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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



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Speaker: Hon. Kathleen M. Casey

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MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (I)	2432
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	2436
EVANGELINE-MISCOUCHE (250 th Anniversary-Deportation of Acadians)	2436
YORK-OYSTER BED (Wade MacLaughlan-Order of Canada)	2437
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Universal Children’s Day)	2438
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TAKE AS NOTICE	2438
HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND SENIORS (Pay of RCWs; Unlicensed Services)	2438
ORAL QUESTIONS	2439
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Alexandra Concert)	2439
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Used Car Dealerships-further)	2444
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Atlantic Gateway Initiative)	2445
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Land Purchase by TPW)	2445
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Expenses of Foreign Trips)	2447
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (In-filling of Property)	2447
TYNE VALLEY-LINKLETTER (Transfer Fees Between Hospitals)	2448
EVANGELINE-MISCOUCHE (Pellet Market)	2449
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (In-filling of Property-further)	2449
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Diagnoses of Autism)	2450
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Different Wages for Helpers with Autism)	2451
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Employment Options for People with Autism)	2452
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Autism Centre of Excellence)	2452
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Services for Autistic Children)	2453
MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (II)	2454
STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS	2454
EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, AND ATTORNEY GENERAL (National Child Day)	2454
ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND FORESTRY (Climate Change and Energy)	2455
COMMUNITIES, CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (Additions to Art Bank)	2456
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	2457
MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT	2457
MOTION 60 (Commitment to Islanders with Autism Spectrum Disorder)	2457
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	2457

A

R

D

<i>H</i>	GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS	2462
	HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND SENIORS	2464
	EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, AND ATTORNEY GENERAL	2466
	COMMUNITIES, CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND LABOUR	2467
	TYNE VALLEY-LINKLETTER	2469
	WEST ROYALTY-SPRINGVALE	2470
	SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT	2470
	PREMIER	2471
	INNOVATION AND ADVANCED LEARNING	2472
<i>A</i>	LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	2472
	MOTION 6 (Exploring Alternative Energies)	2473
	GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS	2473
	LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	2481
	ORDERS OF THE DAY (GOVERNMENT)	2482
	SECOND READING AND COMMITTEE	2483
<i>N</i>	BILL 57 (An Act to Amend the Wildlife Conservation Act-Committee)	2483
	BILL 54 (Innovation PEI Act-Second Reading and Committee)	2487
	ADJOURNED	2523

S

A

R

D

The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests (I)

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to the gallery today. I understand that we have some *étudiants ici qui viennent de l'école Pierre-Chiasson École française. Et puis, leur professeur, Madame ou Mademoiselle - je ne sais pas - Angela Pendergast-Williams. Bienvenue ici à la Maison aujourd'hui*, students from Pierre-Chiasson École française. Also, their teacher, Mrs. or Ms. - I don't know - Angela Pendergast-Williams. Welcome to the House today.

Also I'd like to take this opportunity to say hello to Eric Hammill and Faye Pound of the PEI Senior's Federation. Great to see them in the Legislature today, and for all the great work they're doing. Probably one day we're being criticized and the next day congratulated, but that's good. Keep the suggestions coming and we'll do our best to try and fulfill as much as we can to help out our seniors in this province.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to say hello to everyone at home watching on EastLink Channel 10. Probably like many Islanders, I woke up this morning, was out scraping some windows, trying to get the car door open. At this time of the year, when we do get to these times when snow and ice hit for the first time, I urge all Islanders to remember it's not like driving in the summertime. Please drive with prudence. Be a little more cautious, slow down a little more, because it is a little bit more dangerous out there.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to rise too, and welcome visitors in the gallery. We have April Ennis and Natalie Walsh from the Autism Society, the former minister of agriculture, Eric Hammill, as well as Faye Pound, who are now working with the PEI Senior's Federation. Also I see Morell is well represented with our journalism students from Holland College today.

I'd also like to say hello to the people watching at home and thank all the people that gave me many e-mails and telephone calls last night, including Cathy, Cindy, Irene, Elizabeth, and Aldon. I really appreciate your support.

I also want to make sure I welcome a teacher, Angela Pendergast-Williams and her students from Pierre Chiasson École française.

Finally, I would like to thank the Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors. His staff briefed me and our staff this morning on the social work act and it was very appreciated.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Ms. Dunsford: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Welcome to everyone in the gallery.
Bonjour. I hope you have a wonderful day in the proceedings.

Also, the hon. Leader of the Opposition recognized April Ennis. I would like to also say hello to April who does a lot of work for the early years and children on PEI with the parents for quality education, and somebody who is probably listening or watching remotely all the way in BC, Jane Boyd, who did a lot of work with April over the years.

Also a great big welcome and hello to those watching at home on EastLink, of course, in the beautiful and growing District of Stratford-Kinlock.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome all our visitors in the gallery and especially Angela Pendergast-Williams from Tyne Valley. I know she is very dedicated to français en l'enfance and nice to have them in the gallery this afternoon.

I extend best wishes to all those watching on EastLink and for the rest of the constituency, and have a good day.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, I rise today of course to welcome everybody, both in the gallery and watching at home today.

But in particular, I want to bring the attention to the Prince County Scott Talent Event tonight. It's being held at the Harbourfront Jubilee Theatre. The proceeds from this talent competition, which by the way has 11 finalists, will go the East Prince Women's Information Centre, as well as the PEI Prescription Drug Education and Awareness and Support for Safe Community. I do encourage those who can go to please attend, as these are both very great groups and we want to provide as much funding as we can.

The other item I'd like to mention, as the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, is to briefly bring recognition to today being National Child Day. This will be further spoken to by our minister of education.

But at this point in time, I do want to say that since the adoption by the United Nation in 1989, it has been signed or ratified by more countries, including Canada, than any other international treaty, something we should all be very proud of.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I, too, would like to rise in the House and welcome those in the gallery.

A special welcome to a constituent of mine, Eric Hammill, who was the former minister of agriculture and is now the current chairperson of the maple leaf seniors in Kinkora. His committee and myself are working very diligently to try to establish a family health clinic in the village of Kinkora. We're working very hard on that.

I'd also like to extend best wishes to people out there watching on Cablevision, channel 10.

I want to compliment Maritime Electric for working through the night last night. I knew there was a block of houses on PEI without power, I believe up to 1,600 estimated, and I know they are getting power back on. I woke up this morning to no power, no coffee, no toaster, whatever. So I really appreciate my bill, paying my bill now I have a little more respect for that. So I wish all those out there in District 19 well.

Speaker: Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. LeClair: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, want to welcome everybody in the gallery today. A special welcome to Angela Pendergast-Williams and her class from Pierre Chiasson École française in DeBlois. It's nice to see the class here and have such an interest in the proceedings of government, and I welcome you here today and I hope you enjoy yourselves.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to commend Maritime Electric last night on their hard work in keeping everybody's lights on and getting some back on, and also, thank everyone for the safe drive home last night. It took us a little while, but we made it safely. Everyone drove cautiously.

I'd also like to welcome everyone to the

gallery. Bienvenue tout le monde, and say hello to everyone at home in District 24 in Evangeline-Miscouche.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville.

Mr. Murphy: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would also like to rise and welcome all those in the gallery, especially one of my constituents up there. Can't see him, but it's my district secretary, Kevin Barbour. Welcome, Kevin. I would also like to welcome all those that are watching in the Alberton-Roseville district, watching on Eastlink.

I would also like to congratulate the Westisle AA boys' volleyball team on winning their provincial championship, and their coach Peter Bulger.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tracadie-Hillsborough Park.

Mr. Watts: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would also like to welcome everybody to the gallery today, and also like to welcome everybody that's watching on Cable 10 and over the Internet.

A special hello to my mother-in-law, who I'm sure is watching today, Lalie Corrigan. She's still very active despite her age, and I'm sure she's watching today. I would also like to extend a happy anniversary to her daughter, Margie. Forty-three years ago

today Margie and I were married out in Corran Ban -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Watts: I know what you're all thinking: My God, they were married young.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Watts: But anyway, I just want to say happy anniversary to Margie, and I want to thank her for sharing with me probably the best 43 years of my life.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Watts: You know that 43 years went by very fast, and it's just a reminder as I look across the floor here, and look at some of the young faces on the other side of the room -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Watts: - it reminds me that there are a number of people in this Chamber who weren't even born the day I was married., people like the hon. Premier, and the minister of communities and cultural affairs. Very likely yourself, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. Brown: Who gave himself 15 minutes?

Mr. Watts: Also the Leader of the Opposition -

Speaker: Carry on.

Mr. Watts: - I don't think was born in those days.

So it just goes to show that with all the very

young, innovative minds and so much experience in this area of the House, decades of experience, we make a great team.

So thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everyone in the gallery, and especially two people. Eric Hammill. He was noted for past titles he's held, but one was missed for sure, and that was he's a former great dairy farmer. We can't leave that part out. A good family friend. Welcome to Eric. And to Faye Pound, who was actually a classmate of mine not that long ago, graduated in 1972, so just young people ourselves -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac: She was raised and born in Alexandra, which is in the great riding of Vernon River-Stratford.

