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HANSARD

*Speaker: Honourable Paul Lane, MHA*

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**SPEAKER (Lane):** Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Well, we have our first full House, I believe.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Sold out.

**SPEAKER:** Sold out, yeah.

For my first order of business for the day, I would like to recognize our two Pages, Emily Conway and Emma Harris, who both convocated from Memorial University with their Bachelor of Arts degree this past Tuesday.

Congratulations.

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

**SPEAKER:** Congratulations to you both and all the best on your next chapter.

I'd like to welcome to our public gallery today three Grade 6 classes, along with their teachers and staff, from Cowan Heights Elementary, which is the subject of a Member's statement today.

Welcome to our House of Assembly.

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

**SPEAKER:** I might add, I had the pleasure of meeting them earlier today and they had lots of great questions. I'm not sure if I gave them great answers, but they had lots of great questions.

I would also like to welcome Evan Healey, who is the subject of a Member's statement today as well. He is accompanied by Football Newfoundland and Labrador president, Lindsay Tomes, as well as his mom and dad, Evan and Renee Phair Healey.

Welcome to our House of Assembly.

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

**SPEAKER:** I would also like to welcome to the public gallery today Chief Roger Gillingham from the North Shore Volunteer Fire Department, his wife Maureen and daughter Emily-Jane. Chief Gillingham is the subject of a Member statement today as well.

Welcome to our House of Assembly.

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

**SPEAKER:** And might I add, thank you for your service.

Also visiting the public gallery today is the constituency assistant for the District of Placentia West - Bellevue, Chelsea Follett, and her grandmother, Shirley Stapleton.

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

**SPEAKER:** I'm not supposed to say why she's here today.

The subject of another Member's statement today, who is also visiting our public gallery, is Sarah Sherman, founder of We're Here For You Canada, post-assault dignity care. She is accompanied by several of her friends and supporters from Unifor, as well as Jennifer Murray, the Unifor Atlantic regional director.

Welcome to our gallery today.

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

**SPEAKER:** I'd also like to welcome to the public gallery several representatives from Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as representatives from the Law Enforcement Torch Run Newfoundland and Labrador, which is also the subject of a Ministerial Statement today.

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

**SPEAKER:** Last but definitely not least, a Big Land welcome to Marius Linstead and his wife, Rose, who are joining us in the gallery today. Marius is representing his father, Gilbert Linstead, who is the subject of a Member's statement today, coming here from the Big Land, Labrador.

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

### Statements by Members

**SPEAKER:** Today we'll hear Members' statements from the hon. Members for the Districts of St. John's West, Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde, Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair, Conception Bay East - Bell Island and Placentia West - Bellevue. We will also have some other statements with leave, which I will get to shortly.

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

**K. WHITE:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Grade 6 students of Cowan Heights Elementary on your D.A.R.E graduation.

Today marks an important milestone and a celebration of the lessons, leadership and confidence you have gained throughout the program. The D.A.R.E program helps young people make safe, healthy and responsible choices while building respect, communication and decision-making skills that will guide them for years to come.

Thank you to the educators, families and Constable Julie Cunningham of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary who supported students along the way and helped make the program such a success. Your encouragement and commitment continue to make a positive difference in the lives of young people in our community.

As you prepare for the next chapter of your educational journey, remember the importance of kindness, courage and making positive choices. May you continue to Define, Assess, Respond and Evaluate

when faced with decisions around drugs and alcohol, bullying, vaping, peer pressure, stress and anxiety, and violence. Continue to believe in yourselves, support one another and strive to be leaders in your school and community.

Speaker, I ask all Members of this House to join me in congratulating the D.A.R.E. graduates from Cowan Heights Elementary.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Carbonear- Trinity- Bay de Verde.

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

**R. BALSOM:** Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Roger Gillingham from the North Shore Volunteer Fire Department for his exceptional leadership during last year's wildfires.

During one of the scariest events our region has ever faced, Chief Gillingham demonstrated the calm and courageous leadership our communities needed. Through shifting conditions and long hours, he led with an unwavering commitment to public safety. Chief Gillingham worked alongside both his department and neighbouring ones, earning their trust through action and example.

His leadership ensured not only an effective response but also the safety of those on the front lines. Wildfires test the strength and resilience of both first responders and communities, and Chief Gillingham met that test with determination and carried that responsibility with dignity and focus.

While many sought safety, Chief Gillingham and his crew moved towards danger, putting service above self, and demonstrating the courage and resilience that defines our province. Chief Gillingham and the entire North Shore Volunteer Fire Department reminded us of their extraordinary dedication to those in need.

I ask all Members to join me in recognizing Chief Gillingham and the North Shore Volunteer Fire Department for their continued bravery and excellence as they protect our communities.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker.

I rise today to recognize Gilbert Linstead of L'Anse au Loup on his retirement after 45 remarkable years as the general manager of the Labrador Shrimp Company.

Under his leadership, Gilbert transformed the company into one of Labrador's greatest success stories as a harvester owned, community based, socio-economic co-operative. The Labrador Shrimp Company now operates five processing facilities and two buying stations in communities throughout my district.

Gilbert's vision led to an impressive harvesting fleet including inshore and mid-shore vessels and the offshore flagship, *MV Northern Osprey III*. His commitment to modernization has sustained the livelihoods of 600 harvesters and provided employment for more than 500 people.

Speaker, Gilbert always put fishers and communities first. His concern for the well-being of our people was evident in every single decision he made. He felt those closest to the resource should benefit the most, reminding us that success is measured by the health and prosperity of our communities.

Gilbert's ability to unite partners and champion community engagement has left an enduring legacy that will benefit our communities for generations.

Please join me in thanking Gilbert Linstead for his decades of service and wishing him, his beautiful wife Sybil and family the very best in his well-earned retirement.

Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair is stronger today because of his leadership and steadfast belief in prioritizing fishers and communities.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**F. HUTTON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I proudly rise to honour a young resident of Conception Bay East - Bell Island who is making a mark on the national sports scene.

Recently named Portugal Cove-St. Philip's Male Athlete of the Year, Evan Healey is proud of his roots. He attended Beachy Cove Elementary, Brookside Intermediate – where I was just about an hour ago and he received that from the mayor, Dave Bartlett – and, of course, he was a graduate of Prince of Wales Collegiate before being recruited by an elite football preparatory program in Ontario.

Evan joined the Avalon Minor Football league back in 2019, thanks to some encouragement from teachers, and was named Rookie of the Year. That's basically where it all started.

After attending several CFC prospect camps, Evan was invited to their youth game at the University of Ottawa in 2023, featured on *TSN*. He was then offered a spot on the roster with Football North in Mississauga, a first for someone from Newfoundland and Labrador.

Evan is also an honours student at Clarkson Secondary School. He is attending recruiting camps in Canada and the US and

hopes to play college football. A recent invite to McMaster University resulted in his first official university sports offer. Next for Evan, he's going to be attending a camp at Columbia University in New York City next month.

Evan plans on playing football while earning a degree in chemical engineering. We will be watching for him under the Friday night lights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to rise and honour Evan Healey.

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

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

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

**J. DWYER:** Thank you, Speaker, and I want to thank my hon. colleagues for granting me leave to make this Member statement today.

I rise to acknowledge and highlight a very important person in the lives of all residents of my district, Chelsea Follett, my constituency assistant who is joining us today in the gallery with her beautiful grandmother Shirley Stapleton.

The compassion and kindness that Chelsea brings to the position is truly second to none. She treats everyone that seeks my assistance with integrity, respect and dedication. She treats residents with the utmost respect and courtesy while providing the information they require. Through her efforts and knowledge, she contacts the appropriate government departments and officials seeking resolutions to our constituent's concerns. Chelsea has built strong professional relationships with the citizens of the district and the many officials, enhancing turnaround times in resolving their issues.

Chelsea is a new mother with her fiancé, Dustin Edwards, to son Owen who celebrated his first birthday in March. Chelsea is a doting mom who loves spending time with her family.

I ask all hon. Members to join me in thanking Chelsea for her hard work and commitment to the people of Placentia West - Bellevue.

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

**SPEAKER:** When I was doing my welcome, you wondered why I forgot to mention that you were the subject of a Member's statement. It was a surprise.

**J. DWYER:** It's easier to ask for forgiveness than for permission.

**SPEAKER:** There you go.

Okay, so I have a request here for the MHA for St. John's Centre, as well as the MHA for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi, to deliver a Member statement with leave.

We'll start with the Member for St. John's Centre.

Does the Member have leave to do his Member statement?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Leave.

**SPEAKER:** Leave has been granted.

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

**J. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you colleagues for the leave.

Malala Yousafzai said: "I raise up my voice – not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard."

Sarah Sherman is a survivor of sexual and intimate partner violence, author of *Unbroken: One Woman's Story of Survival*, and founder of We're Here For You

Canada. Most of all, she's a voice for all those who experience intimate partner violence.

For 18 years, Sarah suffered escalating abuse by her husband. In 2004, he tied her up, physically and sexually assaulted her and left to kill their children and himself. Sarah escaped and called the police. In the tragic events that followed, her husband was killed in a head-on collision but their daughter survived.

Sarah underwent a sexual assault forensic exam – a traumatic and humiliating experience. When finished, she had none of her own clothes and the hospital had nothing for her to wear.

Determined that no woman should have to face that terrible experience, Sarah started providing comfort kits to hospitals for women who experience sexual violence. With this, We're Here For You Canada was born.

Thank you, Sarah, for using your voice and resilience to help women experiencing the trauma of intimate partner violence.

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

**SPEAKER:** Does the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi also have leave?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Leave.

**SPEAKER:** Leave has been granted.

The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Speaker, and thanks Members and ministers.

We're Here For You Canada was founded by Sarah Sherman of Nanaimo, BC, through her horrific personal story. Like so many survivors across Canada, her experience managing the aftermath of sexual violence and a forensic exam left her to navigate one

of the hardest moment of her life, feeling exposed and alone.

Hope, dignity and respect for survivors is the goal and We're Here For You Canada's mission is to foster a commitment to survivor-centered, trauma-informed care working alongside nurses, hospitals and communities to ensure no survivor ever leaves their exam in paper scrubs again. Each kit includes clean, gender-inclusive clothing, basic toiletries, gift cards for food and transportation, cultural support when needed and clear next step resources.

MHA Jim Dinn and I were honoured to meet with Sarah to learn and to partner with dedicated volunteers from Unifor who provide steady support to elevate the dignity of survivors by engaging in education, sponsorships and comfort kits compilation and provision.

Intimate partner violence can manifest in many ways and we are grateful to the labour movement and to the Newfoundland and Labrador organizations that support and shelter those experiencing intimate partner sexual violence.

We're Here For You Canada wants survivors to know they are not alone and that dignity is not optional.

Thank you, Sarah.

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

**SPEAKER:** Such an important issue. Thank you to the Member for doing that and thank you, Sarah.

I also have a request for leave from the Premier to do a Member's statement in his capacity as MHA for Stephenville - Port au Port.

Does the Premier have leave?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Leave.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier and MHA for the District of Stephenville - Port au Port.

**PREMIER WAKEHAM:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you everyone for the leave.

Today I rise in this hon. House to celebrate a truly special milestone, the 100th birthday of Pearl LeCoure of Port au Port West, which was celebrated on March 26, 2026.

Pearl has been a wonderful presence in her community for many years. She played a key role in opening the Twilight Seniors 50+ Club and gave 24 years of dedicated service as a member of its board of directors.

Reaching 100 years is an incredible achievement. It speaks to a life filled with strength, resilience, wisdom and love.

Over the years, Pearl has seen so much change and, through it all, she has helped shape the spirit of the Bay St. George region with her kindness, her devotion to family and the many friendships she holds dear.

Among those friendships is her friend Martin Ryan, who himself will be celebrating his 99th birthday this coming October.

On her birthday, she held an event at the Legion and had 250 people at the event, and her and Martin never got off the dance floor.

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

**PREMIER WAKEHAM:** Speaker, we acknowledge Pearl LeCoure and the many lives she has touched and continues to touch.

On behalf of everyone who knows and cherishes her, I offer warmest congratulations to Pearl LeCoure on this very special birthday.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Incredible.

Statements by Ministers.

### Statements by Ministers

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

**P. DINN:** Speaker, I rise today to recognize May 24 to 30 as Early Childhood Educators Week.

Early Childhood Educators Week is a time to celebrate the valuable contributions of early childhood educators in Newfoundland and Labrador as they enrich the lives of children in their care.

As skilled professionals, they are integral to our children's early learning and development. They provide welcoming, play-based programs that help children learn and grow – physically, mentally, emotionally and socially.

Speaker, I encourage everyone to celebrate our early childhood educators during Early Childhood Educators Week and encourage families to thank the educators who work and support their children.

I commend them as they guide their children every day while demonstrating their passion for the profession and each other as early childhood educators.

I also congratulate Louise Pedersen of Corner Brook on receiving the 2026 Joanne Juteau Early Childhood Education Scholarship. This is annual scholarship presented by the Association of Early Childhood Educators Newfoundland and Labrador. Ms. Pedersen is currently completing the final semester of her early childhood education diploma program at the

College of the North Atlantic, and I wish her every success in her career.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Burin - Grand Bank.

**P. PIKE:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

I am pleased to join the minister in recognizing Early Childhood Educators Week and in congratulating scholarship recipient, Louise Pedersen. Early childhood educators are the backbone of our early learning system. They support children's development, strengthen families and make it possible for parents to participate in the workforce.

We continue to hear from the sector that recognition must be matched with meaningful action. There is a need to prioritize recruitment and retention, and that requires an approach that includes fair and equitable wages, a pension program, enhanced medical benefits and paid sick leave.

Despite these well-known pressures, *Budget 2026* offered no indication that new measures are coming to support the workforce or to stabilize the system. These are reasonable expectations for a profession carrying significant responsibility.

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has expired.

**P. PIKE:** I thank all the early childhood educators for their dedication and their commitment.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Member's time has expired.

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

**J. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of the statement.

Congratulations to Louise Pedersen and all early childhood educators. We are grateful for your service and devotion to our province's children, but ECEs cannot live on awards alone. We are still struggling to retain them because of low pay, difficult working conditions and few benefits.

