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HANSARD

Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

Wednesday

October 19, 2022

The House met at 10 a.m.

Speaker (Bennett): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Government Business

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 2.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker

I move that in accordance with Standing Order 65, the Public Accounts Committee shall comprise of: the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port, the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay, the Member for Harbour Main, the Member for Labrador West, the Member for Mount Pearl North and the Member for St. George's - Humber.

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

S. CROCKER: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Finance.

SPEAKER: Okay, thank you.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 3.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Mr. Speaker, I move that notwithstanding Standing Order 9, this House shall not adjourn at 5 p.m. today, Wednesday, October 19, 2022, but shall continue to sit for to conduct government business and, if not earlier adjourned, the Speaker shall adjourn the House at midnight.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I call Order 16, second reading of Bill 15.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, that the Fair Registration Practices Act, Bill 15, be moved for second reading and debate.

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that Bill 15, Fair Registration Practices Act, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Ensure Fair Registration Practices by Regulatory Bodies." (Bill 15)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

This is a very timely and important bill, which I'm sure the House will be seized with, but will be very, very supportive of, especially as I outline the various components and the true intent of the bill.

There is nothing here that I think would result in negativity from any Member of the House, because we are in a particular situation, Mr. Speaker, where we recognize that we have a critical – we have a very important, very significant, shortfall in certain professions. In particular, health professions, but it is not exclusive to health professions, Mr. Speaker. We have a skills shortage in many, many areas.

We have an aging demographic in our province. I have spoken about this before, it needs to be spoken about again and it needs to be arrested and reversed. We need to arrest and reverse the reality that, according to the forecast, by the year 2028, 50 per cent of our population in Newfoundland and Labrador will be over the age of 55. In addition to having an older population, we have a skills shortage. Health professions being amongst them. Other technical professions, other high tech skills are also in relative short supply in certain fields.

So, Mr. Speaker, where do we get that talent? Where do we reverse that trend? We reverse it by training our own. That's one of the reasons we invest over \$150 million a year in training Newfoundlanders and Labradorians for the jobs and skills today, for the jobs and skills of tomorrow. We'll continue to do that. We have one of the most generous and proactive training programs in the country. But we also rely on a new source, and a very, very important source, which is immigration.

Mr. Speaker, it's been no secret that for many, many decades the population of Newfoundland and Labrador has been in relative decline. Ever since the 1970s, in fact, there's been a sweeping shift in the demographic, worsened with the moratorium in 1992, when many, many people left. But the core cause of our concern for a demographic right now is that we have more people passing away than we have babies being born. We have almost twice as many people passing away as we have babies being born. That's driving our population alone.

So we look to newcomers, Mr. Speaker. We look to newcomers to increase our population base, to increase our taxpayers, to increase the skills that are available to our economy and to our employers and within our workforce. So this bill supports that initiative.

There are many professions, Mr. Speaker, that rely on professional accreditations or licensure in order to be able to practice. Those professions where the scope of practice, the skills that are required to be able to be not only competent, but to be known to be competent, to be safe in practising those professions and to be highly professional. There are certain professions that require on a licensing process. Mr. Speaker, that's what this bill is all about, is recognizing foreign credentials, but recognizing fair practice in the recognition of foreign-trained newcomers and foreign credentials.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to say what this bill is not, because I think that will provide some comfort to Members who may be still curious. What this bill is not is an attack on the independence of self-regulating bodies in our province, within the 33 professions that are self-regulating. It's not an attack on self-regulation, in fact, the opposite. It's not an attempt by government to try to determine licensing requirements.

What it is, is the creation of certainty around a transparent, timely and fair registration practice. Now, Mr. Speaker, the bill itself speaks directly to what this is. In the bill, it explains that in clause 4: “A regulatory body has a duty to provide registration practices that are transparent, timely and fair.”

So I’ll take a step back and say that the power to regulate certain professions rests exclusively with this House. Under the Constitution, under this Legislature, we hold the power, the authority to regulate a profession. What this House has done is recognize that there may be greater value to delegating that authority out, so this House has passed several statutes that grant regulation or regulatory powers, registration powers for a registration process to self-governing bodies.

The power rests with this House, but we delegate it out because the result is more effective. But we still hold the responsibility, and the responsibility we still hold is that if we’re going to delegate this out, there needs to be some reasonable oversight that the process that is being delegated out, and that is the registration process, is fair, transparent and timely. That’s all that this bill is. It’s the core of this bill.

So what is a registration practice which I referred to? That’s captured within clause 2(f): “‘registration practices’ means the administrative steps taken to by a regulatory body to process an application for registration but does not include the standards and objective requirements set by a regulatory body to assess the qualifications of individuals applying for registration.”

This is not the government’s hand into the registration standards and objectives set by professionals. We recognize that those who are professionals that have an interest in maintaining high-quality professionalism and safety within their profession, they have a vested interest in making sure that the

registration practices are robust and meet that objective.

So what this bill does, it does not change the standards or objective requirements set by a regulatory body, but what it does do is it says, if you’re going to pronounce that you have a registration practice, that it must be done. If you’re going to articulate a set of rules, apply your own rules that you articulate in a fair, transparent and a timely way. So it’s not reaching into the standard; it’s just simply saying do it in a way which is fair-minded.

Mr. Speaker, we have newcomers who have been somewhat frustrated with the timing of a process, with the transparency of a process. We have an incredible set of self-regulating professions and self-regulating bodies in our province, Mr. Speaker, but there has been noted that occasionally there are frustrations or anxieties that are created that change people’s decisions as to whether or not they might come here or not.

This bill simply creates a method to make sure that the regulatory body performs in this way. That’s captured in clause 6 where it says in the bill: “A regulatory body shall ensure that (a) the requirements for registration are necessary for, or relevant to, the practice of the regulated profession; and” –in other words they’re not unnecessary barriers of entry – “(b) the criteria used in an assessment of qualifications is necessary to assess the competence in the practice of the regulated profession.”

So those three clauses, Mr. Speaker, I really ask Members to pay close attention to and read them a couples of times even. The entire bill is necessary and important but those three clauses and subclauses within those clauses really capture the essence of what is being done here, what is being proposed here. Again, what this bill is not, it’s not an attack on the independence of self-regulating bodies, it’s not an attack on

self-regulation itself and it's not an attempt for government to determine licensing requirements itself. That stays within the regulatory bodies, but it just simply says if you're going to set a standard, if you're going to set a regulatory practice and you're going to stand to your regulatory practice and make sure that it's done in a fair-minded, timely and transparent and accountable way.

Mr. Speaker, there are authorities that are granted within, remember. The authority to do this is exclusively held by this House but we have chosen, through statute, to delegate that authority to professional bodies. So that's what we've done and I think it's the right thing to do.

This Member or that Member should not necessarily be deciding who should be a geoscientist in our province; a registered, licensed, practising geoscientist.

Geoscientists should figure that out. They should come together as a body, as a professional organization, set their standards, apply their standards so that if somebody comes in with a foreign credential, a foreign education, foreign work experience, that they will assess that and then determine whether or not a licence for practising in Newfoundland and Labrador can be granted.

That's a smart thing to do, but we delegate that out. We could take that back if we wanted to, because constitutionally, it's our authority, it's our power of this House to do that. But we choose through statute to delegate that out. So this is what we make sure, if we're going to do that, it really is incumbent upon each and every one of us as Members of this House. If we're going to delegate this out, at least have the oversight of having a fair, transparent and timely process associated with those rules, those standards.

So, Mr. Speaker, the act will apply to select regulatory bodies. The regulated occupations covered under the act will

include: licensed practical nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social workers, medical laboratory technologists, respiratory therapists, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, clinical psychologists, advanced care paramedics and primary care paramedics, K-12 teachers. Some professions are not just outside of government; some are held inside of government.

The Department of Education is the regulator, the licensure of K-12 teachers and early childhood educators. Engineers will be covered. My department – Immigration, Population Growth and Skills – is responsible for heavy-duty equipment technicians, which is covered under this under the apprenticeship program. As well, Digital Government and Service NL is responsible for transport truck drivers, which is covered under this.

Mr. Speaker, we do this knowing that we've got to do this. We've got to have all hands on deck to make sure that we get the skills in the province, that there are not arbitrary, unnecessary barriers to bringing in the important skills, welcoming those skills into our province. We do so reflecting on the fact that government delegated this authority out for good reason. It's because while this Member and that Member may feel that they got some competence and expertise in understanding what a particular profession is, we don't have the best competence or experience in understanding what a profession is, so we delegate that to the professions and the professionals within them themselves.

So that is maintained in this bill. There is a compliance, so it sets up and the bill sets out sort of a process whereby the professions themselves have a responsibility to ensuring that this all happens. So we don't go in and say government will be over your shoulder at all times. It's the responsibility of the professional body, of the regulated body. They, under this statute, have the

responsibility to do this work. We will provide oversight to it; we'll make sure that the mechanisms are in place for that oversight.

Mr. Speaker, we consulted widely on this. I engaged in personal consultations with the registrars at colleges of the affected professions that went forward with further follow-up through written submissions by individual members. We met with the registrars and their executive directors. We met with a variety of different people. The consultations went on throughout the entire spring, summer and early fall, and we've now arrived at this legislation.

We think it meets a very specific need. It's not a solution in search of a problem. It's a solution to an identified problem that far too often the frustration that builds within newcomers about getting their credentials recognized is there. This makes sure that we have, all of us, all of us in our province, confidence in the process that safety must come first and foremost, always. That's why high standards are set, but through the registration practices themselves, that there are no unnecessary barriers that go beyond, that don't really provide additional value to the process itself.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's too, too, much more than I can say about this. I think I've answered most of the questions in an explanatory way. I know there will be further questions, but I would like to say that we have arrived at the point where the professions themselves are saying and saying loudly that we need more members of our profession; you, government, must act. You must act in collaboration with us, but you must act. This is government acting and I think it's the right thing to do.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Speaker.

It is indeed a pleasure to stand in this House this morning and represent the residents of the beautiful district and speak to Bill 15, *Fair Registration Practices Act*. I thank the minister for his opening words.

Speaker, the goal of this bill, Bill 15, is to speed up the registration process for 13 of the organizations that are outlined – many of them are self-governed currently – by holding them to time limits through compliance order with financial penalties for breaches. Many of these, but not all, are health care organizations.

Speaker, it is likely in response to news stories of late about registration delays impacting the availability of health care professions in certain disciplines. As the minister said this morning in his words, a significant shortfall in skilled professions. We are all seeing that, of course, in all our districts.

Seen in one way, this appears to be the hand of government ensuring the arm's-length professional organizations do their registrations with a certain specified time and to provide more transparency and additional registration options. The details are going to be forthcoming, I would hope, in the regulations.

Now, we have been in this House many times discussing many bills and, as one minister said, the meat is in the regulations. So we all know how important the regulations are and how important they are to each particular bill.

Speaker, every one of these organization, and there are 13 of them – we have 13 that are outlined in the bill – will have its own view on the implications for their organization. For the benefit of – as my colleague for Bonavista says – those watching from home, in Schedule A in the bill, the 13 are outlined as: professional engineers and geoscientists; early

childhood educators; Teachers' Certification Committee; Licensed Practical Nurses; College of Physicians and Surgeons; College of Registered Nurses; Council of Health Care Professionals; College of Social Workers; Pharmacy Board; Psychology Board; Paramedicine Regulation; Motor Registration Division; and the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board. So, Speaker, we have 13 groups and under Schedule B, four government departments that are going to be affected by this bill. That is important for us all to remember.

So one questions I do have, and the minister did speak to it briefly with respect to consultation, have each and every one of these groups been consulted? I know we've spoken to several bills this week. Yesterday, my colleague for Harbour Main asked many times about consultation and received very open-ended answers. That's one question that we do have and will come up later, of course, in Committee, with respect to consultation for the 13 groups under the four government departments.

If not, is it wise to send this legislation to a legislative review Committee for hearings with these groups and others? That's something that we have to ask ourselves with respect to those listed in Schedule A and depending on the level of consultation, as the minister said earlier.

Speaker, in principle, it seems reasonable to streamline processes. We are not adverse to that. In practice, it might create challenges for some, though. For some groups it might mean a heavier workload. But it will be important to see the regulations as soon as possible. And I'll go back to what I said earlier, the meat is in the regulations. We are looking forward to that as soon as possible as they would come out to see those regulations and to determine the implications and such.

Some of the regulations may vary according to the group's circumstances. As I said,

there are 13 there. They all will have variances, no doubt, and it will be important to make sure that each and every one of those 13 groups are dealt with specifically.

Speaker, we see both sides of this, we certainly do. We have to ask ourselves: Will speeding up the process compromise registration decisions or jeopardize one's health when it comes to those groups under the Department of Health and Community Services? On the other hand, will failing to speed up the process jeopardize people's health by denying people timely access to professional care they need? We see both sides of that circumstance. So that's something that again we will discuss later today and, of course, questions in Committee, and to weigh out both sides of that case.

Speaker, it is understandable that health care organizations will be concerned about the implications of this particular bill, Bill 15. Earlier this week we debated Bill 1, which was the bill for doctors and represents a major shift in self-governed professions. I come back to the consultation part of it. I'll go to the slide deck that was presented for the briefing. It says: following consultation review of emerging best practices across Canada. So we will certainly ask questions with respect to the consultation, with respect to those best practices, and to see what was brought forward to bring this legislation here to this hon. House.

Keeping it relevant to the bill with respect to consultation, I do know that when we dealt with Bill 1, since that has come before the House, the president of the NLMA has certainly said, "It is unfortunate that despite requests for consultation from the NLMA the government did not engage us on a discussion of the new regulatory approach." It says, "Its contents ... of the ministerial regulation was a complete surprise."

So I do hope as we go forward today, as we discuss this bill and we go into Committee, that we don't see any further surprises. It's

unsettling to hear that from the president of the NLMA with respect to Bill 1 and I do hope that we don't have a repeat of surprises with respect to those who are affected by this bill, the 13 groups with respect to the shift in self-governed professions.

Speaker, with respect to it being good or bad, that will depend on how it's handled going forward.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

J. WALL: Thank you, Speaker.

I appreciate that, Speaker, very much.

Speaker, we're all in agreement that the public does want something done about this. We understand what the minister is talking about with respect to people coming here who have accreditations that could help Newfoundland and Labrador and the people that they were going to serve. We understand that. But we want to make sure that we don't lose any quality in the safeguards and the process. The minister did speak to that briefly this morning. We are hopeful that the safeguards will not be lost in this process going forward to protect all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Speaker, with things happening so quickly and so much left to the regulations – and we all know how important the regulations are. We can go back to several bills with regulations that we discussed here. We have many health care professional organizations right now who are scrambling and many questions left unanswered. So that's why I'm looking forward to getting into Committee to have some good questions put to the minister and his staff. We are looking for some quality answers when it comes to the questions that the organizations have.

It feels like this is something that could go either way with respect to in a better direction and I hope and please God not off the rails whatsoever. So it's something that we're looking forward to discussing.

Speaker, we do see a problem when it comes to the registration of health care professionals. With respect to medical errors or perhaps even allegations of medical errors, they're inevitable in any system. When these happen in the future will people be saying in retrospect, has government lowered the bar without proper consultation of all these groups? Again, consultation is the key and we are looking for answers for that.

Is government ensuring that the safeguards are not going to be compromised? This is something again the minister spoke briefly on this morning. The safeguards are paramount when it comes to the 13 groups that are represented in Bill 15 and how we're going to go forward with the regulations.

One thing that government, of course, has to be aware of at all times, and of course this hon. House, is about malpractice caused by the rushed registration process.

Speaker, we do have many questions when it comes to this in the Opposition and, of course, we realize it's, as the minister said this morning, not an attack on self-regulating bodies but we are not looking at the particular attack. We are looking at going forward in the proper manner with respect to proper regulation and having those 13 groups, first and foremost when it comes to the proper regulations and licensing requirements.

Speaker, I look forward to when we get into Committee for this. We'll have many questions to ask the minister and we look forward to the debate.

Thank you very much, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

One of the things, and I brought this up before, with regards to speaking to newcomers who have a skill set, whether some professional training and who are looking to practice their skills here, the comments that were made I thought were reasonable in terms of many understood that they would need to have some verification or certification of their skills in order to practice here. They weren't looking to circumvent the process. Their issue was just trying to get any communication from, whether it was the regulatory body or a government department on it. So it came down to – for them the frustration was in the communication piece. I am assuming here that this will address this in some way, shape or form.

Certainly, the impetus of drafting the legislation arose as a result of consultations held with newcomers in July and August 2022 and it certainly involved the Association of New Canadians, which municipalities and a virtual element through engageNL and professional regulatory bodies. I am assuming, certainly, for new Canadians, the ANC were able to give a very thorough explanation of the people who they represent were facing. So the bill is a result of this consultation.

Its goal is to remove some of the barriers for registration for newcomers. I think for newcomers who want to make Newfoundland and Labrador their home, this is going to welcome. For those who are people here in this province where we might be crying out for certain professions and professional skills, this is going to be welcome as well. The key thing is that there's a balance in terms of ensuring that the skill sets are up to the level where we

need them and also that it's respectful of those who have that professional training.

I think the key thing is to move it along. Less speed, more haste, and move ahead with this in terms of making sure that the people who come are able to have their qualifications certified and move on.

Certainly, the regulatory bodies identified in Schedule A are for a profession of which is in huge shortage of skilled labour and have been identified. It would apply to refugees or immigrants from war zones or underdeveloped regions, where obtaining some of the pertinent records might create insurmountable barriers for registration especially if you've had to leave an area suddenly and without any planning.

It commits regulatory bodies to provide registration practices that are transparent, timely and fair. Key word here certainly for me is transparent and timeliness and fairness. However, other jurisdictions with the same legislation also had a commitment to objectivity and impartiality and we wonder, too, why these values were not included in our legislation. We understand certainly that there's no attempt to be subjective or partial, but nevertheless, it would be worthwhile to consider that.

Objectivity, of course, based on fact and not influenced by personal beliefs or feelings, or political feelings, impartiality to the fact of not supporting any of the sides involved in an argument. So that's a question that we would have.

Schedule A lists all those organizations whose members' skills are in high demand in the labour market, and it's not an exhaustive list of all the regulatory bodies created by the statute in this province. In the interest of fairness and transparency, it would be good for the department to continue consultations with the remaining public bodies and secure their accession to this legislation.

Now in some other jurisdictions with similar legislation, including Alberta, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, all have provisions that recognize interprovincial trade commitments or the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. We're wondering why this bill also does not contain such wording.

On the whole though – and maybe those questions can certainly be addressed when we move into Committee – the bill does not seem problematic, despite the fact that we do have some questions, we will support this. The key thing here, too, for us comes back to the communication piece with newcomers who are seeking to have their skills or their professional skills recognized so that they can get on with practising in their scope of practice, to which they've been trained so that they're not relegated to doing duties that have nothing to do with their skillset.

Thank you, Speaker.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I'd echo some of my colleague next to me issues in terms of what he's raised, but also I'm in agreement that this is timely bill, there's no doubt about it, but we will have questions.

It's addressing the shortfall in many areas. It's addressing our aging demographic. It's addressing our skill shortages and so on. So I don't think anyone is going to argue with that.

The minister responsible, as he always does, gives such an eloquent presentation on this and covered a lot of great things. I've worked for the minister before and I've held him up many times with data that he should have and advised him appropriately.

G. BYRNE: (Inaudible.)

P. DINN: That's exactly right.

So when I look at this, the improvements in foreign qualification recognition, of course, there was consultation done on this. It's pretty extensive from what I was told by his staff. I thank them for their briefing. It was very well done and informative. They spoke to summer consultations, which happened in June or July. There were written invites. Some of this was done in partnership with the Association for New Canadians. There were a number of virtual sessions and, as well, feedback through engageNL.

