stand on your morals, stand on your ground and say, I cannot get through because of this. You'll go much further.

Don't be this no response because that's the message you're giving. To anyone else it wouldn't be acceptable. I don't know why he finds it acceptable to say no, because it's offensive. I'm not the only one who said it's offensive, others repeat: Did you hear that news? Did you hear that news? Yeah, it's offensive.

You don't have to support Husky. You should support the workers of this province. You should support a project that has over \$2 billion invested into it that's sitting down there now idling, doing nothing and we're now at least another year out. That's the part that they need to look at and say: Is that answer acceptable? No, it's not acceptable. It's not acceptable to me; it shouldn't be acceptable to anyone in this province.

Madam Speaker, through all the conversations about oil and gas, and I talk about the fishery and whatever, there's another point I'd like to make in the last few minutes I have. It is something that, again, I've talked about this before and it's been a long while but it comes back to me and I sit in the House on days, we're in a night sittings tonight, and you'll listen to a lot of conversations and a lot of debate. Some days it drags all of us down because some of the conversations are not uplifting. Sometimes it can be distressing because you're listening to it. You're looking for that good news. You're looking for the light at the end of the tunnel.

It wasn't so long ago we had – I don't know if we had any light but we had a mindset. We felt good about ourselves. We had a bounce in our step. We were proud people and I believe, I still believe this, we are very proud people. I think that's what makes Newfoundland and Labrador so special. We fight for what we have. We fight to try to keep what we have and that's why I find it offensive sometimes when I feel that people are not fighting hard enough for stuff that we shouldn't – we shouldn't expect it to be as a handout, that's a right in Confederation. We deserve that. What we give back to the rest of this country and we get back in return, there's no mistake we are deserved and owed a lot more than we ever get.

Pick up, be a proud Newfoundlander, stand your ground. I don't care what stripe you are, if you



do that and you stand your ground, people will gravitate to that; people will respect that.

We have a new Premier and I will be the first to say, if I think he does something that's credible and noteworthy, I would send the message myself, I would thank him. It doesn't matter about the stripe on that. As a province, as a people, we should rise above everything if you're doing what's right for the people and our province. You can never go wrong. Follow that mentality and you'll never go wrong. But if you go and you try to do what's right for political purposes or not to upset this one or not to ruffle this one, we will never get there. Don't offend this one. Call it as you see it. Don't be afraid to say what you feel. If you feel that way, say it.

Again, in the day-to-day life, most people respect that. Sometimes we get caught in this political bubble and we have a little crowd of the dos and the don'ts: We can't say something; we're afraid to say something. If you say this, you'll be going against this; if you say that, you'll go against that. Madam Speaker, sometimes that will become tiresome for – I know I get tired with it and I'm sure a lot do, too. You listen to that same thing over again and sometimes you find – you have to give yourself a shake sometimes – you're doing that somewhat yourself.

Something I try to do – and I think most of my caucus can attest to for me – I try to speak my mind. I try to be fair, helpful, but I'll never shy away from what I believe in. Sometimes that may annoy people that are over here with me. I know it does. I don't ever believe in if you have a strong view on something, it may not be – I may be the only view in the room. I'll be a team player. But if it's something that I cannot live with, something that I really feel strongly about – and a lot of these things in our province I do feel strongly about – I will never back away from it; I'll never be convinced because this is what you should do because of this. You have to give me very good reasons.

Just to say it's because you're PC or you have to do that because this one agrees or you have to do that because that one agrees, that's not who I am. When politics is said and done that may be the reason I walk away from it. If that's the case, that's fine. In politics sometimes it's like in life:

You have to live with your decisions. But it's a lot of decisions – if you're principled, if you can't go to bed and sleep, you're not going to make the decisions. It's as simple as that. You have to be very principled.

I believe if you're principled in life and you're principled in politics, you will make decisions that make sense. You will always make mistake, but you can never go wrong when you have principles and you do what's right for the people of this province.