I want to say on that note, there is another couple from Vernon River-Stratford, in Hazelbrook. Hollis and Aletha Wood, are celebrating their 55th anniversary. That will happen this Saturday at the Cotton Centre between 2:00 and 5:00. Anyone in our riding, or anyone else who wishes to pop by and wish them all the best, that'd be terrific.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from West

Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: Madam Speaker, thank you very much.

I am one that was born when the hon. member here did hitch up, so I think it would be quite appropriate if - I'm just wondering now if he's going to be in the House tonight, so he's kind of given himself away.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Dumville: I, too, would like to welcome everybody to the gallery here today.

I'd also like to bring attention to the sledge hockey tournament, the international tournament that we've got going on out at UPEI. I guess the action is wonderful, and those people, they're getting good crowds and everybody's enjoying it. I guess there's another venue going again tonight, and I encourage all Islanders to get out and support these wonderful athletes that are in our beautiful province at this time.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Attorney General.

Mr. Greenan: Madam Speaker, it gives me pleasure to rise and recognize our guests in the gallery, especially the students and their teacher from Pierre Chiasson École française in DeBlois.

Also, a constituent of mine has been recognized by others here, Faye Pound, and of course, a former member of this

Legislature, Eric Hammill.

Also, I want to extend a warm welcome to those watching on Eastlink on their computers.

Also, last evening I had the pleasure of speaking at my annual meeting in District 22 Summerside-St. Eleanors. Despite the weather, we had a good turnout.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brown: Here comes the seasoned (Indistinct).

Mr. McKinley: Thanks very much, Madam Speaker.

If you look up in the gallery, pretty much everybody has been recognized, but I want to recognize Nicholas Oakes, one of the new young star horse drivers from the race track, trainer. I'm there to see him win. He also is one of the top organizers for my district -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKinley: - and it's great to see him here today. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: That's quite a jump.

Statements by Members

Speaker: The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

250th Anniversary-Deportation of

Acadians

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This year, as we know, 2008, Canadians and Islanders commemorated the 250th Anniversary of Deportation of Acadians from Prince Edward Island.

To understand the magnitude of this event, one only has to look at population data from this troubled time. In 1758 the Island Acadian population stood at approximately 4,700 people. Of this number, 3,100 were forcibly expelled and another 1,500 escaped mostly to northern New Brunswick.

Of those deported, it is estimated that half died due to sickness or tragic sinking of the departing ships. With the deportation, it is estimated that only 2% of the Acadian population remained on the Island, although the population was somewhat bolstered as some families returned and re-settled in the years following 1758.

La Déportation a eu un effet dramatique et traumatique sur la population acadienne. Elle a changé pour toujours l'histoire et le développement de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard.

Étant d'ascendance acadienne et le député d'une circonscription ayant une importante population acadienne, je suis content que le gouvernement de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard appuie et souligne le deux cent cinquantième anniversaire de la Déportation des Acadiens de l'Île.

The Deportation had a dramatic and traumatic effect on the Acadian population. It forever changed the history and development of Prince Edward Island.

As a person of Acadian descent and the MLA for a district with a large Acadian population, I am most pleased that the Government of Prince Edward Island has

been a participant in supporting and recognizing the 250th Anniversary of the Deportation of Island Acadians.

Madam Speaker, it can be our sincere hope that by the recognition of our troubled past we can avoid injustice in the future.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Wade MacLaughlan-Order of Canada

Mr. Vessey: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This past Canada Day, the Governor General of Canada, Michaëlle Jean, announced that H. Wade MacLaughlan of Stanhope would be invested as a member of the Order of Canada.

Mr. MacLaughlan needs no introduction to this House. He has had a successful academic career in the field of law, he was former head of the University of New Brunswick Law School, and of course, he is currently president of the University of Prince Edward Island, a position which he has held for ten years.

In the citation issued by the Governor General, Mr. MacLaughlan is recognized: for his contribution to the study of law in Atlantic Canada and the economic development of the Province of Prince Edward Island through his leadership and involvement with numerous academic, cultural and research organizations, including the University of Prince Edward Island.

Madam Speaker, Mr. MacLaughlan is an Islanders most deserving of this recognition,

and as MLA for York-Oyster Bed where Mr. MacLaughlan resides, I'd like to extend my congratulations.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Universal Children's Day

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today to recognize a very important day in the calendar. Yes, as the tourism minister suggested, in some places it's known as Universal Children's Day. Other places nationally it's called the International Day for the Rights of a Child, and here on Prince Edward Island, we actually call it the National Child Parade Day.

Our children are the future of this world. We all know the pressures that families can face, especially in these very tough economic times. However, we must always take every opportunity to recognize the rights of our children and always guide, nurture and educate them to the best of our abilities.

I understand in the gallery today later there will be child care professionals: Mary Matheson from Stratford, Kara Gallant from C.H.A.N.C.E.S., and Sonya Corrigan from the Early Childhood Association. These people and others across Prince Edward Island work very hard daily to improve the lives of all our children, especially through the professional services provided through early childhood education centres, like the one in my - we have a number in my own district, but especially the one in Morell. With great staff of Wendy MacLaren and Cathy Phelan who continue to help raise all

our communities children.

The Declaration of the Rights of a Child was passed on this date in 1959. The declaration guarantees children's rights including all children, even children with special needs. Not to be discriminated against, to participate, to good health, to education, to play, to life, survival and development.

It's unfortunate. It was my understanding today, too, that students from our four western schools would not be able to be present at their school to observe the right to education, but I'm sure they're home watching on t.v.

Anyway, I ask all hon. members, all viewers, all Islanders to take a moment today and recognize a child for the beautiful smile, their innocence, for the joy they give us on a daily basis, especially our own three children.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you.

Responses to Questions Taken As Notice

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors.

Pay of RCWs

Mr. D. Currie: Madam Speaker, thank you.

I'm bringing back two questions for clarification for the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

The first question: What do RCWs get paid in the public and private sector? As I indicated yesterday, we have over 4,500 staff in the department of health. The answer is that we can only respond to the public

sector. We have roughly 400 RCWs in the department of health. RCWs get paid between 17.53 per hour and 18.19 per hour, as per the UPSE collective agreement. We're excited about the opportunity to continue to work with our RCWs as we look at potential new opportunities in scope of practice with the Corpus Sanchez review.

So there's one.

Unlicensed services

Second one is: What kind of unlicensed services are utilized in the province? What is the definition for unlicensed services?

The answer is the Corpus Sanchez report refers to professional and unlicensed worker in home care, and the fact that we need to use everyone in the system to be part of an integrated health care team.

The difference between licensed workers and non-licensed workers is the fact that licensed workers have legislation which dictates their scope of practice and they are issued a license to practice.

Licensed health care worker must satisfy the requirements of a licensing body to be registered and to be employed in that profession. Non-licensed workers must have the necessary education and training to perform work as dictated by an employer.

An example of licensed workers is registered nurses, LPN's. An example of non-licensed workers are resident care workers. We have non-licensed and licensed workers currently working in home care.

We're certainly excited about the opportunities being moved forward with our new vision in healthcare, and I know that there's a clear message that there's tremendous opportunities to enhance scope of practice and create new legislation to

allow them to work to their full potential.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Questions by Members

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Alexandra concert

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

There aren't very many answers to questions given as notice coming back.

My first question today is for the Minister of Tourism. Madam Minister, could you tell the House, did your department hire any company or firm to help you manage or assist in the failed concert in Alexandra?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, no, we did not hire anyone.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: So you took this concert on, yourself and the deputy?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: No, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: You used the taxpayers' money. Madam Speaker, could the minister please tell us how much of the taxpayers' money was lost with this failed concert in Alexandra?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, it's unfortunate that the hon. member has to use the term "failed."

In the tourism industry, we try our best to ensure that we do what we can in order to increase visitation. Over the 20 years as a bureaucrat, government makes a number of initiatives - takes risks - in order to make differences in the lives of Islanders. That's no different than what we have done.

In the case of the concert, we knew that we were having a soft season. We were trying to make a difference in the tourism industry. As we well know, concerts have done well in the past couple of years. Therefore, we were approached by a concert promoter to assist with the concert. We gave the concert promoter a \$100,000 grant, which we typically have given in the past. That's just part of doing business. We also arranged a bridge loan for them of \$400,000, of which they were to pay back.

It is indeed unfortunate that the ticket sales were not what were anticipated by the promoter. Of the \$400,000 that was loaned out, 100,000 has been paid back. The \$300,000 has been absorbed by my department, who will not require any additional funding from treasury board or anywhere else.

We're quite proud of the fact that we proved a number of things by holding that concert. I hope the hon. member realizes that risks do happen and we took one.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, a question for the Minister of Tourism.

Was there a business plan that was presented to you and your department? Did you get a business plan for this concert?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, my understanding is that the concert promoter did present a business plan to our deputy minister, yes.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, would the minister please table that business plan?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Not a problem.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: When there was bridge financing offered of \$400,000, were there personal guarantees put up for that bridge financing?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: When the bridge financing was arranged there were obviously arrangements made with the anticipation that the money was paid back. Personally, I don't know because I was not involved in the actual negotiations, but I'm going to guess that there must not have been any personal guarantees because we are absorbing the loss.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, I and a lot

of Islanders are puzzled to know now that the Department of Tourism is lending money.