I'm looking at the list and I stand to be corrected, but I believe most of the groups on this list, the associations, the agencies, were listed as the result of being areas in which there was skills shortage shortfall, not due to anything they were doing right or wrong in this respect in terms of licensure and approval within their organizations. So, hopefully, that's the case. It was done simply on the basis that there was a skills shortage in these areas and need to be addressed.

I do agree that there are many people who come in from away, Ukrainians, as an example, but anyone with foreign credentials; there's always been an issue when it comes to foreign credential recognition or foreign qualification recognition. To the fact that of course there's a separate committee or area in terms under the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to deal with that, as there is one to deal with labour mobility.

So that has always been an issue and each of these organizations, I'm sure, follow a very, very good process to make sure that the standards of their occupations are upheld and that they go through a process that can be as quickly as possible. We all know there are always hurdles.

As this piece of legislation was designed to do, it says here that the consultation process is intended to (inaudible) barriers to

foreign qualification recognition in Newfoundland and Labrador. It addresses that many professions, especially in regulated occupations, face the challenges of full licensure resulting in lengthy and costly processes.

As I noted earlier in the week on talking on another bill, some of these agencies, some of the delays in a process are not necessarily their doing. It's maybe to the fact that the documentation that's required to come in from an individual may be delayed or may not be obtainable, depending on if they fled a country that's at war.

So I do question how you would enforce a process of timeliness if there are those hurdles that do present themselves. I would hope that in administering this piece of legislation that that would be a main consideration as well. Because as we know some of these delays are not the fault of the organization and they need to be recognized as well.

Again, as the minister said, this is not in any way taking away the standard that is set by these agencies. It's trying to ensure that they're open, accountable and transparent in the process. I would hope that these that are loaded in appendix A, I would hope that they would already have an open, transparent and accountable process. I would hope that right now they're on this list because they're in areas that in are in very short supply in here and areas that we need to bring more in.

I go back to this is not just immigration, it's not the individuals who come from another country, we also see it within Canada. Within Canada it's not so easy to move from one province to another in some occupations. So we need to look at that. Of course, we have the Canadian Free Trade Agreement in that respect and that would have to be in concert with the Canadian Free Trade Agreement and, in particular, Chapter 7 on Labour Mobility. There are

other pieces of legislation out there that enshrine into these organizations, these agencies their ability to set the standards.

I'll read for the record from the *Labour Mobility Implementation Act*, it's a piece of our provincial legislation just speaking to regulatory authorities and the definition of it under section 2(1), and it says, "regulatory authority', in relation to the province or another Canadian jurisdiction, means a person or other body, whether or not a governmental entity, that has, by an Act or regulation, been granted authority to set or implement measures related to one or more of the following: (i) the establishment of occupational standards or certification requirements; (ii) the assessment of the qualifications of workers against established occupational standards or certification requirements, and (iii) the official recognition that an individual meets established occupational standards or certification requirements."

So what that tells me is exactly what the minister has said, that this is a process to increase transparency on a process so that individuals coming into this province meet the standard. There are many pieces of legislation that are there to ensure that the regulatory bodies are ensuring that the standards are there and this is a process.

There will be questions when we go to Committee, but right now I see this as a plus and moving forward hopefully we'll be able to generate some more individuals who can get through this process in a more efficient manner but also be meeting to the full standard that's required.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'll be supporting Bill 15 as well. I'm sure everybody in the House of Assembly will.

Mr. Speaker, this is really about – while there are other professions listed here, social workers, teachers, engineers and so on that have regulatory bodies, I think the impetus for this, as we all would recognize, is the state of our health care system. So anything that we can do to try to address that, to try to bring in professionals to fill the many positions that exist within our province, to try to deal with the crisis that we currently have in our health care system, I think, the better.

I would be remiss if I didn't say that while I certainly support this and I support the idea of trying to recruit physicians and nurses and other health care professionals, whether it be from other parts of the country or whether it be from other countries and around the globe, I have to say that it's pretty sad. It is pretty sad – it's not just sad, it's outrageous, actually – when you see stories and you hear from people who have graduated at our medical school at Memorial University not even being offered a job, being recruited by other provinces.

There are many stories out there, but to have a constituent of mine from Southlands currently practising medicine in Halifax to call me up and say: Mr. Lane, I have to tell you this. I went through MUN medical school. I graduated this year, as you know, and not one person approached me or any of my colleagues from the Department of Health, from Eastern Health, from Western Health, from Labrador-Grenfell Health, not a soul, but we were all being lobbied very heavily by all of the Atlantic provinces and Quebec and offered jobs.

I made the effort, myself, on my own initiative to contact Eastern Health and say, I'm graduating. I'm a Newfoundlander. I just graduated from MUN. I'm looking for a job. And not even to get a return call and then to make a second attempt and not even get a return call. His colleague, another girl from

St. John's did the same thing. Not even get a return call. It's absolutely atrocious.

And while I am glad that the Minister of Health –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the Member to stay relevant to this bill.

P. LANE: Yes, Speaker.

The point I'm making – I'm supporting this bill, I'm just saying that it's unfortunate that we have such a great need for this bill.

I was just reflecting on that point that we have our own students here, MUN medical students, not even being offered jobs and now we're trying to come up with ways and mechanisms and so on to try to make it easier to recruit physicians and nurses and so on from other provinces and other parts of the world, which I don't have a problem with, which I support.

It's not about not supporting that, it's about the fact that we've gotten to the point that we have this urgency to do so, when our own children have left and gone to other jurisdictions who were qualified, educated and wanted to work here. That was my point.

Whoever was responsible for recruitment – I know we have a new office now, which is great, but whoever was responsible for that, they should be fired, prior to this. Whoever was responsible in those health care authorities for recruitment and retention, they shouldn't be there anymore, we should be filling those positions.

Anyway, I digress.

E. JOYCE: It's true.

P. LANE: It is true.

As I said, this bill, to my mind, is creating – I think the only concern anyone would have with this is that in creating this urgency or more urgency to recruit and retain – or to recruit, I guess – primarily physicians and health care professionals, in particular, although it also applies to teachers and engineers as well, but primarily when we're talking health care, the only concern anyone would have, I think, is ensuring that while we're trying to eliminate hurdles and so on, at the same time, we're going to maintain standards for the safety of the people, of the patients. That would be the only concern.

Now, I have to believe, because I think my colleague from Topsail sort of brought up that point, but I really have to believe that these licensing agencies, like the College of Physicians and Surgeons, as an example, I really do not believe for the life of me that they're going to say because we have to get this done right away, we're going to skip steps and allow people to come in here to practice medicine who aren't qualified. I really don't think that's going to happen, I really don't.

I don't think any of those professional bodies would allow that to happen. But by the same token, we also don't want people dragging their feet, and that's really what this is about, I think. We don't want people dragging their feet.

We've seen it, we've seen it in any number of bureaucracies; I've seen it. We've seen here in provincial government. How many times have we had a constituent contact us over a particular issue where they were awaiting some sort of a benefit or a response or something and nobody got back to them, or they didn't receive what they were supposed to? After you make some calls and rattle some cages you find out it was on someone's desk who forgot to put it on someone else's desk, or it had to go to someone's desk to sign off on it before they could process it. Such and such went on annual leave and after they went from annual leave, they took another position and

a new person moved in and blah, blah, blah, and then things get lost and the urgency is not there. That stuff happens all the time. That's why our phones are ringing in our offices all the time – a lot of times because of things like that.

So I'm sure that those same types of things can happen in any body, not just government. But it can happen in these offices and regulating bodies as well, I'm sure, where things get set aside, things get forgotten about, things get misplaced, or maybe in some cases, the urgency is just not there. I'll get to it when I get to it, that type of thing. I'm sure that happens. It happens everywhere.

So having some oversight, because I'm sure that these professional bodies will continue to operate as they always have. Nothing's changed in that regard. They will continue to do the work that they do in a professional manner. But in the circumstance, which we've heard stories about that can happen from time to time, not saying that this is an ongoing regular occurrence, but from time to time, if someone is sort of dragging their feet, or someone is being somewhat unreasonable or not providing information in a timely matter, or not making decisions in a timely matter, that ability is there for that bit of oversight to sort of intervene and say what's going on with this particular case, this is not reasonable. At least that individual who is trying to get licensed has somewhere they can go, someone who can just sort of make that call to say what's going on with this person?

That's not going to be happening on a daily basis, because I'm sure in most cases things are working just fine. But at least it does provide that little bit of a push, that little bit of oversight, adds a little bit more urgency not to push people through who are not qualified, but to make sure things are done in an efficient way as possible. Not to be creating hurdles where they don't exist, not to be delaying things unnecessarily, not

to be casting things aside and sort of, out of sight, out of mind, but just getting things done, basically. That's all this is doing, that little push.

I don't see anything wrong with that. Personally, I don't see anything wrong with it. I'm glad that apparently the minister said that he has consulted with everyone at this point. It's disappointing that the NLMA said that they knew nothing about it. But the minister can speak to that, I guess. But seemingly he's saying that for all the governing bodies, like the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Registered Nurses' Union, and all that stuff, he's talked to them all, they all know about this and seemingly they're okay with it. If that's the case, I'll support it and I'll support the bill. I think it's another small step in trying to address, in particular, the shortage we have in health care professionals in this province.

Again, I know it also applies to engineers, teachers and other professions there as well, but let's face it, at the end of the day this is about the health care crisis. I would conclude by just saying, once again, for the record, while I do support this, it is very unfortunate and ridiculous, actually, that we're having to rely and push ourselves down this road while, at the same time, we're watching our own children leave the province who are quite qualified to take some of these jobs but nobody is bothering to do their job to recruit them.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Speaker.

I rise here today and I am very pleased to say that we will be supporting this bill, the *Fair Registration Practices Act* and there are a number of reasons for that, Speaker. First of all, I would like to maybe provide some background and context.

In terms of what the act really is getting to, I think we need to first of all understand, perhaps, some distinctions between what professional organizations are, what regulatory organizations are, professional associations and as well when we look at the specific act, it applies and obliges regulatory bodies to do certain things.

So first of all just looking at what professional associations are. Really what professional associations do is they represent the interests of their memberships. When we look at regulatory organizations or professional regulatory organizations, they delegate authority to govern their profession by the provincial government and work within a certain regulatory framework which is established by government. So regulatory organizations have certain authorities and certain powers, like to set entry requirements and standards of practice. They assess applicant's qualifications and credentials. They can certify, register or license qualified applicants. They can even discipline members.

I think that's important to put that in context and as well when we look at this specific act and it applies to regulatory bodies, again, they set the standards of practice. They set qualifications. As well, qualifications and standards of practice for a profession, an occupation or a trade.

So I think that's important to look at and to understand because we need to see that these professional bodies and occupational bodies have certain powers. I think the first thing that I find interesting to note, and I was glad to hear that the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills pointed out this is not an attack on self-regulators.

The minister also said that he specifically looked at section 6. He described section 6 as really the essence of this act. He indicated that a regulatory body shall ensure that the requirements for registration are necessary. That's set out in the act. Also,

and I think this section in particular is important, 6(b), which says that a regulatory body shall ensure that the criteria used in the assessment of qualifications is necessary to assess the competence in the practice of the regulated profession.

So what does that mean, Speaker? It means that as I've stated, when we look at what the responsibilities and the powers and the obligations of regulatory bodies are, it's that they first set out the criteria which is used in assessing qualifications. Now, what I think is very important to make sure that doesn't happen here is that we know that the government is going to be overseeing this. It's very important that that responsibility and power is left and remains with the regulatory body.

So I just wonder, and perhaps this is something that the minister can address, perhaps in Committee, is there are assurances that government will not be deep diving or going into the powers of the regulatory body and it comes to the criteria that they've established because it does say that a regulatory body is being prescribed. They shall – it's mandatory that the criteria that they used is necessary.

So how is that going to be assessed by government? Are they going to go in to looking at the criteria? Are they going to say this criteria is not good enough? Are they going to start to dictate what credentials a body must have for someone to apply?

I just need to know that there are assurances that they government isn't going to be overreaching or stepping into what really is the authority of these regulatory bodies. So that is perhaps the only qualification that I have when I say that I support the legislation here and I would just like to see what the minister has to say about that, to provide assurances that the powers of these regulatory bodies will be protected.

I also find it very important that the minister has indicated that, really, what is of essence here is transparency, timeliness and fairness. So I think that is key. I think that is very relevant here. These principles are very important. When I hear the minister say that it goes to the application of the rules, so the rules that these regulatory bodies have, have to be applied transparently, in a timely manner and fairly, that is good. I think that is a very good thing. There is no one, I don't think, would disagree with the importance of those principles being paramount in any kinds of rules or registration practices that are in place.

Transparency, of course we're all for that; we need to see openness; we need to see visibility and that registration practices are easy to access by people who wish to access them, that they're timely. What does timeliness mean? It means that it is efficient. We have to support practices that are more efficient. I would say that I wish we could see that in our Crown lands application process, for example, but I digress.

Fairness – we need to see fairness. We need to see that the rules apply equally to all and that there is equal opportunity for everyone that wishes to apply and wishes to register in terms of these regulatory bodies.

Another point that I think is important to raise is the piece about how important this legislation is, just in terms of the fact that it will help, for example, internationally educated people practise their profession in our Province of Newfoundland and Labrador sooner. I think that is something that has to be applauded. We know that there are skilled workers already here and others who are looking to come here.

This, hopefully, streamlining and this removing of the unnecessary red tape, the unnecessary red tape that bogs things down, that will encourage people to come. We know that there's difficulty getting foreign credentials recognized here. We acknowledge that that has been a problem,

Speaker, and that leaves individuals with limited options. So again, we support anything that goes to enhancing and encouraging and making registration practices more efficient.

So the intent of the legislation, one cannot, I don't think, disagree with the importance of it. Again, the principles of transparency, the principles of timeliness, efficiency, the principles of fairness, streamlining practices, eliminating red tape, I think those are all good things.

This legislation, I might add as well, Speaker, mirrors similar legislation in other provinces. This legislation has been in place, it's been tested and tried and has been found to be effective in other provinces in our country. So I think that's also an important point to note.

Speaker, frankly, this legislation is very good. Also, as the minister has pointed out, it's important, it's key to meeting labour force demands that we have. The legislation will give people the opportunity to use their learned skills sooner. And it will, hopefully, the intent is, grow our population. We all know that that is important and necessary in today's society.

On that note, Speaker, I do say that I support the legislation. It's in principle very good legislation. The concern about the oversight and what level of oversight is going to take place, as long as there's no overreaching by government, of course, then this is something that we can support. The obligations of the regulatory bodies have been set out clearly and the powers and duties of the minister have also been set out.

The one point I do want to make, though, as far as the powers and duties of the minister, it does authorize, this act, this fair practices act authorizes the minister to review registration assessment practices of regulatory bodies who assess qualifications, and I mentioned that before. I just want to

make sure that their power to review; I don't understand what the extent of that will be. So perhaps the minister can give some examples as to exactly how he will go about reviewing these assessment practices of regulatory bodies.

So that's about the only thing that I would like clarification on. Other than that, I think this is a good bill and, for the reasons that I've stated, we support it.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Thank you.

If the hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills speaks now, he will close the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I do appreciate the feedback that hon. Members have provided me. I take great comfort in the fact that all of the questions that have been posed have very specific and straightforward answers to be able to provide. I'll take some time in Committee to go into more detail, but please do, indeed, read all clauses of the bill.

I'll start with the hon. Member who just spoke last, and her eloquent interventions. In terms of communications it was said: What does communications mean? What exactly is the hand of government onto the regulatory practice, the regulatory authorities? Clause 5 speaks to this. In terms of communications, clause 5 is very specific. It says "A regulatory body shall provide information about the following matters, in a clear and understandable form" to the – I'm adding this – licensing applicant.

It says: “(a) the regulatory body’s registration practices and internal review processes; (b) the amount of time that the registration process usually takes; (c) the requirements for registration, any alternative means of meeting any of the requirements and the criteria used to assess whether the requirements have been met; (d) any support the regulatory body provides to applicants or other available supports for applicants of which the regulatory body is aware, with respect to the registration process; (e) any fees relating to registration; and (f) other matters prescribed in the regulations.”

So, Mr. Speaker, it really does not put its hand on the operative standard. It puts its hand on how the operative standard is communicated and applied. Clause 2 tells us in subsection (f): “registration practices’ means the administrative steps taken by a regulatory body to process an application for registration but does not include the standards and objective requirements set by a regulatory body to assess the qualifications of individuals applying for registration.”

So the act is very prescriptive, very clear as to what exactly is the extent of the hand of government in all of this.

On a consultation point of view, yes, Mr. Speaker, we consulted extensively. I’ll provide more details at Committee stage, but I indeed spoke myself with the registrars and heads of regulatory bodies, and that was followed up by other consultations with my staff and resulted in a series of both in-person sessions, direct invitations and bilateral meetings. In fact, we had direct invitations and bilateral meetings with 13 provincial regulatory bodies, all of whom are now subject to the act. We’ve had virtual sessions; we’ve had engageNL platform sessions and electronic submissions. So yes, the consultations were very, very extensive. I think that was properly covered.

I’ll leave this before I take my place. Here are some barriers, some examples of barriers faced by internationally educated newcomers to Newfoundland and Labrador. There are some internationally educated nurses, Mr. Speaker, educated abroad, who’ve had to actually return to their country of origin to complete their employment hours in order to maintain currency for licensing here in Newfoundland and Labrador. So these are the kinds of things that we really want to work with the colleges, the registrars, the regulating associations and bodies, to work with them for them to recognize. Because that’s what the act does. It’s not for government to assess the process; it’s for the regulatory agencies and bodies themselves to assess this and we’ll monitor that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think I feel very confident and comfortable. I’m very appreciative that the words spoken on the floor of the House this morning suggest that there will be potentially unanimous consent to this particular bill. I’m sure that will be decided once we go through Committee stage. But I think there’s a strong appreciation for the merits of this particular bill.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that Bill 15 be now read a second time.

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

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, ‘nay.’

Motion carried.

CLERK (Barnes): A bill, An Act to Ensure Fair Registration Practices by Regulating Bodies. (Bill 15)

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

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

S. CROCKER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Ensure Fair Registration Practices by Regulating Bodies," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 15)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to debate Bill 15.

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 the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Trimper): Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 15, An Act to Ensure Fair Registration Practices by Regulating Bodies.

A bill, "An Act to Ensure Fair Registration Practices by Regulating Bodies." (Bill 15)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair.

We do have some questions to ask. Chair, the lists of organizations in the Schedule, I do have a question: Are registrations bogged down currently with each organization?

CHAIR: Can you repeat the question, please?

J. WALL: Certainly.

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

J. WALL: Thank you.

Currently when we look at the list of organizations, are registrations currently bogged down with each organization?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think it would be rude and unfair to suggest that with the 13 organizations that are impacted, that their entire process is bogged down. This is as much about supports for the individual as it is about the whole, so there may be individuals that have been bogged down. Generally

speaking, I think I feel very confident in saying that our regulatory bodies are very, very effective, efficient and professional and produce good result.

There are always occasions where there may be individual certain circumstances or situations arise that the application of the process could be made better. So I would argue, I think the hon. Member would agree with me, is that our regulatory bodies are performing well. This enables them to be introspective and be even better.

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair, and I thank the minister for that answer.