We, therefore, call on government to show their appreciation in giving a full benefit package to make their profession more attractive to prospective students and increase retention. They cannot wait any longer for what they have already earned.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Jobs, Growth and Rural Development.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** Mr. Speaker, je suis heureux de souligner la Journée de la francophonie provinciale, célébrée chaque année le 30 mai.

Cette journée est une possibilité de célébrer la communauté francophone et acadienne dynamique de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador, ainsi que le rôle important qu'elle continue de jouer dans la vie culturelle, sociale et économique de notre province.

Cette année revêt une importance particulière, car nous célébrons le 402<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du drapeau franco-terre-neuvien-et-labradorien, un symbole fort de

fiercé, de résilience et d'esprit communautaire. Pour marquer l'occasion, le drapeau sera hissé devant l'édifice de la Confédération et flottera pendant 40 jours, en hommage aux générations qui ont transmis cette culture.

Cette célébration se poursuivra demain, alors que les communautés se réuniront pour célébrer la Journée de la francophonie provinciale.

Depuis plus de 500 ans, les francophones et les Acadiens ont contribué à façonner notre province. Aujourd'hui, cet héritage ne cesse de croître, renforcé par les nouvelles générations et les nouveaux arrivants francophones qui choisissent de s'établir ici.

Notre gouvernement reste déterminé à soutenir cette croissance, notamment en investissant dans les services en français et en collaborant avec ses partenaires afin de multiplier les possibilités dans toute la province.

Je remercie la Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador ainsi que les partenaires communautaires pour leur leadership continu, et j'invite tous les habitants de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador à prendre part aux célébrations.

Merci.

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

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

**S. STOODLEY:** Monsieur le Président,

Aujourd'hui, nous célébrons la Journée provinciale de la francophonie, l'occasion de souligner le dynamisme des communautés francophones et acadiennes qui sont une composante essentielle de notre économie, de notre culture et de notre histoire.

Durant mon mandat de ministre responsable des Affaires francophones,

j'ai eu le privilège de travailler en étroite collaboration avec les communautés francophones et les organismes qui les soutiennent.

J'encourage le gouvernement à poursuivre ses investissements dans les services en français et à continuer de prioriser les francophones dans ses programmes d'immigration afin d'accroître le nombre de francophones à Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador.

Alors que nous soulignons le 40<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du drapeau franco-terre-neuvien-Labradorien, je tiens à adresser mes meilleurs vœux aux communautés francophones et acadiennes qui célèbrent cet événement ce week-end, et à les remercier pour l'importante contribution qu'elles continuent d'apporter à Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador.

Merci.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Merci.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of the statement. As Francophonie Day approaches, I want to share our congratulations with the Francophone communities of this province and our appreciation of how much they've contributed to the cultural life and history of our province.

Let's make sure that the Francophone community in this province continues to thrive for another 40 years to come by investing more in French education both for immersion and for the Francophone community.

Félicitations et merci bien.

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

**SPEAKER:** That was impressive.

Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Thank you, Speaker.

Individuals in the province's law enforcement community are regularly giving back to their communities. We see this on display every year for the Law Enforcement Torch Run to support the Special Olympics.

June 5 to 12 is recognized as Law Enforcement Torch Run Week, however, there have been events happening throughout the province over the last couple of months to raise public awareness and fundraise for Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador.

Beginning in Newfoundland and Labrador in 1989, corrections staff, sheriff's officers and members of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have participated in various events to support Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador activities. The funds raised go to an organization that empowers and motivates athletes, enabling them to inspire others through their determination and outstanding accomplishments.

Members of Newfoundland and Labrador's law enforcement agencies demonstrate their dedication, not only in their professional duties, but also through the many ways they contribute to their communities all year long.

Speaker, I ask all hon. Members to join me in celebrating Law Enforcement Torch Run Week and thanking all of those who participate to support our impressive Special Olympic athletes.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

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

I am pleased to join the minister in recognizing Law Enforcement Torch Run Week and the tremendous support this initiative provides to Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our correction staff, sheriff's officers and members of the RNC and RCMP show remarkable dedication both in their daily duties and in the volunteer work they take on to support athletes across our province. Their commitment reflects the compassion and community spirit that define Newfoundland and Labrador; however, recognition must be paired with real support. This year's budget did not include new positions, new training resources or any measures to address the pressures facing correctional staff and sheriff's officers.

These are front-line professionals who manage complex and often dangerous environments and they deserve the tools and staffing levels required to do their job safely.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the minister for the advance copy of the statement.

We thank all the participants in this long-running event, the correction staff, sheriff's officers and law enforcement members. I also want to take this moment to especially acknowledge all of the Special Olympic athletes and volunteers who show up to show us what true grit and determination really are.

This is what community is all about and all the participants are true leaders by example.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Speaker, the food fishery is an important part of our culture, food security and community life. We welcome the federal government's announcement for increased access and flexibility with the expansion of the province's food fishery, especially seven-day fishing in select areas.

This commitment responds to a long-standing concerns and lets people fish when conditions on the water are the safest.

While these improvements are appreciated, communities, residents and advocacy groups continue to call for more consistency and fairness.

I stand in this hon. House requesting the federal minister grant seven-day access to the South Coast and West Coast.

Speaker, making this change would ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to participate in the food fishery. This is a priority for our government, as demonstrated in the Budget Speech and by unanimous support received in this Legislature for extending the seasonal fishery.

We recognize the need to protect cod stocks and sustainability concerns. We are proposing a balanced approach for seven-day access in these areas to improve safety and flexibility, not to increase pressure on the stock. A limit of five cod per day and a weekly cap of 15 fish would maintain conservation while providing flexibility.

We'll continue to work with the federal government to ensure our food fishery is managed safely and sustainably, meeting the needs for all of us.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

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

**E. LOVELESS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of the statement.

I rise today in full support of efforts to expand seven-day food fishery access to the South Coast and West Coast.

My colleague, the Member for Burgeo - La Poile, should be fully commended because the day after the announcement he wrote the minister and was very vocal in lobbying for this.

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

**E. LOVELESS:** For many residents in these regions, the food fishery is not simply a tradition, it is an important part of life, food

security and community connection. People have raised concerns for years about unequal access compared to other areas of the province, particularly when weather and safety conditions can change quickly.

Providing seven-day access would give families and recreational harvesters greater flexibility to fish when conditions are safest while also ensuring a fair and more consistent approach across Newfoundland and Labrador.

While I appreciate the recognition that conservation must remain a priority, a balanced approach that protects cod stocks while improving access is both responsible and reasonable. Residents on the South and West Coast deserve the same opportunities already available elsewhere.

I join in supporting that call today for the federal minister to make the right decision for all of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

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

**J. DINN:** Thank you, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of the statement.

We, too, support the changes to the food fishery that will make it easier for our people to take part. Equitability is important here.

Still there are three important issues to consider when considering any change: safety on the water, enforcement of the rules to ensure fairness for all and sustainability so that this precious resource will remain healthy and well stocked for generations to come.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Yesterday, I asked questions related to seniors in our province, and I met with the 50+ Federation this morning. They are concerned that their voices aren't being heard by this government. In fact, they were disappointed that the Premier didn't answer a question when asked about seniors yesterday. So I'll try again.

When will the Premier open the Active NL grants and the Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative that's so important to seniors in our province?

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

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

**C. PARDY:** Speaker, as the Minister of Seniors – thanks to the Premier for allowing me to answer questions related to my department, which I greatly appreciate – we've met with the seniors. We've had a great meeting with them. They talked very favourably about the meeting that we held with them and, in the chair's words, they thought it was rather refreshing, the reception that they had when we met.

Will we work with seniors going forward to make sure we address their needs? One hundred per cent we will.

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

**C. PARDY:** We've made that commitment. I think we've surpassed what the previous government has done in relation to seniors.

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

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

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

**J. HOGAN:** That's funny because when I met with the seniors' 50-plus club this morning, they said what wasn't refreshing was the lack of a stand-alone Seniors Minister. When they went looking to see who the new Seniors Minister was, they said they were disappointed that he was sandwiched between the Treasury Board and the NLC.

I say to the Minister of Finance, if that's what I'm hearing from seniors, how can they expect this government to deliver what's important for them?

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

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

**C. PARDY:** I say to the Leader of the Opposition, when I received that question in Estimates, I shared the breaking news that the Minister of Seniors and the Minister of Finance are very, very close friends.

I'm not sure what the Leader of the Opposition is insinuating that distant from the Finance Department to support seniors' needs. I can guarantee you, the deputy minister is on one side of the administrative secretary. I'm on the other side. We meet no less than eight times a day.

Seniors will be looked after with this government, Speaker.

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

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

**J. HOGAN:** Seniors didn't feel like that this morning and they weren't laughing either, Speaker.

It's been over two months since the minister announced the committee to make

recommendations on early childhood educators, essentially to tell him and to tell everybody what we already know. These recommendations have been made for months.

Now that it's Early Childhood Educators Week, when will the Premier turn these recommendations into action, given that he didn't do it in his first budget?

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

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

**P. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker.

We've made the commitment in our blue book. We've indicated that we're going to look at pensions. We're going to look at wages, compensation – something that was totally not in the book across the hall there – nothing, never mentioned early childhood educators.

We have it in our blue book. It's a commitment and we will follow through on it.

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

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

**J. HOGAN:** Speaker, I again say we already know our early childhood educators want an upgraded wage grid, paid sick days and pensions, just like as he said was in their platform, but they didn't deliver on it in this budget. They say they will get to it, but they haven't already.

So can the Premier confirm that this failure will have no adverse effect on the system while they wait, to the ECEs that work in the system, the children and the parents who rely on it each and every day.

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

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

**P. DINN:** It's interesting because it's only yesterday the crowd across the way voted down our budget and early child care pieces were in that budget. It's interesting to hear now that after a previous government of 10 years never reached out to the early child care sector, now they are.

I can tell you the many meetings I've had with those groups, they have listed their priorities. They haven't listed them in order. I have reached out to them. We will have a steering committee in place in very short order, and we will work together to ensure that the issues we address are in the order in which they want them addressed, in their priorities, and that's what I commit to do.

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

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

**M. KING:** Speaker, yesterday in Question Period we asked about the revelation that Steve Outhouse, the Premier's deputy chief of staff, was paid not out of the political staff budget, but to a private consultancy corporation through funds meant for the bureaucracy. He's now had 24 hours to come up with an answer.

Why is the Premier treating not only MCP funds but government funds as his own political staff slush fund?

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

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

**PREMIER WAKEHAM:** Speaker, the Member opposite wants to talk about budgeting and wants to talk about process, let's talk about process. Let's talk about the transitional supportive living initiative. Let's

talk about a flawed process that has cost the taxpayers of the Province of Newfoundland \$24 million so far.

At the same time as the Auditor General has presented this report to the House, Members opposite, including the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island, have publicly questioned the competency of the Auditor General. That is not acceptable, Speaker, when they turn around and say that they wouldn't have done it that way, that questions the integrity of the Auditor General.

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

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

**M. KING:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what channel the Premier has in his earpiece, but the question I'm asking of this government, the government that is in charge now: Why is he using government funds to pay for his political staff slush fund?

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

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

**PREMIER WAKEHAM:** Speaker, the Member opposite wants to talk government expenditure, government expenditure. Well, we have it right here in front of us. We have an opportunity. We turned around – the Liberal government actually signed a lease for three years with a Liberal contributor, a Liberal friend, for \$7 million a year, \$21 million over three years, when the hotel was on the books for less than \$4 million.

So if they were so concerned with homelessness and doing something about it, why didn't they buy the hotel and actually do something with the rest of the money and put it into actual program delivery?

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

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

**M. KING:** Mr. Speaker, it is May of 2026, and the Conservatives are in government, and these are the decisions that they are making with the taxpayers' money of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Premier's deputy chief of staff was in place well after the transition and did not appear in access to information requests for political staff pay because he was secretly paid through a corporation, not through the Premier's office salary budget.

How much did the Premier give to his staffer's consulting company?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

They're fixated on those issues, and they know they're trying to manipulate. We're fixated on what really matters to the people of the province.

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

**B. PETTEN:** It's irresponsible expenditures of money. We were told \$13.8 million for the Airport inn there, when it was in actual fact it was over \$24 million. Thirty-four people transitioned out at a cost of \$706,000 per person. There were 25 beds left vacant down there in excess of \$2 million.

Do you know why? Because they wanted to cut down on the noise around the area, but they never did what was right and spent the money appropriately. Now they're worried about trying to nickel and dime, getting in and they're trying to poke around how much someone was paid. They need to pay more attention to their track record, and it's not very good, Speaker.

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

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

**M. KING:** Mr. Speaker, I would say to the minister that they should be following their process. They are in government. The Premier's deputy chief of staff was signing off emails with that title, not using a government email, but a private email linked to the corporation he was secretly paid through.

Did the Premier also allow this use of a private email to keep records from the access to information process?

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

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

**C. PARDY:** Mr. Speaker, the Member for Burgeo - La Poile was at Estimates when we did the Executive Council, and he asked a similar question. I shared with the House and those in attendance at that time that the Premier's office is \$345,000 under budget than what the previous government was before – \$345,000 –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**C. PARDY:** – and I think that would be quoted, but let me finish.

The report card came out from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. It gives Newfoundland and Labrador a C – fourth highest in the country. The only thing that dragged us down was the debt from the previous government that we had (inaudible) –

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

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

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

**M. KING:** Well, let's use that point, Mr. Speaker. If they are claiming that point, why are they paying a staffer \$275,000, including a bonus, through MCP? Why did they then, on top of that, pay a consulting company God knows how much money – we don't even know.

Can the Minister of Finance explain that difference?

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

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

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

**C. PARDY:** Mr. Speaker, the coffers have a net gain. We followed the contract that was signed by the previous government with NLMA that when we have professionals that we hire, and quality professionals that we hire –

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

**C. PARDY:** – to direct the course for an out-of-control spending in a certain element of which the person is looking after and administering advice.

But let me say and add one thing from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, they gave us, on affordability, in Newfoundland and Labrador, on the past budget, an A plus.