Right now, we will speak a lot, but the people of Newfoundland and Labrador need our help and they need it now.

Thank you very much.

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

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Corner Brook.

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

Tonight, I'd like to take an opportunity to speak about my district, the beautiful and historic District of Corner Brook because I think I have a lot to say. There is a lot to be told about Corner Brook. We have an amazing culture within the City of Corner Brook, within my district. We have an amazing economy; we have an amazing social infrastructure. We have a lot of things going for us.

I'll begin my comments by commenting on something which has been the mainstay of the economy and the social fabric of our city for well over 95 years and that is the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, our newsprint mill in our city. Madam Speaker, we have a tremendous resource that's available to us that has been churning out jobs and value to the economy and to the general region for many, many years. It appears that will be sustained into the long term. I'm very proud of that because we've worked successfully with the company to be able to maintain that presence and not only the output, but the attitude that goes with it. It has proven to be successful.

Madam Speaker, in the newsprint market it is challenging, no doubt. Everyone recognizes that

the newsprint market is challenging, as people gravitate away from printed copy of newspapers and more and more to online or to specialty publications. Yet, our newsprint mill continues to expand into markets that were otherwise not serviced before and it's succeeding. This is a tribute, not only to the company itself but, in particular, to the workers, to the employees of Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, both in the mill and in the Woodlands divisions and within its management. I feel very well connected, very proud of my own connections to this particular operation, but more, in particular, my connections to the people who make it work.

Madam Speaker, things like partnered investments have proven to be extremely important in this regard. For example, just recently to assist in the logistics or the transportation capacity and opportunity for the company, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador partnered with other governments, including the Port of Corner Brook, to invest \$12 million into a new logistics system, a new crane service.

Now, Madam Speaker, that may not sound remarkable to some, but it is. Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, the newsprint facility there that was born in 1925, it began construction in 1923, it has always had a competitive advantage because it's at a seaport and it was able to service markets well outside of other interior mills, other newsprint mills located in the interior parts of the North American continent and elsewhere.

Corner Brook Pulp and Paper being on a seaport has been very successful in supplying markets elsewhere. Well, with the addition to this loading crane, the cost of shipping – this is quite remarkable – has been reduced by upwards of \$70 a ton, making the mill more competitive now than ever before. Now, that's remarkable because the price of newsprint at roughly \$500 a ton – and there is quite a significant body of fluctuation there – to be able to save \$70 per ton, that is quite significant.

Another initiative that has enabled the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper operation to be so successful, so viable, even in difficult times is an initiative with the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture in a timber exchange. Exchanging timber resources between area six

and area 10; getting access to greater spruce inventories for that mill, very, very important.

Sometimes it's the things that don't cost any money that can make a huge difference and that is one of such examples where it comes down to sheer political will and determination, but most importantly the intention to work in partnership with each other, recognizing the value that each partner brings.

Another innovation that, I think, will be important in the future is our forestry products innovation centre located at Corner Brook. There the provincial government invested just roughly \$6 million of a \$9 million initiative to bring increased training to the employees of Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, but also to use the facility as an innovation hub, not only for the purposes of the paper mill but also for the community at large generating ideas towards and momentum towards entrepreneurship and innovation.

Mr. Speaker, there's a lot going on in Corner Brook and I highlight the mill because it is a stable pillar to our economy. While newsprint mills throughout North America and indeed through the world have been closing their doors, have been turning off their boilers and extinguishing their operations, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper today is very much a very going concern and a strong entity.

When we consider that initial investment back in 1923, '24 leading to the opening of the mill in 1925, there's another initiative underway right now which I find quite impressive, and that is the construction of our brand new hospital. At a square footage of just over 600,000 square feet, much larger than the existing hospital, it is the largest project to occur in the history of the City of Corner Brook since 1924. At a construction value of over \$550 million plus the additional contract value of just over \$200 million, this is an innovative build which is proving successful in Corner Brook and has been used as a model for other parts of the province.