Chair, is there any red tape that is so onerous that they can't get things done in a reasonable time. It's something that we could work through with respect to cutting through that red tape.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: There's always a certain level of red tape, and that's one of the challenges, is the balance between the effectiveness of red tape to be able to assure a particular result. A sober thought and analysis and process is what achieves good result, but sometimes there are unintended barriers to access or barriers to entry that were unintended and were consequences of distant and past processes that could always be made better by examination.

For example, there are some instances where monetary fees are imposed on various levels of the registration process. We would simply, in some occasions, we'd ask as to whether or not those monetary fees are an unnecessary barrier to entry or are they prescriptive and valuable. That's the kind of dialogue that we would engage

with registrars and associations registering bodies.

So I think that the short answer is, the purpose of this, this allows an organization or a regulatory body to be self-examining, because that's what the act prescribes. Examine oneself, report about what you find and we will work with you to produce a better result.

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Minister.

Have government regulations, as the minister just alluded to with respect to several instances of red tape, have there been impediments to these organizations streamlining things for themselves in their own individual group?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Always remember that the red tape that's referred to is from within the organization. It's the professional and objective standards created by the registrar. We delegate this authority out. The authority constitutionally sits with this Legislature. We could, if we so desired, set the standards and objectives. We could, but we create statutes and we delegate the authority out to self-governing, what I would argue would be almost the effect of quasi-judicial bodies, because it does create a final codified-driven process for obtaining a licence.

So I would argue that it would be in the realm of the quasi-judicial, in that point of view. So these are the processes of the regulatory bodies themselves. I think what we'll have discovered is that even the regulatory bodies themselves have found that constant improvement within their own processes, the elimination of red tape produces a better result.

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair.

As was noted earlier in discussion today, other governments have similar bills. Did this government consult with them to see what is working and learn what not to do going forward?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Short answer is we consulted – we did a jurisdictional scan; we examined exactly what other jurisdictions have had. When you put forward things in law that are passed by legislature, it is easy to access. The regulations are all available as well, but one of the things that I noted is that the professional bodies themselves, the registrars, the registering authorities, they are very aware of other jurisdictions in their particular professions and how it impacts those professions in those other jurisdictions.

So during the course of the consultation process that we engaged in, we heard from Newfoundland and Labrador recognition bodies and they told us in other jurisdictions this is what has worked and what has not and so on. This was part of the dialogue.

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair.

During the jurisdictional scan, as the minister just alluded to, how is this process going to be comparable to theirs and what major differences are we going to look at between this province and others?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: I think the main difference, Mr. Chair, is that other jurisdictions, I would

argue, that within the jurisdictions that have done this were kind of centrist in this process. Some jurisdictions have included far more professions than what we have. Some jurisdictions have been a little more, dare I say, intrusive but engaged in the actual setting of standards than we are.

We are not doing that. Our act is very prescriptive in that regard; we are not moving in and dictating standards. But one of the things that we have done is we've recognized that through regulation, which I know has been brought up earlier, as has been said sometimes the teeth of the devil is in regulation.

That consultation process will still occur in the crafting of regulations specific to professional entities. For example, one type of professional entity, in terms of recognition of foreign credentials, foreign education, foreign licensing, it may not be as time onerous as another. One profession may require an extensive amount of time to be able to do due diligence and have an informed decision on whether or not it can apply to our circumstance.

So within regulations, the setting of a time frame, for example, for an answer could very easily and will likely be different between professions, reflecting on the fact that no two professions are identical and that one profession may have a different burden and a different amount of labour associated with assessing an application than another profession would.

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair.

In Schedule A, all the regulated bodies outlined in the Schedule, are they in full agreement with this legislation?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: The intent of the legislation was presented to them, and while I will not speak for them, they will obviously have an opportunity to speak for themselves. What was found during the course of the consultations is that they were made aware of the intent of the specific languages that would be used.

I can just use an example because I'm quite confident those bodies will come forward, very shortly, to pronounce on this, but when it was made clear to – there were some organizations, some regulatory bodies that still needed to be assured. When it was read to them, when it was stated to them, that the bills language will mirror language such as registration practices means the administrative steps taken by a regulatory body to process an application for registration, but does not include the standards and objective requirements set by a regulatory body to assess the qualifications of individuals applying for registration, when that very, very clear language was mirrored during the course of the consultation, then much concern was alleviated.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

J. WALL: Thank you, Chair and thank you, Minister, for that clarification.

Minister, have the regulations been drafted and, if so, can you please provide a copy to this House?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Thank you for the question, Mr. Chair.

No, the regulations have not been drafted, and as I just pointed out earlier, they will be subject to further consultation. As I just indicated a few minutes ago, there are some organizations, some regulatory bodies

that within the context of their standards and objective criteria to be able to accomplish that, it may be more onerous than others. So within the context of the regulations we may afford a much longer period of time for communications and for answers.

Always remember that within the context of this regulatory practice, if information is not available because documents are missing that are essential to assure patient safety or infrastructure safety or public safety, then the onus then becomes just simply to communicate that this is why an answer cannot be afforded at this point in time because. That's an element that we'll refine within the regulations and that will be done through a consultative process as well.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

J. WALL: Thank you, Minister, and we do look forward to seeing those regulations when available.

Chair, my last question for clause 1. Alberta opened a fair registration practice office with a budget of \$2.5 million to receive complaints and provide information to newcomers, as well as to work with professional and trade organizations.

How much will this program cost to implement here in our province?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Mr. Chair, this legislation does afford an opportunity to open a fair registration practices office, if required. While there are 33 licensed professions in Newfoundland and Labrador, this bill takes in 13 of them. One of the reasons why is that these are the 13 professions of highest labour market demand, need and concern. We need these people; we need to move forward with this.

Only enlisting 13 on the Schedule, is that a sign of lack of ambition? No, that's a sign of practicality. We could've enlisted all organizations on the Schedule and spread our resources very, very thin, and in areas where they may not necessarily be as effective and of the most significant public good. What we did is we channelled those resources into 13 clear needed professional bodies. Do we have an option to add more? Absolutely, we have an option to add more, but we're working with the 13.

So while we have the option, the legislation creates the option to be able to create an office, a stand-alone office, with these authorities invested within my powers as minister, or whatever minister. We envision this being done in-house within the department itself at this point in time. So the resources are very minimal.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Any further speakers to Bill 15?

Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clauses 2 through 23 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 through 23 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 23 carried.

CLERK: Schedule A.

CHAIR: Schedule A.

Shall the Schedule carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, Schedule A carried.

CLERK: Schedule B.

CHAIR: Shall Schedule B carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, Schedule B carried.

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

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause of the bill carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

It's carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Ensure Fair Registration Practices by Regulating Bodies. (Bill 15)

CHAIR: Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

The title is 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.'

It's carried.

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

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 15.

CHAIR: It is moved that the Committee rise and report Bill 15.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

It's carried.

Thank you.

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

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville and Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you, Speaker.

The Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 15 carried without amendment.

SPEAKER: The Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered matters to them referred and reports Bill 15 without amendment.

When shall the bill be received?

S. CROCKER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the bill be read a third time?

S. CROCKER: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

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

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to debate Bill 12.

SPEAKER: The motion is that I do now leave the Chair for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to debate Bill 12.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Warr): Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act." (Bill 12)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I do have a couple of questions on this bill in the meantime.

The first one is where did the coverage cut-off dates come from, the dates in the original act in 2016 and the dates in the new bill? Why was 2019 chosen and not 2017 or 2015 like in the 2016 bill?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: That's a very good question, Mr. Chair. I thank the hon. Member for the question.

The dates were chosen in 2016, I think, because there was a commitment made at the time. The dates were chosen in 2019 because that was the start of the statutory review that made the recommendation for the presumption of cardiac care for 24 hours, as well as the four presumptive cancer coverages that the stat review from 2019 recommended. We wanted to backdate it to where the review started.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: The newly added illnesses covered by WorkplaceNL, shouldn't the presumptive coverage for these new illnesses be retroactive to the same earlier dates?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The decision was made based on the best advice we had at the time that these recommendations would come forward based on the statutory review. Any time we deal with retroactivity there's always a point at which how far should you go back, should you go back 10, 12, 15 years. We decided that based upon the statutory review that was brought forward in 2019, December of 2019, that would be the date that we backdated the coverage for presumptive cancer coverage, as well as for the 24-hour cardiac care.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: If it was wrong to give different coverage to firefighters and volunteer firefighters in 2016, why not correct it now

and move the retroactive to accommodate in 2015, if not earlier?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Let me be very clear, anyone that works in this province that's under the *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act* had every ability to apply for the coverage with respect to these cancers. It just would've taken a little bit more – I think in your own words from yesterday – hoops to jump through. It takes a little bit more evaluation; a little bit more research; a little bit more history looked into.

What we're doing here today and yesterday, sorry, with this bill, is we're presuming that the list of 19 cancers that are now currently in the legislation are presumed to be caused by your work-related activities. That's what we're assuming in this. That makes it a little bit easier for them to – administratively easier for them to move forward. While they're going through a very difficult time with their families, it makes it a lot easier for them to move thorough that system.

That's what our whole goal is with this legislation is to make it easier for those that protect us, to protect them and their families when they need it the most. I think that we've struck the balance there of making sure that's what we're trying to do. That's why we went retroactive to when we established the stat review in 2019.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Why is there no retroactive coverage for heart injury, if it happens soon after the emergency response, even if it happened years ago? Should that coverage also be retroactive?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Member raises a great point there. There was no cardiac claims in WorkplaceNL from 2017 to now. There was none. So what we decided was, because it wasn't in the legislation now, we picked a date the ratification of this legislations as November 30, 2022.

So that is on a go-forward basis, but as I've said before just like the other cancer coverages, if they feel that it's because of their work relation, this is just a presumptive opportunity for it. So we want to make sure that people understand that there's still the ability to get coverage. It just made it a little bit easier by doing it this way.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Are there any illnesses or forms of cancer that are not being covered despite advice that they may be linked to firefighting work?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think you'll agree that the some 30 people that were here in the House of Assembly and the many calls and emails that we're probably all getting about the positive aspects of this. Obviously, there is going to be – as research determines and research is improved, just like we did from the previous legislation that was brought forward in this House that had the 11 cancers, we just added an additional eight to it based on the research that was brought forward.

If that research changes and there are more cancers that come forward that are required to be covered, we'll look at that just like we're doing today. We'll continue to move the legislation in a positive way forward for the people that we all represent.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: What about cancers that are not primary sites cancers?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Staff will come back with something on that right now, but I do want to reiterate that this is the list of cancers that are in the highest jurisdictions across the country. We become the leader in the country with respect to this with three other jurisdictions, which is great news and obviously as the information develops, more research is done. This is an ever-changing file, as we all know with health care.

Things change, the way houses are built, the way people are fighting fires, the PPE that is used, all changes that make improvements, but there are also things that would affect the health and wellness of the individuals that we all are trying to care for in this bill.

When they go into a fire to protect us and our property, we want to make sure that we protect them. This is a big step in the right direction for that, but that's not going to be the last step. I can guarantee you that if there are more things that come forward from our firefighters as well as first responders and others, we're going to be looking at those and look at the research that is around and try to help them as much as we possibly can.

What a very good question.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Minister, NAPE has raised the issue for forest firefighters to be included in this legislation. Will the forest firefighters be included?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and that is a very valid question.

Yesterday was the first I actually heard from Mr. Earle about this for those employees, it has never been asked before for this. That does not mean that we're not going to do it; everyone has the ability to apply for coverage on this type now, it's just not presumptive.

What we will do is we'll take that away, obviously, as an opportunity for us to look at that, search the research out and see what we can do for those individuals. Obviously, there are differences between fighting a wildfire versus fighting a fire within a home with all the chemicals and all the different plastics and things like that. But that doesn't negate the fact of how dangerous the work is that they do, so we want to try to support them.

This was something that was recently raised to us, we're going to do the research on it and if changes have to be made or additions have to be made to either legislation or other we'll be back here to do that.

CHAIR: The Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Just in addition to that question – maybe not the inhalations are the same for forest fires, but especially the rigorous work that they're involved in, couldn't this increase heart attacks and heart issues in regards to the kind of work that they do?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Absolutely, I don't disagree with that. We're going to look at that. As I've said to you before just recently, this is the first time it's been raised to us for that group of employees. We're not going to leave them behind. We're going to work with them;

we're going to look at the options that we can do. We're going to bring back information after we do the research and if it's required, we're going to make those changes that will support those employees as well.

Thank you for the question.

CHAIR: The Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Some industrial fire departments are associated with additional workplace hazards. Because of the nature of the industry, are these additional hazards taken into consideration?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As I've said, I don't want to seem like a broken record, because I'm trying my best to answer. Anyone that works in this province that's under the *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act* has the ability to apply for coverage that they deem necessary based on their effects that they would've had in pursuit of their employment, their job.

What we're doing here now is we're presumptively covering the carcinogens that have been known to cause cancer in an area of firefighting. That doesn't negate the fact of what you said. Obviously if there are industrial concerns, those are going to be looked at by WorkplaceNL.

We're going to continue to evaluate those things, and as I've said, we're willing to move on legislation. We've always done that on this side of the House. When we see opportunities to improve it, we will, and we're going to continue to use the best available science and research that we can and listening to the individuals like we had in the gallery here yesterday. Those individuals brought forward this; they've been fighting for it for decades. We brought

it forward in 2016, 2017, and now we're doing it again here today based on their request and based on the research they have, and the research that we do.

That's what we're going to do and I thank the hon. Member for the question and raising some valid concerns for sure.

CHAIR: The Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Some of the injuries for compensation for firefighters are now at 75 per cent. Would the minister consider a top-up of 100 per cent?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Mr. Chair, I think I heard 75 per cent of coverage. I think it's 85 per cent of coverage, but I just wanted to clarify to make sure that was the right question I heard.

Obviously in one of the statutory reviews, there were a number of recommendations that came forward. We're dealing with one here yesterday. There will be others that will come forward. I think we put forward the first reading of a bill that's going to come forward as well, that will deal with some of the additional changes that are required based out of that statutory review. We're going to continue to look at those, evaluate those and obviously that's one that was recommended by the stat review for us to look at and see if we can make some amendments to those.

Thank you very much for the question.

CHAIR: Further questions?

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Chair.

I only got a couple of questions. One, like I said, I made a point yesterday. I do want to ask the minister: With consideration to the

EMTs and police officers who do attend fire scenes on a regular basis, would there be considerations for presumptive cancer coverage for them, as well as the cardiac arrest?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

A valid question and I, first of all, want to say a big thank you, not just to our firefighters but our first responders. I know a couple of people on the other side of the House were in that role and I know miss it probably every day for the things they were doing. So I do want to say a big thank you to the first responders, police, EMTs, everyone that comes to the scene. When most of us are going in the opposite direction, they're running to make those changes.

What we're doing here today, that doesn't negate the fact that those individuals can apply through the current system that exists there. It just requires a little bit more of looking through the history I think the word; it's going to take a little bit more time. As the hon. Member for, I think, Exploits said before, it takes a little bit more hoops to jump through just to make sure that they're trying to tie the action that's occurred to the individual to their workplace – which is what we're trying to limit in this case because we know the history and the research that's been done with these particular cancers that they are in direct correlation to the activities of firefighting with respect to fighting a fire and the carcinogens that would come from, you know, houses and things like that that are really, really dangerous to those individuals that go in and fight fires every day or multiple times thorough the year.

The equipment that they wear, the PPE, although it has made advancements and it's really good, it still does not stop all of those carcinogens from entering the body and we want to make sure we protect those

individuals; not unlike we want to protect our first responders and things like that.

So it's a valid question. Obviously, they have an opportunity to apply through the regular means, through WorkplaceNL and it's always something that we always look at. If there are changes that research shows otherwise, we'll always look at those things as well.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: I thank the minister and thank you, Chair.

Another question I did have that was raised to me by some volunteer firefighters back home is about when they apply for this, they want to make sure, is it going to be connected to their primary income or is it a separate income being calculated for when they apply for these through the act.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think the word I was looking for was expedient adjudication, which is what we're trying to do here with this process. We want to expedite that adjudication process. I think the other aspect of what you're looking for, right now under the maximum compensable earnings it's \$67,500.

So obviously it relates to the question that the Member for Exploits asked, if we're going to go up from 85 to 90, which is a statutory review, or if – I know firefighters have been asking and first responders have been asking for 100 per cent coverage when they're doing the actions of their job. That's something that obviously we're looking at as an evaluation tool. It's not there yet, but you make a valid point. It's maximum compensable earnings of \$67,500, which moves with the inflation, is

my understanding. So I hope that answers your question at least a little bit.

CHAIR: The Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Chair.

I ask the minister: Was there any consideration of changing this? For example, the average income in Labrador West – so the volunteer firefighters, their average income is a lot higher than \$67,000. But at the same time, you have to look at the consideration of where they live and everything like that, and the cost of living in the North. So for firefighters and volunteer firefighters in the North, this is a very low-income thing that would probably put them in peril of default and stuff like that on their financial abilities, plus the cost of travel and everything for health care up there.

So I ask the minister: Would he take into consideration of changing that bar, in the consideration that there is a lot of different hurdles in different parts of this province?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

It's based on a system of compensable earnings. As of now, as I mentioned earlier, it moves up with inflation. We're going to always be looking at that. That's what the statutory reviews take into account. They make recommendations, whether it be increasing the return from 85 to 90 per cent, or otherwise. We're going to look at those statutory reviews and organizations, such as the Fire Fighters Association, that come in and make presentations about why they need to do this, why we need to do that.

It's an important advocate role that they have, and I look forward to bringing forward those ideas and thoughts each and every time we come into contact with each other. I

think that's how we make better legislation, that's how we better reflect the needs of what the population requires, but I do thank you for the question. It's a very good one.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Shall the motion carry?

The Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

J. DWYER: Thank you, Chair.

I got a question for the minister. This statute and legislation is covering the physical ailments, but as we know, there are a lot of mental health issues that come out of arriving on the scene and what they face and what they leave with. I'm just wondering, does this statute or this legislation cover any compensation for mental health supports?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair, a very good question.

We have brought in pieces of legislation with WorkplaceNL that helps with PTSD and presumptive coverage for mental health issues that would come. But there's always the opportunity to apply through the program anyway to be adjudicated based on the merits of each individual application. Because it's not just a blanket coverage. This gives a blanket coverage to expedite those adjudications, but we want to make sure that it's done in the best way possible.

It's a very valid point. Obviously individuals in many different careers face many different aspects that would impact someone's mental wellness. I know WorkplaceNL has put a lot of measures in place to support those individuals and have many people that have already received benefit based on that.

The previous question that the hon. Member for Labrador West asked, the benefits are tax-free, which I wanted to highlight, as well as health costs are over and above that. So they cover some of the health costs as well, which is good. Those are just to alleviate some of that cost.

I do understand it's probably not an answer of the full amount, but it does give them more than just the 85 per cent.

Thank you, Members.

CHAIR: Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clause 2 and 3.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 and 3 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 and 3 carried.

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

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: An Act to Amend the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act.

CHAIR: Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the bill without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 12.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 12.

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

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.

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay and Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

B. WARR: Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 12 without amendment.

SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and directed him to report Bill 12 carried without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

S. CROCKER: Now.

SPEAKER: When shall the bill be read a third time?

S. CROCKER: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

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

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 1.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment and Climate

Change, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act, Bill 19, and I further move the said bill be now read a first time.

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to introduce a bill, "An Act to Amend the Fishing Industry Collective Bargain Act," carried. (Bill 19)

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act. (Bill 19)

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

When shall the said bill be read a second time?

S. CROCKER: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 19 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, that this House do now recess until 2 p.m.