A question for the minister of finance. Is that the norm for your government now, that you're going to allow your departments to lend out money?

Speaker: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Sheridan: Madam Speaker, thank you very much.

As far as I am concerned on this one, hon. member, the loan did not come from the Department of Tourism.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: I'm confused, because it's my understanding that the minister just said she lent the money. Are you saying that treasury board lent the money, did the bridge financing?

Speaker: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Sheridan: Madam Speaker, the tourism department did not lend the money, to my knowledge, and this is not within my department, but I believe that it came from our other lending arm.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Could the Minister of Tourism please tell us where she found this mythical \$400,000 to provide bridge financing if it didn't come from treasury board?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, the bridge financing that was arranged with the concert promoter was done through BDI, and when we were told by the concert promoter that it could not be paid back, tourism covered that \$300,000 loss.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: According to treasury board policy - question to the minister of finance - if you were to move \$25,000 or greater than \$25,000 in your department, the department has to take a memo to treasury board to ask for that money to be transferred from one line item to the other. Could you please bring back the minute from treasury board which said you allowed them to do that?

Speaker: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Sheridan: Just to clarify for the hon. member, Madam Speaker, just the way that this happens.

When the actual repayment takes place, that will come to treasury board, and when that does come we will definitely make sure that takes place. When the loan went out from BDI to assist in putting on this show the money would flow from that department. When that money needs to be repaid, tourism will have to come and have their line adjusted. No question about that. We will certainly present that to the House.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: A question to the minister of innovation. Did you, in your due diligence on this file, ask for personal guarantees on this bridge financing?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: No, we didn't, Madam Speaker.

The Department of Tourism sent a proposal over to the BDI lending section and they guaranteed the money. We depended on the Department of Tourism to do its due diligence.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, my question's to the same minister.

Is that going to be the norm now that you're not going to ask for personal guarantees on loans?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: No, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: A question for the Minister of Tourism. It was reported, I guess, or there was a strong indication that ticket sales weren't that good two or three weeks before this concert. It's our understanding that the promoters wanted to cancel the concert. Did they come to you and want to cancel the concert?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, concerts, unfortunately, have become a real media story.

Those that are involved in the concert business realize that the more discussion that we hold about concerts, their success

and their failures - but in particular their failures - causes us even more trouble simply because agents are not looking to do businesses in the area where politicians and others get in the media's eye, media's attention, and start discussing whether things are good or bad.

So in regards to the hon. member's question, the concert was something that we took a risk on. It's something that we felt that was going to help boost our shoulder season after a very soft summer season. The fact that the two previous years with the Legends of Golf, that there was a loss of well over \$600,000 for those two events, it shows that Tourism takes risks. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. We're not ashamed of what we did. We will continue to invest in concerts and we have great faith that we're going to learn a lot from the last season.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Very simple question, Madam Speaker, to the same minister.

Did the promoters come to you and your deputy wanting to cancel the concert in Alexandra?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Ms. Docherty: Madam Speaker, my understanding is, no, the promoter did not come to me.

I do believe there was a discussion the day before the concert was to be held. The detrimental effects of cancelling a concert at that late date would have been so wrong for us to follow through on. The artists themselves were paid for. The equipment to

host the site was paid for. Everything was paid for that we needed to host it.

For Prince Edward Island to back down on an advertised concert, whether or not we sold the 3,000 or the 10,000 tickets we intended, it would probably be the last time Prince Edward Island would host a concert again.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, I think what Islanders are asking the questions on this failed concert was the fact that there's been no attempt by government to go back and get money back from the promoters, the 300,000 or 400,000 that they gave them.

They understand that it was going to be cancelled or talks of being cancelled by the promoter. But government didn't want that embarrassment.

So I'm wondering if they eased the requirements of the loan at that time. Did you relax the requirements, minister of innovation, in regards to the loan requirements, personal guarantees? Did you wipe that all clean at that time and that's why they're allowed to walk away with 300,000 or \$400,000?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, as the Minister of Tourism indicated, this was a project that was looked (Indistinct) a company came along with a proposal.

The proposal was looked at and we proceeded, or the department proceeded,

with its event. As I understand it, \$100,000 was put up. The promoter came in some difficulties. The loan was advanced to the company and the tickets weren't sold.

But I agree with the Minister of Tourism. The event was well underway. To cancel the event would have cost the Islanders much more money in terms of tourism capabilities, or just confidence in the tourism industry.

We all must understand, at this time too, it did generate economic activity for Prince Edward Island. We did get sales tax on it back, we did generate about - I understand the final number is about \$800,000 in economic activity. So we invested \$400,000 to generate \$800,000 in activity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: So I guess, Madam Speaker, what the minister indicated to me is that this is the time when you relieve these promoters of the responsibility to pay back this bridge financing, because you didn't want to be an embarrassment.

They wanted to walk away then and get out and cut, but you guys didn't want that. So that's when you relaxed the responsibility of them to pay back their loan. Is that true, minister?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is indicating that maybe the promoter walked away with a bunch of money here in this pocket.

I can assure Islanders he did not walk away with money. He's trying to make it look like to the public that he walked away with

\$300,000. We must understand, the promoter said: I can't do it. The department came to the aid and said: Look, we can't cancel this concert, there's a substantial investment in it, there's our reputation in it. So we went forward. You must understand, if your name gets out there cancelling a concert, all promoters after that, all entertainers after that, are saying: I'm not going to PEI.

This was a risk that was taken. Not unlike the Polar one. This is only \$400,000 and it was invested into the event. People were working, tickets were sold, people got bus fares and taxi fares out of it. Eight hundred thousand dollars in activity was generated from this concert, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, a question for the minister of innovation.

Did these promoters receive any PNP units for this concert?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, the PNP program is a private transaction between a private developer and a private investor.

I cannot disclose that information. If I did disclose that information in this House I would be breaking the privacy act. This member fully knows that. Why he would ask that question, trying to get me to expose private information on private companies, is beyond me.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, it appears there was a number of numbered companies registered after September, after the concert, so I'm just wondering if they got PNP units to reduce even more of the losses?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, I'm told by the FOIPP, the freedom of information people, that a private transaction occurred, if it occurred - if - it's between a private investor and a private company.

Now I can assure the member that government cannot apply for PNP units.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, I guess Islanders are still frustrated.

There is a lot of questions that are not answered. I think there's certainly one thing that came out of this, that Alanis Morissette, she certainly had a fairly famous song. It was called "Hand in My Pocket." I'm certainly sure that somebody had their hand in their pocket on this one.

Used car dealerships (further)

Question for the hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works. Did you bring back the information I had asked you a week or so ago on the used cars lots?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. MacKinley: I'll have that information

for you tomorrow. But if you had checked the papers on a regular basis, that company has been advertising cars for sale in the *Guardian* different times, but we'll get you all that information tomorrow.

Premier Ghiz: Just helping him out.

Atlantic Gateway initiative

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, I also asked the minister, last spring there was a study done on the Atlantic Gateway Initiative and I'm just wondering if he'd bring that information back tomorrow too, that study?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. MacKinley: It's not all final so we can't table anything that might be confidential, especially with the federal government involved in it. Especially since we got our own Cabinet minister up there from PEI now, just giving all kinds of money out to us. We don't want to cause distress among our relations.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, it's my understanding that the study was done and completed of February of this year.

Would the minister please look at bringing that study back here tomorrow?

Premier Ghiz: I'll take it.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much -

Mr. M. Currie: Taking him off the ropes.

Premier Ghiz: No, not at all. This is actually an issue that has now arrived at the CAP table, the Council of Atlantic Premiers.

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are currently done of our priorities. We're still was waiting for the priorities of Newfoundland to be done before we can go and forward that off to the federal government. Of course, there's been a lot of preliminary talk that has gone on this far. But once, I'm sure, that we receive the request from Newfoundland, and as the Atlantic we're able to go ahead forward, we'll look at releasing that report then.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Land purchase by TPW

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The minister of transportation has certainly proclaimed himself as the minister of safety. He has taken all our buses off the road in the view of safety. He's closed down a number of bridges across PEI, all for safety. He's built lights all for safety for his buddies.

But I'm just wondering, if the minister is so concerned about safety, why did you buy four acres of landlocked contaminated soaked in hydrocarbons and going to allow our children to play to on it? A million dollars you gave your buddy Cliff.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. MacKinley: Under our department we have a team that does the negotiation. We were asked by the Department of Education

in order to go and buy this for the Department of Education. The councillors in Charlottetown were pushing for it. Mr. Taweel. The site's looking good. We had all the environment studies were done and everything. It's going to improve the area.

Why shouldn't the children in Charlottetown have a right to play the same as anybody in rural PEI? We can't have two standards here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Speaking of two standards, question for the minister of environment. Anytime there's an oil spill or contaminated land, your field technicians issue an order for cleanup. Why didn't you issue an order for a cleanup on this property that was just bought by your government?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I assume that we're talking about the Longworth Avenue sports field?

Some Hon. Members: Great project.

Mr. Webster: We went in and we did an environmental assessment on the area, Madam Speaker, and our staff came to the conclusion that if they put 30 centimetres of soil over the top - we made a determination that the hydrocarbons in the ground did not go anywhere, will not go anywhere but we wanted that barrier, if you like, between the existing soil that was there.