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

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

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

**M. KING:** Mr. Speaker, if there was a net gain, why did the budget line not change in the Premier's office?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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

**SPEAKER:** I only want to hear the minister respond, nobody else.

The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Again, they're fixated on issues; they're trying to manipulate. All this money is spent right. We're getting the proper service. Thank God, the PC Party of Newfoundland and Labrador are in charge.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, I have a couple of observations. The role of the Auditor General is to scrutinize government. Running the risk of appearing defensive or hostile to transparency, dodging political accountability, Public Accounts is the appropriate avenue.

I pass that along to the Members opposite, especially the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island, that's how you deal with the AG issues through Public Accounts, not in the public trying to discredit this lady.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

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

Speaker, the Newfoundland and Labrador waterbomber and air ambulance pilots have been notified that their chief pilot has submitted his resignation effective tomorrow, May 29, 2026. Waterbomber crews are warning that continuing operations without qualified leadership presents an unacceptable risk to crews, patients and public safety.

What is the minister's plan for this fire season and for the provincial air ambulance coverage?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

We all got that letter. That was sent to many Members. I don't know if everyone got it. We all got it. I am the minister responsible. I've been aware of this. We were actually advertising for a replacement. We can't help if someone retires or moves on. Good for them and we wish them well.

We know the issue. We're aware of the issue. We're dealing with Transport Canada in the interim to deal with this. We're fully abreast. It's not new to us. We're hoping to have a replacement in place soon but, in the interim, Transport Canada has been notified and we're working with the appropriate officials and we will be ready for this coming season.

Thank you very much.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

**P. PARSONS:** Well, Speaker, if they knew about it, why didn't they say anything? Why didn't they be open and transparent? Oh, that's right, never mind, because they're not transparent.

In the letter, the pilots say that without a qualified and approved chief pilot, air services many no longer legally operate after June 29 under federal aviation regulations.

Has the government been advised by Transport Canada that the air operating certificate could be suspended?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

When we got the resignation, I think it was the same day I approved an RSA to put out a job action to replace that person. I don't know if you want to call Transport – I don't advertise every time someone leaves the department. That's crazy.

Maybe the Member opposite could tell us about transparency when she was voting herself a raise, a secret bonus of \$20,276. Maybe the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave could tell us that answer. Maybe that's about transparency.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

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

Again, more deflection, deflection. They can't answer. We're not talking about any department. We're not talking about any personnel. This is urgent, Minister, so I'd advise you to take it seriously.

**SPEAKER:** I would ask you to address the Chair.

**P. PARSONS:** What is the government's backup plans, Speaker? Because this is urgent and he shouldn't be making light or make jokes or mislead in any way.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, I can't help but chuckle because we're doing everything in our power. There's no way you can do it any faster. I think it was the same day we got the resignation; we acted on it immediately.

What the Member opposite needs to realize is if she wants to come in and lecture me about transparency, we're very transparent. I can tell you now, the former government, this administration that used to be in power, they're in Opposition for a reason. They lacked a lot of transparency. My colleague from Finance just highlighted, they were getting an F. We're up to a C.

I've got another question. Why did the Member for Virginia Waters – talking about transparency – vote themselves a secret bonus of \$28,387? Maybe he can answer that question.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

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

We can talk about deflection all we want. That's what's happening here all day long.

Despite the government's inability to keep the urgent care clinics open, the Deputy Premier is defending his plan to open a new urgent care clinic in his own District of Conception Bay South.

Will the Deputy Premier commit to staffing the centres in St. John's and Mount Pearl before building a new one in his own backyard?

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Speaker, I talked about big announcements, rollouts, without proper funding – underfunding, I referred to it, significant underfunding in the millions of dollars. In actual fact, I am committed to staffing and fulfilling the mandate for the Family Care Teams, including the urgent care centres, Speaker. They actually have a need.

The problem is there was very little planning. We're struggling with what we've been left after 10 years of Liberal government in terms of recruitment and retention. But, in actual fact, we're not going to turn our backs on those urgent care centres because we have to have primary health care access for people in our province.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** I thank the Minister of Health for answering the question, saying those centres will be staffed first, before that CBS centre is done.

The Deputy Premier also said in the media: The vast majority of the people in emergency rooms are from CBS and Holyrood.

Can the minister table any report or data that he has to confirm this statement, or is it just made-up data justifying the building of a new centre in his backyard?

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Speaker, it's important to address the preamble because facts do matter. What I've said is I'm committed to actually staffing the urgent care centres, the one out on St. John's, the one in Mount Pearl, and the planned one in CBS. They meet an essential need and we have to make sure – 10 years of Liberal government and access to family doctors and a health care provider is really what we're facing right now because of the lack of real action.

We are going to provide access to health care providers, nurse practitioners, doctors, and we're going to use urgent care centres to take the pressure off emergency as well.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

**E. LOVELESS:** Mr. Speaker, the FFAW says thousands of seasonal workers are being unfairly penalized by EI deviser rules.

I ask the Premier: Why hasn't your government taken a strong public position demanding EI reform from the federal government as requested by the FFAW in their letter to you?

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

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you, Speaker.

I certainly did get a letter from the FFAW and we've been reaching out to the federal government on this issue. We are hoping to hear back to see what we can do to make this issue go away or help the issue as it stands right now.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

**E. LOVELESS:** I say to the minister, I think FFAW is looking for more than it to go away.

The FFAW is warning that changing EI calculations are already negatively affecting workers in this province and the situation could worsen in the coming months.

I ask the Premier: What immediate actions are you taking to protect seasonal workers, especially in rural Newfoundland and Labrador?

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

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Again, Speaker, we've reached out to the federal government. It is certainly a concern in all districts, how the calculation works. We are waiting to hear back and when I get some answers to the question, we'll certainly report back here.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

**E. LOVELESS:** We're still looking for that plan that you have to address it, I say to the minister.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, seasonal workers are being asked to absorb the consequences of economic conditions they cannot control.

What message does the Premier think it sends when his government stays silent while workers lose income support?

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

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Again, Speaker, I will say that I reached out to the federal government. It's something that we're looking into. He asked the same question now for the third time, so it's something that when we get the answers, we'll get back to him. But it's something that we're very concerned about.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Waterford Valley.

**J. KORAB:** Speaker, the TI Minister said no contract was awarded for a swing vessel because all three bids were non-compliant. That's odd for every bidder to be non-compliant.

Given the need for a new swing vessel, will the minister reissue the RFP so that the bidders would know any errors they made and can now be compliant?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, the process is the Public Procurement Agency reviews all these bids. In isolation of me or anyone in the department, they do the review. They made that determination. What they do know, now that it's put on MERX, they will meet with all those bidders, go over their bids, go over the flaws with their bids, the issues they had after, once it's been publicly posted, which it has been.

All those bidders, they'll get an opportunity to speak to them. Our opportunities now are probably brokerage. We're not sure if another RFP will work again. We are exploring options but, one thing is, we're committed to getting a swing vessel and building new vessels in this province and developing an industry. That's our commitment to the people.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Waterford Valley.

**J. KORAB:** Speaker, I'm glad to hear that, but a couple of days ago, the story was different. The story was said that we were working with someone that was late.

My question is the minister is moving on to discuss, what he said two days ago, with a company that simply missed the deadline for the RFP. A couple of days ago, it sounded like you were sole sourcing.

So are you going reissue the RFP, or are you just going to review it and see what happens?

That's what you said two days ago (inaudible).

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**B. PETTEN:** Oh my, Speaker. They try to put words in people's mouth.

No, that's not what I said. Anyone can come forth to the department. I welcome anyone to come forth. If they have a swing vessel for the province that will fit our need, come on. I'm ready; come over and meet me right now. That's all we are saying.

People have come in and expressed an interest since the bids have closed and our officials are saying you are welcome; we will talk to anybody. That's outside the RFP process.

The RFP process is closed; anyone now is welcome to come in and talk to our officials, and I do welcome them. Other than that, we may employ a brokerage firm. We're not sure where we're going. As for what he said, I stand by that. There are firms that never applied or never bid and –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I only want to hear the minister.

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Sir.

And they're welcome to come in and talk to us. Our officials are meeting with them to have those discussions. If anything comes

of it, I will be sure to let the people of this province know the minute I find out.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Gander.

**B. FORD:** Thank you.

Speaker, College of the North Atlantic was supposed to have an early childhood education program and demonstration site open at the Gander campus just a few months from now, creating 45 child care spaces and 20 jobs, but nothing is happening. I wrote the minister a month ago and he said it was being monitored.

Given the urgent need, I ask, will the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development commit that the program will proceed in Gander this fall?

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

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

**P. DINN:** Thank you, and thank you for the question.

I will say it, again, early child care education is paramount in this province. The issue is being monitored; there's no doubt about it.

When facilities come forward and register for child care, there are many issues, especially if it's going in a building where they may need upgrades, renovations, certificates passed and assessed and inspections done.

I will look at that file as soon as we're back and I'll give you a clearer update on it, but the child care centre hasn't been tossed to the side. We are continuing to work together to increase our child care in this province.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

**P. PARSONS:** Speaker, residents are raising concerns about blood collection at Carbonear Hospital. They won't accept walk-ins or online appointments. Phone calls are not being answered or offering appointments months out.

Will the government commit to immediately fixing this problem?

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Yes, Speaker, we recognize there are lasting problems left over that we're struggling with. Seriously, 10 years and we've only been in government eight months.

In actual fact, Speaker, we are looking at what's going on out in Carbonear. We are putting plans in place to address long-standing issues. In actual fact, Carbonear is a place where people need to be supported. It's a healthy community that supports a large region, and this government is interested in making Carbonear work.

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

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

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

The Minister of Education announced a steering committee to help determine which benefit ECEs should be entitled to first. Child Care Now NL is calling on government to introduce a total compensation package for early childhood educators.

I ask the minister, rather than a piecemeal approach and kicking the can further down

the road with yet another committee, why not simply introduce a total compensation package that includes paid sick days, a health plan, a defined benefit pension plan and an increase in salary, the full meal deal?

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

**P. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for the question.

We're not dealing with McDonalds here. This is not a take-out that we're going to. This is a serious, serious issue for this province. I have reports from Child Care Now national. I've met with YWCA.

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**P. DINN:** They've all indicated –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I don't want to hear anybody but the minister. If I have to address this again, someone is losing their speaking privileges yet again.

The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**P. DINN:** Thank you for that.

I've met with many groups. It's in their reports. They understand that this is not a quick fix. They also want to have a committee together, which we will be announcing very soon, on working through what their priorities are in terms of compensation, in terms of pension, in terms of benefits.

We are doing what the sector has requested.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Waterford Valley, you need not rise any further today, you will not be recognized.

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

**SPEAKER:** Would you like to join her?

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

**SPEAKER:** I heard the Member for Waterford Valley heckling across at the minister when he spoke. Sorry, not Waterford Valley, I apologize, Mount Scio is who I meant. I apologize on that.

The minister's time is long expired.

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

**J. DINN:** Speaker, I would say that paid sick days, a health plan, a defined benefit pension plan and an increase in salary are more than a McDonald's meal. They're essential.

Speaker, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada has redesignated the South Newfoundland West population of Atlantic salmon endangered due primarily to open sea pen aquaculture practices. Under the *Species at Risk Act*, the federal minister of Fisheries, upon receiving the COSEWIC status assessment, must develop a recovery plan for the species.

I ask the minister: Will he pause the expansion of open sea pen aquaculture along the South Coast until a plan for the recovery of salmon is put in place by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans?

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

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you, Speaker.

It's certainly a pleasure to get up here and answer some questions on the aquaculture here in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It's a very big industry.

We've met with the groups and we're meeting with groups tomorrow, as well, on aquaculture. We have a plan going forward here for aquaculture in this province. It's something that we take very seriously in regard to wild salmon here in this province.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Speaker, workplace violence is very real for many front-line workers and in some sectors, such as health care and education, the hazard can be an individual's behaviour and the severity of the hazard can vary from person to person. Unfortunately, violence and harassment are seen as part of the job.

Will government increase the number of OHS investigators and publish their reports online to hold employers to account?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Government Services.

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

**M. GOOSNEY:** Thank you, Speaker, and I'd like to thank the Member opposite for such an important question.

Since coming into this office I've met with many stakeholders, and I know this is going to sound repetitive, Speaker, but I'm doing lots of work. I want to thank my department heads for doing lots of work.

We're looking into the fall sitting bring forward – adopting legislation that we're looking through. I'm here to serve the people, that's what I signed up for. That's

what I'm going to continue to do and I'm going to continue to do it for all of us.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** I'm going to allow the Member another question given she lost a lot of her time due to all this foolishness.

The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, nurses, LPNs, PCAs are working overtime, not taking vacation or are being mandated to work because there are not enough staff to deal with the demands that we have in our health care system. They love the work they do, they care deeply for their patients and they want to provide the best care possible.

Will government establish an independent health sector council to address violence, prevent injury, enforce safety standards and promote a culture of safety?

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Speaker, myself and my department have met with the Nurses' Union. The Premier and myself have met with the Nurses' Union. That is one of their priorities; they've raised it on behalf of their workers.

Speaker, we have to make sure that we actually will be able to properly recruit to fill vacancies because that is what's happening, the workplace now doesn't have enough nurses out there and it's creating a lot of stress and strain.

But one of the things we've done, Speaker, is we've successfully gotten the vacancy

rate down to under 5 per cent. So we're back before COVID days. We are actually going to meet and exceed that, Speaker. In actual fact, when we properly staff our health care professionals in the workplace –

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. minister's time has expired.

**L. EVANS:** Thank you.

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

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

Again, I apologize to the Member for Waterford Valley on mixing up the district name. That was inadvertent.

**J. KORAB:** (Inaudible.)

**SPEAKER:** You were on my mind, that's all. I apologize.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

### **Notices of Motion**

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Long week.

**SPEAKER:** I know, it's been a long week.

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move the following motion: That in accordance with Standing Order 11(1) this House do not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2026.

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

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move the following motion: That in accordance with Standing Order 11(1) this House do not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 2, 2026.

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

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Liquor Control Act, Bill 20.

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

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, Bill 21.

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

I give notice that I will ask leave to move the following resolution tomorrow: Be it resolved by the House of Assembly as follows:

WHEREAS section 4 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* provides that on resolution of the House of Assembly, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall appoint a Child and Youth Advocate.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wilma MacInnis be appointed as the Child and Youth Advocate effective June 15, 2026.