SPEAKER: It is the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

This House do stand recessed until 2 p.m. this afternoon.

Recess

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Statements by Members

SPEAKER: Today we will hear statements by the hon. Members for the Districts of Ferryland, Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, Harbour Main, Humber - Bay of Islands and Labrador West.

The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Speaker.

I rise today in this hon. House to recognize Jim Hamlyn and his contribution to soccer in Bay Bulls and the surrounding area. Jim started with the BBAA/Southern Shore United as technical director in the summer of 2016. He dedicated his time to soccer year-round, running the summer program and then the fall and winter program.

Jim spends all spring prepping the fields in Bay Bulls, Witless Bay and Mobile and starts preparing youth for the metro program

in May. In 2017, he took on the role as soccer coach for Mobile Central High.

When Jim first began as technical director, enrolment in the soccer program was very low with a registration totalling 80-90 participants. Since 2016, the program has seen a lot of growth in terms of additional equipment and involvement with the metro league in St. John's. In 2016, there were no dedicated girls' teams and now the girls' registration is higher than the boys.

This past summer there were 350 kids registered in the soccer program, and its success is a show of Jim's hard work and dedication, which has resulted in a 68.5 per cent growth in soccer registration since 2018.

I ask all Members in this House to join me in recognition of Jim's hard work and dedication.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Speaker.

The Exploits Search and Rescue volunteers are a highly trained and well-equipped emergency response unit serving communities throughout Central Newfoundland and Labrador. The team was originally established in 1982 as the result of an initiative by Emergency Measures and the RCMP, who saw a need for organized and trained groups to assist police in locating missing persons. It is one of 24 teams containing almost 900 members operating throughout the province today.

Today, the Exploits team provides search and rescue services to residents in communities from Harbour Breton to Bay d'Espoir, from Notre Dame Bay to Gander Bay and from Badger Lake to Glenwood.

Since its inception in 1982, the team has responded to over 250 lost or missing persons, acted as a support on numerous search and rescue operations. On average, the team responds to 15 to 20 calls annually. These searches include lost persons, evacuation of injured persons from isolated areas, water searches for drowning victims, body recoveries and traffic control. This past summer members assisted during the great forest fires in Central.

I ask all hon. Members to please join me as we say thank you to the Exploits Search and Rescue members for helping so many people in their greatest time of need.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Speaker.

Today in this hon. House, it is my pleasure to recognize and congratulate Dr. Catherine Donovan of Holyrood, in the District of Harbour Main, on recently being invested into the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Catherine is a graduate of Memorial University and the University of British Columbia. She spent over 30 dedicated years in Public Health in various roles throughout her career. Before her retirement in 2020, she was instrumental in the development of the Masters of Public Health and the Indigenous Health program at MUN's Faculty of Medicine where she acted as program chair, associate dean and associate professor.

Dr. Donovan has received many awards including the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal for the Contribution to the Promotion of Heart Health, the Jansen-Ortho Inc. Award for Advancing the State of

the Art of Public Health in Canada, and the Nathan Gosse Award for Significant Contribution to Environmental Public Health in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Dr. Catherine Donovan is a true leader in her field of medicine and an inspirational role model for other women and young girls to follow.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating Dr. Catherine Donovan and wish her well in her well-deserved retirement.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

E. JOYCE: On August 17, 1979, the Quigley family in Curling suffered a tragic loss as their 14-year-old son and brother, Dougie, was killed in a bus accident on his way to a soccer tournament in St. John's. Other team members were injured, but Dougie was the only member that passed away. I remember that day vividly.

Dougie was known for his passion for the game, was a great player and always focused more on his teammates that weren't getting as strong or getting enough time to play.

In 1989, Dougie's former coach, Eugene Cook, started the Doug Quigley Memorial Junior High Tournament and teams from Corner Brook, Deer Lake and Stephenville came together each summer to compete, until 2009.

This past summer, the Corner Brook United Soccer revived the tournament as a way to remember Dougie, his love of the game and also get more young people involved in soccer and it was a huge success. Junior high boys and girls teams from Corner

Brook, Stephenville, Pasadena and Deer Lake came together in Dougie's memory.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating the Corner Brook United for bringing back the Douglas Quigley Memorial Soccer Tournament and honouring Dougie, a true team player, a great young man who left us too early, but left an impression on everybody he knew or met.

Rest in peace, Dougie.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Speaker.

I rise today to acknowledge Gateway Labrador, its committee members and volunteers for their contribution to Labrador West.

Gateway Labrador successfully hosted the annual Fall Heritage Fair week in Labrador West. I want to thank everyone involved for taking the time to make the event possible. It was a week filled with various events for all ages in Labrador West. Such as an Indigenous Celebration day that was hosted by the local Indigenous centre; the event included drumming performances, a fire with bannock and jam. The week also included bead workshops, pottery events, guided walks and tours, a family day and a few more.

Gateway Labrador also welcomed new improvements to their visitor centre. Over the last few months, construction has started to support the tourists visiting the Big Land. With five fully serviced RV sites, this will allow tourists much-needed RV services while travelling long distances through Labrador and a rest stop as they enjoy their visit to Labrador West.

I encourage all Members in this hon. House to join me in thanking Gateway Labrador,

the committee members and volunteers who made the Labrador West Fall Heritage Fair week possible and a congratulations on the expansion to their centre.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

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

S. COADY: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Speaker, the advancement of women and marginalized people is important to our government. To ensure our public service employees are fairly and equitably compensated, we implemented a Job Evaluation System in 2015.

This system covers 85 per cent of core public service employees who work on the front line delivering programs and services to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The system addresses the four standard criteria recognized in all pay equity legislation for the purpose of job evaluation, which are skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions.

Our Job Evaluation System is just one example of how our government supports women, gender diverse and marginalized employees in the public service. Over 50 per cent of the core public service, including senior management, directors and executive are female. We strive to foster a workplace that is supportive of women, including such policies as flexible work arrangements, family responsibility leave and compassionate care leave.

Creating a truly equitable society takes action from everyone. I'm glad to share with you how we are working towards that goal.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of her statement. The Progressive Conservative caucus has great respect for all of our public service. The women, men and gender-diverse individuals in our public sector come to work each and every day to make our province a better place to live, work and raise a family.

I believe though that one of the objectives of the minister's statement today was to talk about advancing and supporting women. So I would like to take this opportunity to suggest to the minister the next time legislation targeted to help women and gender-diverse individuals is brought to this hon. House of Assembly that consultations with women, gender-diverse persons and the appropriate advocacy groups occurs first.

As we have seen with the recent pay equity legislation, consultation after the fact is not good enough.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Speaker.

I thank the minister for a copy of her statement. We appreciate the minister admitting that their attempt at pay legislation was only going to address 15 per cent of the public service. We remind the minister, for the evaluation system to work it must be complemented with oversight, standards

and enforcement mechanisms. This system will only be achieved through robust consultations with all partners and genuine collaboration with those who require it.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Education.

J. HAGGIE: Thank you, Speaker.

I stand today to reaffirm our commitment to providing low-cost early childhood education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

J. HAGGIE: Affordable child care is crucial to helping people, particularly women, enter or re-enter the workforce.

I am pleased to say that Newfoundland and Labrador is a national leader in progressively lowering the costs of child care, and this coming January we will move to \$10 a day.

In May, we announced more than 30 locations for a pilot pre-kindergarten early learning program that will open in 2022-23. The pilot will result in approximately 600 new regulated child care spaces. The first five locations are slated to open in November.

Overall, we have committed to nearly 6,000 new child care spaces.

We anticipate receiving the final report from the Early Childhood Educators Human Resource Council in the near future. This will recommend a comprehensive compensation model for early childhood educators. We have asked the council to recommend a wage grid that would reflect the education, training and years of

experience of early childhood educators. Historically, these roles have been undervalued and traditionally held by women.

Early childhood educators are often the first point of contact for learning for our youngest population and, as such, their work is very important.

Speaker, I ask all hon. Members to join me in celebrating the progress we're making in improving access to child care – actions that continue to advance the social and economic well-being of women and girls in our province.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

I'd like to thank the hon. minister for an advance copy of his statement. Speaker, my colleagues and I join the minister in celebrating the importance of early childhood education. It was the previous PC administration that implemented full-day kindergarten as the first significant step in improving outcomes at a critical age.

Speaker, while I appreciate the lofty goals the minister sets out, I note we continue to hear from operators who cannot find staff for the spaces they have now. Many early childhood educators have left the industry out of frustration with government regulations and poor pay. I do hope the minister has a detailed human resources plan to staff the 6,000 new spaces he's referencing.

In addition, parents have noted time and again that existing spaces for halftime are being converted to more lucrative full-time spaces – and I hear that in my own district. This has been a significant issue for working

parents seeking afterschool care that I might add are not working very well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement and we appreciate the fact that government sees the merit of NDP policies and values like universally accessible publicly funded quality child care in this province.

But to avoid a repeat of their failed attempt at pay equity legislation, we remind them that strong, effective legislation starts with and continues with consultation and collaboration. We look forward to them catching up to their own approaches.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Are there any further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, according to media reports, the Premier flew to billionaire Liberal donor –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. PETTEN: – John Risley's luxury hunting cabin last summer. A trip that has been advertised as \$75,000 for a group package.

I ask the Premier: Is this why Mr. Risley said: "I don't think there's any question that the project will get approval"?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

A. FUREY: I feel very fortunate that my dad and I share the same passion of salmon fishing, as many people do across the province, very fortunate to be able to fish with him on the river. I fished with him on the river before this job. I plan to fish on the river with him during this job and after this job, Mr. Speaker.

As the Member opposite knows, there is an open and transparent process for all proponents and we are quite grateful that there are many, many proponents with respect to hydrogen and wind. Minister Parsons has put forward a stringent, strict, open and transparent process that every proponent can go through, as it should be, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

An access to information request shows that removing the wind moratorium for private companies was first mentioned by public servants in September of last year, just a few months after the Premier's private flight to this billionaire's hunting lodge.

I ask the Premier: Was this where the deal was struck or is this the biggest coincidence in Newfoundland and Labrador history?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly, the reality is that wind and hydrogen is something that has been discussed in this province for some time. In fact, I believe Dame Greene mentioned it in her May 21 PERT report. In fact, I can first remember hearing about it when I was in Opposition back in 2011.

I can't explain why the previous administrations didn't move forward with the removal of a wind moratorium, but what I can tell you is that everything we have done, from the Renewable Energy Plan of last December, the removal of the moratorium in April, to the laying out of a plan in July, our submission deadline of October 1; everything has been done transparently and accountable. I can tell you, the 31 companies that have submitted land nominations think that our process is a very fair one.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, let me get this straight, the Premier spends days with a billionaire donor who is leading a wind development project in a luxury cabin and he expects people of the province to believe that wind energy did not come up once? Three months later, public servants start talking about removing the wind moratorium in our province.

Speaker, does the Premier really believe there is not at least an appearance of conflict of interest in this situation?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, the reality is that the Opposition can say what they want. They can try to turn this into something that it is not, but the reality is

—

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The reality of it is there in black and white. We have been contacted by numerous companies, all of who expressed their views on where we want to go. In fact, the company in question has expressed their displeasure at the approach that our department and government have taken when it comes to wind development. That is there in black and white, and I would also point that information is out their publicly.

The reality is we have a very strong process; we're going to lead the country and we have 31 land submissions from companies all over this globe. I would suggest anybody go talk to them about whether we have a fair process.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Mr. Speaker, you can't get a piece of Crown land unless you wait for three years and we've got a billion-dollar project down in Stephenville that's going at lightning speed. Maybe someone should fill in the blanks there. That's what we're really asking. It's not about a private trip, it's about getting the details of conflict of interest and what possibly — it's all about optics and that's how we operate in this House.

Making personal slurs is not going to solve it, Mr. Speaker. He's the Premier and he should answer these questions.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. PETTEN: Thank you.

While the Premier enjoys his luxury trips and the benefits of the oil and gas industry to his budget, 125,000 people remain without a family doctor in our province. One doctor said — quote — I'm trying to stay here until my kids finish high school, but I'm not sure if I can last.

Speaker, does today's surplus mean the people of Whitbourne can expect emergency rooms back?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to address the preamble that the Member gave. He gave a preamble that was as long as the actual question and he's questioning the integrity of the Premier.

Now, the reality is the Premier and anybody else is allowed to go fishing. It's something they have earned. There was certainly nothing done on anybody else's dime but their own.

But if there's someone in this province anywhere that can show me that we have done something wrong when it comes to our process, that we have given anyone an advantage. If anybody can show me any Crown land that's actually been given out at this time, show me.

No one's going to step up, Mr. Speaker. Do you know why? Because there's no Crown land given out, there are no approvals being given. Right now, we have 31 companies that are at the starting line, in the queue, all done fairly.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That has no resolve to the people in Whitbourne. Like I said, I think government does a great job of covering their tracks and this one is no different, obviously.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

B. PETTEN: Here we go again.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Move on with your question, please.

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, I –

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

B. PETTEN: Does the Minister of Environment want to get up and talk here today? You want to get up here today?

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Move on with your question, please.

B. PETTEN: Speaker, another doctor said – quote – sadly, I faced the recruitment process that was both disrespectful and devaluing.

I ask the Premier: Will doctors come to our province if they feel they are being disrespected and devalued by his Liberal government?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to let the Leader of the Opposition stand up – he, again, wants to get the little snide remarks in about covering tracks. Because the reality is, that is an allegation that our and my integrity has been compromised. Now, I'm not going to sit there and accept that because the reality is that is true; that is baseless. That is without fact. There is nobody that can say that because it is simply not the case that. In fact, if anybody tries to say that's the case, I'll say it here and I'll say it outside – that is a lie.

Now, what I'll tell you is that when this project is done or any project that's done with our wind development, there will be no inquiry after like the projects that we have had to inherit.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: The minister has got all of the hats. He is Minister of Health and now he is answering all of the health questions. He is answering the Premier's questions. He's lecturing me about my preambles, though. Here we go.

But we've got a job to do and we're going to ask questions that mean something to the people in this province. I'm not stopping for the Minister of Industry or anyone else on that side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I ask the Member to move to your question, please.

B. PETTEN: I'll take no lectures from this crowd, Speaker.

Speaker, a recent survey by the Registered Nurses' Union showed that 88 per cent of the members believe understaffing has resulted in unsafe conditions for patients. Doctors are contacting the Premier saying that working conditions are intolerable. Paramedics are working 1,000 hours overtime.

I ask the Premier: How is virtually everything getting worse under your leadership? Or is the minister going to answer that, too?

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the Member knows, we introduced the Medical Act last week, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

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

T. OSBORNE: He's obviously more interested in the question than he is the answer.

Mr. Speaker, we introduced the Medical Act last week, which deals with many of the issues that were contained in the letters written by physicians to the Premier. We understand that there are workplace issues, Mr. Speaker. We had the Think Tank that dealt with many of the workplace issues that nurses are feeling. Those issues are being worked on currently. We are proceeding with the implementation of the items that are in the Think Tank. Mr. Speaker.

We are addressing the issues in the workplace, including the Medical Act that we introduced just last week.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

It's disappointing that the Member from CBS asked three very good questions on the dire straits needs in health care in this province and they chose to go down another road.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Move on to your question.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, the recent survey conducted by the Nurses' Union is alarming. Three-quarters of respondents said they felt that the quality of health care in our province has gotten worse over the last two years. Registered nurses, obviously, do not have confidence in this government.

I ask the minister: Do you agree with the Nurses' Union that health care has gotten worse over the last two years?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, we take the information provided by the Registered Nurses' Union very seriously. We have taken a number of measures over the past months to address many of those issues, including the Think Tank. We have to give that an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to come to fruition and allow us to get those recommendations through the Think Tank put in place.

One of them is already put in place, the retention bonus, Mr. Speaker. Many of what was included in the survey by the Registered Nurses' Union is people being overworked and understaffed and we are working to address that with our recruitment efforts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I wonder where that Think Tank was seven years ago.

A staggering 92 per cent of registered nurses surveyed felt their current workload was increasing their risk of burnout and fatigue, while there are nurses who are left with no choice but to retire or leave the occupation. The president of the Nurses' Union is calling health care a dire situation.

Does the minister agree?

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

T. OSBORNE: We absolutely have concerns and issues within the health care system and that is what we're working hard to address. We are working very hard to address. As I said in the previous answer, many of the issues that were raised by the survey deal with the fact that our nurses are overworked, demanded to work overtime and additional shifts. They're understaffed.

Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, or the day before yesterday, myself and the Premier met with nursing students at the Centre for Nursing Studies and offered every single one of them a job, because many of the issues –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

T. OSBORNE: – are dealing with the fact that they are understaffed and overworked. We need more health professionals working shoulder to shoulder with them to help lift the load.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm really impressed that they're listening to us because we raised this before, about the Nova Scotia government offering jobs to every nurse. So thank God they're starting to listen after seven years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

P. DINN: Eighty-eight per cent of registered nurses said that understaffing has resulted in unsafe conditions for the patients. That sounds dire to me.

Member, I'd like for you to explain what's laughable. What's laughable?

SPEAKER: Order, please!

P. DINN: I'll have him stand up and explain.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I'll ask the Member to move on to your question, please.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

P. DINN: You certainly can. I have no problem.

SPEAKER: Move to your question, please.

P. DINN: Let's start again, 88 per cent of registered nurses said that understaffing has resulted in unsafe conditions for patients. Nothing laughable about that. That sounds dire to me. How can nurses continue like this, Speaker?

I ask the minister: What is the rate of patient harm in our health care system due to chronic understaffing?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, understaffing is a significant issue in our health care system; we recognize that. The Premier put in place a recruitment office in the Department of Health.

Mr. Speaker, we are focused on and we are working, as we move from four health authorities to one, to having an enhanced recruitment process and office within the one health authority that links all of the recruitment offices within each of the health authorities currently.

Mr. Speaker, it is our biggest challenge, recruitment and retention. And not just here, in Nova Scotia. And not just there, in Prince Edward Island. And not just there but Ontario. Across the country, around the globe, recruitment is the biggest issue in health care today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DWYER: I'll remind the minister that we were told already that we'd have a made-in-Newfoundland solution. So what's going on in the world is well and duly noted, but we need a made-in-Newfoundland solution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

J. DWYER: I'll sit down until they're finished. Do they want to hear the question?

SPEAKER: Go ahead, Sir.

J. DWYER: Okay.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

J. DWYER: It's not your Question Period. We're the Official Opposition. We ask the questions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

J. DWYER: Thank you, Speaker.

On Monday, the minister responsible for Occupational Health and Safety said it may be two years after the investigation is complete before we learn the details on the Come By Chance explosion.

Speaker, why must families and the victims have to wait two years for answers?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, every time they stand, their preamble is about the question before. I think we owe it to the people of the province to answer that preamble.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, the made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador solution is called the Health Accord NL. The Premier put that process in place to deal with the chronic issues in health care today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DWYER: So we got a long-term plan to straighten out a short-term solution. I'll ask my question again, because it was about Come By Chance, Minister.

On Monday –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

J. DWYER: If you'll listen, you'll understand it.

SPEAKER: Move on with your question, please.

J. DWYER: On Monday, the minister responsible for Occupational Health and Safety said it may be two years after the investigation is complete before we learn the details on the Come By Chance explosion.

Speaker, why must the families of the victims have to wait two years for answers?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Speaker.

First, I'd like to give my condolences to the families, coworkers and friends of the individual who passed away. It's a very tragic incident at Come By Chance.

Our Occupational Health and Safety team have been putting almost all of our resources – we've never had so many people on an investigation. We have third party experts; we are putting all-in into this investigation, Mr. Speaker, because we know that people deserve answers, absolutely.