Mr. Speaker, we could speak of some of the criticisms about P3s and other things; clearly those criticisms are not valid in Corner Brook or in other projects which have been embarked under this government to build up health care,

build our health care resources, our capacity in this province. Mr. Speaker, I would challenge anyone at all, whether they be in this House right now or outside of the House, to go to Corner Brook and say this is not a good project to be invested in.

I tell you, if anyone were to try that, if they were to try to gain support from the people of Corner Brook or the surrounding area by suggesting this project was not well built or well designed or well financed or well initiated, you would find yourself in a very, very bad predicament, if you were seeking political office and suggesting that, because the overwhelming support from the people of the area in this particular project is well pronounced. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, not just on a theoretical level but in a practical level. We've already had one facility built on that exact same model, which is absolutely incredible in the level of amenities, the design, the construction. It came in on time, on budget and it was built in the exact same model as the Corner Brook Acute Care Hospital build.

We have the long-term care facility in Corner Brook, a 145-bed facility: 120 long-term care beds, 15 rehab beds and 10 palliative care beds for a total of 145. That facility is now open. Mr. Speaker, the reviews are just outstanding. People have said they cannot believe their eyes, the amenities. It has been arguably overengineered. These are the comments not from the builders, not from government, but from the people who go into that facility. They're just astounded at the fact that as you walk in through the front doors, there's a community hall; there's this feeling of setting that is like a true home that anyone would want to consider as an option, especially in requiring alternative care measures, whether you be a senior or someone requiring alternative care for your health care needs.

Mr. Speaker, those are two very important bookends: We have the true beginning of Corner Brook with the construction of the paper mill and today, after 95 years, the second, if not arguably, potentially – depending on how you consider the time value of money – the largest project in the history of Corner Brook. The largest construction, the largest build is occurring right now today with our acute care hospital. I'm very, very proud to be the Member

for Corner Brook that helped bring that about with my team.

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

**MR. BYRNE:** Mr. Speaker, Corner Brook is a place which is a service centre to other areas. We recognize the value of not only our manufacturing industries, in particular our newsprint, our paper industries, our service industries, but as well our resource industries. It's why I was very proud as the minister responsible for Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture to work collaboratively with the government and with the stakeholders in those sectors to make sure we build up resources within the West Coast of Newfoundland and, in particular, the Bay of Islands and Corner Brook area.

It has been mentioned by the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands that redfish is an important resource which will contribute to the economy of the area in the next short while. No truer words could be spoken. This is a phenomenal opportunity that has to be taken advantage of.

How is the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador preparing for that eventual increase in quota as a result of the increase in biomass? We're doing it by positioning ourselves to have a competitive advantage when that fishery opens. We are doing that by conducting science-based investigations on the biomass on the status of the stock itself. We're working with fishermen directly through the Atlantic Fisheries Fund to support that initiative but we're also supporting our fishery processing operations to get ready for that eventuality.

The Barry Group of companies, headquartered in the Bay of Islands, is investing literally tens of millions of dollars in preparation for this resource. We are working collaboratively with the federal government to make sure that the resource is shared disproportionately higher to Newfoundland and Labrador.

When I say disproportionately, I say that with my tongue in my cheek, because we are well deserving of a significant majority share of that resource based not so much on historical attachment because this, of course, has been a

fishery that has been closed for 25 years. We are doing so because we're earning that keep; we're earning that place by doing scientific information, investigation and research on the resource; we're building up the socio-economic capacity to be able to take full advantage of the resource and we are participating and encouraging Indigenous partners to participate in that resource.

I was very particularly delighted that the former minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada came to the West Coast, came to the Bay of Islands and signed a formal declaration that the Qalipu First Nation, Mi'kmaq First Nation, would indeed be a significant beneficiary of that resource; that they intend to use to partner with processing operations and with local fishermen in the local area.