So we elevated the field approximately 30 centimetres, I believe, and it's deemed to be extremely safe.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, to the minister of environment, is that going to be the norm from now on?

When an oil tank releases its oil onto the ground and it goes down six or eight feet, are you going to make them clean up or just tell them they can shovel some clay over the top of it and everything's fine?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, we use the latest technology we can.

We use the latest intellectual ability surrounding brown fields. There's lots and lots of brown fields on PEI, which is a sight that hydrocarbons leaked from many years ago. There's some around old abandoned service stations and so on. Our skill set tells us that the hydrocarbons do not move after a specific period of time. We've deemed it to be safe, but we put a layer over the top to make sure that our children can play on it with the highest level of safety. I'm going forward with the science and technology around that, and that's our conclusion.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Minister of environment, I guess you feel safe now that our children are going to roll around on this clay that's soaked in hydrocarbons and are going to breathing up this dust and everything and everything's fine, but everybody else

outside of your own land, we have to dig it up.

We have to dig up all the properties that have contaminated soil. You're saying everything is fine now, our kids are going to be fine with this property?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, yes.

The layer of topsoil that when in on the top is a barrier to any movement vertically upwards of the hydrocarbons. We deemed it to be safe and there should be no contact whatsoever with our children, bare legs, bare skin, soccer, or whatever. We think it's safe. Good to go.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, I know then that the minister now, if anyone has an oil spill, they'll just take a shovelful of clay and throw it over it. It'll be all right.

Question for the hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works. I believe there were two appraisals done on this property where you paid your buddy Cliff McQuaid a million dollars for four acres of land. Would you bring those appraisals back to the House?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. MacKinley: Yes. I'll bring the appraisals back. I know there was one done, I believe, by Herman McQuaid or somebody that's in the business of doing that. I'll get the copies, whatever was done, and bring them back.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Expenses of foreign trips

Mr. M. Currie: Question for the minister of innovation.

I had asked last week for all your expenses regarding your trip to Dubai and Hong Kong. Did you bring that information back?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, my expenses are online and they're available to anyone on Prince Edward Island.

Also, he's asked for expenses for deputy ministers and people within my department. They're being compiled right now. I can assure the member I will be in front of Public Accounts next Wednesday morning. Any questions will be answered then. We're preparing quite a substantial amount of documentation for the committee and I think a lot of the answers around this program will be answered at that time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

In-filling of property

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, a question for the minister of environment.

There's an individual - I'm not sure if he's in your riding or not. His name is Dan Taylor. He has a property out in the middle part of the Island. The next door neighbour was allowed - I guess with your department's position, or without your permission - to put about 14 or 15 feet of fill next to his property and certainly has caused

a lot of grief to the individual next door. His property now is floating. His septic is overflowing. There is also a tap drain, I believe, from highways go through his property, but he doesn't seem to have got any answers from government to any great degree.

Could you tell us if you're going to work with this individual to try and help him out after this in-filling was done on their property?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I am extremely aware of this particular site, the Taylor site.

I have visited the site myself. That's been a longstanding issue for a number of years. The site is slightly wet. I believe the site is a category two system. The system that was installed about six or seven years ago was actually put below the subsoil where there was no drainage. We did an assessment within the last two weeks at our expense to help out the Taylors. We're very concerned with their drinking water as well, and we've made a determination that there has to be some significant upgrades to the site in order for it to work.

We do have some challenges across PEI with septic systems installed in category two and even worse. We do have high standards now going forward so that we keep, protect and preserve our water. This is one case that we are working on, and we will try to come to a logical conclusion with the Taylors over the next months.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-

Linkletter.

Transfer fees between hospitals

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors.

Mr. Minister, first of all I want to congratulate your department on the removal of the ambulance fees in regard to the seniors coming up and off-Island coverage.

My concern in particular that have been raised with me from individuals and also from the Seniors Federation is in regard to transfer fees between hospitals. It is a great hindrance to those that are in the rural areas, perhaps, and have to be transferred to Summerside or Charlottetown for tests, and if they don't have insurance coverage it can be quite a fee that they incur. Could you please explain that policy?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

With the question, I can't help but acknowledge Eric Hammill and Faye Pound who are with us today who are providing tremendous leadership with the Seniors Federation who work very closely with the Senior Secretariat.

I know we received a tremendous amount of positive response on our implementation of seniors home repair program, diabetic strips, and recently with the announcement of free ambulance fees for over 65.

In respect to the question, right now the policy states that any patient who is transferred from hospital to hospital, there's

a cost at \$150. If it's for a consultation or a service or some sort of test, certainly that is covered by the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

Pellet market

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question will go to the minister of environment. Hon. minister, a while back there was some news about shortages of pellet stoves and maybe the possibility of a shortage of pellets. With the decrease in fossil fuels, is the pellet market still viable? Is there a shortage of pellets or is there quite a supply of them?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, we don't believe there will be a shortage of pellets.

A month ago I did tour the two sites in New Brunswick. One of them is Shaw Bricks that manufacture pellets, the other one is a company I believe named Mac Tara which is a German owned company that operates in Stewiacke. Those are the two New Brunswick sites. There are three other sites in Atlantic Canada. There's five totally, now, manufacturing pellets and I think the estimated volume that they can manufacture this year is about 400,000 tons.

There was a slight bit of rumour mill or fearmongering may be going on out there that there wasn't going to be a supply of pellets. I don't believe that to be true. There are a significant amount of stoves available

now as well. It's a renewable energy. We think the pellet industry is an industry of growth. Possibly next year or the year after Prince Edward Island might be manufacturing pellets and use some of the forest lands that we do have. We think supplies will be adequate this year, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

In-filling of property (further)

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Question for minister of environment. Back on the same subject regarding Mr. Taylor. I'm pleased to here you're going to work with him now and probably bring his property back to where it should have been.

It's my understanding that the fill was put in last year without an in-filling permit. Is that true?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I know that site very well.

The in-filling that happened there, I'm not sure if a permit is actually required to fill that.

The issue is that it was raised very high. There's probably 15 to 17 feet of vertical fill put in there which was a lot of material that was moved from somewhere else, obviously. Currently there's no regulation that limits vertical height and there poses the issue.

We went in and investigated that issue thoroughly and there is a tap drain, if you like, or a drain that runs from the highway

back parallel with the property, and there should really - our estimation is there shouldn't really be any pressure from that high-filled lot. The issue in that whole area is somewhat of a low issue and it's a very high watertable in the area and that does present problems over time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Diagnoses of autism

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Presently, it's said that maybe one in 150 children is diagnosed with autism.

My question. Right now apparently in the province there's well over a year delay for parents to get a diagnosis, which is really important, especially - early diagnosis really helps with the treatment. My question is to the Premier. When is your government going to have the dollars, the resources available, for professionals to do these diagnoses and to get the backlog caught up?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The question that the Leader of the Opposition raises is extremely important, obviously.

This is something that over the last 20 years governments have been starting to address, and it seems to be becoming more prevalent. As the hon. Leader of the Opposition indicated, one out of 150, I believe. Governments are now working hard, continuing on to make sure that we're able to get the necessary services in place.

I've had the opportunity to meet with different folks from the autism association of Prince Edward Island. Our government will continue to work on that and we hope to be able to make more announcements, coming up in the next Speech from the Throne.

But also, at the same time, it's also challenging to get the professionals that we need at the same time, but our government is committed to making sure that we improve that.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. My next question is to the Premier on this.

My understanding is government policy today: if a child is diagnosed by a professional out-of-province, that government doesn't follow through with the recommendations of programs and services for that child. Why?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Obviously, there is a system put in place right now. I understand that there are challenges out there. I've met with some of the parents where they've had to wait over a year to get a diagnosis. Some of them have gone now off-province because they're able to afford to do that. It's something horrible. I consider that having two tiers, so to speak. I think it's deplorable. Our government, since we've come into power, we're working very hard to alleviate this problem.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. Then to the Premier: Are you, then, going to direct government to provide programs and services from those diagnoses that have been made by the professional out-of-province?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

If we had the resources, we would. Our problem right now is we need to get the diagnosis done on Prince Edward Island so any child that's able to do that, that could be affected by autism, is able to get the diagnosis that they need so that we can start to get the help that they need. A lot of professionals out there indicate that the earlier it can be diagnosed, the earlier that you can get the rehabilitation started, the better off it is.

We recently made some changes within our departments. We now have education and early childhood development together. It was over with social services. I understand that currently right now there are a lot of officials over at the department of early childhood development that are working in collaboration with those bureaucrats over at social services so that we're able to advance this.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Different wages for helpers with autism

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you,

Madam Speaker.

My next question is to the education minister, then.

It's my understanding that if an EA is working with a child that's in the school system, that person gets about \$17, \$18 an hour. If a person is working with a child that's diagnosed with autism in a person's home, the helper in the home, with the same training, only receives \$10 an hour. Can you tell us when you're going to get the two policies in sync with each other?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Attorney General.

Mr. Greenan: Madam Speaker, I don't believe that the department of education has any control or influence or need to address one-on-one private supports that families get in their homes.

If we have supports for students within our system, then we pay a just wage. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. To the education minister. One of the difficulties to provide consistency in the treatment to autistic children - and since early childhood is now under your department, it's really important to have people trained.