In terms of the two-year time frame, I just want to clarify that in terms of when there's an occupational health and safety incident like this, there is just a two-year time frame in legislation where Public Prosecutions has to file charges.

So just to make sure everyone is aware of the process, that's the process. Our next step is to find out the outcome of the Occupational Health and Safety investigation.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DWYER: Mr. Speaker, we understand that just last Friday there was another stand

down in a portion of the refinery due to safety concerns. Has the minister ordered an investigation into this incident as well?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I can speak a bit about the occupational health and safety orders that were issued prior to the explosion. We had inspections throughout the summer, Mr. Speaker, from both the Inspections Division and Occupational Health and Safety. At the time of the explosion in Come By Chance, all the outstanding orders had been rectified; there was nothing outstanding.

So we're all-in on the investigation at the moment and we're working hard to resolve that as quickly as possible, Mr. Speaker. We do also recognize other occupational health and safety responsibilities and we are delivering on those as well.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Earlier today, the RNC released a statement that acknowledged, "the impact of racism within our communities, the role police have played in it, and the RNC's responsibility to move forward in the spirit of reconciliation."

Now that the RNC is taking responsibility, will the minister, in the spirit of reconciliation, implement the recommendations made by the recent First Voice report?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to stand up and speak to this extremely important question and this extremely important topic.

The first thing I would like to say is to note that from what I saw today, there was a very positive meeting between the RNC and First Light. In fact, I think it was roughly an hour-and-a-half meeting, and the reports that I have coming out of that meeting was that everybody said it was extremely positive and it was a good step in the right direction. Certainly as a department, we like to see that; as a government we like to see that.

As it stands, there's always ongoing work as it relates to systemic racism in this province, and not just within the Department of Justice and Public Safety. It's something that spans across governments. Especially when we talk about those recommendations from that very important national inquiry. Some of those have been implemented, many are in progress, but I can tell you that there's a commitment to continue to working towards progress in that direction.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Speaker, we all welcome those commitments by the RNC, but they do not alter the urgent need for systemic change in the way that policing is carried out in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Speaker, yesterday in an attempt to justify the pay equity legislation the minister led this House to believe that the president of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour supported the pay equity legislation.

How does the minister react to Ms. Shortall when she appropriately called the legislation woefully inadequate?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

P. PARSONS: Thank you, Speaker.

Again, it was a proud day here and proud week in the work that we are doing to finally advance pay equity legislation here in our province.

But what I will say, I think we took up too much talking about personalities and individuals and egos, rather, Mr. Speaker. This is about the current generations that are there, and the future generations to come. We are making advancements on pay equity in the public sector. As we said, we're moving for pay transparency in both private and the public sector, and we are making a plan to bring in pay equity for the private sector. I'm very proud, and I encourage everyone here in this hon. House, of course, to be a part of that and to move forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Speaker, what we're talking about here is consultation with important pay equity groups that are involved in this legislation and involved in this process.

Ms. Shortall said: "Consultation after the legislation is tabled feels like a slap in the face to pay equity advocates who have been doing this work for years."

So I ask the minister: What steps is the minister going to take to restore trust and confidence with pay equity advocacy groups, so as to have meaningful future consultations.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

P. PARSONS: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

A wonderful topic of pay equity and how we are moving forward as a government, and, of course, as a people here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As we have said time and time again, my hon. colleagues, the Minister of Finance, as well as the Minister Responsible for Labour, we will be conducting robust consultation to have the experts, the appropriate community stakeholders, including employees, take part in our consultation process to move forward this very, very important and celebrated legislation. I thank the hon. Member for continuing to bring up this topic in this hon. House on the floor.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

C. PARDY: Thank you, Speaker.

Continuing with the theme of consultation or lack thereof, I ask the following:

I ask the minister: Why didn't his government consult with harvesters on the more recent review of the Final Offer Selection system of fish processing or the *Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act*?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very happy – and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Conway for the report, that came forward. It was a fulsome consultation that he did do with some 40

different agencies and people, learned individuals within the fishing industry. I'd like to thank him for those recommendations.

We're now going through those recommendations. I look forward to bringing forward some changes that are going to make this system a little better for everybody involved in the province and for the industry itself.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

C. PARDY: Many harvesters in the District of Bonavista feel like they didn't have any input into that, and that's where the genesis of the question comes from.

Speaker, about a year ago, the Fisheries Minister launched a review into foreign ownership and control in the fish processing industry.

I ask the minister: Can you update the House on this review? When can we expect to see a report?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

I do take exception to it. The FFAW represents harvesters in this province and they were very well consulted in this, and I think their commentary in the public sphere says that. They were happy to see the report come out. They realize that there's going to be additional consultation and they're happy the government was involved in trying to bring this to fruition and helping make the industry a little bit better.

So thank you very much for your question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. WALL: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, four years ago, government rejected residency status for Mr. and Mrs. Hull, denying financial assistance for community relocation. The family appealed the decisions and the independent reviewer, now the current Minister of Justice, sided with government. However, the Supreme Court has stated the reviewer and the minister have made mistakes.

When will the current minister do the right thing and correct this mistake?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

K. HOWELL: Thank you, Speaker, and I welcome the opportunity, as always, to answer a question in this wonderful House.

I would like to refer that the matter that is in question is in our department for further review. At this time, because it is under advisement, I don't want to speak to the particulars of it but as soon as there is an answer we do want to get it out to the people that are affected as soon as possible, making sure that the needs of the people of this province are always considered when we make decisions that impact communities or as a whole for the province.

So as soon as that information is available, we'll be sure to get it to the members in question as well as presented to the Member opposite for a review.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. WALL: That was four years ago. I would expect a much more detailed answer than that.

Speaker, the individuals did not reside in Little Bay Islands because access to health care was not available in their community. The decision by the current Minister of Justice has caused much stress and hardship to these seniors.

When can the couple expect the minister to do the right thing?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

K. HOWELL: Thank you, Speaker.

As I've said in my previous question, there is a process that has to be followed here when we review these things. Four years ago, I was not in this position so I can't speak to what happened there. What I can speak to is the advancements that have been made in the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs since April of 2021 when I managed to show up here.

So I would like to let the Member opposite know that there's a policy that has to be followed, a process that is laid out. As soon as that process is conducted in our shop, I will make sure that that information is available to the people that are affected as well as to the Member opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, government has provided the fall fiscal update filled with praise for \$500 cheques and their strategy of throwing money at health care workers to make their problems disappear.

Now I ask the Premier: What investment has been made to address workplace conditions, especially those by the nurses, as a result of the successive cuts to the public health care system that are at the root of this crisis?

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not sure throwing money at health care workers is the way I would describe trying to recognize the valuable work that our health care workers do.

We could argue the amount, Mr. Speaker, but the intent of this is to recognize the valuable work and to recognize that our health care workers have carried a very heavy load over the past number of years, especially in light of the pandemic and the cyberattack, Mr. Speaker. So I take exception to the remarks by the Member opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Speaker.

You know there is more to it than money; you should also look at their conditions they work in.

Speaker, in September 2020, I wrote the former Health minister expressing the concerns that the regional health authorities are not adequately addressing recruitment and retention of health care professionals in Labrador and I asked the department for help. The department did not want to get involved and I was told it was the responsibility of the RHAs. This morning, in the media, the Premier expressed shock that the RHAs were not returning calls to applications.

What does the Premier have to say to the workers and patients who have suffered the last eight years due to the Liberal government inaction on this?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair to say that the Premier and the former minister have gotten involved. There was a recruitment office set up, Mr. Speaker. We have looked at the Health Accord, the Nursing Think Tank, Mr. Speaker, looking at workplace issues of our health care workers.

Just this week, Mr. Speaker – or last week – we introduced the Medical Act. We debated it. It passed in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, to try to get additional physicians working side by side with the physicians that are carrying too heavy a load right now.

We are working hard to recruit nurses to work side by side with the nurses that are carrying too heavy a load right now. Myself and the Premier offered every nurse at the Centre for Nursing Studies a job, just a couple of days ago.

Mr. Speaker, we are focused on this issue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First off, I just want to wish my colleague here a happy birthday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

P. LANE: Eighty-what?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

P. LANE: Mr. Speaker, first we heard the scathing revelations from the Muskrat Falls

inquiry around mismanagement, withholding of critical information, misrepresentation of numbers and the list goes on. More recently, we've heard numerous concerns from the Auditor General around inappropriate expenditures and allowing questionable practices to go unchecked from embedded contractors.

I ask the minister: How many charges have been laid, civil actions initiated and/or pink slips handed out at Nalcor since these very serious matters have been brought to light?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am happy to get the question from the Member opposite, as it relates to former Nalcor, when it comes to Muskrat Falls because I got to tell you, it's been an interesting number of years dealing with that project and dealing with that corporation. Which is why I'm glad that in the last number of years, we've basically moved Nalcor under Hydro. We've brought Ms. Jennifer Williams into a governance position. We've brought the Auditor General in to have a look at this. We've launched the Muskrat Falls inquiry. We've taken a lot of steps to clean up the mess that was left to us.

But to the Member opposite I would say, when we refer this to the Auditor General – and I believe there is another report coming – the reality is under the legislation, she has the ability to recommend or bring to LGIC the opportunity for criminal charges. She did not make that recommendation, so at this point there is not a criminal investigation.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The minister's time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. LANE: Thank you, Minister, for the answer.

Mr. Speaker, for months I stood in this House of Assembly and presented petitions on behalf of the group Advocates for Senior Citizens' Rights, calling on the government to develop a legislative framework outlining minimum standards, staffing and expectations for our long-term care homes. Unfortunately, instead of acting, the minister of the day simply dismissed the concerns. We are all now hearing horrific stories coming about Central Health around the abuse of seniors in long-term care.

So I ask the current minister: Will you commit to the development of legislation around long-term care as envisioned under Lillian's Law?

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we've heard coming out of Central, Mr. Speaker, is shocking. It is unacceptable. I've said that in the House yesterday and on a previous day. I've written the CEOs, Mr. Speaker, of the four health authorities to ensure that the proper training and to ensure that the proper resources are in place so that staff – and I will say that we can't allow the actions of two or three staff to impact all staff.

But I do want to ensure that the proper training is there so that seniors in our long-term care facilities receive the dignity and the respect that they should. These individuals cannot always speak on behalf of themselves and we need to ensure that they are treated with the highest level of dignity and respect.

SPEAKER: The time for Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act Respecting the Delivery of Health and Community Services and the Establishment of a Provincial Health Authority, Bill 20.

SPEAKER: Are there any further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Speaker.

The background of this petition is as follows:

Route 10 on the Southern Avalon forms a large section of the Irish Loop. This is a significant piece of infrastructure and is the main highway along the Irish Loop. This highway plays a major role in the residential and commercial growth of the region.

Therefore, we petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that immediate brush cutting is required on Route 10, the Southern Shore Highway as

large sections of brush along this highway is a significant safety hazard for the high volume of travelling motorists who travel this highway daily. This work is essential in the prevention of moose-vehicle accidents along Route 10.

Speaker, I drive this highway fairly regular as it's in the district, and I have spoken to the minister. There's certainly a big danger driving along some of these areas from the bottom to the top of the district. The alders growing out through the guardrails and some growth along the roads as well; trees over hanging the road. It's pretty dangerous, certainly getting to this time of the year when it's getting darker in the evenings earlier and you're seeing moose in various locations. Even driving home the other night we saw a moose in a location you never see one, right next to the pond. It's like he came up out of the pond, but he didn't. It's just a safety issue in regard to getting this cut.

It goes from, like I said, St. Shott's right down through the Goulds, Petty Harbour area, down that way. So it's something that I would love to see the minister have a look at and just wondering when we will see the brush cutting and if there is any tendering coming out.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

E. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand again today and I read the prayer of the petition.

WHEREAS our environment must be protected and the *Environmental Protection Act* must be followed to ensure the safety of our environment for future generations; and

WHEREAS the World Energy GH2 has submitted a plan to the Government of

Newfoundland and Labrador to build wind turbines in Western Newfoundland; and

WHEREAS the company director has stated publicly that government told the company to register only Phase 1 of the project; and

WHEREAS the company director stated that they need the three phases to make the project viable;

THEREFORE, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the hon. House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reject Phase 1 of the World Energy GH2 project and complete an environmental impact study on the World Energy GH2 project as one to ensure the complete project is evaluated and the environmental study is not circumvented.

I stand again, Mr. Speaker, on this petition also because I – and these people are from all over. It started in Corner Brook, Pasadena, all over, because they're concerned about the environment.

I say to the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology, you did make the process fair by putting out the Crown lands.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

E. JOYCE: I have to say that. I have to say when this was put out, just say okay, just walk in; you look where they had the proposed windmills. I know the minister stepped up and others probably stepped up and said no, no, we've got to make it fair. That part is fair. At least now there's an open bid for Crown lands, which is great.

But the part that a lot of people are concerned about – I'm very concerned because I've seen it tried to be done before – is circumventing the environmental impact study. I heard the minister state last week – it's in *Hansard*. He stated last week yeah, we're just talking about the project on the

Southwest Coast. That's not factually correct. We're talking about the project also in the Lewis Hills, Serpentine, Blow Me Down area.

So when the minister says it's a Southwest Coast, that's the only part of the project that's been put in. But the three phases which John Risley said we must have.

Minister, it's not difficult for you, and I'm asking you to put people at ease in the Humber - Bay of Islands, Corner Brook and the North Shore, all throughout the whole area, to say we shall have impact studies on Phase 2 and 3 and combine them now and have one big project.

Because if the project, Mr. Speaker – and this is what I tell people – is going to stand on its own, let's have an informed decision then we can make a decision. Let's have an informed decision. But right now, the way the system is, the Crown lands part is taken care of, but we need this as Phase 1 included to have one big project, not project splitting.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology for response.

A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to stand up and speak to this petition. I don't mind sort of cutting in front of the Minister of Environment. I know the Member from across the way has a number of these petitions. He's done them before and he'll do them again. So I don't mind taking this one on his birthday. This is my birthday present to the Member opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

A. PARSONS: Let me preface it by saying that the petition – I don't blame the Member for making the petition because the reality is whenever we have a new industry come in

to this province there are questions asked. There are concerns raised and that's within every right for everybody to say, look, we want this process done right. Especially with something that is new and unknown to us.

Now, I'm not involved in the environmental process. That is done within the department, its hands off. I'm here to promote the industry. But it is an ability for me to talk about – and I appreciate what the Member said. The Member said I know you have a fair process and that's the reality is that we do have a fair process.

Now, there were comments made today that's this process is not fair and essentially trying to say the fix is in. The reality is I've spent the last two years dealing with this, countless meetings with multiple, multiple proponents.

If you just take this, but you expand it across mining, tech, oil, manufacturing, if I had a dollar for every time a proponent said to me about the project they're going to do, it's a done deal, I'd almost have enough to pay off the Muskrat debt. Everybody says that their project is going to have –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The minister's time has expired.

AN HON. MEMBER: With leave that I keep responding to the Member's petition.

SPEAKER: Does he have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Leave.

SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

Carry on.

A. PARSONS: So the reality is the vast majority of proponents of any project that come in say, we're going to do this. We're going to get it done. It's a done deal, but the reality is it has to go through scrutiny both within our department, within environment. It

has to go through necessary scrutiny. I'm sure with this project, especially given the amount of information they have put out in the public domain, given the number of interviews that they have given, theirs is going to go through obviously increased scrutiny that is caused by themselves.

So, again, without talking about the environmental process, I know the Member opposite is going to bring this forward again on behalf of his constituents and constituents across the West Coast because this takes in my area as well. I do want to talk about the issue that was brought up today and that as we have a process that bar none will match anybody else in the country. It is fair. You only have to talk to every single proponent that submitted a land nomination bid and is going through this. In fact, the reaction I got almost across the board, except for one, was that, do you know what? We like the fact that we're all starting off on the same page. We all have an opportunity.

The last thing I'll say is that anybody can put forward an environmental assessment for a project, even before they have the land. In this case, no land has been granted. If somebody wants to go ahead with an EA, that's fine. They can do that but that doesn't mean (a) it's going to get approved and, secondly, it doesn't mean that they're going to get any Crown land.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

This petition:

WHEREAS there are many hopeful mothers and couples in this province dealing with infertility issues and require medical assistance to conceive; and

WHEREAS the cost associated with out-of-province fertility treatments, specifically in vitro fertilization is extremely cost prohibitive; and

WHEREAS there are doctors in the province trained in in vitro fertilization and have the desire to set up an in vitro fertilization clinic in the province; and

WHEREAS the province is dealing with an aging population and serious population-growth challenges.

Therefore, we petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to establish a fertility treatment clinic within the province providing full fertility services including IVF for hopeful mothers and families. And in the interim provide financial assistance to access out-of-province fertility treatment and services.

Speaker, this is a very important petition for this province. Earlier this morning, we heard the Member for Corner Brook in speaking to a bill talk about skill shortages, talk about our aging demographic and also talk about our death rate outpacing our birth rate. This can help address that by allowing families, young families and mothers-to-be in this province to access what they need to access to have children.

Now government came in with, I think it was a \$5,000 subsidy towards this. We know and we've heard from advocacy groups and young families that that's not near enough. Not near enough to assist families in going away to access IVF treatment. Many cannot afford it. Many give up. Many would love to have a child or children in this province and stay in this province. But the opportunity and the supports are not there.

This government promised it, committed to it in the last election. I would hope they would stick to it and stay on what they said they would do and enable a full-service

fertility clinic providing IVF in this province. It will help work towards our population growth and build our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

Private Members' Day

SPEAKER: I call upon the Member for Bonavista.

C. PARDY: Thank you, Speaker.

It is with delight I move the following private Member's resolution, seconded by the Member for Ferryland.

BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House express to the Government of Canada its strongest opposition to unilateral fisheries management decisions and demand the establishment of a joint Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador joint fisheries management board to give our province a direct say in the management of our most historic and important resource industry.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

C. PARDY: Thank you, Speaker.

We believe, on this side of the House, that the fishery is underserved. We, I think, believe that the fishery has been mismanaged; many others think the fishery has been mismanaged. Many think that we have been voiceless on the fishery for a long time, especially since I've been in the House, 2019, and even predating that.

There are a lot of similarities in what was said 30 years ago, to what it was two decades ago, to what it was one decade ago.

Every time a Canadian prime minister appoints a new Fisheries minister, the people throughout the province get nervous. When Minister LeBlanc was appointed, one thing he unilaterally took away was the surf clams. Minister Murray unilaterally imposed a moratorium on the maceral fishery and also expressed her views about leaving as many fish in the water as possible in a radical effort to combat climate change. Prior ministers traded away our province's fishing interests to gain sweetheart deals from other countries, in other sectors, benefiting people elsewhere.

I'm not sure in the House how many people have read the book, *Empty Nets* by Gus Etchegary. If I were in school now I'd ask for a show of hands of whoever read that. Okay, there we go; that's good. We have people in our House who have read the book, *Empty Nets*. It gives a chronology over time in Mr. Etchegary's storied involvement in the fishery from when he entered to current and he discusses it and thus the term and the title *Empty Nets*.

He references in that book the Walsh report of 1953. In 1953, he utilizes that report as being an indicative of the resources that we brought into Confederation a few years prior. For those people who read the book, they will know that we were pretty bountiful back in the years and when we joined this Confederation, we were pretty bountiful.

People look at it now and see where we are, and it's been said in this House a couple of times, with the exception of the snow crab, what else in the ocean is going to provide the livelihood that the snow crab currently does and to what amount? Look at the quota allocations that have been continuously declining over the years.