**SPEAKER:** Are there any further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

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

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

This is a petition for the prevention of prescription drug addiction.

These are the reasons for the petition:

Pharmacists are only required to review a patient's medication profile and pharmacy network when the prescriptions are initially dropped off and not at the time of pick-up; and

This loophole allows individuals to fill the same prescription in multiple places within a short timespan, either intentionally or unintentionally; and

This increases the risk of overdose and other consequences such as a higher risk of addiction and drug-drug interactions; and

Some might abuse the current framework to start selling the extra drugs they pick up, flooding the illicit market and placing many others at risk of overdose or other serious consequences of overuse, as well as contributing to crime and arrest rates.

Therefore we, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons to tighten the rules regarding treatment agreements by creating a requirement for them to be shared within a patient's circle of care, and for pharmacists to conduct a second review of the pharmacy network and patient profile before releasing medications, or by conducting said review at the time of releasing medications for patients.

Speaker, for the most part, if we drop off a prescription and pick it up while we're there, it's not a problem. But if we drop it off and

don't pick it up for days later, it allows for the option, I guess, of getting a prescription somewhere else and getting several of them filled because there's no requirement to check when the drug is being dispensed. So there are two gaps or loopholes.

First of all, the treatment agreement that doctors can engage with their patient, and this agreement is essentially a contract between the doctor and the patient, where the doctor will be the sole prescriber of medications. Usually, this is if the doctor has concerns about the possibility of addiction. It falls under the purview of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in this province, but our College has no policy around these agreements.

It's worth noting that in other provinces that use these agreements, patients' pharmacies are also included in the agreement as the sole provider. So there is a way of making an agreement that only this pharmacy or only this doctor is going to be the prescribers and the fillers of the prescriptions.

The second part falls under the College of Pharmacy and, basically, a pharmacist does not have to check the database when it's being dispensed.

What this petition is calling for is, basically, let's make prescribing of drugs safer for people.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Further petitions?

Orders of the Day.

### Orders of the Day

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition – or the hon. the Government House Leader, sorry. I don't know why I keep calling you that.

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** That's fair. I deserve that. I deserve that one.

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

Motion 1, I move, seconded by the Deputy Premier, pursuant to Standing Order 11(1), that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on today, Thursday, May 28.

**SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that this House do not adjourn today at 5:30 p.m.

All those in favour of the motion, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

The motion is carried.

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

Order 6, Bill 11.

**SPEAKER:** Order 6.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development –

**SPEAKER:** That would be Order 5, I believe, Bill 11, according to my sheet.

**L. PARROTT:** That's second reading, Order 6, Bill 11.

**SPEAKER:** Maybe I'm looking at yesterday's Order Paper. That's the one I have.

I apologize; I don't have today's Order Paper. I was given yesterdays for some reason.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** That's today's there for you.

**SPEAKER:** Thank you.

I'm going to ask the hon. the Government House Leader to go again there on that, now that I have today's Order Paper.

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

**L. PARROTT:** You good now?

**SPEAKER:** Yes, I am.

**L. PARROTT:** All right.

Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019, now be read a second time.

**SPEAKER:** Is it moved and seconded that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019." (Bill 11)

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

**P. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker.

This bill, of course, would have been the *Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019*. It would eliminate the Student Financial Assistance Appeal Board; it would allow a person to appeal a decision related to a

denial, term condition, amount of a student loan, financial assistance, interest or payment relief made or established under the act to an appeals officer. It would also allow a person to appeal a decision of an appeals officer to the director in the department responsible for student loans and financial services. It would also allow the minister to issue a certificate of judgment for filing at the Supreme Court for the collection of defaulted provincial student loans. It also incorporates gender-neutral language.

These amendments are designed to modernize the student financial assistance system, improve administration efficiency and maintain a fair and transparent appeals process for students across the province. This legislation is about modernizing government and respecting taxpayer dollars. We are cutting red tape by eliminating a 10-year unused appeal board and removing a lengthy court process which serves neither the students nor the public. We are taking an inactive and outdated system and replacing it with one that is that is more timely and efficient.

For more than 10 years, the appeal board has sat idle, while students' needs have evolved and front-end assessment has improved dramatically, maintaining an inactive structure that benefits no one. There have been zero appeal requests to the Financial Assistance Appeal Board since 2013-14. This is clear evidence that the existing model is outdated and no longer necessary. Demand has declined to the point where operating a board is no longer justified or necessary.

The proposed amendments focus on two key areas: modernizing the appeal process for student financial assistance decisions and strengthening the process for collecting defaulted provincial student loans through a more efficient certificate of judgment mechanism. In short, these amendments responsibly remove the legislative requirement for an external board that has

not served a practical function for over a decade.

We are modernizing the appeal process. The first key area for the proposed amendment involves modernizing the appeal process for student financial assistance decisions. This change is in response to a clear and sustained decline in the need for an appeal board. The Student Financial Assistance Appeal Board has not received a single appeal, as I said before, since the 2013-2014 academic year. Despite this, the act still requires a fully appointed board making legislative updates long overdue.

In fact, over the past 20 years, both level one reviews and level two appeals have decreased dramatically due to improved policies and a stronger front-end assessment process. Applications are fully assessed and any errors corrected before processing, reducing the need for reviews and appeals. For example, for the month of September, which is the busiest month for applications, statistics show that level one reviews dropped 88.7 per cent from 758 applications in 2002-2003 to 86 in 2023-2024. Level two appeals dropped 98.4 per cent from 190 in 2002-2003 to 3 in 2013-1014 with none requested since then.

The rationale for making these changes is twofold. The first is maintaining an inactive independent appeal board still requires significant administrative steps, particularly if even a single appeal was submitted. Secondly, eliminating the board removes unnecessary administrative and legislative requirements while preserving full fairness for students. Continuing to recruit, train and maintain an appeal board that has not been used in more than 10 years is both inefficient and ineffective. An appeal board should be populated even when there's no caseload. This creates an unnecessary administrative burden with no benefit to students.

The two-level appeal system that we're proposing remains in place. Students will still have access to two levels of review and written decisions, a foundation of procedural fairness. Level one reviews will continue to be carried out by an appeals officer, an independent and dedicated role within the Student Financial Services Division.

Under the proposed process, nothing changes for students seeking reviews. They still submit appeals to Student Financial Services staff who continue to apply all federal and provincial legislation and policy. The existing process remains intact, ensuring accuracy, fairness and consistency.

If a student remains dissatisfied, they retain the right for a second-level review. Instead of appealing to an external appeal board, the final decision will be made by the director of Student Financial Services. This aligns with administrative law principles and models used successfully in other provinces including Ontario. Given Ontario represents over 60 per cent of the entire national student aid population, while Newfoundland and Labrador represents just 1.2 per cent, this model is both appropriate and proportional.

These amendments enhance clarity and accountability, while maintaining procedural fairness without the inefficiencies of an inactive board. Students still receive written decisions, detailed reasons and clear timelines. Importantly, students retain the right to seek judicial review in the courts if they believe the decision is unfair.

With respect to the second key area where the amendment is proposed, we are seeking to strengthen the process for collecting defaulted provincial student loans through a more efficient certificate of judgment mechanism. The proposed amendment modernizes how the province recovers long-standing defaulted student loans, ensuring public funds are collected efficiently and responsibly. This change

closes a long-standing administrative gap within the act and aligns student loan collections with modern government practices.

Similar to the successful model that is used under the *Income and Employment Support Act*, the bill creates the authority for the minister to issue a certificate of judgment, which replaces the slower, court-heavy statement of claim process. This is a proven, streamlined mechanism already functioning effectively elsewhere in government.

The certificate of judgment process significantly reduces administrative burden and frees staff time from lengthy court procedures without taking away a borrower's right to dispute a claim. It is faster, more efficient, more predictable and still protects the procedural rights of individuals in repayment default.

When a borrower defaults on a provincial student loan and refuses to co-operate with repayment arrangements, the current recovery process requires multiple steps in the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador. This includes filing a statement of claim, attempting service, waiting through statutory response periods and sometimes renewing filings every six months.

This resource-intensive approach diverts staff from active collection work and delays outcomes. This new provision replaces the old with a straightforward, legislated process. This shift improves operational efficiency while maintaining fairness.

The bill will authorize the minister to issue a certificate of judgment which can be filed with the court directly. Once filed with the court, the certificate of judgment issued by the minister carries the same legal effect as a court-issued judgment without the administrative burden of a full court proceeding.

The existing collection process is time consuming. It is resource intensive and inefficient to both courts and government. As mentioned, other government programs, such as the income support, already use a faster, legislated certificate of judgment process with proven success. It does not expand circumstances where the province can initiate collection. Collection Services already recovers millions each year for the province.

Streamlining the legal mechanism ensures more time is spent on actual collections and less on navigating unnecessary procedural steps. This is responsible stewardship of public funds and supports long-term sustainability of student financial assistance. It does not affect students who are co-operating or working towards repayment. It does not increase penalties or create new obligations.

Importantly, this amendment changes how government formalizes a judgment, not when or why. It does not expand enforcement, create new penalties or alter repayment expectations for co-operative borrowers. The proposed amendments simply streamlines the process when legal action is already required.

With respect to how these amendments impact students, it should be noted that they do not reduce any benefits or support. They do not affect eligibility, funding levels or access to grants or loans. They do not impact rural, Indigenous or urban students differently. They preserve a fair, timely and transparent appeal process and they strengthen the overall sustainability and administration of the program.

As I said, Newfoundland and Labrador is not alone in modernizing this area. Multiple provinces – New Brunswick, Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan – have already eliminated their independent appeal boards. Only a few still maintain independent student aid appeal bodies, and even those are seeing drastic caseload declining.

Newfoundland and Labrador continues to offer one of the strongest and most supportive student financial assistance programs in the country. These amendments ensure the program remains modern, efficient and fair. They allow government to focus resources where they matter most: supporting students in accessing post-secondary education and reducing barriers to participation.

In conclusion – which I know my Member across the way who is anxiously waiting for this – these amendments are practical, efficient and long overdue. They preserve fairness for students, while eliminating outdated processes that have not been used in more than a decade, and they modernize our legislation, align with national best practices and streamline government operations.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

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

I'm very happy to stand and follow my colleague, the Minister of Advanced Education, in this case, to bring forward an update to Bill 11, which is to amend the *Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019*.

As a former recipient of student aid, I can understand that some of the practices haven't changed and they need to change. When we're not utilizing some of the resources that are put in place through legislation, we need to fix that legislation. Legislation is a living, breathing document and this House of Assembly, I've said many times, is a time machine. You have the opportunity to fix things and make changes. We've made changes to a number of pieces of legislation and we're going to do some more today.

This legislation, I think the minister highlighted this earlier, affects thousands of students and families that have used this for financial support, how they appeal

decisions, how the government treats them when they fall behind. As a former minister of Education and now critic for Jobs, Growth and Rural Development, as well as Advanced Education, it's important that we talk to the students, which we have, and listen to the concerns they have brought forward. The fact that the full appeal process hasn't been utilized in that case, many of these changes are housekeeping in nature, which is good. We can always support those changes that are housekeeping in nature.

I will have some questions, of course, for the minister when we get into Committee and I won't belabour talking too, too long, but I will say updating languages and updating definitions, that's an important piece and that's a lot of what's happening here. There is the elimination of the appeals board. If it's not functioning and it hasn't been utilized, that makes sense.

I think he mentioned that it hasn't been utilized since 2013, I think, it was. If we're not utilizing that service, maybe it's not required based on the needs and desires of students and based on the current way in which this is done.

Roughly 800 appeals a year is what we already go through in that department through the student aid department that we have. They're fantastic people, I've met them many, many times. They're really good people and they have a great director, great leadership in that area. But if the board is not functioning, we should remove it and change the way in which we do it. Modernizing the act is an important piece.

First, you have the appeal officers, then the director of financial services, as well that director's decision then becomes final and binding. I would never ever think that we should not make changes to legislation.

I will give the minister some advance notice on some of the questioning I will ask about which is how we're going to affect the court

system with respect to this. What's going to happen when we file a statement of claim? Those are some of the things that I'll give him advance notice on. What happens if a student defaults on some loans?

Those are the questions that we have, because you don't want those students to be impacted in any way. We understand that sometimes students fall on tough times and can't pay their bills and this is not what we're talking in this case, I hope. We'll give them every opportunity to work with them, try to find solutions. I know that was the case when I was there and I'm sure that's not going to change in this legislation.

Only 3 per cent to 4 per cent of provincial student loans get defaulted anyway. I understand some of the changes that we made over the last decade or so with increasing the student loan amounts and changes that allowed us to give students more and, also, it's allowed us to forgive provincial portions of student loans.

If I remember correctly, and the minister can correct me if I'm wrong, I think the average student would leave with about a \$900 debt to the provincial loan side, after finishing their degree. A far cry from when I graduated in 2002. I hope that doesn't date me too, too far, but that's an important piece. It took me 10 years or so to pay off my student loan.

I think it is incumbent upon all of us to try to do everything we can to ensure students who want to go to university get the opportunity to go and can afford to go. So making student loans accessible and achievable for everyone and then giving them the opportunity to forgive those loans is an important piece.

I think all of those things are the reason why some of the appeal boards are not being utilized. So I think that's a good move to make those changes.

There is a significant amount of appetite in the community to support students and young people get ahead.

I think I'll end on that note, Mr. Speaker, and just simply say that we're here to support making sure students have the access to that. I would encourage the government to continue on looking at ways to improve the student assistance program for students, make it easier for them to accept. We get calls all the time, or I did when I was in his chair and I still do to this day, about students whose parent's income are reflective of that. We've made changes to make that a little bit better for them, but there is far more to do and I would encourage the government to continue to do those things.

I look forward to the opportunity to ask a few questions during the Committee stage. I think I can say that we would be happy to support this piece of legislation, depending on the answers to the questions, but the questions I think are going to be something for a bit more clarity on the act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SPEAKER:** Seeing no further speakers to the bill, if the minister speaks now, he will end the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**P. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Actually, it's a pleasure to listen to my colleague across the way, having filled this seat just prior to me, I know he is very knowledgeable on this issue and he's recognized – I know he said housekeeping, but he verified that by saying this is still an important piece of legislation. He mentioned that it was a living, breathing document. All legislation is. We have to adjust it as we move forward, especially, when we have a board that's in place that people are on that

you would have to put on who are not being utilized.