One of the issues is pay. My question is: When is it going to become a priority of yours to put policy in place to address the difference in the wage?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and

Attorney General.

Mr. Greenan: Madam Speaker, I don't know if the hon. member was listening, but we do pay within - we provide money to the school boards to provide services for students with autism, and they do get paid a just pay.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Employment options for people with autism

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The education minister - most of that would be under your policy for early childhood educators and that area.

My next question is actually to the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning. Another crucial area of concern is the lack of resources available for adults with autism who exit school. According to members of the autism society, other provinces have started to look into the concept of independent living centres but also for employment options. What is your department doing to provide employment options?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, I believe this would be under the Department of Health, under the Disability Support Program.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: I would ask you the question: Are you not the minister responsible for the co-managed devolution with HRSDC?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Yes I am.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: So I repeat the question. These adults are the same as everybody else. They're looking for opportunities in training and employment. What is your department doing?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: I thought her initial one was housing.

Training, Madam Speaker, I just signed off on a few documents there this morning under the Labour Market Development Agreement.

This is the one that we can control at this point in time. We have to understand that the Labour Market Development Agreement is not fully devolved yet into the Province of PEI. That will not occur until September 30th next year. But I can assure the member that we are working on it. Different programs. We're trying to cut the budgets in areas in order to put more money in front line services. She makes a good suggestion. I'll take that under advisement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Autism centre of excellence

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct),
Madam Speaker.

To the same minister then. It's great to hear that you're going to have your staff work with the autism association and other people to ensure that adults with autism have the same opportunities as everybody else.

My next question is to the same minister. It's exciting to hear from the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island. They have a vision for the future of their people. The society suggests that Prince Edward Island could become a centre of excellence under autism.

My question to the minister of advanced learning. What is your department doing in cooperation with institutions like the university, the autism association, to ensure that Prince Edward Island has a centre of excellence in autism?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. We did receive a proposal for a centre of excellence in autism. The department is currently reviewing that proposal in context of the Labour Market Development Agreement. The initial - we are looking at it. It's a great proposal, I've read it and I've sent it on to the officials to review it and probably incorporate it into it when we take over the program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition, final question.

Services for autistic children

Leader of the Opposition: Final question. My next question then is to the minister of health.

Often there's frustration of parents not being able to get the services and supports they require to help their autistic child cope with a variety of stress and pressures, whether it's in the home or elsewhere. The Autism Society indicates that almost two-thirds of marriages end in divorce.

My question for the health minister is: What programs and services - and especially taking into consideration the Corpus Sanchez report - what specifically is in that report to help these people feel like they are going to get some help?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Autism is an issue that in my former career I had a tremendous amount of involvement in, as a special education teacher and a former principal. I worked tirelessly with families. Inside the Department of Health, our department is responsible for all the assessments. We have an assessment team at the QEH. Right now we're looking at and working towards increasing psychologists' time, expanding the roles of pediatricians. We are also referring a portion of referrals into the private sector.

The Leader of the Opposition is correct. We do have a wait time. As the minister responsible for health I think it's a wait time that's completely unacceptable.

We're increasing support time. We're also adding social workers in dealing with autism spectrum disorders. Certainly, on a personal note, I work very closely with families and I do concur with the Leader of the

Opposition, this is a very difficult time for parents in the Province of Prince Edward Island dealing with children with autism. I saw first hand, I was in the kitchens of Islanders, and I witnessed the emotional strain on their marriages, on their finances. I know that right now, coming into government, we honoured the decision that came down from human rights and honoured the decision and provided the supports on that decision.

We also conducted shortly after that the Disability Service Review and I know that we've had a tremendous amount of consultations in phase one. I know that there was some great discussion about ways that we could partner and move forward.

In respect to the question on the centre of excellence, we have been working with the Stars of Life, and their initial proposal was very focused on a small number of children. We pushed that proposal back, not that it wasn't a great proposal, but we feel that our commitment is to create a centre of excellence and to collaborate and work with individuals and families all across the Province of Prince Edward Island and to look at respite and services to enhance autism.

As the minister responsible for social services and seniors and health, I strongly believe that this is an area that we have to continue to work on and continue to commit to. I know that the staff that I have both under my responsibilities are taking this very seriously.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests (II)

Speaker: Hon. members, before we move

on to Statements by Ministers, I'm going to give the floor to the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale for recognition.

Mr. Dumville: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to recognize city councillor Peter McCloskey who is here in the gallery today observing the workings of the House. Peter lives in District 15. Welcome, Peter. Good to see you here today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: I also recognize (Indistinct) here from Summerside, Margaret. Welcome.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Statements by Ministers

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Attorney General.

Mr. Greenan: Madam Speaker, before I read my statement, I, too, would like to acknowledge a few people in the gallery, with your indulgence.

Speaker: Carry on.

Mr. Greenan: First of all, Sarah Henry, from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and also Sonya Corrigan, who is the executive director of the Early Childhood Development Association. We also have Mary Matheson from the Stratford kindergarten and Kara Gallant from C.H.A.N.C.E.S., Mason Road. Both of their programs were 2008 prize recipients with the Early Childhood Development Association Learning Centre

Challenges. So I'll congratulate them. Also up there is Peter McCloskey from the city of Charlottetown. Peter and I had the pleasure of being parade marshals today for the National Child Day parade. We had a wonderful time.

Madam Speaker, today is National Child Day, one day in a year to focus on the rights and needs of children around our world. Thank you and all members of the House who wear a blue ribbon today to symbolize support for our valuable resource, our young children.

As Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, I am proud of the fact that we place such importance on the early years in this province. We know that a positive experience for very young children will greatly influence their health and well being later in life. We are committed to excellence in early learning, and we continue to work with leaders from the early childhood community to ensure the children get the best possible start in life.

There is no question the first and most important teacher for our children is their parents. We know that being a parent is the most important and rewarding job there is, and at times, the most challenging. That is why we need to support the parents of our young children so that they can be the best parents that they can be.

Today a number of special activities helped draw attention to the importance we place on the younger members of our society. Despite this weather, young children and their parents and care-givers paraded through the streets of Charlottetown with me today to celebrate National Child Day. Police and fire departments, Trius Tours, Confederation Centre, Ocean and K-Rock, all helped ensure our comfort and safety, and I thank them.

I want to acknowledge the staff in our early childcare centres across the province on this National Child day. Congratulations to Karen Picot and Margie Chaisson, both from the Souris Kindergarten and Alternate Programs, who received special awards at the recent annual ECDA annual banquet.

Thank you to Sonya Corrigan and all members of the Early Childhood Development Association for the extra effort they put into events today and every day to ensure the children in this province experience the high quality care they deserve.

I want to point out that our Take 30 for the Family program has been reminding parents and grandparents about the importance of spending quality, unstructured time with their children.

We are now moving into the workplace encouraging family-friendly workplace policies to help foster and support quality family time.

I want to take the time on National Child Day to remind Islanders to take 30 for the family. It costs nothing and it's worth everything.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Mr. Webster: Madam Speaker, I'm happy to be able to rise in the House today to table two reports outlining the Government of Prince Edward Island's strategies for addressing two of the most pressing issues faced by our province.

The Prince Edward Island Energy Strategy looks at our communities' energy situation

and sets out strategies for a coordinated approach to energy use that will be sustainable, affordable and responsible. We live in a time when energy prices are very volatile, and that causes uncertainty for Island businesses and Island homes. We also live with a situation today in which the vast majority of our energy spending leaves the Island.

The Prince Edward Island Energy Strategy sets out an approach that will see the province take more control of its energy destiny. By maximizing energy efficiency throughout our Island community and by working to take advantage of renewable energy sources like wind, solar power and biofuels we will use the energy more wisely and with more benefit to ordinary Islanders.

Prince Edward Island and Climate Change: A Strategy for Reducing the Impacts of Global Warming is our province's action plan for dealing with the issue of climate change.

The Island is not a great contributor to climate change. In fact, we produce only point three of 1% of the greenhouse gases in Canada. But Prince Edward Island is very vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This action plan calls on the Island to show leadership by reducing its own climate change contributions, but it goes further by setting out plans for adaptation so that the Island community can continue to thrive even in the face of changing environment.

In a few moments I will be leaving the House for a press conference downstairs to present these two reports to the media. I think this is a very positive day. We are recognizing the challenges and opportunities we face in dealing with climate and energy issues, and we are prepared to meet them head on.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour.

Ms. Bertram: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Monday morning it will be my honour to officially open An Exhibition of Recent Additions to the Prince Edward Island Art Collection.

The provincial Art Bank is a collection of work by professional Island artists which has been acquired by the province for display in public areas in provincial buildings.

La banque d'œuvres d'art provinciale est une collection d'œuvres par des artistes professionnels de l'Île qui a été acquise par la province pour être mise en exposition dans les aires publiques des immeubles du gouvernement provincial.

Since the 1980s, when the Art Bank collection was started, more than 120 pieces have been purchased.

The art collection includes acrylics, oil, pastels, photography, pottery and sculpture, prints, textiles, watercolours, and glass. It is an impressive collection of works by approximately 75 Island artists. The display, which is opening on Monday, will feature 11 works purchased this year, and six works purchased in 2006. The collection demonstrates the artistic diversity of Prince Edward Island's visual artists, and includes works by Anna Karpinsky, Jamie Germaine, Susanna Rutherford, Dominique Cruchet, Yune Mee Yang, and Julia Purcell, to name just a few.