So I would say referencing the book, and the last reference that I make in the book, was the fact that on page 163 – and that's not from memory because I have the note made here on my sheet – he says Canada has failed us. A previous premier, Brian

Peckford, said the greatest mistake we made was seating the fishery on the Terms of Union with Canada because we gave up ownership of our resource.

When he said and referenced that Canada failed us, he talked about the 200-mile limit, out to the edge of the continental shelf and the Flemish Cap, because they believe that with migratory stocks, we need to make sure that we have that area outside, which is called the nose and tail, we think that we should have jurisdiction in Canada. We should've extended that to cover in the continental shelf.

When Mr. Etchegary had a group, which the acronym was SOFA, Save Our Fisheries Association, he met with then – well the current prime minister's father, and they were very open to making sure that we extended coverage on those areas. For people that are not aware of what the size of the nose and tail would be, I've been told that it equates to the size of the Province of Alberta.

That is an area outside on the continental shelf, very rich grounds, that four nations can catch their product. So, in reality, we've got people become very nervous. Some think we've been used as pawns lots of times for the greater good of others and not the interest of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in a lot of decisions that have been made.

We know that other provinces wouldn't stand for that. If someone said, would Quebec stand for its mines and hydro resources being managed this way? I think we would all concur that absolutely not.

The only thing we hope here today is that through this private Member's resolution, we can all be united and we can make a resolution at the end and we can try to make some inroads to improving our relationship in relation to fisheries management with the federal government.

And that's our goal today. Our goal today is to make inroads.

I would say we talk about the science. Good science is what we all espouse to have. We all seek good science because if it's good science, we can make meaningful decisions and they're grounded in good, rational decision-making. But if there are gaps or lapses in the science or in the stock assessments, then we find that the decisions that are made are not beneficial.

The last one we talked about in the House was the mackerel fishery, Speaker. We talked about the mackerel fishery; it's closed this year, but all our harvesters in Newfoundland and Labrador, whatever coast you refer to, talk about the bountiful amount of mackerel that we have in our waters.

The daily news reports Norway, the largest amount on record caught in one week of mackerel. I think it was 64,000 metric tons, one week. The largest ever of that migratory stock. I would venture that next year we'll have the quota back and I think it'll probably be up more than what it was in the previous year, because we missed on the assessment of that stock. That's not a critique or a negative on the science, but something happened along the way that they came up with an incorrect assumption on the stock of the mackerel.

I would say to you, what could we do differently? Use all those wonderful harvesters that are out there and use their data and their information to bring in to good science either to validate or to enable them to have a second look on science to make sure that what is espoused and what is coming down from DFO is certainly something that is founded and it's accurate and it falls under the category of good science.

I'd be interested in hearing what my colleagues in the House of Assembly have to say. I know Mr. Etchegary is watching

today and he's got a lifetime in the fisheries, and I would say he's most interested in what we bring as a united front in this House. And let's raise the conversation on fishery because it benefits every Newfoundlander and Labradorian that we've got in our province. It's time to raise the conversation.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAGG: Thank you, Speaker.

I have to say it's an honour to stand in this House and as many ministers before me have stood in this House and talked about a comparable resolution; we talk about management decisions as it relates to the fishery. I live in a fishing community, Mr. Speaker. I grew up there; I live there today. Many of my friends are still involved in the fishery, so it's near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker.

I have to say, as ministers, we all get the blame for whatever – oh, I thought I had to sit down, I'm sorry about that, with the changing of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

D. BRAGG: So I apologize for that, changing the train of thought here now.

So as the Member opposite just brought forward from Bonavista, this is a great resolution. It's been debated in this House many times over many years. I have a couple of reports I'm going to reference to later, because this vitally important.

The future of our fishery is what maintains rural Newfoundland and urban Newfoundland. I always thought for a while that it was just the mainstay of rural Newfoundland, but without a fishery, there will no big Gander activities, the

dealerships, the ATV dealerships. It is all so much dependent on the fishery. So the future of our fishery should be on the front of all of us. It's been in red books; it's been in blue books. Every time there's a Speech from the Throne, there's a mention of the fishery. It can tell you how important the fishery is.

But, Mr. Speaker, before I get into my dialogue on this, I want to introduce an amendment to the motion. It's a friendly amendment, by the way, and I did share this with the Member opposite and we both agreed this is friendly. Speaker, I would like to propose the following amendment to the hon. Member's PMR.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, that the private Member's resolution currently before the House be amended by adding immediately after the word "industry" the following: with an emphasis to be placed on increased science, improved stock assessments and for the Government of Canada to prioritize funding for these initiatives.

That is my amendment, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER (Warr): Thank you.

This House will recess and we will determine whether the amendment is in order.

This House stands in recess.

Recess

SPEAKER: Are the House Leaders ready?

Order, please!

After careful consideration, the amendment is said to be in order.

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture.

D. BRAGG: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Speaker, the purpose of our amendment was to talk about science, because without the science and the research, you can have all types of management.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

D. BRAGG: Yeah, that's right. As the minister said, you would have nothing. It's guesswork, and I'm going to give you a couple of examples. The Member opposite talked about mackerel this year, right? Mackerel are in millions this year. A friend of mine stopped me a couple of days ago and said tuna are in millions out off Greenspond. I said yeah. So we need science.

Here's another thing, this is from real live people. If the cod come back, the crab will go because the crab will eat up all the small – or the cod will eat up all the small cod. We need the science on that. The red fish populations is anticipated on growing in our Gulf fishery, that's going to have a positive effect on the red fish, from what I'm being told – I don't have the science for it – but have a negative effect on the shrimp fishery.

Now, if that is where we are, we need the science for that because you need to know. Earlier today, I went down to a forestry event, in which you can walk in the woods and you can look at a tree and you can say yeah, that's harvestable for a log or that's harvestable for pulp. But we don't have that option when you go to the isles, but we have the technology. We've moved a long way in technology.

So we need to urge the federal government to invest. We've heard talk of the two ships that were ready for research that somehow can't get clear of the port because they broke down. We need to get our ships on the ocean. We need research. We have the capabilities, we have the people in the federal government and provincial government with the ability to do the

research that we need and we need to get out there because we don't need to go through another moratorium.

I have two reports here. One is November 1991, joint management and government cooperation in the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery. This is pre-moratorium. I have another one. This is the *White Paper Joint Management of Newfoundland and Labrador Fisheries*. This was done in 2003, commissioned by then Premier Roger Grimes. This is 11 years after the moratorium.

In here, if you checked this document, and I'll table the document in case the Member opposite didn't have a file on his desk, there's some great reading in here; absolutely great reading. It goes back and gives us some history.

In '49, when we joined Confederation, the fishery aspect, the quotas, was taken over by the federal government. We've been there ever since. This has been a battle that this province has been fighting for years and years and years.

So all levels, whether you're the Conservative government before us or the current government today, this is relevant. But the fight goes on, because we need our say.

Now in saying that, I'm not exactly saying we get no say. Don't let anybody who listens think that we have absolutely no say in what goes on in the fishery.

We follow over 50 stocks, and we partner with the federal government. Now, is that me and the minister having a direct conversation? Not on your life, Mr. Speaker, not on your life. That is the educated people. There are learned friends in our department who are very qualified to carry on these conversations.

I'll give you an example of some of the groups. We have advisory groups on 3Ps

groundfish advisory committee; the 2J3KL cod advisory; the 2+3KLMNO Groundfish Advisory Committee; Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee; the 2+3 Capelin Advisory; Snow crab advisory 3L inshore with fishing areas 5A, 6A, 6B; the Atlantic Mackerel Advisory Committee; the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee; the Atlantic Large Pelagics Advisory Committee; Offshore Clam Advisory Committee; the Newfoundland Regional Large Pelagic Advisory Committee; and also we have the Seal Advisory Committee.

Now on top of that, we go to NAFTA meetings in which we get a say, because as the Member opposite said, we've extended our boundary, thanks to the federal government, to take in the 200-mile limit. That is very important. It leaves us the nose and tail. NAFTA would be the ones who govern the nose and tail, in conversations with our government.

Only a little while ago, representatives from our office were in Portugal for the NAFTA meetings. Very important to be there. I know members of the FFAW were also at the same meetings and members of our ASP, people in our industry were there.

So this is very important that we keep up this fight for joint management, but it's more important right now that we get good science because living in a fishing community in rural Newfoundland and being in this province, I do want to go through another moratorium. I do not want to see my friends pack up and leave their houses to go outbound. We've had a great lot of younger families that have moved back into rural Newfoundland the last number of years because our fishery is really lucrative.

The Member opposite said, except for crab. I remind the Member opposite there's many, many species that make up. There's yellowtail comes to my mind for the South Coast. There's clams and lobster. Lobster I would say right now is next to where the

crab is at. We have multiple – the cod fishery, the full quota was caught this year. The first time in about the last seven or eight years we've caught our cod quota, and we're going to do it this year. So that's people doing work and getting work here in our province.

I don't want people out with the allusion that we're sitting back, sucking our thumbs or thinking that we're doing nothing. We're actively talking to our federal counterparts at all times, on all species; but, yes, joint management – and it would come at a cost to this province. Let's not kid ourselves. You don't get joint management without saying we need resources, we need scientists, we need researchers, we need vessel operators and we need vessels. It all comes part and parcel.

But I am right there; we need to be there; we need our voice in there; we need the best science out there because it is the fishery – I am struggling to see the clock, Mr. Speaker, in the light over there.

AN HON. MEMBER: Thirty-six seconds.

D. BRAGG: Thirty-six seconds to go.

I'll close by saying this: The Member opposite would like us saying that this is great. I remind the Member opposite that in April, when I stood on the steps of this Confederation Building, not one soul from the other side stood near me or the Minister Responsible for Labour. Not a soul from the other side, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

D. BRAGG: So if you're going to be serious, let's get real serious; let's work together and let's do the right thing for our fishery.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I recognize the Member for Ferryland.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Mr. Speaker, I won't go down that road; I had my say on that already, previous to this, about not being out there and we know why, so I am not going to get into it. I am just going to keep the low road, as you would say.

We do accept the amendment that you put in there, we certainly agree with it, and hopefully on the next time when we –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

We're taking away from the Member's time to speak here.

I recognize the Member for Ferryland. Please go ahead.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Speaker.

Again, we certainly accept the friendly amendment and hopefully the next time that we have an amendment that we go that way – out of the eight tries the last time, we didn't get one – maybe you'll look at our idea and it might be a good idea as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

L. O'DRISCOLL: We certainly accept your ideas; collaboration, we're all about. I think it is a good move so we sit down and we'll accept that. So hopefully the next time we'll get that back in some recourse, somewhere along the way.

I'll just touch on the fishery in my area, where I live. I grew up – I'm certainly not a fisherman; I'll make that statement. I worked in the fish plant; my father was a fisherman and I certainly did fish a couple of years because you had to go out and fish. That's what you had to do to help. So when I was 16, 17 I had a couple of years that I was out

fishing; I didn't get paid, by the way. You had to go and that was the way it was when you were young.

To touch on the science – again, I've said this a number of times in here – the moratorium was announced July 2, 1992 and it happened to be my birthday, so it's an easy day for me to remember. It was 30 years ago.

They are 30 years now trying to figure out science on the cod fishery, and they haven't got it back yet. So I don't know what science you're going to rely on from the federal government. I know that that's their job. We gave it away in 1949. I think the minister's job, and every previous minister of this, PCs included, should be fighting harder to get it back. Not only the Liberals, everybody should be fighting harder to get it back.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

L. O'DRISCOLL: That's where we seem to fall short. I'm here three years. We have very little that we talk about, other than we brag about the billion-dollar industry, which it is. Good to brag about it. But we have to get more control. We have to try to get more control. Let's fight a little harder as a minister.

AN HON. MEMBER: Boasting.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Boasting, whatever you want to call it. Whatever it is, it's good. But we have to try harder to get some more management back. We have no control. Some of the rules that are out there and I've been listening to it for a few years, and you hear it in your district – everybody has heard it here, and I'm sure there are people here who are not around the fishery, or haven't been out around it, but people that are making these rules are completely out of touch with the industry. Have they ever set foot on a wharf or a boat? Maybe if they had an announcement they'd be here, like they did over in Corner Brook somewhere

when they had the announcement when the minister came down.

They have never been out on a boat and they're talking about the regulations for the longliners or the inshore fishermen to be able to have a longer boat, to be able to go out and do it safely out off the shores here 20 or 25 miles, but they had to have a restricted boat length. I think they're changing the rules right now, which makes a lot of sense, safety-wise, that they should be able to use a longliner, whatever length boat they want to go out and fish in, not 32 foot or 36 foot, whatever the number is. They can't do it safely.

The people who are making the regulations are up in Ottawa; they're not down here. The fishermen have been fighting this forever and they have to fight for a long time, and they haven't won the battle yet. It's not changed as of yet.

So they have to add on their boat, then they have to get the inspectors in to make sure that it's good. It just doesn't make any sense how they don't collaborate with the people who are actually out on the water. It just makes no sense.

When I grew up, I worked in a fish plant. I started down in the hole of a boat, unloading the boats. We did that as a summer job, the same as anybody, you get summer students looking for jobs as what we're at now. That's what happened in your area. We had 500 people working in the fish plant in Bay Bulls; 250 on each shift. So everything was booming when we were young – everything.

So when I was in weighing the fish – I will use capelin as an example. When I started to weigh the capelin – you'd blast freeze them and you get them in; the Japanese were coming here to get them. When you box up the fish, they're in, I'm going to say, 35-40 pound packages that we box them up and you'd wrap them up. The capelin, when it first started, when I was in the plant you

were getting 33 capelin per kilo to make a kilo of the packaging. That was in the first year they started. So the capelin were big,

Two years later, they needed 66-67 capelin to make a kilo. So that'll tell you what happened in two years in regard to you're talking about science; they just let it run. They didn't fish it to extinction, but they were talking about it this year in regard to capelin, they were going to cut down – all that factors in science. Are they doing the science? I'm saying yes, they might try, but their funding is cut on it.

The Minister of Fisheries should be trying harder to get some rights back here. That's what we have to work on. We have to get some more rights and some more say on what's happening. That is not happening right now. I haven't seen it in the three years, and I'm going to say previous governments, they may have spoken about it, but not a whole lot of attention. Within the budget, I think fisheries is mentioned once or twice. In a budget in Newfoundland and Labrador, we mentioned fisheries twice in the budget.

It's certainly changed the way it's been over the last 40 years, for sure. It should be the mainstay. When we down in the Colonial Building, if you go back and look at the records all the rules were about fishery back then and how it was sold and what they did with it and everything else. It's something that we should be looking.

Seals: We don't have to stand here and proclaim and talk an hour about seals. We know the issue. There's a five-mile stretch of ice and it's littered with seals and we do nothing about it. Where's the science, because somebody over in Europe doesn't want it? Well, we can't accept that, we should be fighting and putting out videos and showing what it's doing.

Speaking on the grey seals, they eat 6.6 kilograms – and there are less than a million of those grey seals here, supposedly. How

they count them, I have no idea. I guess they're doing a little bit of research. Harp seals, they eat 3.3 kilograms of fish – and there are six million of those seals here. So that's seeing seven million seals. There are more than seven million seals out there I'm sure.

Again, who's doing the counting? Where is the research coming from? I have pictures on my phone that they cut open a seal and you'll see the cod. They're only eating the guts of the cod; they're not eating all the cod. But they are eating them. Or the minister is lost to think that that's not happening. The seal has to be culled or there has to be a production of some sort to take some of the seals out of the system, because it's certainly hurting the cod fishery.

Now, the cod fishery in all areas, everybody is going out fishing, seem to be getting a lot of fish and it's small – they got the quota caught this year, which is great news, and there was a good supply where we were this year. But there are days that it's not there. I can remember days standing on the hill – we called it coming up over the cliffs, standing up looking out over and saying: b'y, there are no fish here today. That might go on for a month, then all of a sudden they'd hit in certain areas, and that's the way it was this summer in jigging along the Southern Shore. They're in Bay Bulls. They're not up in Ferryland, yet they get to Cape Broyle. So they're moving.

Again, the offshore trawlers, they made a stand here. The Liberal government did at one time. They went and brought in some foreign fisheries and parked them down there at the wharf and charged them and then it stopped after that again.

But with cod traps, at the time, if the fish didn't swim into them, you didn't catch them. But you can go out there and go all over the ocean and track them down. With the systems that they've got now, they can see them anywhere so they're certainly going to

find the fish and the fish got no way to get away or any type of species that they're fishing, whether it be turbot or whatever it is.

I mean, there are certain areas of the province got certain fish. We talk about the mackerel is shut down and that's where, you know, some of this started. There is no mackerel fishery in my area that I know of, I'm sure. In your area, it is big. And not in my area, but I'm saying there's mackerel there but not a fishery that I see boats going out seining or doing whatever.

The crab fishery is vital up our way. Cod fishing is big up our way. Squid was big in our area at one time, very big, but not now. Big in Holyrood. That was the squid-jigging ground; that's where the song came from. You know that different areas have different fishing, but they don't have a lot of regulations – and I agree with the minister. It is about science but they had 30 years with the cod fishery gone and we're relying on science.

So what have they done? That is my statement. What have they done with science in 30 years to improve the fishery? All they did was stop you from catching it. They did nothing else but stop you from catching it. They did nothing with the seals. As soon as a high-profile person says something about the seals, away it goes.

You would think that the environmentalists that are around Trudeau – and I'll read this statement – would understand that the local action rather than management from afar is a principle in the heart of moment that they claim to understand. That is the problem. Forget about what they're saying. We have to try to fight for it. That is the thing we have to do, is try to fight for our fishery and try to get something back here that we can stand on. That is what our Minister of Fisheries – and I'm not blaming that Minister of Fisheries. He's only here a year or a year and a half at it. It's all of our Fisheries ministers but you've got to start somewhere. Give it two years. We've got two years left

or three years left here. Fight for it for the next three years and somebody might have something to build on.

Thank you, Speaker, and I appreciate the time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: I am recognizing the hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: That was close, Mr. Speaker. That could have been closer. I am glad I had my Echinacea last night.

We're here to discuss something, which is not foreign territory or undiscussed in the past. We are here to discuss something that has been a perennial topic of discussion amongst parliamentarians for a number of decades. So, Mr. Speaker, I think we look at it from that point of view, that while we may sort of jockey for position and try to present ourselves as being the front-runner, the leader, the speaker and chief of this particular issue, the cheerleader and chief, the truth is, is that many parties, many individuals, many parliamentarians, many parliaments have engaged in this discussion. Unfortunately, for us all, it has not met with success for Newfoundland and Labrador.

So I think it would be incumbent upon us all to just recognize that if we try to make this a partisan issue, we will fail. Whoever tries to make this a partisan issue of who was the greatest champion of joint management, you will fail, because this initiative dates back to 1977.

It was in 1977 that the territorial limits of most nations, most of the rest of the world were advanced to 200 nautical miles. The exclusive economic zone remained at 12 nautical miles, but the territorial limits for the purposes of seacoast fisheries management and other navigations went to 200 miles in 1977. This was the year that this particular

decision was driven by the collapse of Northern cod, in many respects, or was coincidental with the collapse of Northern cod in Newfoundland and Labrador largely from foreign overfishing.

There was an element of domestic fishing that was in place, but it was clearly evident that foreign overfishing was the lead driver. It was in this year that the Harris panel report – learned scholar Harris issued his report, which called for a consensus of decision-making in fisheries management between federal and provincial governments because he said he recognized that the only way that this could succeed was if federal and provincial governments worked jointly in this.