I think the process that's being provided here – and, again, I've said it before, an individual can still take it to the courts if they feel that way, but I think this system is much more effective in terms of making judgments and students can move forward.

I could go on because the staff that I have are outstanding. They are the same staff that the previous minister had and I'm sure he can agree with me. I know they're probably watching. They gave me some lovely notes to end on, but I think I've already indicated what this does not do or what this does. I'll just reiterate that and then we'll go to questions.

These amendments are practical, efficient and long overdue. They preserve fairness for students while eliminating outdated processes that have not been used in more than a decade. They modernize our legislation, align it with best practices and streamline government operations.

I look forward to Committee on this.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Are the Members ready for the question?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion is carried.

**CLERK (Hawley George):** A bill, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Act, 2019. (Bill 11)

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Student Financial Act, 2019," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole presently. (Bill 11)

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 11.

**SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that I do now leave this Chair and that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 11.

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.'

The motion is carried.

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

### **Committee of the Whole**

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

We are now considering Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019." (Bill 11)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you, Chair.

I'll ask a couple, just in case you need to get some information on direct stats, Minister. So how many requests for student financial assistance does the department receive annually and –?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes –

**B. DAVIS:** (Inaudible.)

**CHAIR:** Okay, the Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville. I apologize for that.

**B. DAVIS:** No, that's okay.

What are the current timelines associated with student appeals through the appeals officer within the department as it exists today, and what will this change from? You may not have it, and I understand that because I know that's a technical one that Rob and his team will probably be able to get for you in a second.

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

**P. DINN:** So you're talking the timelines for an appeal process. I will say – and I know the Member across knows this as well – we have such a robust program that provides funding and assistance to students. The staff over there work very diligently to ensure that, upfront, what's assessed is correct.

With regard to the number of appeals each year, I don't have it right in front of me, but I know it's not a substantial amount. The process that they go through is very fulsome. As you've noted earlier, there are many ways to ensure that students are getting what they deserve to move forward in their education.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** I know the answer to this one, I think, based on what you said, but I'll ask it anyway.

The legislation for the appeals board – I know we're removing that in this case – was that they require the appeal back in 10 days. I'm sure that the legislation that we're doing today is not going to make that process any longer.

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

**P. DINN:** No, the timelines that are in the regulations remain constant. The process, though, with the certificate and that, if it gets to that stage, would certainly make it a lot quicker.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** I think the initial question I asked was, how many requests for student financial services do we get in the department? I think the question that you mentioned after was, how many loans are in default? That was another question I had, so both of those are questions that I just wanted some clarity on.

How many do we have that apply for student loans and receive them, and then what is the default rate on those? I know it said 2 per cent to 3 per cent; I'm just trying to get a number in my own mind.

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

**P. DINN:** I got lovely stats in front of me.

The number of student aid borrowers by institution may help you there: The university has about 3,800 that have come forward; the College of the North Atlantic would have just shy of 1,600; private institutions would have just over 1,300; and, of course, we do provide it to out-of-province institutions, and they have just over 1,500 for around 8,200 to 8,300. That's the number of student aid borrowers by institution.

I could also go into unmet need, which is quite a piece, because when students apply, there are areas in which they don't get the full coverage and there's an unmet need related to that.

I will say, with those, when they receive their grants and their tuition, there is a Tuition Relief Grant that they can avail of. In fact, when it comes to student loans and collections, as you know, there's a rehabilitation of a student loan and there are a number of processes that are available there. I won't get into it unless you have a specific question there.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Chair.

You mentioned a statement of claim; has there ever been a statement of claim denied that the department has went to on a student? I know we're bringing it in as a major plank of this piece here now, but has there ever been one denied in the past?

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

**P. DINN:** Not to my knowledge, no.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Minister, how long does a statement of claim process take currently?

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

**P. DINN:** It could vary, depending on the courts and what's available. I'll just give you a quick rundown. Going by certificate process, we would draft a certificate in-house. It would be registered and issued at the Supreme Court, registered at the Sheriff's Office and a copy sent to a known address. That's what we're proposing in terms of a certificate.

This will give you an understanding of time difference. So a statement of claim, you would draft a document in-house. It would go to a solicitor for review and signing. It would be issued to the Supreme Court. We would send it to the Sheriff's Office for service. The statement of claims that are out of the Sheriff's Office designated area would be sent registered mail. Those that are out of province would be sent registered mail.

If the statement of claim is not served, it is renewed for a period of one year from the date it was issued, then renewed three more times at six-month intervals, if still unable to serve. If there's no reply to the served statement of claim, a draft notice of intention to proceed will be given to a solicitor for review and signing. If no reply on the notice of intention to proceed, after 30 days, it would move to default judgment. A draft default affidavit, default order would be put forward. It would be sent to the court then again, at a cost, register a judgment with the Sheriff's Office and, again, send a copy to the last known address.

So within that, you can see that there's a substantial difference in the time for a statement of claim to go through the system as opposed to what we're proposing in a certificate.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the hon. Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you.

I'm good for time still?

**CHAIR:** Yes.

**B. DAVIS:** Okay.

I agree with that process. It seems like a very lengthy process. I think that's set up that way to protect, I guess, the student and the person that would have defaulted on that loan. From the legal perspective, I understand that's a cumbersome process. But I also want to make sure, have we consulted any of the students or any other jurisdictions to see what they may do in relation to a certificate of judgment because that is, I know, much quicker, but do we find ourselves in a situation where we may make a mistake with respect to a student and what ramifications do they have after that? Because it could really hurt their credit bureau and all those things that are associated with that.

That's not what we want to see. We want compliance, of course. We want them to pay back the money that they owe the provincial government, but we don't want to impact their lives on a go-forward basis because the chance of getting the money back becomes devastatingly harder if we impact their future. Like I said, that's one of the scratchy parts I have with this piece of legislation.

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

**P. DINN:** I'll get a number, but it's a very low number that gets to this stage. But having said that, when it comes to the certificate of judgment, certainly we have looked at other jurisdictions, many I have already indicated, I believe PEI and Nova Scotia are two that are moving this way as well. But with the certificate, you have to realize that students still have the opportunity to go to the courts with this.

But I would suspect that getting to that point is going to be very small, and that's attributed to the staff over there and what we can offer with student loans and what we can offer in terms of helping them pay back their loans.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** I think, Minister, that number would be very helpful so the public would know how small a number that would be.

I know the fantastic staff over there work very, very hard to try to help students navigate a challenging situation, because, obviously, if you're in default of a student loan, it's because something didn't go right in their lives and things like that. But if we knew how small that number was – you're not talking thousands of people – I think that would be helpful.

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

**P. DINN:** As I said, I know it to be extremely small. I was going to say 4 per cent but, in actual fact, it's 5 per cent, I just received.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Chair.

Just a couple of quick questions to follow up on the MHA for Virginia Waters -

Pleasantville, who has covered a lot of ground there.

I'm just wondering what groups did you consult with when drafting this legislation, and what did the consultations consist of?

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

**P. DINN:** This would have included provinces where student loans are issued, which would be every province, essentially, looking at what they've done, looking at the successes of the provinces that have initiated something similar.

As I said earlier, 60 per cent of student loans go through Ontario, as an example. We get 1.2 per cent. Now, it doesn't matter the percentages, as long as it's a fair process for the students. Nova Scotia and PEI, I believe, are two more that are moving towards this process, so we would have reached out to these jurisdictions. They would have been very helpful, certainly, in providing input on the feedback and any issues that would have occurred.

My understanding is this process has been applauded. It's a much, much more efficient process, yet still preserves all the rights that a student would have. As I said earlier in another response, they can go through this process and still, at the end, should they think they need to take it to the courts, there's that opportunity as well.

There are a very small number that default on their loans and most of those we have a robust process in place to help them in any way we can in the repayment.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Minister.

Sorry if I've asked some redundant questions there but jurisdictional scans, obviously, are important.

Will the accompanying regulations be ready for release on August 1, and when are these amendments due to come into effect, if so passed?

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

**P. DINN:** My understanding from the information is that they would come into force on August 1.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Chair.

Just one more question there for the minister, and you may have already covered this but, again, it's late in the week and I may need to get refreshed again.

Could you describe the number of steps currently involved in a statement of claim process for defaulted student provincial loans?

I think you already itemized that and such, so I'll leave it be and I'll check with *Hansard*.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** I think I have just one more, Chair.

I'm happy to hear that the students will still have the option to go to Supreme Court, if they so choose, based on those things. I think that would satisfy a few of the concerns I had with respect to that and the detail that you gave me about what the process is currently and how this will streamline it a little bit better. It's probably better for all around but I just wanted to make sure those most vulnerable students

have the option, if need be, that they felt that they weren't heard.

One of the concerns that you do hear is it's not an independent board that's going to hear it, but we see it's never been used in the last decade or more than a decade so I think it's fine. Students aren't using it and they don't require it, as this point in juncture, because it's the way the system is set up. I think that will be fine.

So other than that, I'm happy with the answers to the questions that we've heard.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

**P. DINN:** I just want to make a comment on that. The independence is huge here. The level one is through an appeals officer. The appeals officer would certainly be very knowledgeable on the processes. The next one, which actually is replacing the board, would be the director. I know our director – I say ours – the director that is there over at Student Loans has been there for a while, knows his stuff inside and out and I would suspect any successor to him would go through the same PSC hiring process. Again, if they're not satisfied after going through those two levels, they still have that opportunity to go to court with it.

We're talking about a very small number. We already know that since 2013 there has been zero that had got to the appeal board. For those, the odd one that may come about, there is that option always there.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you, Chair.

I did say there was only one question, but this is more of a statement. I just wanted the assurance that the questions I asked about the numbers, I know we don't have them right now but if we can get them forwarded

over to us that would be greatly appreciated in the future. I know you may not have them and that's okay, like the number, you said, 5 per cent, I just want the raw numbers, the amount of defaulted loans, how much that is, those things. If you don't have them, that's fine, but if you do, that's great.

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

**P. DINN:** I can provide them. There are lovely sheets here. It's nothing out of the ordinary but just talking about applications and approvals because I think that was what you asked about earlier.

There are 9,667 full-time applicants. That was up 5 per cent from the previous year. Chair, 8,239 of these students receive financial help, up 4.3 per cent.

The remaining ones, which was just over 1,400 – 1,428 applications – were either deemed incomplete or had a negative need. Because, as you understand, they're assessed based on their financial need.

I think that's the information you wanted. We can certainly provide you with the further information.

**CHAIR:** Seeing no further questions, shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** Clauses 2 through 13 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 13 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 13 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:** A bill, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019. (Bill 11)

**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 Chair recognizes the Deputy Government House Leader.

**J. WALL:** Thank you, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019, without amendment.

**CHAIR:** The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, 2019.

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 (Lane):** The hon. Member for Placentia West - Bellevue and Chair of Committee of the Whole.

**J. DWYER:** Thank you, Speaker.

The Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report the Committee recommends Bill 11 without amendment.

**SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and recommends that Bill 11 be carried without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**L. PARROTT:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time?

**L. PARROTT:** Tomorrow.

**SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

Order 7 – I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, that Bill 18 now be read a second time, An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 18 be read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law." (Bill 18)

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Thank you, Speaker.

I rise today to speak to Bill 18, the *Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 2026*.

The purpose of this bill, Speaker, is straightforward. It's a technical amendment bill. The intent is to correct errors, inconsistencies, anomalies that have been identified in various acts and regulations across the whole entire statute book.

These issues come to light from time to time through the work of administrators, the courts and members of the legal profession, as legislation is applied in practice. Bills of this nature are not new to the House. In

fact, when one reviews debates on similar legislation from previous sessions, that these are remarkably consistent.

Members have acknowledged that while these bills may not be the most substantive or exciting measures brought forward, they're nevertheless necessary. Why? To ensure that the law remains clear, accurate and functional.

Before proceeding further, Speaker, I'd like the opportunity to acknowledge the work of the Office of the Legislative Counsel. This is a small group. They're small but mighty, and they undertake the detailed review and drafting of extensive legislative texts – not an easy task for sure.

The legislative drafters, they work closely with departments across the entire government to ensure that our province has the appropriate legislative framework. Their role is critical in ensuring that bills brought before this House, even where the amendments are technical and limited to correcting wording and references or errors, that they are prepared with precision and care.

The amendments contained in this bill, again, are entirely technical. They do not introduce new policy. They do not change the intent of the existing legislation. They do not raise legal or constitutional issues. Instead, they address matters such as incorrect statutory references, things like outdated terminology, drafting oversights, provisions that are no longer required and legislation that essentially has become obsolete or spent.

As errors and anomalies become apparent, it is then necessary from time to time to correct them through legislation such as this. There is no other convenient or practical mechanism available to deal with these matters in a comprehensive way, so this is why we're here on this. What would the alternative be? It would be to open individual acts before the House to correct

simple errors or routine matters. That would not be an efficient use of our legislative time.

So this type of legislation, like I said, is often described as housekeeping or a cleanup measure. It reflects a long-standing practice of periodically reviewing the statute book and making the technical corrections that are required to keep it current and coherent. It's my understanding the last time this was done, I believe, was in 2017, and it's typically done every four or five years. This is maintaining accurate and up-to-date legislation. It's an essential part of the rule of law and of good legislative stewardship.

The amendments in the bill address a number of acts and regulations. In each case, the changes are limited to correcting errors or anomalies that have been identified. I'm just going to give you a couple of examples, just to flush out what the meaning of this is to illustrate the anomalies that are being addressed in the bill.

I'll only give you a few, but when we look at clause 2, for example, of the bill, that's to amend paragraph 85(3)(b) of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015*, to delete the reference to Clerk assistant, that was eliminated in recent organizational changes in the House of Assembly service.

So that's one example. Another clause 3(2) of the bill, that's amending subsection 201.84(3) of the *Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Newfoundland and Labrador Act*. That is to replace the words "him" or "her." This provision was inadvertently omitted when similar amendments relating to gender-neutral language were made to the act in 2025.