On the issue of agriculture, Mr. Speaker – we're delighted what's happening in the fishery and I'm pretty proud of some of the things that are making a difference there. We're seeing other positive signs, whether it be the Labrador Gem Seafoods operation in Ramea. Incredible operation, a very small footprint in the past, but producing value-added seafood for the world marketplace. I am delighted with that.

Mr. Speaker, since I have the floor and the absolute undivided attention of every Member of the House, I'd like to speak about the pellet plant industry of our province. It's been spoken of earlier that we are investing significantly in pellets in our province by encouraging a biomass conversion opportunity for public buildings. What a difference that is compared to the previous strategy of putting next to \$20 million into a single operation which has never produced a pellet in its history. I might take that back. I think it did produce about five pounds of pellets.

Our government offered an RFP to an existing pellet producer in Central Newfoundland in Summerford –

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

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

The noise level in the House is a little high. I'd like to hear what the Member has to say.

The hon. the Member for Corner Brook.

**MR. BYRNE:** I thank you for the protection, Mr. Speaker, but I'm confident I have the undivided attention of every Member of this House.

When we invested we took a decision, a different tack, a different strategy to develop the pellet industry in our province. What we did is we partnered with an existing pellet manufacturer under an RFP basis. We put forward an opportunity to be able to supply biomass conversion of public buildings far cheaper than the \$20 million invested, which never produced one pellet. Oh no, again, sorry, I take that back. It produced five pounds of pellets. What we're doing is we're partnering directly with existing industry to be able to create a market opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, why this is important goes beyond just simply supplying one operation with the ability to create more jobs in Central Newfoundland and Labrador. What makes this so important is it does two things. Well, it does several things: One, it fights climate change; secondly, it supplies a secondary market for small diameter wood, or lower value wood, a market which was normally pulpwood, which now, of course, with the closure of two paper mills, two Abitibi mills in 2008 and 2009, those two paper mills now, there is less of a demand for pulpwood.

Sawmills, as we know, Mr. Speaker, are very dependent on the synergistic relationship between the paper industry and the sawmills to be able to supply an exchange of sawlogs and pulpwood. With the closure of those two paper mills back in the previous decade, we knew that we had to find a better marketplace for that small-diameter wood. Well, pellets are one of those such markets. It creates greater stability for the forest industry. How does that relate back to Corner Brook, Mr. Speaker? It makes the entire forest sector stronger.

It also goes without saying that when we supply this, we fight climate change; we create a secondary product for sawmills. But here's what we also do: We create a new opportunity in biomass conversion which is equally important. A whole lot of benefits come with that. You

know what, Mr. Speaker? We didn't do it by putting \$20 million into a plant that never produced one pound of pellets – no, sorry, it produced five pounds of pellets. So that money was extremely well spent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on the agricultural front. As we know, the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, the Forestry and agrifoods branches, the headquarters are based in Corner Brook. Some of the richest farmlands that are available to us are, of course, on the Island portion of the province, generally, but a significant value on the West Coast and Central.

Mr. Speaker, the department is expanding its food security footprint by leaps and bounds for each and every one of us. Things such as the Wooddale centre for excellence, centre of innovation for forestry and agrifoods, the Transplant Program producing literally millions and millions of additional pounds of vegetables and literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional revenue for farmers. It's quite extraordinary. You know, Mr. Speaker, it's really important that opportunity not be wasted or those vegetable transplants not be wasted.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, we can speak at length about all the different innovations that have occurred in agriculture. Each and every one of those have a direct link and advantage for the City of Corner Brook because as a supply centre for so much of the area, the region around Corner Brook, including the forestry and agriculture sector and the fishery sector – but we recognize, this government recognizes that rural Newfoundland and Labrador, coastal Newfoundland and Labrador, agricultural Newfoundland and Labrador, they stand on their own two feet. Those areas deserve to be invested in.