So the Harris panel – I'm going to quote from the Harris panel itself, if I can read this. It says: "In such cases, not only may objectives differ but even established goals may take on different meanings when seen from different perspectives. Thus, a national goal of improving the competitive position of the fishing industry may conflict with a provincial or regional goal designed to achieve a social objective such as enhanced job opportunities. All too often allocations among user groups are made on the basis of political expediency rather than on a clear understanding of established biological, ecological, social, or economic goals and objectives. Such ad hoc management decisions frequently destabilize the commercial fishery and scientific efforts to conserve the resource and to collect the data needed to assist government in making rational management decisions."

The panel concluded by stating that the management goals of the fishery should be ones to which both levels of government can subscribe.

So that goes back to 1977, and 1977 was the first real year that there could have been even a discussion about joint management. Prior to that, it was a three- and 12-mile

coastal limit. With such a limited depth of fisheries management in terms of geographic footprint, there really wasn't a whole lot of value to joint management, arguably, but now with the collapse of Northern cod, with foreign overfishing, the expansion to the 200-mile limit, it made infinite sense to move to joint management.

So '77 was the first time that the concept of joint management came forward. The second time was in 1990, in a formal way. I'm sure there were discussions between in the 1980s, but from a formal way, it was the Mulroney commission of 1990. The Mulroney commission in 1990 stated that to resolve the problem the Mulroney commission recommended a joint authority to be established to coordinate the policy objectives of both governments. Such a body would offer management advice to both ministers without changing their respective constitutional responsibilities. In the long run, the creation of such a board would go a long way to reducing the level of conflict and acrimony that gave rise to the creation of this commission.

So that goes back to 1990, and then, of course, in 1991 former Premier Clyde Wells, who was a fervent champion of joint management, brought forward a provincial government paper, *Effective Fisheries Management: Joint Management and Government Cooperation in the Newfoundland and Labrador Fishery*.

That was a key, substantive, modern-day driver because that initiative, while the Harris panel report and the Mulroney Commission report took on more of a pan-Atlantic or pan-Canadian point of view, it was in 1991 that Newfoundland and Labrador stood up and stood strong with its own clear vision and articulation of joint management.

From there, Mr. Speaker, we go to several other initiatives. With the moratorium in place in 1993, and subsequently expanded in 1994, several Standing Committees on

Fisheries and Oceans began an investigation – or at least touched on the subject; one being in November of 2003. The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, Members of the Liberal government at that point in time joined as witnesses to the committee's proceedings, along with Members of the Opposition. They brought forward strong words of advice to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, a call for joint management.

Then, arguably, the subject becomes something of a discussion on the wharf and in the kitchen, but not necessarily in the legislatures until March of 2017 when the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, again, and its report on *Newfoundland and Labrador's Northern Cod Fishery: Charting a new sustainable future* – the chair of that standing committee was the hon. Scott Simms.

The report came forward with identification of a key recommendation: "While the federal government manages the harvesting sector, the processing sector is under provincial jurisdiction. In his opinion, it is almost impossible to have an integrated industry when separate jurisdictions manage two critical aspects of the fishery."

The provincial minister at the time in 2017, the Member for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde – I can't name his name, although he is named in the report. The provincial Fisheries Minister, the Member for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde, I believe his name is Steve, "also expressed the need for increased coordination between federal and provincial policies to support the fishery industry in its transition from shellfish to groundfish."

The minister for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde carried on: "Northern cod represent a unique opportunity for federal-provincial joint management since its fishing areas are only adjacent to Newfoundland and Labrador removing the complexity of multi-

provincial jurisdictions that takes place in the management of many other" species.

What I do find interesting about this is that while the Member for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde was an expert witness on the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, there were no other parties that brought forward ideas or contemplations to the standing committee.

The other thing that I note, in tandem with joint management is also custodial management, which of course, as we know, the hon. Loyola Hearn announced in 2007 that Canada had attained effective management of the nose and the tail. So that was a bit of a contrary position to previous positions where we had fought hard for custodial management of the nose and the tail of the Grand Banks from foreign overfishing. But the Conservative government of the day in 2007 announced that because of changes to the NAFO convention, we had now achieved custodial management.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of work has been done, but clearly it has not been successful (inaudible) –

SPEAKER: Thank you.

I remind the minister his speaking time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: I recognize the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Being the Member for Exploits, of course, it's always good to get up here in the House of Assembly and speak on such an important PMR. Especially in my district, we do have some communities that still rely on the fishery. I know the Town of Leading Tickles, where I came from – I grew up there; I saw the fishery being vibrant. It was

a good resource to our community and it still is a good resource to our community. Many of my friends, many of my relations are still there and they rely on the fishery. We know how much the fishery is important to that community and some of the other communities in my district.

Even the fishery itself, Mr. Speaker, not only to my community but the whole, basically, of Central Newfoundland – and the minister did touch on it earlier – is still a big supporter of the fishery. It relies on the fishery. There's a lot of industry in Central Newfoundland that still relies on the fishery. The monies that are made from the fishery are still spent in the Central areas with regard to vehicles and other products.

I know that Newfoundland Styro in Bishop's Falls, one of our great manufacturers – I had a chance to visit, myself and the Fisheries critic only a couple of weeks ago – make all kinds of products for the fishing industry. They also do machine welding stuff there for the boats and stuff equipped for the fishing industry.

So the fishing industry is a great aspect to Central Newfoundland – all the Northeast Coast, actually. It provides income, employment and jobs to the Central area. It's great to get up here and talk about the fishery in that aspect.

In regard to what needs to be done with the fishery, we need – I know the Fisheries critic mentioned it; a couple of speakers did mention it – science. We need to sit down and listen to the harvesters and find out ways to increase our fishing capacity. Our stocks have been low, of course. We know one of the biggest contributors is predators to our fishing industry. We know that seals are a big contributor to what we need to be attacking in regard to the science itself.

You know, I'm not a scientist. I grew up in lean-to's, like I said, but in regard to knowing that seals eat a massive amount of fish, that's just common knowledge. I don't

need to be a scientist. You know the harvesters themselves, I can remember sitting on the wharves talking to the fisherman as they come in, as they see the seals or even bring in some seals themselves. They'd tell you what came out of those seals. It wasn't beach rocks; it was other fish and stuff like that in the oceans that really were a big part of our loss to the fishery.

So we certainly need to get down to the science of that. We'd like to get probably more products for our seals; we could certainly have a bigger industry on that, and maybe even our own products. Some of the quotas that we could use there just to read on to that. When the minister speaks of support from Ottawa, only recently, our own PC Member of Parliament, Clifford Small, was named the Fisheries critic for Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

P. FORSEY: Which is a big boost for the Newfoundland fishery. It's something that we can stand behind. We can stand behind our Fisheries critic that's up there in Ottawa right now; it puts us in a good position. We can stand behind him and take this to Ottawa. I know he can be a great advocate for it; he wants to be an advocate for it. He's already been an advocate for it. He came from the fishery himself. He knows the fishery. He can certainly tell us what we need in the fishery and how to get there.

So when the minister talks about taking a stand, here's a chance to take a stand. I can remember him telling our Fisheries critic here, probably a year ago, I'm not sure, maybe a bit longer. If you want to take a stand on seals, I'm your man.

I don't know where that went.

AN HON. MEMBER: I give you my seal of approval.

P. FORSEY: I think you should give it elsewhere.

Anyway, we didn't see anything on seals. So when another question was asked about the fishery, I think the minister's response was: We don't touch the fishery until it comes on land.

So we don't touch the fishery until it comes on land; I'm not touching seals. Take a stand. Take a stand. Take it to Ottawa. Probably the minister should turn his attention from milking cows to our fishery and give it that great attention. Maybe that's what needs to be done here.

Anyway, I just figured I'd throw that in, Minister, because you've been gloating that you're so good at milking cow here lately.

So there are lots of things we can do, Speaker. I think we should stand behind our Fisheries critic that's in Ottawa and take our challenge to Ottawa; get back some of your quotas; get back some of our waters. We need this renewable industry to be ours. We need more input into it. We need more say into it and we need to be able to set some quotas and get our industry back to where it's to.

We need our new industry, new people going into our industry and not have the challenges that they have today to get into the industry, because it's another type of industry to pass down that by the time the new entrants want to get into the fishery, they get that discouraged with it that they're gone by the wayside anyway.

So in order for our fishery to be renewable we need to get our fishery back in our oceans. We need to get a good streamline of predation and have our fishery back to where it's good so that we can get new entrants back in our fishery, new people back there and start enterprises that can make us proud and generate more income in this province. It's a renewable resource. It's our resource and we should be able to

have more input of what we do with our own resources. This one, in particular, is very, very important.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, it's good to speak on this report. Certainly, as always, it's nice to support the amendment that was put in as well. It shows collaboration between both sides. It's always nice to support the amendment that somebody gives to help out any situation that we can move our industry along and our government along to make it better for this province and make everybody feel that we're supporting our industries and we want to be collaborative about that.

Mr. Speaker, other than that, I'll gladly speak on this PMR, but there are also some more points that people can make. I think we need to put more emphasis on our fishery. The discussion needs to be more and more on our fisheries. It seems like we need to bring this to the forefront and we need to continue the conversation on our fishery.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

The only body of water in the St. John's Centre, of course, is Mundy Pond.

AN HON. MEMBER: Any fish in it?

J. DINN: There are fish, the ones that the osprey don't get.

I don't know if I had a real connection with the fishery other than my grandfather taking capelin from the beach and spreading it on the fields, but that was about it. That was part of our involvement out in Bay Roberts.

But I taught on the Southern Shore, I taught up on the Burin Peninsula and I knew that the fishery was integral to that community and to the communities there. If anything else, when I taught up in Trepassey, Speaker, in 1982-1983, the place was blooming. That was primarily because of the fishery. That was shortly after the cod moratorium. If you'd drive through Trepassey now, it's a shadow of itself. In many ways, the fishery certainly ensured the viability of many small communities.

I understand totally why this motion is brought forward, and I do agree with the Member for Bonavista that the fishery should be bringing in much more. We should be managing it properly, because it's renewable and it's sustainable. Let there be no mistake that many of my colleagues up in Ferryland would remind me that the St. John's townies wouldn't exist without the bay and without the fish harvester and so on and so forth. So I got that lesson for the entire 16 years I was up there and I was never let to forget it.

So having joint management, I do agree with it. There are issues with it. I'll address those. I do appreciate the amendment most of all, I think, because in the end, whatever we do here, it's going to have to be subject to good science, well-funded science because I believe that's going to be the key to sustainability and to growing the industries back to where it was.

That means we're going to have to put political differences aside and leave the politics out of it. I go back to the public sector pension funds where they have independent boards, which are based on good financial fiscal management. That's the thing that's keeping them healthy right now.

I can go back to the cod moratorium, and it's interesting, the discussions I've heard on that. I used to be a big listener of *The Fisheries Broadcast*, and certainly with regard to the factory freezer trawlers, the

foreign overfishing, you name it, and seals and so on and so forth, and capelin. I'll talk a little bit about those.

Now, if I were to believe my, I think it was my elementary grade history book, when John Cabot first sailed here, he was able to dip a basket down to the water and come up with the brim full of fish. At that time, there was still a healthy seal population. There was a balance. For many generations, I would say, with the techniques that the fishery certainly thrived and supported many small communities, then things changed.

Now, as to whether seals are the culprit in preventing the cod rebounding, I don't know. But do you know what? Anecdotally, that seems to be the issue. So there needs to be some science there.

I want to talk briefly – an analogy if you will – and it has to do with many, many years ago, it had to do with the 100 Mile House caribou herd that was decimated by overhunting and could not rebound. They cut out the hunting, Speaker, and still the herds did not rebound.

What they realized, of course, was that the population levels had gotten so low that the wolf predation was actually inhibiting them from getting back to their normal, once healthy populations. What they started to do is they realized culling the wolf didn't help, but they started to sterilize the males so that the older wolves stayed in place and kept the younger ones away, but the herd actually rebounded.

The point here is that, at the root of it, it comes back to maybe the commercialized – and I'm talking about the factory freezer trawlers and everything else, that we overharvested. I've been on boats where they caught fish, not marketable, and dumped into the ocean. That's got to stop. That's not something that we can tolerate. It's too valuable a resource. But I do believe that – do you know what? When it comes to seals, by the way, I have no issues with a

seal hunt; no issue whatsoever, but let's make sure we do it – and I think we caved into international pressure at a time when we should not have and that we should have stuck to our guns on that and protected that industry as well and we probably wouldn't be in the situation we are right now because I do believe there's a balance at play here.

Capelin – I always figured it was the commercial fishery that's contributing to it. Yet, if I look at what some of the scientific reports are saying, the commercial fishery takes a very small amount of it. Scientists suggest that there's something going on out in the ocean. I'm sure many of you remember – well, any of you my age or a little bit younger – that the capelin are usually around in June sometime – the early part of June. I remember even teaching up the shore, the capelin would be coming in around June. Now it's much later. Something has happened.

So if anything else, if I look at my vision for a joint management committee, it's about looking at all of these things so that Ottawa is not using our fishery as a bargaining chip to gain advantage in international trade of some sort and that the provincial government also – whoever it is at that time – provincial politicians are also not tempted to use the fishery as a political bargaining chip as well.

But I do believe that it's going to have to be a committee that brings in other voices too, whether that's the FFAW, the communities that depend on this valuable resource and science, especially.

Look, we've got the redfish fishery about to open up, or it's reaching its peak, and there's a whole discussion now whether it's going to be inshore or offshore or whether it's going to be the large companies or the small inshore fishermen that's going to be taking charge of it. That involves more than just Newfoundland and Labrador; that involves adjacent provinces.

Maybe the committee being proposed here is going to deal with that; maybe not. Maybe we're going to have to broaden it. Then there's the issue, if you look at here in this province, of controlling agreements. Federally there is legislation, regulations that deal with it in terms of the fish harvesters. Provincially there's nothing there that really prevents the fish processors from entering into it.

We have aquaculture, and the science has certainly shown that it has probably led to the decimation of our wild salmon stocks. How do we manage that? How do we transition maybe to a land-based system?

I support this, I really do. If you want a made-in-Newfoundland-and Labrador resource, it's one that's too valuable to leave to the decision-making power of any one government. I think we need the federal government at times for certain enforcement issues, but I think we also need to make sure that when Ottawa is making decisions, they understand just how important this is. More importantly, how important it is to invest in this industry in terms of making sure that we have the best possible science, the best possible research, the best possible evidence so that we can maintain and grow this industry and keep those fish harvesters who are in it enjoying a healthy living and making sure that communities that depend on it are viable and thrive and grow. If anything else, it's that kind of sustainability I think that we can all support.

I certainly support this, let's do it, let's do it well and let's put the effort into it. Whether that's provincial or federal funding or both. I think it's going to have to come from both, and certainly, it's going to have to come from the feds. But certainly let's put the science behind it and let's make sure that no one is making unilateral decisions about a resource that's going to benefit many Newfoundlanders, all Newfoundlanders, whether they're engaged or not, and I would say the rest of this country as well.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER (Bennett): The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

B. WARR: Thank you, Speaker.

It's a pleasure to stand and lend a voice to this important PMR.

Mr. Speaker, the prolific fishing grounds off our coast have been the core of Newfoundland and Labrador's economy since Europeans arrived here in the 15th century. We must also not forget at that time that the fishery was an integral part of the lifecycle of the Indigenous people who call this place home. Their settlement patterns were intimately connected to the migration patterns of the creatures of the sea and the land. Like the Indigenous people who lived here, settlers sought out places to live that provided ready access to the sea and, at the same time, shelter from the harsh climate of the North Atlantic.

The value of the fishery has been obvious throughout our history, as noted by the fact that one of the primary reasons for conflict between the French and the English in the past was access to our prolific fishing grounds. Interestingly, when Canada was added to the British Empire in 1763 the British government thought Newfoundland and the newly ceded St. Lawrence Gulf fisheries to be much more important than the vast but underdeveloped mainland.

Not all of our experiences with the fishery have been positive, as we're all aware. There have been times of challenge, most noteworthy being the moratorium on groundfish in 1992. Despite this, the people of the province have demonstrated the resilience resulting in a reimagined and rebuilt fishery that has resulted in landed value for the Newfoundland fishery, exceeding \$1 billion over the past two years.

In my district, most communities have a long and important relationship with the fishing industry. Our communities are keenly aware of the challenges and of the opportunities inherent in earning a livelihood from the sea. There are few jurisdictions in the world that have such a historical attachment to the fishery over more than five centuries; an attachment that continues to grow into the 21st century.

Our world today is witnessing change at an unprecedented pace, and facing challenges like climate change, a global pandemic and international aggression. Maintaining a healthy fishing industry that will provide a healthy food source during these tumultuous times is critical. Newfoundland and Labrador, with centuries of experience and knowledge of the fishery and adjacency to diverse fish docks, is ideally positioned to be a leader in the fishery of the future.

Joint management has been something that has been advocated by Members on both sides of the House for decades. It is a position that we all see as being of benefit to the province and its people, especially those in the fishing industry. It is prudent, and I would argue crucial, that there be effective and efficient long-term management of the fisheries. That management has to include the voice of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians on matters that affect the province directly.

Joint management is not a new concept, and it has been a position that Members on both sides of the House have advocated for approximately 50 years. Joint management will enable the province to achieve a number of goals, including providing the opportunity for increased influence over decisions that impact the province's economic and social future.

The fishery, as we know it, impacts all of us in so many ways, and on a daily basis. We need to have a strong voice as a result. It will provide the opportunity to secure greater resource access through advocacy

for and confirmation of the principles of adjacency and historical dependency as a key criteria for access and allocation. This is a major factor, and one that has been at the forefront of the discussion on joint management from the outset.

We've realized there are matters related to the fishery that have national and international implications, and on those, the federal government has a duty and a responsibility to act in the best interest of the nation. But on matters that impact the citizens of the province, our voice has to be on the table and carry equal weight.

As I have previously stated, there are few jurisdictions in the world that has its identity so closely and intimately connected to the sea and its resources. We passionately care about our fishery and its success. Our seat at the joint management table brings a voice that wants the best from the province and, by extension, the nation. Our voice will champion a management that builds on the experiences of the past but above all works to ensure a sustainable and viable fishery for the future.

There have been occasions when fishery concerns have given rise to conflict between the two levels of government such as the days surrounding the 1992 moratorium and the CETA agreement in 2013. We have to ensure that, going forward, management of the fishery is one that is characteristic by co-operation and joint agreement and conflict. The fishery of 100 years ago is not the fishery of today, Mr. Speaker, and, consequently, the management must reflect the realities of today.

Today's fishery functions in an environment that now has an active offshore oil industry, developing onshore and offshore wind energy projects and an ocean that is a highway for international transport of goods.

I am working for a better tomorrow for the citizens of Baie Verte - Green Bay and for this province, Speaker. Joint management

of our first and, I would argue, the industry that has shaped us the most, is an objective that I believe is necessary for the future sustainability of the industry.

In closing, I support the PMR and the proposed amendment as in the world of 2022 there has to be stated emphasis on science and improved stock assessments. We cannot properly manage a resource that we do not understand, and increased and improved science will enable us to do that. It is imperative that our Government of Canada prioritize funding for those initiatives.

Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak about a resource that has shaped my District of Baie Verte - Green Bay and the people of this province.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

This resolution I'm sure none of us would have a problem supporting. It's great to hear some of the background that has been given here today on the fishery.

I'm going to say I recall back – but no, this is well before my time – when we heard of this gentleman, Giovanni Caboto, John Cabot as we mainly know him as, when he landed on our shores in 1497 and he wrote back to King Henry. He said you can't imagine the oil and gas we have here. No, I don't think he said that. Or you can't imagine the natural resources we have here, the mining. We do have all that, but this province was built on the fishery.