Another clause 11 of the bill, that it amend paragraph 2(b) of the *Innkeepers Act*. That's to correct a typographical error. The

reference to “or a price” is corrected to “for a price.”

Clause 17 of the bill would amend subparagraph 2(n)(i) of the *Medical Radiation Technologists Regulations* to, again, correct a typographical error. The reference to “optical” is corrected to “optimal.”

Clause 22 of the bill would amend subsection 11(3) of the *Provincial Parks Regulations* to correct an incorrect reference to a regulation. So those are just some of the examples, just to illustrate what’s happening here.

I’d just like to say this. In addition to these technical corrections, the bill also proposes the repeal of several acts and regulations that are now obsolete and spent. That, I believe, is in regard to clause 25, I think. These provisions no longer have any legal effect or practical application. Their removal helps keep the statute book clear and accessible.

The departments responsible for administering the acts being amended have either proposed these changes or have been consulted with respect to them and they have confirmed their agreement. That’s the level of consultation that was necessary and done.

Speaker, the amendments have been brought to my attention, as the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and, again, no policy or legal issues associated with the provisions in the bill.

Also for clarification, what happens if this bill were not enacted? The errors and anomalies it is addressing would remain in force. Why is that a problem? That would create unnecessary confusion. It would require the introduction of multiple individual amendment bills to deal with the matters that really are just technical in nature.

Passing this bill allows the House to address these issues efficiently and transparently in a single legislative measure. While legislation of this kind may not attract much public attention, it’s still important. It plays an important role in ensuring that the laws of the province are clear, accurate and properly maintained. For that reason, Speaker, the bill is both necessary and appropriate.

On that note, I look forward to addressing any questions that the Members may have as the bill proceeds.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters – Pleasantville.

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

I think both the introduction and my speech is going to be longer than Committee on this, I think, based on previous time.

Many times we stand and debate policies that are coming forward and create legislation or changes to legislation. This is, essentially, the piece that aligns all those legislation changes that we make here on substantive bills with this process. The minister highlighted a number of legislative changes that are going to be made, all to bring it in line with changes that we’ve made, whether they be minor changes to another act before or major changes like changes to an oil and gas corporation versus something else.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t say thank you to the legislative team that put this together. I think the last time we did a bill like this was 2017 and it was a culmination of so many different acts together. It makes no sense to use the House of Assembly’s time to bring in each individual change when you’re changing something like clause 24, which asks us to change subsection 285(7) of the

*Towns and Local Service Districts Act* to correct the typographical error in reference to marshals versus commissioner. So we would have to bring in a piece of legislation, have a minister stand up and introduce it, go through a Committee process to change a word that is just something that the towns or Local Service District aske. So this brings us in line with what we need to do. Bill 18 is truly as much a housekeeping bill as anything we've seen.

It doesn't introduce new policy, as I said, but it is clear, and I think the minister mentioned this earlier, that we rely on these pieces of legislation every day for our laws and we need to ensure they are aligned with what the current practices are. So it's very, very important that we do these things and make sure that the bills align so they are a true reflection of what this House of Assembly and the people of this province require and need.

This bill doesn't call for heated debate. There's no heated debate here on this. It's a part of regular maintenance of our legislative system.

When we don't address these concerns, they could be confusing for the public, legal practitioners or government officials. Ensuring that gender-neutral language is updated, cross-referencing shifts in legislation evolves. As I've said in my previous chat with the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, legislation is a living document, it changes, it morphs into what we need it to be at the time.

We've sat in this House of Assembly many, many times to change the *Highway Traffic Act*. I think there were three or four ministers over the years that have changed that traffic act, probably two or three dozen times to make things right and change for the better of the province, whether it be helmets or whether it be slowing down or stunt driving and things like those. That's exactly what we need to be doing with

legislation. This is making sure that it's accurate in all the other subsequent pieces of legislation where they're mentioned, in many cases.

Typographical errors, *Health Professionals Act*, all those things that we make changes to on a regular basis, that we change one piece of legislation and the legislation is mentioned in other pieces of legislation, so the title could change. It could be a department name change. Those things are important to acknowledge and officials in departments work very closely with Legislative Council, as the minister mentioned, they bring these things forward.

This crosses the previous government as well as this government. Many of these changes were done in previous – as I said before, the last time this was done was 2017 and this is a sensible decision to move forward on these.

I'm not going to belabour it any longer other than to say that this adds consistency to our laws, it's important and it's something that all Members in this House of Assembly should be supportive of. I look forward to another one of these coming forward to align, as we make changes to legislation because that's what we do in this House of Assembly.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

**S. O'LEARY:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the minister.

As a new MHA, I continue to learn about these processes that certainly continue to unfold, especially with the Department of Justice and Public Safety, for sure, learning that this is an opportunity to streamline legislative process and remove obsolescence.

Of course, I'm only beginning to understand the level of dedication and work that goes into the Department of Justice, who makes sure that the attention to detail is truly paid.

I'm understanding, of course, that these types of bills and updates are done from time to time by the House of Assembly to make the minor corrections and amendments. So I certainly concur with my colleague on the necessity and congratulate the department for that, and the minister as well.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Seeing no further speakers, if the Minister of Justice speaks now, she will close the debate.

The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Speaker, first, I'd like to acknowledge what the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville stated with respect to the importance of what we're doing here that it's really reflecting the will of the House of Assembly. I think that's what the Member was getting at, and to ensure that the acts accurately depict or state what the House intended to make law.

I think that's a really important point and I'm glad that he mentioned that and emphasized the importance of that because that is really what we're doing here is reflecting the will of the House of Assembly.

I'd also like to thank the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi, as well, for recognizing the level of work that's involved, especially with respect to the legislative drafters and all who were involved in bringing this forward and the expertise that is required to have such precision and accuracy with respect to this kind of bill.

Thank you, Speaker.

**SPEAKER:** Are the Members ready for the question?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion has been carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law. (Bill 18)

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently. (Bill 18)

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, that the House resolve itself into Committee of Whole to consider Bill 18.

**SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that I do now leave the Chair and that this House resolve into Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 18.

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 is carried.

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

### **Committee of the Whole**

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

We are now considering Bill 18, An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law.

A bill, "An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law." (Bill 18)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the hon. Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

I'm going to use an example of clause 17, but it could be for a bunch of different clauses. It's just that's the one I'll use here for the example.

Clause 17 would amend the *Medical Radiation Technologists Regulations* to correct a typographical error. Are all of these LGIC things or ministerial regulations that would be done by the minister, or is a combination of both?

Probably, with the sheer magnitude of it, I'm sure it's a combination of both. It's not just clause 17; it's all of them. It can be a blanket answer. I'm not looking clause by clause here; I'm just looking for some clarity because it didn't say ministerial regulations or Lieutenant-Governor in Council. I'm sure it's a combination of both, but I'm answering your question, I think.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** You did answer your own question. Some of these are ministerial, but it is a combination of both, yes.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you for that first answer there because it sort of answers pretty much any other question I would have. I'm sure that the department is fed up this information, as you mentioned. Would they have also looked at other jurisdictions as well to assure that our legislation is aligning?

I'm sure probably from the gender-neutral language and updating like that, that would have been done from a jurisdictional scan as well. But will departments look at that? I'm sure they did in some cases, but that's more of an interest question than anything else.

Not too many people out there are as concerned about legislative matters like this, except for us in the House of Assembly, for the most part. So this is a very interesting thing for us to talk about.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Sure, and I appreciate the question.

No, there would not have been because there are no policy decisions being made here, and I guess there would be consultations if there were substantive amendments to the bill. But again, within our department, we are always reviewing the legislation to see what is appropriate.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you, Minister. Probably my fault on that one. The jurisdictional scan probably would have been in the initial design of the previous bills that would have been reflective of these changes.

Okay, I'm good.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Seeing no further questions, shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** Clauses 2 to 25 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 25 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 25 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:** A bill, An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law. (Bill 18)

**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 Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 18 without amendment.

**CHAIR:** The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 18 without amendment.

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 (Lane):** The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue and Chair of Committee of the Whole.

**J. DWYER:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that the Committee recommends Bill 18 without amendment.

**SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and recommends Bill 18 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**L. PARROTT:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time?

**L. PARROTT:** Tomorrow.

**SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services that Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Pharmaceutical Services Act, now be read a second time.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 19 be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Amend the Pharmaceutical Services Act." (Bill 19)

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Pharmaceutical Services Act. As this House is aware, we did provide a technical briefing. The *Pharmaceutical Services Act* established, amongst other things, the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program and the tamper resistant prescription drug pad program.

Speaker, the tamper resistant drug pad program began in 2005 and it administered by the Department of Health and Community Services. This program aims to reduce prescription drug abuse and diversion by making it harder to forge or to change prescriptions for controlled drugs and substances, including narcotics.

Drug diversion occurs when somebody redirects a prescribed drug, usually an opioid or a stimulant, to another person who was not meant to receive it. This diversion can occur when a person who has been prescribed the drugs sells, shares or misuses the medication.

Under the program, prescribers must use tamper-resistant prescription pads for high-risk medications such as opioids. These special prescription pads are embedded with security features that make the prescription difficult to duplicate or alter. The Department of Health and Community Services provides these prescription pads to prescribers including physicians, dentists, optometrists, midwives, veterinarians and nurse practitioners. Prescribers are required to use the temper-resistant prescription pads for drugs that are listed in a schedule maintained by the Minister of Health and

Community Services, and the schedule is available online.

Speaker, when the program began in 2005, the federal *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act* did not allow verbal prescriptions for controlled drugs and substances.

Prescriptions for controlled drugs and substances needed to be written or typed in order to be accepted and dispensed by a pharmacy.

The provincial *Pharmaceutical Services Act* aligned with the federal legislation and required all prescriptions for drugs included in the Tamper Resistant Drug Pad Program to be written or typed on a tamper-resistant prescription pad.

During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Government of Canada implemented a class exemption to the federal *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act* to accommodate telephone prescriptions and prescription transfers from pharmacy to pharmacy. The *Pharmaceutical Services Act* was subsequently amended to reflect the federal changes and to exempt verbal prescriptions and pharmacy transfers from the Tamper Resistant Drug Pad Program.

On October 1, 2026, this October coming, the Government of Canada will implement new controlled substances regulations, these new federal regulations will absorb the previous class exemption issued under the *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act*.

Speaker, this bill that we're introducing now updates the language of the *Pharmaceutical Services Act* to align with this new federal regulations and maintains the ability to give verbal prescriptions and to make pharmacy-to-pharmacy transfers without using a tamper-resistant prescription pad.

The new federal regulations will also allow for substitutions of drugs and substances. This practice was previously limited to non-controlled drugs and substances. To reflect these changes at the federal level, this bill

would also allow pharmacists and dispensing physicians to make a substitution of a controlled drug or substance without the use of a tamper-resistant prescription pad. A substitution involves replacing a prescription drug with one that works the same way and has the same effect as another drug. There are several reasons for making a substitution, including mitigating side effects for the patient, supporting patients in taking their treatment as recommended, insurance coverage or managing a drug shortage.

The use of a tamper-resistant prescription pad is not useful for substitutions as the prescription does not leave the pharmacy and there is no risk of patient forgery. This bill would also remove the requirement to use a tamper-resistant prescription pad for prescriptions sent directly to the pharmacy. This includes instances of electronic prescribing, which can be done securely through the Electronic Medical Record, secure faxes, e-prescribing platforms and, of course, the newly introduced CorCare. This will be beneficial for the hospital and long-term care facilities in this province where prescriptions are delivered directly to a dispensing pharmacy.

Facilitating electronic prescribing will also better support out-of-province prescribing providing virtual care services. Currently, out-of-province prescribers must obtain a tamper-resistant prescription pad from the Department of Health and Community Services or they may verbally prescribe to a local pharmacy, whereby a local pharmacist must verify the legitimacy. Requiring a tamper-resistant prescription pad creates unnecessary barriers to efficient prescribing and dispensing in these settings.

Speaker, the harm to individuals and families caused by the opioid crisis is well documented, we know that. This bill was developed by balancing the need to optimize opioid-related patient care with the need to mitigate risk of diversion or overdose.

Pharmacists have access to patient electronic health records, including drug profiles, and they are trained to ensure appropriate drug use. Further, the risk of forgery of a hard-copy prescription is eliminated where the prescriptions are delivered directly from a prescriber to a pharmacy. A tamper-resistant prescription pad will still be required when a patient is given a physical copy of a prescription to submit to a pharmacy.

The bill will uphold the program's original objective of safe and secure prescription delivery while better aligning with the federal legislation. The proposed amendment will also provide necessary updates to reflect modern prescribing practices. The proposed amendments will reduce the volume of paperwork needed, resulting in timelier patient care and increased access for patients. This will remove unnecessary burdens and will allow health care workers to devote more of their valuable time and resources to patient care.

The proposed amendments are supported by the College of Pharmacy of Newfoundland and Labrador. Additionally, prescribers, pharmacists and staff at Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services have been requesting the elimination of the requirement for the tamper-resistant prescription pads for electronic prescribing for some time now and will also be in support of the proposed amendment, Speaker.

I am pleased to support this important bill and I ask that all hon. Members of this House join me in supporting the bill.

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

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker.

I'm pleased today to stand and speak for a few minutes to Bill 19, second reading, here

in the House of Assembly, An Act to Amend the Pharmaceutical Services Act.

Speaker, this is an act that came into force back in 2006, a couple of decades ago, and it's really only been amended a handful of times since that. At its core, this legislation is primarily administrative in nature. It updates professional – I'm sorry, Speaker, I'm nursing a bad head cold, as most of my colleagues know – it updates provincial legislation to align with federal regulatory changes that are coming into force later this year, particularly around the prescribing and dispensing of controlled medications.

In essence, Speaker, this bill is really an extension of a bill that we had introduced in 2023. At that time, it was in response to the federal government's changes that came out of the pandemic. It also recognizes the reality that prescribing practices have evolved significantly over the last number of years as new technology has come onboard and introduced. Many things have changed, including the dispensing of drugs.

Electronic prescribing is now common practice. Prescriptions are often sent directly from a prescriber to a pharmacy electronically or by telephone. Pharmacists are increasingly working within an expanded scope of practice. So what we have here today, Speaker, in the amendments that are on the floor to Bill 19, is really looking to update the legislation to reflect those realities.