The official opening for this exhibit will take place at 10:00 on Monday morning, November 24th, at the Eptek Art and Culture Centre in Summerside. I invite you,

members of the Assembly, and all Islanders to join us for the opening ceremonies. The works will remain on display and it will be open to the public until January 3, 2009. I hope everyone will take the time to come on Monday.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Hon. members, before we move on to the next item on the agenda,

Je veux prendre un moment pour dire bienvenue à Eva Kovacic à l'Assemblée législative aujourd'hui. Eva enseigne le français au ministre du Tourisme et à moi-même. Bienvenue Eva.

I want to take a moment to welcome Eva Kovacic to the Legislative Assembly today. Eva teaches French to the Minister of Tourism and myself. Welcome Eva.

An Hon. Member: Wow.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you.

Presenting and Receiving Petitions.

Tabling of Documents

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. MacKinley: Yes. I was asked a question the other day, so I have the Application for a Motor Vehicle Dealer Trade License, and I have all the lists of car dealers that are on PEI, a list of car dealers. I don't know if they're all here, but a list of dealers. I'd like to table that -

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Mr. MacKinley: - so the gentleman - I hear the gentleman is looking for another line of business, too. So, you might get a job there.

Reports by Committees

Introduction of Government Bills

Motions Other than Government

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, we would like to call Motion No. 60.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Clerk: Motion No. 60.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition moves, seconded by the hon. member from Georgetown-St. Peters, the following motion:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island encourage government to work collaboratively with the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island, and to commit to addressing the challenges facing Islanders of all ages and the families/caregivers impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition to move the motion.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. I've already recognized a number of guests that are with us this afternoon, and it's quite fitting, I think, that we're doing this motion on the same day that it's National Child Day.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak on our motion on Autism Spectrum Disorder. Although our focus is really on the work that the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island does, I want to take a minute to also mention there are many other Islanders who work together to provide and advance education, awareness and support for people with autism, their family and their caregivers.

Madam Speaker, there are countless families themselves. Early childhood workers, health professionals and educators. For example we have with us this afternoon April Ennis. April lives in Summerville, Prince Edward Island, with her husband Robert and her two sons, Brandon who's five years of age, and Benjamin. As a parent of two children with autism, April works tirelessly to promote and support other individuals and their families who have autism. She also has an Internet blog that is full of information and resources on autism. She advocates for a future when government will begin to listen to Island families affected by autism and move forward with meaningful actions. April has also been very instrumental in launching the new not-for-profit organization called Parents for Choice and Quality.

Another person is Jane Boyd who provides work, family and life consulting in the area. There are other provincial services as well. Autism Early Intervention Program, Stars for Life Foundation. Carolyn Bateman raises money to develop housing and independent living options. The Prince Edward Island Council of the Disabled, the Prince Edward Island Preschool Autism Services Parent Blog, Disability Alert, ACL PEI, Prince Edward Island Disability Support Program, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Department of Health, Officer of Information and Privacy, Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission, Community Service Bursary

Program that also provides an initiative to help students who want to gain some experience, the Eastern School District, the Western School Board, the French Language School Board, La Commission scolaire de langue, French Services.

Many of these people, myself included, recognize that we all have to work together on this. Like I'd mentioned earlier today, I'm not sure if everybody's familiar but only 20 years ago, 1 in 10,000 children had a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and today it's down to 1 in 150. I know for a long while professionals thought autism had primarily to do with genetics but for people who study the demographics of genetics - that would be impossible for those kind of changes over a 20 year period. There's seriously something else going on.

We believe the motion is a very important one for Islanders because it addresses this issue, this issue that impacts on many Island families, educators, health professionals, employers, and more. Some of us may think that's a child or a family over there with autism but maybe if the numbers keep increasing, even our own children in the future will be having children that have autism. It is extremely serious. If Prince Edward Island can provide leadership and help us to have a research centre of excellence here, it would be a tremendous contribution not only to Islanders and Canada but lots of families all over the world.

Autism Spectrum Disorders have a tremendous impact in our communities, and until a cure is found it appears here to stay. Through this motion, we in the Official Opposition are urging government to work collaboratively with the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island to provide additional support for Islanders whose lives have been affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. It was really good this afternoon to hear both

the Premier's commitment and the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning, because often what happens is once a child's diagnosed and the family is then providing services and supports, we really don't yet have a continuum of programs and supports for the person from birth all the way into our adult lives. Many people with autism are very capable of employment and independent living. Sometimes they may need a little bit of support, but who of us doesn't need support sometimes?

The first point of reference and support for many Islanders impacted is the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island. This body was incorporated in 1992. The autism society was founded by two pioneering women, Carolyn Bateman and Joan teRaa. Today, the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island is a not-for-profit charitable organization that strives to improve the lives of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, their families and friends. The society is a member of the National Autism Society of Canada.

The staff - Nathalie Walsh, executive director - board of directors and volunteers of the PEI Autism Society work tirelessly to accomplish the following: one, to provide information and support to family members, professionals, and individuals affected by autism; two, to encourage, support, promote and advocate for quality education, treatment, health services and equipment for persons and their families affected by autism; three, to raise public awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorders; four, to promote and support increased awareness of issues surrounding autism, as well as supporting research into the cause and treatment of autism.

I understand there's some research out of Toronto Sick Kids Hospital that there's actually a doctor there that's been doing work on autism who suggests that maybe

there's a environmental link to what's happening with autism. They haven't identified what may be in the environment, but maybe there's something that triggers off, for some people, autism.

I wish to commend this organization and all other groups that work on behalf. They truly provide excellent resources for Islanders, their families and friends impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder. For example, the autism society offers regular family support meetings, family events, family diagnosis packages, newsletters, a resource library, workshops and training seminars.

My own nephew, Brendan, is autistic and although he lives in Florida, what his mother Kimmie often tells me is because he looks so normal and people just take that here's this child that's now nine years of age, and if they're out shopping sometimes he has a meltdown. I encourage people that sometimes when we see children not to make assumptions, because in his case with his particular form of the disorder, he is high functioning, but every once and a while he'll have a meltdown. Some people have come up to Kimmie and said: For the size of your child, he should be behaving better. Well, he really doesn't have a choice, and I encourage each of us that when we - today is National Children's Day- to look and accept people in a different way.

I would like to express my gratitude to the various Island sponsors of the autism society. For example, D.P. Murphy sponsors the Autism Family Swims. This is a free event for families and friends of those impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorders hosted every Saturday evening at the CARI pool at the university.

All persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders deserve to achieve their individual potential, and they and their families deserve to have universal access to the variety of

resources that they require. They can not achieve this alone.

There are many physical, social and economic costs of autism. There's a lady that actually works at the cafeteria out in Morell. Her first name is Barb. She and her husband actually have two children, not one, but two children with autism. I know for years the extra finances that it's required Barb to be able to provide for her two children.

Research shows that the physical, social and economic costs of autism are significant. Indeed, they should not continue to be ignored by government or the rest of us as well. For example, individuals with autism may suffer, among other symptoms, the physical effects of disrupted sleep patterns and increased irritability. Parents, siblings and extended families may suffer from increased emotional stress, and in some cases, family breakdowns. In fact, 70% of marriages where a child is diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder end in divorce.

Sometimes, I know we constantly ask government to provide leadership program services and support, but I also think sometimes there are some things we can do on an individual basis. Maybe in the communities, if we know families that do have someone with autism, maybe it's as simple as asking: Is there anything we can do to help?

There can be lost economic productivity due to stress leaves, sick days and absences to care for the child, and reduced job input. There can be lost income when families are diverting funds for their children's treatment that could otherwise be used.

There is a negative impact on the labour force when families leave their employment to care for their child. or when families relocate to other provinces where there are

more comprehensive services that are offered.

I know when Kimmie and her family lived in Montreal they were lucky, her mom, my sister Alma, worked at McGill. Because of that, early diagnosis took place really quickly. But it was interesting. As impressive as the programs in Quebec were, when Kimmie and her family moved to Florida the kinds of programs and supports for her son were incredible all the way through. Because of that, that's probably one of the biggest reasons why he's able to function so well.

The current shortfalls in staffing, services, research and training represent a lost economic opportunity for Prince Edward Island. The causes of autism remain largely unknown. However, what is known is that early diagnosis and intervention combined with appropriate services and supports help those with Autism Spectrum Disorders in reaching their full potential as participating members of the communities.

It is my understanding that this is the current best practice for the treatment of autism. Early intervention, delivered as quickly as possible, helps facilitate the best possible outcomes. Indeed while there is no complete cure, there is hope. Many can recover.

In fact, 48% of children diagnosed can recover with early intensive intervention using behavioural principles and structured teaching. Applied behavioural analysis is a medically recognized approach of treating autism, and is generally delivered by a therapist, often combined with parents or caregivers. Additional services that are drawn upon to support treatment include speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, nutritionists and dietitians, among other health service professionals.