Of course, when John Cabot wrote back to King Henry, he actually wrote about the fishery. He talked about the fishery. He said the fish were so abundant in the oceans it

would slow a ship. Think about it. It would slow a ship. This is what he wrote. He said you look down over the boat and codfish – it was bottomless; a bottomless source of codfish. As my Member to the right here had said, you could drop a basket in and just pull it up full of fish. That's how bountiful this resource was.

As the Member across spoke to the wars that broke out over the fishing resource. Again, that's 1497, that's a long time for this province to grow and build and get to where it is because of that resource and because of the many fishers and harvesters that had toiled in that resource, and those who have lost their lives in that resource. It is the main fabric of our being here, really, as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The fishery is what got us to where we are.

Now, we have other resources, yes, and they have to come along. Like the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay said, you know, the ocean has changed. There are other resources and industries happening and we have to change with that. But the fishery is still a huge cornerstone of who we are. We really have to protect that resource. We have to do our best to manage that resource. We have to do our best to ensure that individuals, hardworking Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have that resource in the future.

We talk about seals and how we are sort of held back. You look at it, where else do we allow someone else to come in, in a creaky old boat, black painted boat – Greenpeace – come in and have us not out harvesting seals?

Think about what happens in China. Think about how they herd dolphins into a cove, thousands of dolphins for slaughter and they pick out the ones that they can send to an aquarium. Did you ever see Greenpeace float on in there? I've never heard tell of it. I would suspect if they floated in there – maybe that's where they'll land and stay. Maybe that's where they'll stay.

And we talk about foreign overfishing. Do you think that would be allowed in another country, just to cruise on in while we're dealing with quotas and moratoriums and we have other countries just raking the tip of the Grand Banks?

You know, you talk about the fighting Newfoundlander and we are well known for standing up for our own and standing up for others. I don't personally believe that the federal government, right now, is standing up for us now as fishers. I really don't believe it and I don't think this House, I wouldn't say collectively, is making enough noise when it comes to our fishery and our fishery development.

We have a seal industry where we can harvest every part and use every part of that seal. We know there's a humane harvest of them. Professional fish harvesters have worked with the sealers and they have a course that allows people to go out and humanely harvest seals. So there are none of these gruesome pictures where you see Paul McCartney out on the ice hugging seals and then playing these pictures of seals getting hacked. That's not the story anymore.

First of all, why do we allow individuals like that out on the ice floe? It's unheard of. You wouldn't see it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

P. DINN: He almost got bit by a seal, yes. He almost got bit. Too bad. Too bad it wasn't close enough.

But just think about it, we allow that to happen, right? We allow that to happen. I would love to see him go down to China and hug a dolphin. We really got to start speaking up louder. I'm not saying that we're not speaking; we've got to be louder on this.

We talk about science. Science is a good part of it. I'm not a fisher but I love it. I'm not

a fisher but I will wear my life jacket when I go out for the recreational fishery. When I listen to the fishers out there, they know. They have lived experience and they can tell you. We've talked about the mackerel, a huge abundance of mackerel. We're hearing from them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

P. DINN: Quintals upon quintals, you name it. But you look at this and you say –

AN HON. MEMBER: I don't know what a quintal is.

P. DINN: He don't know what a quintal is; in fact, I doubt he knows how to spell it. It begins with a Q, not a K, just to let you know. Anyway, these are –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

P. DINN: I mean this is a serious issue for us. It's something that we really need to look at. Just because you take one science report, you've really got to look collectively at all reports that are out there. You've really got to sit and have a chat with those who are out there who know it.

The Member across there talked about forestry. He said he can go in and point at this tree and that tree and this tree and say what's harvestable. I agree with that. So it baffles me how a scientist could go out in a sense and say there's a cod, there's a cod, there's a cod. I know it's not as simple as that. But when you listen to the fishers and they say, well, hang on, they've moved. They move inshore, offshore, to another cove.

So when we talk about managing our fishery, we've really got to take – and the word we've used in this House many times – a “fulsome” approach and we've got to look at that. We have to have a say. We talk about joint management. I would think that

joint management is equal, but I'm not even sure. I'm not even sure it's equal. We really need a say in how we manage our resource.

As my Member said earlier, you're not going to tell Quebec how to manage their resources; you're not going to tell Ontario how to manage their resources, Prairie Provinces, BC. Nobody's going in and telling them how to manage their resources, nor should it be here.

We're quite willing and able to work together on this. We also recognize more has to be done to keep our foundation industry going.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

Just listening to stories about working in the fish plant, I was 14 years old when I went to work in the fish plant. I have to tell you it was a lot of good work, hard work. At the time, we actually had three shifts on around the clock. I mean, how things have changed.

The one thing I want to point out is with this PMR it's about actually voicing strong opposition to unilateral fish management decisions. I remember when John Crosbie came in and brought in the moratorium. What a lot of people fail to realize is we all know that compensation was based on the last two years of the fishery. But the problem for the people in my district and in Labrador was the Labrador fishery collapsed a little more than two years before the moratorium was brought on. In actual fact, the amount of monies that they were compensated for not fishing was far less than they would have actually had if it had actually been based on when the fishery was in full flight.

That's what a lot of people didn't know and didn't understand. It created a lot of hardship for people, the fisherpeople in my district. That was never ever acknowledged.

I agree with the intent of this PMR. It's to address the unilateral fishery management decisions made by the federal government. The exclusion of the stakeholders, the people who should have a say, the people of this province, either through the government or the inclusion of other stakeholders as well.

So I do agree. I do support the PMR. It has good intentions. It's asking for a direct say. But one of the things that we have to look at is if we're looking at establishment of a joint Canada-Newfoundland fisheries management board, really what would it have input into? Would it be the management plans for the fish stocks, the quotas, the licensing, all of it? Because those are really the important decisions that we need to be a part of.

Just looking at the history now of these unilateral decisions, it's not just the decisions that were made with the introduction of the cod moratorium. Just the way the quotas are allotted, just the way the licences are allotted, it creates a lot of animosity for people who are involved who feel shut out and excluded. If this PMR meets its intent, it would actually get rid of a lot of that mistrust, animosity and resentment. Just looking at that, another thing, too, is we have to look at all the stakeholders because a lot of the fisherpeople who are out there, a lot of the people involved in the industry, they help collect data that actually contributes to the science that has the final say on these quotas, yet they don't actually have any say on the allotment of the quotas.

The one thing I question on this PMR is it just the Newfoundland and Labrador government that would be involved in the joint-management board, or would we involve other stakeholders like fishery

harvesters, the plant workers and the union? They contribute a lot; they're very involved in the fishery and in the resources as well. So that would be very, very important.

Another thing I wanted to talk about is Newfoundland and Labrador; we are adjacent to the resource. So it would be really important for us to have a say in the management decisions of our resource. Just looking at the 2002 Independent Panel on Access Criteria that was adopted by DFO, it states here: "The adjacency criterion requires that priority of access should be granted to those who are closest to the fishery resource in question."

Newfoundland and Labrador is closest to the fishery resource. "The adjacency criterion is based on the explicit premise that those coastal fishing communities and fishers in closest proximity to a given fishery should gain the greatest benefit from it, and on the implicit assumption that access based on adjacency will promote values of local stewardship and local economic development." Adjacency is so important.

Also, I would like to point out in this House of Assembly in May of 2022, this year, the Nunatsiavut Government actually called out the federal minister, Joyce Murray, for denying an increase in the shrimp quota in waters directly adjacent to the Labrador Settlement Area. In actual fact, that violates the spirit and the intent of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. So when you want to talk about adjacency, the federal government is even in violation a lot of times of their own policies.

We have a constitutionally protected right to a new fishing opportunity within and adjacent to Nunatsiavut. Something that Minister Murray "continues to blatantly ignore," said Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe. The thing about it is a lot of times what's agreed upon, what's put into legislation, what's put into policy is not

followed and the federal government is actually guilty of that.

Looking at the composition of the board, will it be a federal government and provincial government? Will they be the only stakeholders involved, or will we actually extend it to fish harvesters, plant workers and the union? Those are good questions there.

Also looking at that, now if we are able to get a joint management board, our province, what about the other provinces? That's something that needs to be addressed. Because just looking at the Gulf of St. Lawrence, there are five provinces that have claims to the fishery there. So would this actually create a problem where all of the provinces want to have their own boards?

One of the things that need to be worked out, if we're going to look at this PMR, is the jurisdictions. Also, to maybe to have some public consultations. But I do support the intent of this PMR.

Thank you, Speaker.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for St. George's - Humber.

S. REID: Thank you, Speaker.

It's great to have an opportunity to speak on this motion today. I want to thank the Member for Bonavista for bringing forward this motion today. It's an interesting motion that deserves to be debated. As some of the Members have said, we've debated this type of motion or similar motion to it on joint management before. As the Member for Corner Brook outlined, we've had a lot of documents and a lot of discussions and this has been an ongoing issue for a number of years. But it's something that is just as relevant now as it has been in the past.

The Member for Corner Brook referenced a number of documents and I want to just read a little bit from the – one of the ones that he referenced was the White Paper by the provincial government from 1991. I just want to reference that one because I think it gives the goals of joint management. It gives a good summary of what the goals of joint management are.

The goals of the joint management system would be to improve industry efficiency and stability by integrating key policy responsibilities and making decisions closer to the local level.

I think that's the important part of what we're talking about here, is bringing decision-making closer to the people who are impacted by the decision-making, and to foster the effective integration of economic and social priorities with fisheries management decisions and to establish a more open and predictable management process. So by bringing it closer to the people, it allows for more local factors to be taken into account in the decision-making.

Now also in this document is outlined some of the ways that such a board would be set up. The board would be modelled partly after the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board. So that's the board that manages the development of our offshore oil industry. An intergovernmental agreement would set out the key characteristics and powers of the board, similar to the Atlantic Accord.

The arrangement would then be recognized in mirror legislation adopted by the province and by the federal government. Equal numbers of board members would be appointed by the federal and the provincial government, and a jointly appointed chairperson of the board. So that's basically what we're talking about, is setting up a board with those goals and setting up a board possibly with that same structure as the petroleum management board.

It's a very important debate to have. A number of Members also have talked about the history of the fishery in this province, the importance that it has to our culture. It's the reason why Europeans came to this country, came to this province, to live. It determined our settlement patterns, the fact that we have many settlements around the coast, many small communities. It's all designed to prosecute the fishery; it's all based on a fishing economy.

So the impact that the fishery has had on our livelihoods, on our cultural and social development in this province can't be overstated. I think it's very relevant to have that sort of debate here today. I think as well, first when the oil industry started to be developed in Newfoundland, there was some talk about how offshore oil development would impact the fishery. I think the real way that it's impacted the fishery is, in some ways, it's sort of pushed the fishery to the back burner in some ways. I think that is part of the issue that we're dealing with. We need to recognize that the fishery is still important to our economy. It's still an important part of the social fabric in the communities around this province.

We still employ 17,000 people in the fisheries in about 400 communities around the province. In the district that I represent in Codroy, there's only one fish plant left on the Southwest Coast, and it's in the community of Codroy, which is traditionally a fishing, farming, logging community. So I certainly recognize the importance of the fishery economy and the decisions that are made related to fishery resources.

A lot of people have talked about science and the importance of science, and I agree with that. Every industry, no matter if you're looking at farming or fishing or anything, it's based on science and research and the competitive advantage that people have because of the science and the research. One of the examples – and I think to have that science happen as close as possible to

the people who are in the industry is very important.

As well, I think it's important to take into consideration local knowledge when you're doing science, because if you're doing some fishery science in Ottawa and you don't rub shoulders every day with people who are in the industry, I have to question how good and how useful that science is going to be. I'm hopeful that if we're able to institute a joint management model, that we'll see more of that science done here in this province where local people, local knowledge will have more input.

I want to give an example of how this is working. In Grenfell Campus of Memorial University in Corner Brook, they recently received one of the largest research grants anyone in Newfoundland has ever received, and it's to do research into marine resources and how they can be used. They're integrating Indigenous people into that research, they're integrating local people into that research and there is a lot of good things happening because that research is being done close to the people who are in the industry.

I just want to, before I clue up here, I know there may be others who want to speak on this motion as well, but what I wanted to say is that it is interesting. In my district, we have a lot of people who are in the fishery and it's interesting to see the confidence and how wealthy some of the fishermen in particular are. One thing that I remember is some of the people that I went to school with, they're telling me how much they're making in lobster fishing, for example. It's interesting to know that they make way more than ministers or Members of this House do. So it's an interesting lesson on how important the fishery industry is to this province.

Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Seeing no other speakers, if the Member for Bonavista speaks now we'll close the debate.

The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

C. PARDY: Thank you, Speaker.

Thirty years of a cod and other fishing moratorium, the troubled fishing industry deserves better science. It doesn't mean that the scientists aren't good, because I would think that in Canada we've got top-notch scientists. Nobody disputes the scientists, but if we do not invest enough money into the science or if we've got ships, as the minister said, that can't leave the wharf because they're broken down, then, listen, we can't have the science to give us good information.

I want to throw in there, before I wrap up, the Member for St. George's - Humber just mentioned about Grenfell with the research that was going on there. If you haven't visited the Dr. Joe Brown Aquatic Research Building here in St. John's, which is operated by MUN, I would suggest that you do so. You'll be most impressed by the research that is currently ongoing there. Multi-faceted, but a big component of it would be with the aquaculture industry.

We know that aquaculture is quite instrumental in many districts here. I visited the South Coast, recently, a few weeks back and could see first-hand how integral it was to those communities and how beneficial it was, the aquaculture industry.

I would think, instead of recapping what people had said, we are all on board with this PMR; everyone of us are on board. United we stand, which is wonderful. I think for the people watching now that would be home, whether it be the Gus Etchegarys, the Ray Andrews, who are most interested in fisheries and have a lifetime working and making sure that the fishery is serving the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, I

think they'll be pleased, but they'll want to know what the next step would be.

The minister referenced again out on the steps. Imagine if we all went to the steps. We don't need to, but at least united-wise let's go out and make a statement or let's write the letter now, Minister, and say as a result of today's session and all 40 signatures from Newfoundland and Labrador would be accompanying the letter –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: – and let's cc it to our Members, our federal MPs and let's see what we can yield. Let's see what we can do and let's raise our voices. Let's raise our voices to make sure that we can have something come of it.

I want to mention in 1982 we harvested from our waters 503,000 metric tons. Today, we're about 240,000 to 250,000 metric tons, thereabouts. So we're about half what we harvest from the waters. The Member for St. John's Centre talked about seals and he talked about seals existed back in time when the cod were plentiful, and he's correct, 100 per cent correct. The only thing about now is that the seals have grown in number, and as my hon. Member for Ferryland has stated, the harp seals, about 8 million.

If we have a diminished stock out there, like the cod, the chances of them rebuilding with a diminished stock is much greater. The effects of the invasion, the Seal Science Task force have stated that in Norway, when they did two seal invasions – and I know someone had mentioned cull here earlier, that's what they refer to as an invasion, and they did two of them. They have great science that plotted the recovery of the groundfish stocks and their species after each invasion and how the stocks have grown and how they grew after those two invasions.

With five minutes left, even though we've had several people read *Empty Nets*, but I'm sure we may not have had too many people watch the latest meeting of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. There was a gentleman, a Newfoundlander, who has now retired from DFO, the federal government; he was being questioned on the panel. His name is Morley Knight from the hon. Member's District from Baie Verte - Green Bay.

Here are Mr. Knight's credentials: he was a regional director of fisheries management in the Newfoundland region, director general of fisheries management in Ottawa, regional director general in the Gulf and Maritime regions and assistant deputy minister of fisheries policy in Ottawa. He was being asked in the panel some questions.

In his preamble, here's what he said – and I'm just going to take pieces from what he had stated, but you'll get the drift. He said there are four areas I would like to address about the science DFO produces and the impacts.

One: lack of results; surveys don't get done. So when we say good science, we're talking about the absence of surveys. We're not talking about substandard scientists that we have with DFO. We don't have that. We're talking about good science, making sure that surveys do get done.

Results don't always get analyzed in a timely basis. We talked about seals, through ATIPP and Bob Hardy; Bob Hardy would say he's familiar with it. Through ATIPP, DFO now has the stomach contents of seals since 2017 and they have not analyzed them yet. That's since 2017.

Science programs and scientists are married to theoretical processes and models, and he says the models are not always right. Three: Reliance of only science on source information. We've got people on our waters, every day, catching fish. They fish for a lifetime on our waters.

We ought to be utilizing them more in the collection or the validating of data. And the fourth one, he states, poor communication. And then he states an example about how science was wrong and he gives some examples about that, where they had it incorrect due to lack of studies being done.

So, in closing, I thank everyone for their participation this afternoon. I think it was a wonderful discussion. There are not many times we can leave the House that we are united on a resolution, and we are. I think we'll go through the voting process now shortly. But I would again state to the minister, it is now in his ballpark. Lead the charge. He had stated he was the man with the seals, but he could be the man for the joint management.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: Raise the voice in the House of Assembly and let's see if we can make some noise in Ottawa and let's get 'er done.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

All those in favour of the amendment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

The amendment carried.

On motion, amendment carried.

SPEAKER: All those in favour of the amended motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 2, third reading of Bill 1.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011, be now read a third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011. (Bill 1)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 1)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, Order 3, third reading of Bill 3.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality, that Bill 3 be now read a third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

Motion carried.

AN HON. MEMBER: Division.

SPEAKER: Division has been called.

Call in the Members.

Division

SPEAKER: Are the caucus Whips ready for the vote?

All those in favour of the motion, please rise.

CLERK: Steve Crocker, Lisa Dempster, John Haggie, Gerry Byrne, Bernard Davis, Tom Osborne, Siobhan Coady, Pam Parsons, Elvis Loveless, Krista Lynn Howell, Andrew Parsons, Sarah Stoodley, Derrick Bragg, John Abbott, Brian Warr, Perry Trimper, Paul Pike, Scott Reid, Lucy Stoyles, Barry Petten, Helen Conway Ottenheimer, Paul Dinn, Lloyd Parrot, Jeff

Dwyer, Pleaman Forsey, Loyola O'Driscoll, Craig Pardy, Joedy Wall, Chris Tibbs.

SPEAKER: All those against the motion, please rise.

CLERK: James Dinn, Jordan Brown, Lela Evans.

Speaker, the ayes: 29; the nays: 3.

SPEAKER: I declare the motion passed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CLERK: An Act Respecting Pay Equity for the Public Sector and Pay Transparency for the Public and Private Sectors. (Bill 3)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting Pay Equity for the Public Sector and Pay Transparency for the Public and Private Sectors," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 3)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 4, Bill 5.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On this most appropriate day, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 5, An Act Respecting the Establishment of the Newfoundland and Labrador Future Fund, be now read a third time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act Respecting the Establishment of the Newfoundland and Labrador Future Fund. (Bill 5)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting the Establishment of the Newfoundland and Labrador Future Fund," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 5)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 5, third reading of Bill 6.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act, be now read a third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act. (Bill 6)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 6)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 6, third reading of Bill 13.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL, that Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Consumer Protection and Business Practices Act, be now read a third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Consumer Protection and Business Practices Act. (Bill 13)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Consumer Protection and Business Practices Act," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 13)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 7, third reading of Bill 16.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act No. 2, be now read a third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act No. 2. (Bill 16)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act No. 2," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 16)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House do now adjourn,

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

This House do stand adjourned until 1:30 o'clock tomorrow.