This particular bill will allow controlled drug prescriptions to be received by telephone, where permitted federally – so we're just aligning ourselves with Canada – remove certain requirements related to, as the minister alluded to in her opening remarks, tamper resistant prescription pads, where prescriptions are transferred electronically or directly between professionals; and allow pharmacists to substitute therapeutically equivalent controlled medications in appropriate circumstances.

Our caucus will certainly be supporting the proposed amendments that are before us in the House today under Bill 19. We recognize that much of this bill is housekeeping required to maintain the alignment with the federal legislation I mentioned earlier. I was forgetting when it was coming into effect, but it's actually taking effect in October of this year. Those amendments will now expand to include all of the aspects of the federal legislation.

Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't say we also recognize the important role pharmacists play in our health care system, particularly as we continue facing health care pressures across our beautiful province. Pharmacists have increasingly stepped into front-line health care roles, helping patients access more quickly, particularly in rural communities and in situations where access to primary care remains a challenge.

Pharmacists are a group of people that – well, myself nor the minister would have grown up with the benefits of really being able to go to a pharmacist and have them explain all the potential side effects of your drugs, because we grew up where there were local clinics and you went and the nurse or someone on the desk passed you your pills and you paid for them right then and there, probably in cash, and you moved on. So you talk about how things have evolved over the years.

I can tell you, even since I've been doing this job and here in the city, the relationship that you build, the relationship that even my daughter, who is a type 1 diabetic and insulin-dependent and things like that, have built with the pharmacist. Right here, in this moment, I would be remiss if I didn't give a shout-out to Brittany Neville who just opened up Coastal Care PharmaChoice in Forteau, in the Labrador Straits. A brilliant young lady from St. John's, and love led her to Labrador, and we wish Brittany really well. I actually have a couple of young ladies that are pharmacists in my own community.

Many of these changes reflect work that began while our government was in office, including efforts to responsibly expand the pharmacists' scope of practice. But, Speaker, while we support the bill, I do think it's important to acknowledge that this legislation has also prompted broader conversations around monitored drugs, addiction prevention and, ultimately, patient safety.

I have permission, for my next little sentence, to use names here. It was a couple of weeks ago that I had the opportunity to sit down with Henry House, a social worker and an advocate who has spent considerable time raising concerns related to the prescribing and monitoring of controlled medication in this province, following the death of his mother, Catherine House – Kay, as she was affectionately known.

While the concerns he raised are really not fully addressed within Bill 19 itself, I do believe they deserve thoughtful consideration. Just another family, an incredibly sad story that they're going to live with until the end of time. I was thinking just as I was sitting here today that I don't know anything that drives change more than somebody who have had an experience and they want to make changes as a result of that. A lot of people prescribing and I guess pharmacist A wasn't talking to pharmacist B and things like that. So I wanted to share that, and I'll have more to say on that as we go forward. We will also write Health and Community Services and the Pharmacy NLHS on Henry's behalf as well.

His concerns were focus less on access to medication and more on ensuring appropriate safeguards, oversight, communication and monitoring exist throughout the prescribing and dispensing process. Health is so massive and there are so many layers, but until you sit with somebody who lost a family member and they share their story, you realize, in a new

light, just how essential it is to have those safeguards in place.

One of the issues raised was whether there should be an enhanced review of patient medication profiles, not only when medications are dispensed, but also at the time that prescriptions are filled. There were also discussions around improving coordination and information sharing between health care professionals involved in prescribing and dispensing monitored drugs.

These are important conversations, especially as we continue to see the impacts of addiction and substance use challenges in communities throughout our province. We know that accidental drug toxicity deaths have been increasing. Terry Fox, that was related to cancer, I know, but his slogan was that somewhere the hurting must stop. I bet you, if we were to canvass every one of the 40 Members that represent every resident of Newfoundland and Labrador in this House, somebody knows a sad story of an accidental death related to drugs.

While there is no indication that the changes in this particular bill would increase misuse or diversion, I do believe that this debate highlights the importance of ensuring our monitoring systems and safeguards continue evolving, alongside the modern prescribing technology that I had talked about in my opening, trying to keep up with the pace of technology. Well then, there are other conversations that need to happen simultaneously with that. That includes making sure health care professionals have access to the information and tools they need to identify risk, prevent harmful interactions and support safe prescribing practices.

Speaker, I also want to acknowledge that tamper resistant prescription pads were originally introduced for a very important reason. It was to reduce fraud, forgery and diversion of controlled substances.

Questions were raised during the briefing about whether reducing reliance on those pads could create risk, and the explanation that was provided –

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** I'm finding it a little bit difficult to hear, Speaker.

**SPEAKER:** We had a little accident, I believe, in the corner.

We're okay now.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Okay, I'm glad I wasn't involved in that.

Speaker, the explanation provided was that modern electronic prescribing systems may actually reduce some of those risks because prescriptions can now move directly between prescribers and pharmacies without passing through multiple hands. That is a really important distinction and is certainly noteworthy here today as we discuss the amendments on Bill 19.

Technology has changed significantly since many of these rules were first written. Legislation does need to evolve alongside those changes. I talked about the changes through the years, and I don't know about the minister who's leading Bill 19, but in my home growing up on the coast, isolated, the home I was raised in, my grandmother's home, we had the drugs. So all the drugs would come in a big trunk and then it would be dispensed. People would come to the house and they would pick up their drugs.

So quite a change to the conversation we're having here today. However, as legislators, we also have a responsibility to ensure that modernization does not come at the expense of oversight or patient safety. I'm sure that every one of us on all sides of the House would agree with that.

Speaker, this bill largely reflects administrative modernization and federal alignment. There's no major overhaul that's happening here with the Pharmaceutical Services Act of controlled substance policy in Newfoundland and Labrador. But, as I said earlier, it does provide an opportunity to continue broader conversations about monitored drugs, addiction prevention, safeguards and the role of prescription monitoring within our health care system. Those are conversations that I believe it is incumbent upon all of us to continue to ensure that we continue to have those conversations.

I don't know if I have missed any points here, Speaker. I think that may have been the majority of what I wanted to say, and I will have some questions, of course, in Committee. But, certainly, the Opposition caucus will be happy to support the proposed amendments that the minister brought forward for Bill 19.

Thank you.

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

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

We, too, will support this bill. From what we can see here, it's very much about safety. I heard the minister speak to this, with regard to recognition on all sides here of the opioid crisis and the addictions that come with it. But, certainly, this is a way of modernizing it a bit so that it's not just simply restricted to the tamper resistant pad. It allows for the verbal prescriptions, the pharmacy-to-pharmacy transfers and allows the substitutes of controlled drugs without a tamper resistant prescription pad.

Prescribers have asked the provincial government for this power and they noted that the act itself is not keeping up with the rapid developments in prescribing. Certainly, I would say, not only with regard

to the technology, but also maybe the crises that we are facing –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I would ask Members to keep the conversations down. I'm trying to listen to the Leader of the Third Party.

**J. DINN:** Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Thank you for your co-operation.

**J. DINN:** So one could argue that the rapid pace of change is driven by both technology and the proliferation of opioid abuse in our province.

I want to take a minute here to talk a little bit about the issue I raised with the petition earlier today. It's related to patient safety, especially with regard to controlled substances, opioids and so on and so forth.

Henry House has been in the news a few times on this. His mother died of a drug overdose. He's been campaigning for greater safeguards around the prescription and the dispensing of opiates to prevent those with legal prescriptions from gaming the system. He is specifically calling for the College of Physicians and Surgeons to create a policy for opioid-narcotic agreements, also known as treatment agreements, that includes the requirement for information sharing with a patient's circle of care.

Currently – and this was one of the points of the petition – the physician can enter into a treatment agreement with a patient, if that physician feels the patient is in danger of developing addictions or dependency and so on and so forth. There is no general policy governing what this treatment addiction is like. There is no consistency, no uniformity in these agreements. There's no requirement with sharing that information

with anyone else, even with the pharmacy. So the pharmacy would have no knowledge necessarily of any concerns that the prescribing physician might have with this.

The other thing is that even if they were to upload into CorCare, not all physicians are on this and, even then, it can be very clinic specific. It's possible for someone to be in the emergency room and be given another prescription for the same drug without realizing that maybe there is a treatment agreement in place.

At least here, with regard to this, what Mr. House was looking for was a mechanism where all people involved in that circle of care, the providers of care for that person, are included in these agreements to make sure that either intentional or unintentional prescription abuse does not occur.

The second thing he looks at here, too, is he wants the College of Pharmacy to change its current policy to conduct patient profile, medication profile and pharmacy network reviews at the time of releasing medication or dispensing to a patient, as opposed to at the time of receiving a prescription from a patient. This will help prevent, again, patients from using a single prescription at multiple pharmacies.

The concern here is that any of us who have gone to a pharmacy, we drop off the prescription to be filled and, at that point, the pharmacist is going to check the network to see if this prescription hasn't already been filled in some way shape or form. If the person picks it up at that point or waits for it, then that's no problem. But if that person says I'll come back later or I'll come back tomorrow or come back the week, there's no record, really, when the pharmacist goes to check as to whether this prescription has been filled a second time, or if he or she has been admitted to the hospital and has that prescription filled.

Inadvertently, I guess, people might very well be taking more than what they require

or they are actually now getting extra prescriptions that they can then sell illegally. So what he was asking here in the petition were, basically, other measures that could make the dispensation of opioids and other controlled substances more difficult and, therefore, making it safer for people.

While we are looking here at these acts, the changes here have to do with, more or less, changes that would allow for verbal prescription, pharmacy-to-pharmacy transfers and allow substitutes of controlled drugs without the tamper resistant pad, there's a recognition here of responding to the changes in technology and so on and so forth, but also striving for patient safety and well-being.

In future, Speaker, what Mr. House would like to see and certainly the reason behind the petition that he helped craft were other measures that could make it even safer for people. We know it's a serious problem, the use of opioids and the controlled substances. People find a way to get access to them as it is. This is one more way that we could, in the future, make the use of prescription drugs safer for everyone.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Seeing no further speakers, if the Minister of Health and Community Services speaks now, she will close the debate.

**L. EVANS:** Thank you, Speaker.

Just looking at this now, some good comments there. I think we're all aligned here with these amendments. We talked about modernized legislation to be in line with the federal changes that's coming in October. That's very, very important. Most of this is administrative.

But, Speaker, I did hear some concerns, and this government here also shares the concerns. I just want to summarize here that there is going to be a full review. Currently,

there's a full review under way of the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*. I think that will address some of the issues that were raised here that was outside the scope of this amendment, and this review is expected to be completed in 2027.

Speaker, this is about making sure that when prescriptions are –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I'm trying to listen to the minister.

**L. EVANS:** It's to make sure that prescriptions are safe and that there is no room for abuse. We know the harm that narcotics and controlled substances can have on our general population, Speaker, and this amendment does nothing to erase those safeguards. In actual fact, it's just about modernizing how prescriptions are prescribed, and also making it more efficient between the prescribers and the pharmacists.

**SPEAKER:** Are all Members ready for the question?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

The motion has been carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Amend the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*. (Bill 19)

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently. (Bill 19)

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

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 19.

**SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that I do now leave the Chair and that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 19.

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.'

The motion has been carried.

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

### Committee of the Whole

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

We are now considering Bill 19, An Act to Amend the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*." (Bill 19)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

I just have a few questions here for the minister on Bill 19. Minister, was the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board consulted on these amendments?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** It's my understanding that we did consult with them, yes.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair, and I thank the minister.

Did the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board specifically request any of the amendments that were contained in this bill?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Yes, actually.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you.

Minister, were addiction experts and those with lived experience consulted?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** I have to check about the lived experience. I'm just getting to the part there where stakeholders were consulted here. The College of Pharmacists in Newfoundland and Labrador were consulted and supported the change, as I said. Officials from Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services have been advocating for updates for some time, particularly to remove the requirement for the tamper

resistance pad, when prescriptions are sent electronically or within hospital settings.

My notes here end there. In terms of those with lived experiences, no, they weren't consulted. But there is going to be another opportunity. Like I said, the review of the *Pharmaceutical Services Act* is now under way. That's going to be complete by 2027, and I think that there's an opportunity. I will go back to see. I'm sure that we'll be consulting those with lived experiences and if it's not right now, as minister, I'll go back and ask that they be consulted. Because you did raise very, very important points earlier.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Minister, I appreciate that and around the addiction experts, I'm happy for you to get that information after.

Did the department receive any concerns during consultations regarding the reduced reliance on tamper resistant prescription pads?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** No, it wasn't because, in actual fact, the only changes are between the prescribers and the pharmacists. The prescribers are, like, physicians and we talked about midwives, nurse practitioners, that direct relationship. Now, if there's a prescription to a patient, they'll always have to use the tamper resistant pad. There was no concern there.

Like I said, these amendments are very limited in scope. It's just to make sure we're in compliance with the new federal regulations that are going to be introduced in October.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

Will pharmacists be required to notify prescribers when substitutions involving controlled drugs are made?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Could you just repeat that? I never got the first part of what you just said.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I'm not sounding my normal loud and clear self today, I apologize.

Just wondering, Minister, will pharmacist be required to notify prescribers when substitutions involving controlled drugs are made? Is that requirement built in?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Well, when the substitution is made, what we're talking about is a pharmacist will replace prescribed medication with a different drug that works in a similar way and produces the same effect. We've expanded the scope of the pharmacist.

The pharmacists, really, are the ones that are very knowledgeable in the drugs, in the medications and they're the ones who really have the knowledge about which ones can be substituted. But the act doesn't require that the pharmacist contact the prescriber to let them know. The standard of practice would speak to that.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

I thank the minister for that answer.

How will the introduction of CorCare – we're hearing lots about it those days, it's just a transition, I think it's a good thing, sometimes there are a few hiccups along the way getting there – affect how controlled substances are prescribed in this province? I'm just wondering if that was considered at the time when this legislation was being drafted?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** My understanding of CorCare is how information is transferred. So CorCare really wouldn't impact how prescriptions are prescribed because the prescriber to the pharmacist, that's the relationship that they have. CorCare is direct electronic, just basically moves the information. The same as if the prescriber had picked up the phone and called the pharmacist or if the prescriber had faxed or secure faxed, that's another way they do the prescriptions. If the prescribers had sent in a secure fax to the pharmacist, CorCare is basically another means of doing that.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

Does the department anticipate these amendments or the implementation of CorCare will increase the use of electronic prescribing systems across the province?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Well, any introduction for new electronic prescribing mechanisms, such as CorCare, or if there's another one that becomes available, it would have to be vetted. It would have to go through all of the safeguards to make sure that they're safe.