Autism is increasing significantly on Prince

Edward Island and throughout Canada. In 1997 the chances of having a child in Prince Edward Island developing autism was 1 in 10,000 to 20,000 people. In 2007 the chances of a child developing autism was 1 in 150 children. Out of these 150 children, the possibility of - if it was a boy, the boy could be born with autism, is 1 in 80.

Autism is now more common than Down's syndrome, childhood cancer, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, and vision and hearing impairments. Autism is approximately four times more common in boys than in girls. Here on Prince Edward Island there is on average one or two diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder every month, but even this number may not be entirely accurate since there is likely a long backlog due to the wait-list for diagnosis that we were talking about earlier this afternoon. Waitlists for diagnosis are up to a year or more in some instances.

The numbers are astounding. In fact, back in the spring session I think there was at least three parents that had contacted me with concerns that their child was not able to get a diagnosis. Ten Prince Edward Island newborns per year will receive Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnoses. It's not just Island families that are struggling to cope with limited resources. I encourage the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly to speak to the teachers and early childhood educators in their districts. Talk with them about how their work is impacted by students and children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Is the Province's education system prepared to accept an influx of students with autism? Because the numbers are getting so great. Based on the staggering numbers, I have no doubt that the province's educators are facing challenges on this issue, both now and into the future.

Islanders are fortunate to have such highly trained and dedicated teachers, special educators, and support staff in the education system. At the same time, however, this government needs to build on the partnership with parents, educators, professional support staff, to provide the best opportunities for our children with autism.

Earlier this afternoon in Question Period I was asking the education minister about having a change where people that work with autism, especially after a child is diagnosed, that there is a way to increase the pay for that person and maybe include them under the same sector as TAs and EAs. Because again, consistency is so important. You can imagine when someone gets paid \$10 an hour, if they have a degree maybe or training from Holland College human resources - what sometimes and often happens is the person is with the child for a short time until they are able to find employment at a higher level of pay, and this causes great inconsistency to the child.

The province's preschool and early learning educators are telling us that programs are lagging behind the current need. I am told that some Island families are waiting between 12 to 18 months. Unfortunately, support ceases at age six in this province. Some families are waiting up to two and a half years to receive services, and oftentimes their children are too old to receive services by the time they reach the top of the list.

If such children receive adequate and timely services, their educational experiences upon entry into school would be very different and the demands on the educational system should also be very different. It becomes a vicious circle, a circle that must be addressed by this government.

The challenges do not end upon completion of school. Adults with autism who are

transitioning out of high school also need support services to develop a level of independence appropriate to the individual.

We asked earlier to the minister of innovation, he's sitting in a position where he will soon be able to provide direction to the labour market into the province. There has been a huge gap in the area of having employment opportunities or other training for people with autism. He has a chance to make a big change there. So we'll be looking forward to when that happens.

Every parent or caregiver of an autistic child in the province deserves what many of us can sometimes take for granted, to know that if they wish, they may be able to take their child to a daycare or early learning facility that will deliver quality care and attention specifically to the child's needs, provided by a certified or qualified tutor. As well, there is a need for meaningful and educational family support services for new families with autistic children.

We all talked many times about the number of immigrant people that have moved to the province. You can imagine, if any of those children - as some of the parents have babies here - if any of them are born with autism where there is such issues of different cultures, issues of different languages, it's so important for the province to have a real broad spectrum of programs and services to support all people, families and children with autism.

Parents of autistic children deserve access to family physicians, pediatricians and other medical specialists that have expertise in this particular area. It's my understanding that some Islanders have had to travel out of the province, as far as Montreal, Chicago and Harvard to see pediatricians. Parents of autistic children deserve to have a say in their child's education and to lobby on behalf of their children.

While awareness of autism is essential, so too is action. This government needs to make autism a priority, especially with increasing incidences of autism in Prince Edward Island. This government needs to take a strong leadership role in addressing the imminent need of all Islanders and their families affected by autism.

The Autism Society of Prince Edward Island has publicly called on this government to reduce wait times, improve services, education and support. It has further called on the province to develop a made in Prince Edward Island provincial autism strategy by initiating research, surveillance and reporting, by setting provincial standards and guidelines for treatment and service delivery, by reducing or eliminating wait-lists, by ceasing to age out children, and by ceasing to income their parents for service eligibility.

Now is the time for this government to act. Now is the time for the government to demonstrate leadership and accountability to all Islanders impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorders. Now is the time for government to commit to working with the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island to increase support for all Islanders impacted by autism, while also removing obstacles to success.

I now turn the floor over to the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters to second the motion.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters to second the motion.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Certainly, it's a pleasure to second this

motion this afternoon. It's a motion that affects almost every person, especially in every riding across PEI.

First of all, I'd like to express my gratitude to those people that volunteer a lot of time to the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island. They certainly work hard and they champion the cause with their request for this autism that has affected and impacted a lot of people.

This motion is put forward to urge the government to work with the autism society to provide ongoing, meaningful support for Islanders whose lives have been impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorders.

An increasing number of Island children are being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders almost every day. Therefore, to seriously address autism on Prince Edward Island, this government need to increase resources to existing programs and services. As well, this government needs to demonstrate leadership and commit to working with Autism Society of Prince Edward Island along with other key community partners to develop, fund, and implement a made on PEI provincial autism strategy, a strategy that addresses lifelong issues related to ASD.

Islanders and their families who are impacted by autism deserve to be heard and they deserve to take a greater role in developing and managing care options. I urge this government to take advantage of the opportunities there are now and to become a leader in the area of Autism Spectrum Disorders, especially through research and innovation. This government should be working hard to promote Prince Edward Island as the centre for clinical research into the causes and treatments of ASD. At the same time, partnerships could be explored to improve inter-provincial ASD training opportunities. For example, a

centre of excellence could be developed between UPEI and Holland College for upgrading educators and health professionals.

The Autism Society of Prince Edward Island has identified several obstacles to success here in the province, obstacles, I believe, that need to be addressed by this government. Some include, for example: the excessive wait times for a diagnosis; the inflexibility of the delivery model for treatment and support services; excessive wait time to develop and implement effective early intervention strategies; lack of necessary support for adults living with ASD to allow them to make positive contributions to the Island community and economy. There needs to be more accountability from this government, with clear lines of decision-making authority on this issue.

As well, this government needs to demonstrate that it takes this health issue seriously by committing more financial resources, more trained professionals, to properly support the current delivery model.

This government made a lot of promises to the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island during the general election and today this government remains accountable to the people of Prince Edward Island. In all fairness, I encourage this government to deliver upon their promises.

I will list off some the promises made by the current government:

No parent or child should be forced to wait up to two years to be assessed for autism. The Liberal government will put Islanders first by increasing learning disability testing for children in the early childhood system as part of an early intervention strategy; increasing access to assessments for learning disabilities and reducing wait times to 90

days.

Providing increased grants - financial incentives to operators - to increase spaces for infant childcare and those providing spaces for special needs children.

Increasing access to educational assistance in order to promote educational opportunities for special needs children. Also, there's a huge demand for speech and audio specialists who work in our school system.

Ensure that early intervention strategies are implemented and proper supports are provided in our school system to optimize students' readiness for the transition to childhood.

Increase daily rates for community housing to reflect actual operating cost increases and establish a PEI housing corporation as a Crown agency fully responsible for the administration of social housing, and the construction of a \$3.2 million new social housing units by 2009. They promised to do a full review with a disability support program. I believe they've already done that, and I think that's where they use Stephen Pate.

Identify realistic opportunities for improving services to French families impacted by ASD in need of support.

Also promised to develop an early intervention strategy for learning disabilities and support measures, such as launching a learning disability educational equipment fund that will provide improved services and support to Islanders with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

Therefore, with so many promises already spoken, we urge this government to deliver on these promises. Islanders impacted by ASD are tired of waiting and they are in

need of government leadership on the issue today. For the benefit of all Islanders with Autistic Spectrum Disorders, their families and caregivers, educators, employers, and healthcare providers, we urge the hon. Premier and his government to step up to the plate and meet these challenges.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors.

Mr. D. Currie: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

It's certainly a pleasure to be standing in the House today, responding to what we feel, as a government, is a very important motion.

First of all, I'd like to acknowledge April Ennis who's in the gallery today. Acknowledge her and all families living with children with autism. As I alluded to earlier, with my experience working with families, I have a tremendous amount of respect for the challenge and the work that you do. Thank you for being here today.

As minister of health, I would like to recognize the amazing work that the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island does for those working through the issues families and individuals face who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders. I'd like to also acknowledge Carolyn and Bob Bateman, who represent the Stars for Life organization and their commitment that they've made - and we've been working with them - in creating a centre of excellence, and having meetings and discussions, and moving towards that.

The society works tirelessly to reduce the impact of Autistic Spectrum Disorders on individuals and their families for improvements that will create better lives and opportunities for all Canadian children

and adults affected by autism and Asperger's.

I would also like to inform the House about the role that my department plays in helping individuals and families who deal with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital there is an assessment team which includes a psychologist that provides assessment and possible diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorders. Wait time for access to the Autistic Spectrum Disorders team has been continuously decreasing over the past decade. This is due mostly to the increased demand, as has been indicated here in the House, on the service. Today, we have an approximately nine-month wait. The team at the QEH has come up with a number of options to try to focus more of the psychologist's time on the assessment component.