That's why this government, as we saw in the main Estimates of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture which passed unanimously by all Members of this House – it was just a glowing tale of endorsement for the government's position on our resource industries. It really, really does speak to where our province is going. We're investing in our cities but we're also investing in our rural communities, our rural economy and it's making a huge difference.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you and all Members of this House for the undivided attention which has been bequeathed to me.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Seeing no further speakers, is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that the report of the Resource Committee be concurred in.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, Report of the Resource Estimates Committee, carried.

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

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

I call from the Order Paper, Order 6, second reading of Bill 44.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that this bill be now read a second time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 44, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2." (Bill 44)

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

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

This bill has been announced in the budget. There will be a lowering of gas tax by two cents, Mr. Speaker. It is a one-line change, so it's not a big change to the act. It's more making reference to the fact that we are decreasing the provincial gasoline tax by two cents a litre.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure that we're competitive in our tax system. We are constantly looking at the tax that we apply to people; we look at what other jurisdictions are doing. We have convened, as you know, an Independent Tax Review Committee. They made their report in late 2017. We constantly survey and make sure that we are competitive. Very, very important and essential, besides having a fair tax system, that we also have a competitive tax system. We have surveyed our colleagues across the country, looked at where we want to position ourselves. This would make us, indeed, the middle of the pack.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I found it very interesting that it's been decades that the provincial government has had the tax where it is. I think it has been at least 25 years had the same level of tax on gasoline. Now we're moving to a lower amount of 14.5 cents and that is exactly what we're doing here.

This is a very important tax change and one that I said was announced in the – I'm just making sure I'm not missing something, Mr. Speaker. It certainly is important to continue to look at other jurisdictions, making sure that we remain competitive. This will have, I think, a good effect for the people of the province as we continue to lower our tax system, lower the rates on gasoline. That is why we're suggesting it in this budget.

There are other puts and takes, of course, throughout the budget that we'll be discussing in the days to come, but I think I have support in this House. I know I have support for the entire budget, so they must be supportive, of course, of lowering this gasoline tax from 16.5 to 14.5 cents. Again, it's a simple, small change in the act to a particular section, paragraph 51(e) of the *Revenue Administration Act*, to lower the gasoline tax to 14.5.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll allow my colleagues to speak and then move into Committee for any questions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**MR. WAKEHAM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for her opening remarks.

It is always good, of course, when we see our taxes going down. In this case, the gas tax going down by two cents a litre, but the elephant in the room is, of course, the relating increase in the carbon tax, which we'll have a lot of time to talk about at a future time. The carbon tax is mandated to increase to \$30 a ton; it's currently at \$20 a ton. That effectively means that the carbon tax on gasoline will be increasing by 2.21 cents per litre. As a result of that the net impact is an actual increase in tax on gas by 0.21 cents per litre, not a decrease.

My hon. colleague for Mount Pearl North alluded earlier today about the carbon tax and its impact on people and whether or not we see the benefits of the carbon tax. I'm not sure if we've been able to measure actually how much carbon has been reduced since the carbon tax was first implemented but, again, that's a discussion we will have at a later time when we debate the impact of the carbon tax.

In the meantime, this is pretty straightforward in this particular section, as the minister alluded to. I'll end my comments with that and we will wait for the next one on the carbon tax.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Just speaking for the record on this, I'd like to echo my colleague's comments from Stephenville - Port au Port.

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

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

**MS. COFFIN:** How he points out that this is simply one part of a two-part change in the tax on gasoline. The net effect would be that the price of gasoline will go up at the pumps. That, of course, is going to be a deterrent to you buying more gasoline.

However, we do support part one of this tax, decreasing the tax in an attempt to offset an additional higher carbon tax. You have the support of the New Democratic caucus. I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Somebody said you're going to have to be faster. I doubt that's going to happen.

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

**MR. LANE:** No, the minister says it's definitely not going to happen. Anyway, there's not a whole lot, really, that can be said about it other than what has been said.