With CorCare, there are a lot of safety behind in terms of personal information, in terms of being hacked, all of those

safeguards are put in place. Any new electronic means of prescribing would have to go through the strict standards and safeguards.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

Minister, I'm just wondering how many prescriptions for controlled substances are currently transmitted electronically in Newfoundland and Labrador. Do we have any idea?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services,

**L. EVANS:** When you're talking electronically, you're talking through secure fax and now we're going into CorCare so we don't have that information. I can probably get it for you shortly because of the way CorCare is set up, they would be able to compile that data pretty quickly. It's not something I have at my fingertips right now, but we can provide it. If anyone is interested, we can get that information for them.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you.

When we deal with these issues that we've talked about, the over-prescribing and the addictions and all those things, I was just interested in knowing how many prescriptions for controlled substances are currently transmitted electronically.

Are there any additional safeguards in place to detect fraud or diversion in situations where prescriptions are transmitted either electronically or verbally?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** The safeguards, there would be a relationship between the prescriber and the pharmacist electronically over CorCare. The prescriber would have to log into CorCare and there are a lot of safeguards there to make sure that the person who is actually using the profile of the prescriber in CorCare, they would have to meet those safeguards.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair, and I thank the minister for that answer.

Does this bill, do you believe, Minister, responds to the increase in toxicity deaths?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** When I answered the prior question, I was talking about CorCare, but if there are any other electronic means, the pharmacists are trained on how to – what does it say here – pharmacists can always reach out to the prescriber if they have concerns and they are trained to identify any kind of risks or any kind of identity issues. I just wanted to clarify that.

In terms of toxicity, we don't see any increases in toxicity because this is just between the prescribers, the established professional prescribers, and the pharmacists. In actual fact, it may cut down on abuse.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Will these amendments improve controls related to prescribing and/or dispensing controlled drugs?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Yes, it would.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Does the department anticipate any cost savings to patients or the health care system as a result of allowing the equivalent substitutions that are talked about in this bill?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Are you talking about substituting medications – the pharmacist?

**L. DEMPSTER:** Yes, for therapeutic claims and things like that, I'm just wondering if there are any savings anticipated as a result that would be allowed to (inaudible).

**L. EVANS:** The pharmacist and the prescriber, there are always ongoing substitutions. What we're just doing now is basically changing the way that they do it. In actual fact, it's ongoing now, we don't expect any changes.

Substitutions of prescriptions, that's something totally different than this amendment. This amendment is about how they actually are allowed to do the substitutions. Before, they would have to use the tamper-resistant prescription pad. Now, the prescriber, when the – or whatever, right? Yes.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** How does Newfoundland and Labrador compare to other provinces in terms of the safeguards surrounding controlled drug prescribing? Would you have any information on that? Like, if we were to do a jurisdictional scan, how do we compare?

**CHAIR:** Then Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

I will remind the Members, it's a little different than Estimates, where we need to be recognized just for Broadcast purposes.

**L. EVANS:** Thank you, Chair.

Just looking at this legislation, the tamper-resistant prescription pad that we're referring to, this legislation, is unique to Newfoundland and Labrador. Basically, other provinces don't have the same tamper-resistant drug program legislation.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Does the minister believe additional reforms to the Prescription Monitoring Program are needed beyond the scope of what we're doing here today with Bill 19?

**CHAIR:** Then Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** A full review is going on.

**L. DEMPSTER:** (Inaudible.)

**L. EVANS:** Chair, the Member is having difficulty hearing me.

**CHAIR:** I'm hearing okay.

Are you hearing okay now?

**L. EVANS:** Yes, just background noise.

**CHAIR:** Oh, okay.

Order, please!

I need to hear the speaker so we can clue up for the week.

**L. EVANS:** In actual fact, a full review of the *Pharmaceutical Services Act* now is underway. In 2027, it should be complete.

The only reason why we just brought in these amendments now is because of the

upcoming changes in the federal regulations, we want to be in line. These are not the only changes that are going to be introduced, a full review is underway.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I recognize that we're doing it to stay aligned with Canada on this.

Is the government considering future amendments related specifically to opioid prescribing standards or narcotic contracts?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Well, both acts are being reviewed. I think we're all aware that the world is changing, access to drugs and the purity of the drugs that are on the street now is creating a lot of health issues and putting people at risk. In actual fact, there is need to actually have a review and have more safeguards put in place.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** What metrics will the department use to determine whether these amendments are functioning as intended after the implementation? Like, you make changes and then you want to know if it is functioning as it was intended, just wondering what's the process there, what you would have in mind.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** I didn't hear. Her mic wasn't on.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** It's gotten pretty noisy in here and I think the minister sometimes is struggling to hear me as well. I'll just repeat the question.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

**L. DEMPSTER:** What metrics will the department use to determine whether these amendments are functioning as they were intended after the implementation?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** A review can provide a lot of information. Also, according to my notes here, there is going to be collaboration with the college and Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Okay, so feedback maybe from those groups to see if it's functioning as it was intended, okay.

Will there be any public reporting related to substitution practices or the electronically transmitted controlled drug descriptions?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** It's my understanding that the therapeutic substitution – this amendment is only about how that actually happens. The communication between the prescriber – okay, I understand what you're saying now, but could you repeat the question? Sorry about that.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

Can I ask all Members to please – if you have conversations, take them outside. The two Members are having a hard time debating the bill and that's what we're here to do.

I acknowledge now the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** We could stay here until 6 or 7 on a Thursday evening.

Thank you, Chair.

Just to ask the question again, will there be any public reporting related to substitution practices or the electronically transmitted controlled drug prescriptions – any public reporting back?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** It won't be out of this amendment because how pharmacists substitute drugs is independent of this amendment. This amendment is about, in actual fact, safeguarding the fact of actually how they do it. It's basically without the tamper-resistant pad. So the answer will be no.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

Has the department assessed whether there are any cybersecurity or privacy risks associated with increased electronic prescribing? I mean, privacy is always a big issue when you're talking about people's health information, as you would know, anything associated with the increased electronic prescribing.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** No, they are not anticipating an increase.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I'm just wondering, does the department believe current addiction and mental health supports are sufficient given the rise in accidental drug toxicity

deaths? It's kind of a general question, I know.

Given the current supports, are they sufficient given the rise of the accidental drug toxicity deaths?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** This amendment does not deal with that question. That's outside the scope of this amendment.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's Centre and Leader of the Third Party.

**J. DINN:** Thank you, Chair, I only have a few.

I just wanted to go back with regard to the substitution, just based on the conversation, I want to make sure I'm understanding it.

So in certain drug programs, if you are prescribed, you can have access to a brand name, but if there's a generic drug available, usually the health plan, that's the one it would go with. So it's the same drug but a generic form of it. Obviously, then the pharmacists wouldn't have to notify the prescriber of that, the doctor, in that case, unless, of course, the doctor says no, this must be the brand name.

So I just want to make sure when it comes to the opioids and the controlled drugs, we're not talking about that and simply where there's a generic form, or are we talking about a different substitution, a similar drug, different brand name?

I'm just trying to make sure I understand what they're talking about with regard to substitutions.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** No, in actual fact, therapeutic substitutions are ongoing today. They are going to be ongoing tomorrow and they've been ongoing last year.

What it is, the pharmacist will substitute, because sometimes it has to do with insurance coverage or the generic one may be cheaper, if the person has to pay out of pocket. Also, there may be a drug shortage in a brand name. The pharmacist is working with the patient, and a lot of times the pharmacist works with the prescriber.

So that's really what's happening now, yesterday and tomorrow. This amendment is not going to change the way pharmacists do substitutions in terms of the drug substitution. This is just going to change the fact that they will not actually have to use – what do you call that – the tamper-resistant pad.

So that would be a question that you could probably bring when we introduce the new legislation and amendments that's coming up.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's Centre.

**J. DINN:** Thank you. I think that makes it clear.

So, right now, if I get a prescription filled just for my regular medication, there is no requirement to inform or change the prescription or anything else like that. What we're talking about specifically, though, with the legislation, basically, for opioids it's a different ball altogether. So no matter what is done, it's going to require tamper-proof prescription pads.

All we're doing now with this is we're just allowing the same practice to occur that we do for other drugs without that tamper-resistant pad, if that's what I'm understanding. They're just simplifying the process but keeping the patient safe. Would that be fair?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** I'm just looking through.

Yes, this bill will also allow pharmacists and dispensing physicians to make a substitution of a controlled drug or substance without the use of a tamper-resistant pad. Right now, when the legislation is not changed, they have to use the tamper-resistant pad. A substitution involves replacing a prescribed drug with one that works the same way and has the same effect.

So this bill will allow pharmacists and dispensing physicians to make a substitution of a controlled drug or substance without the use of the tamper-resistant prescription pad. That's the only change.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's Centre.

**J. DINN:** Was the pharmacist ever required to let the doctor know, look, we don't have this brand name in or we don't have this? Would that have happened before?

In other words, I guess, if there had to be a change, would the pharmacist have to call the doctor and say, we don't have this. It's not going to be in for a month or more. We're going to let you know that we're changing it, or would that have required the prescriber to send in a new prescription?

It's obviously a little bit of a different process than it would be for the regular run-of-the-mill prescription drugs, I would assume. Does that make sense, what I'm asking?

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Like I said, the amendment will not change the way the substitutions are made. It's my understanding, when a substitution is made, a lot of times the

pharmacist will reach out to the prescriber. Say for example, if there's a shortage of a brand name of a prescription medication and they're substituting a generic, or it may be something that has to do with the patient's insurance coverage.

It's my understanding, and I haven't been told otherwise, that being able to do a substitution is within the scope of practice of the pharmacist so they don't have to. I think that's the questions everybody was asking but, like I said, that's outside the amendment, but the answer is the pharmacist does have the ability to make the substitution without going back to the prescriber.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's Centre.

**J. DINN:** That's what I would have assumed. I was just curious, the fact that this allowed the substitution of controlled drugs without a tamper-resistant pad, I think that's what was throwing me off a little bit, but you're right, actually probably be better to rely on pharmacists when it comes to knowledge of drugs than even your doctors. That makes it clear. That's perfect.

I have two questions – just a few more.

There was concern we heard among some prescribers that the legislation isn't keeping up to date with rapid changes around prescribing. I don't know if you heard anything, you or anyone in your department heard that and, if you did, would you be able to elaborate on it, if there were those concerns with the rapid changes around prescriptions.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Well, I mean, back in the day, most of the – I guess for lack of a better word – electronic prescriptions were only through the secure faxes. Now, you have

CorCare, so the technology is changing. I think that's what we're talking about.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's Centre.

**J. DINN:** That's fair enough, I know when going to get blood work you don't even take the paper copy of the requisition now. So it's moving ahead rather quickly.

Last two questions, I'm going to combine them and it has to do with the point that I raised with regard to the petition today. Is the department in discussion with the College of Physicians about making it mandatory to share opioid narcotic agreements, also known as treatment agreements, within a patient's circle of care? The other part of that, are they working with the College of Pharmacy so that it's mandatory to do a review of the patient's profile and the pharmacy network at the time when they're releasing medications?

Not necessarily to do with this bill, Chair, but I don't know if there are discussions or if this is going to be something that's part of the review of the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Those conversations are probably happening now. I'm not privy to them. Also, the review is ongoing. I'm not sure exactly what's being reviewed, being a new minister and also not having these things come forward. The only thing that I've been dealing with right now are these amendments.

That would probably be something that would come up later. If you want, my team is listening, we can probably even get that information back to you, but we would have to go and ask them.

**J. DINN:** That's perfect. Thank you.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

I said I didn't have any more; I just have one quick thing.

The Health Minister, who is also Labrador Affairs and Indigenous Relations, I really wanted to bring to her attention a brand new thing that has really gone south in the last few weeks, in particular, right now in real time in a couple of places in Labrador.

A few weeks ago, I learned from a pharmacist when I was coming back – and this is connected with the one airline and the unreliability. A lady had said to me at the belt, the biggest issue we have – she's from the Member's District of Lab West – is we're not getting our drugs and that's a problem.

So what's happening now in Forteau, the new pharmacist that's there is paying priority to get the drugs up and then the flights are getting cancelled and not coming. I had a lady reach out today, she could only get half of her allotted medication. As I was walking in at 1:30, the husband of the lady who runs the pharmacy in Forteau – the entire district uses this pharmacy – he has now had to give up his work, jump on the ferry and is driving 2,000 kilometres to get all the medication that didn't get in on the one airline we have.

I just wanted to make you aware. I don't have any further questions, but we've all been frustrated with the unreliability and all that. Now, it has really gotten serious with the drugs when it has comes to that. I'll probably follow up with something to you in writing so that you can farm it out to NLHS.

We all have to continue to hold the airline accountable because it's having really big, life-and-death impacts now.

Thank you for that.

**CHAIR:** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**L. EVANS:** Yes, you can reach out to me anytime.

Like I said, this is very straightforward. There are only a few changes. There's a review going on now, a full review currently underway with the *Pharmaceutical Services Act* and that's expected to be completed in 2027. This is basically just to make sure we're in line with the federal regulation changes that are coming in October.

**CHAIR:** Seeing no further questions, shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** 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:** A bill, An Act to Amend the Pharmaceutical Services Act. (Bill 19)

**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 Bill 19 without amendment, carried.

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Chair.

I move that Committee rise and report Bill 19 without amendment.

**CHAIR:** The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 19 without amendment.

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 (Lane):** The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue and Chair of Committee of the Whole.

**J. DWYER:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that the Committee recommends Bill 19 without amendment.

**SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and recommends Bill 19 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**L. PARROTT:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time?

**L. PARROTT:** Tomorrow.

**SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

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

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Opposition House Leader, that this House do now adjourn,

**SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

This House do now stand adjourned until tomorrow, being Monday, June 1, at 1:30 p.m.

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