It all sounds good to say that we're going to be reducing the gas tax by two cents per litre. I will be interested to see – because one of the things that happens in the House of Assembly all the time, a lot of times when the minister is making a Ministerial Statement, shortly thereafter there will be a news release. It will be basically a cut and paste of the Ministerial Statement. Also, a lot of times in the House of Assembly when something gets announced or something gets done, you'll see a news release go out.

I'm just going to be really curious tomorrow morning, if not tonight, when the news release goes out, will the news release say that we're going to have a net increase of 0.21 cents per litre on gasoline or is there going to be a news

release that's going to be put out to say that government lowers the gas tax by two cents a litre but then neglects to mention the fact that they're going to be upping it on the carbon tax side? I'll be very curious to see how the communications personnel rolls that one out. That'll be great to see and I'm sure we'll all be looking forward to that.

Anyway, with that said, obviously, I think we're all going to support it. I do understand what the government is doing. I give them credit in one sense because let's face it, we were going to be stuck with a carbon pricing plan by the feds. This is something that's really being forced down the throats of all Canadians. Something that a lot of Members of this House of Assembly, I know, and the people across the country have a real concern about. I really don't believe the carbon tax is doing anything to deal with the polluters. I think they should have went after polluters as opposed to just creating tax on the whole population. At the end of day, if I have to drive my car from A to B, I still have to drive it whether I'm putting extra money in the government coffers under any kind of tax or not, it's going to happen anyway.

I've always seen this whole carbon tax as nothing but a money grab, to be honest with you. That's just my personal opinion. With that said, if the province was going to have it forced down their throat one way or the other, they chose to go this route. I guess in fairness they are going to reduce the gas tax side to make up the difference, or most of the difference, not all but most of the difference on the carbon tax side. It is going to be a small increase. As I say, I certainly look forward to that news release tomorrow and what that's going to say about the gas tax.

I will support the bill, just the same.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

If the hon. the Minister of Finance speaks now, she'll close the debate.

**MS. COADY:** Just looking around to make sure I'm not cutting off any of my colleagues.

Probably the most expeditious we've been in the House of Assembly.

I want to thank –

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

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

**MS. COADY:** – the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port, the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi and Mount Pearl - Southlands and I can assure the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands there'll be no press release in the morning.

I just want to make sure that the people that are listening today do understand that this is a lowering of the provincial gas tax under the *Revenue Administration Act* and that's what we're debating here this evening. I think I have the support of the House. We've already addressed what we need to address, Mr. Speaker, so I won't belabour this.

I know a number of Members commented about how there will be an increase in the carbon tax. That will be debated and discussed, of course, in a separate resolution coming before the House in the next number of days and we can have a hearty discussion at that point in time around the difference between what the gasoline tax is from a provincial perspective and what the federally mandated carbon tax is. But the Members of the House are correct: There will be a slight increase due to the change in carbon tax.

I'll leave it there, Mr. Speaker. I'll take any questions that are required. I thank the Members of the House of Assembly for their attention to this matter and for their support.

Thank you.

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

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

The motion is that Bill 44 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 (Barnes):** A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2. (Bill 44)

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

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

**MR. CROCKER:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 44)

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

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

I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 44.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.



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

**Committee of the Whole**

**CHAIR (P. Parsons):** Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 44, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2." (Bill 44)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

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

**CHAIR:** Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

**CLERK:** An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2. (Bill 44)

**CHAIR:** Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report the bill carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**MR. CROCKER:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 44.

**CHAIR:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the Committee rise?

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 Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

**MS. P. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 44, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2, without amendment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have directed her to report Bill 44 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**MR. CROCKER:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time?

**MR. CROCKER:** Tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

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

**MS. DEMPSTER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, given the hour of the day, that this House do now adjourn.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Is that motion seconded?

**MS. DEMPSTER:** Seconded by the Deputy Premier.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that this House does 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.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Nay.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Carried.

The House is now adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

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