We're also doing an informal jurisdictional review of other Atlantic regions and (Indistinct) looking for more efficient and collaborative ways to expedite wait times. The department is looking for future options to address this challenge. To address wait times, as indicated, is the crucial - early intervention is the crucial priority that needs to be in place to get results for families and children with autism.

Permanently increasing psychologists' time is being looked at; expanding pediatrician roles and time; referring a portion of referrals to the private sector, outside of province; aiding a psychologist's position to the complement; increasing admin support time; and adding social work to Autistic Spectrum Disorders team to perform follow-up and facilitate referral processes in post-diagnosis.

We recognize the difficulties and challenges that families and individuals face with dealing with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and we applaud the work being done

through the departments of health and education, as well as the autism society on PEI. We are committed to working with our partners to help alleviate some of these challenges and pressures.

Our government is about people and we want to make sure - our announcement on Tuesday - read the Corpus Sanchez - and this announcement regarding the sustainability of the provincial healthcare system will have a huge impact on our ability to lead and govern in this province.

We talk about the challenges of our present health care system. We know that it's under a tremendous amount of financial growth, and as a government we're committed to looking at a sustainable, integrated health care system in order to provide resources for programs that are so badly needed for other areas in the health care system and other areas of government. We strongly believe that we have to act, and act now, as we go forward into the future.

As we know, the statistics are there. In Canada last year, health care expenditures over \$171 billion. The impact, if we continue to allow our health budget to grow at the pace it's growing - at 10%, - will have a detrimental affect on our ability to enhance or provide services into the future. That's why our government is looking and has endorsed the vision of Corpus Sanchez.

There is a strong relevance to that work that's being done, not only in other areas of government, but all areas of government as we move forward. The statistics are frightening and we need, as a government - and we will provide the leadership that is badly needed to make sure that we get to a better place to make sure that we enhance services and programs in all areas of government for all Islanders.

Individuals with Autistic Spectrum

Disorders are eligible for support under the Department of Social Services and Seniors' Disability Support Program. We recognize the challenges faced by individuals and families living with autism, however, we must also recognize the challenges faced by all families raising a child with a disability. This is why our government has undertaken the disability service review. This comprehensive review has been a partnership between various government departments, community organizations, and families. We expect the final report will contain recommendations to be completed by late January. We've just recently received phase 1, which is the consultations, which we are extremely pleased with the involvement from tip to tip in all stakeholders across the province.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood holds a responsibility for the preschool autism program and for school-related services for these children. We are partnering with education and we are developing policy with IBI therapy and will continue to work with education.

I want to acknowledge, as a former educator - just to conclude my response to the motion - it was certainly a very powerful experience as an educator. When you're in the trenches, working on the front lines as an educator, as a school administrator - at Birchwood Intermediate School, we had an area that dealt with a range of students with disabilities. So during my eight years at Birchwood - and my special ed background - I got a strong appreciation for the need, as the Leader of the Opposition alluded to, of a collaborative partnership between all government departments. As the minister responsible for my two departments, I will certainly do all I can to make sure, as government, that we continue to advocate and we partner to make sure that we work towards services that are more efficient and supportive for all families and individuals

with autism.

Just to wrap up, on a personal note, my oldest daughter, who's in grade 4 this year, for the first three years of her school year, in grades 1, 2 and 3 at Sherwood Elementary School, had a little boy that she sat next to. She had the responsibility of assisting him and working with him. He was autistic, so we had a chance to be in their home and go to their birthday parties. It was a common discussion at bedtime with my oldest girl. She tried to understand and figure out the needs and the challenges that this little boy faced.

From a personal note, I bring that passion and commitment to our government. I know that I've been in a number of meetings with our Premier and we know that this is a very important issue as we move forward. Yes, we have made commitments, and our expectation is that we'll continue to work towards improved services and supports for families, and most importantly individuals and children. Not only from a financial perspective, but just in respect of programs and services. We look forward to the work in the future.

Thank you for bringing this motion forward.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Attorney General.

Do you require the podium, Minister?

Mr. Greenan: No. I don't think so, Madam Speaker.

I'm pleased to advise the colleagues of the House that this province is committed to provided high quality service for families of children with the Autism Spectrum Disorders.

At this time we have 137 students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder enrolled in 48 Island schools. Approximately 18 more students are expected to enter the school system in the next two years.

We have excellent autism and pre-school autism teams that provide a valuable service to the increasing number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The teams consists of autism consultants at each of the school boards under the leadership of the autism coordinator who works from our department. The consultants provide individualized programming and help facilitate transition planning. The priority of this government is to ensure that the necessary training and support is available for school staff and for the families of children with autism.

In order for the educational need of students with autism to be met in an inclusive school setting, continuous and appropriate training is required by the staff who provide direct instruction. In our new Department of Education and Early Childhood Development we also have the responsibility for pre-school autism services. There is a high demand for services in this area.

To ensure that children who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder have access to Intensive Behaviourial Intervention (IBI) service as soon as possible, we pay special attention to the recruitment of specialized staff, which can be challenging at times.

Today I am pleased to advise that we are very close to filling the position of program coordinator which has been vacant for a year. In order to meet increasing demand and to improve the coordination of services, we are also recruiting a fourth pre-school autism specialist for at least a one-year term. We are also hopeful that we will have an excellent candidate in this position very soon.

My department and the three other government departments - Social Services and Seniors, Innovation and Advanced Learning, and Health - are working with the autism society of PEI to develop a provincial autism strategy. We continue to monitor our efforts, identify gaps in services and keep abreast of the latest research and best practices.

We appreciate the obliging assistance we always receive from the autism society as we work collaboratively to provide the best possible services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder here in the province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour.

Do you require the podium?

Ms. Bertram: No, it's okay, Madam Speaker.

Thank you, and it's my pleasure to speak to this resolution this afternoon and certainly I want to lend my support to it. I think as a government - and this goes back to the days when we were in opposition - our Premier and those that served in opposition during that time, we supported the autism society and I just noted - I went back to Hansard in our days in opposition and I asked similar questions as the opposition member asked today, relative to the funding.

I think our minister of health, our minister of education, I think there's going to be great things happening here. I just like to go back, and I know a lot of the word leadership was given and I know the former minister of health was asked a lot to find the dollars and cents for these supports in the system, whether it was autism or other disabilities that face our children or youth or adults in

the province. I think our government - I know our Premier is very supportive of supports to our children and youth. I just certainly want to welcome those in the gallery today that are here to support this resolution.

In my former life, as you know, I was a teacher, and I worked in the elementary level. I had the experience to work with a few children that were diagnosed with autism and I had one that was a low functioning and one that was high. It was interesting to compare the two in terms of how the behaviours, how they interacted, their social abilities and reality. They can do the day-to-day but they do need assistance and supports to do that.

I think the autism society here in Prince Edward Island is doing a great job. I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition brought up - it's the education, the education to our community. Because there are many people and I'm sure lots of people in this House that perhaps have a relative or a neighbour that they know that have perhaps a child or adolescent or perhaps an adult in their family that has autism. They have been acquainted with what happens in terms of their behaviours, their social abilities, but for those that don't, they don't know what to expect or what to do.

I think it's important that the education component comes into it. I really do feel that it's our children today that are probably the best educated because just like the minister of health mentioned, his daughter was in a class for quite a few years with a little boy, I believe it was. These children that are going through the school system, that's where inclusion takes place. Our children are the inclusion model, where children are respecting everyone's differences and are learning how to work with one another in their social capacities and how our learning styles are very different.

Just to look back, though. Certainly it's not just a Prince Edward Island issue. I looked in Nova Scotia, there's a doctor over there through Dalhousie and the IWK who has done an extensive program there. I'm sure that we can all learn from different jurisdictions and what programs and research that's done that we can tap into. Obviously, it comes down to dollars and cents. I think our government is in it's early days and I know that our Premier and ministers responsible for this particular area are very committed to this.

I think also that it's not just a provincial or territorial issue. It is a federal issue also. There was a Senate committee back a year ago that had a report and the committee reported that they wanted increased transfer payments relative to this issue specifically. They had a Senate committee specifically dealing with autism. I think we need to lobby our federal counterparts. I think the province can do what it can - different provinces - but the federal government as well needs to stay committed because this is a cross-country issue and our people need to be supported.

To know that 200,000 youth, children and adults have this disorder is a call from our federal counterparts for transfers to education and health care to support these. I think the Autism Society of Canada was a bit disappointed because the federal government back a year ago only decided to accept the report and develop a strategy. They certainly want to see the dollars and cents behind that strategy.

I think we can lend a hand here in the province by supporting a resolution like this today. It would be my hope that probably the ministers of health and the ministers of education can bring this forward to the federal table when they have their meetings because this should be an agenda item. I'm sure this is forefront issues with those

ministers responsible for that.

I thank the hon. member for doing this. I also want to thank, before I conclude, those people in our Island community that are supporting - the hon. Leader of the Opposition alluded to some people that have supported this organization over the years. Joan teRaa was a tireless worker, it's unfortunate she passed away, but she was a tireless worker and her own son has autism, and John is carrying her memory forward by being a great advocate. But I also think like the Brad Richards Celebrity Golf tournament in Dundarave and Brudenell in the summer that supports the Children's Wish Foundation, but also supports the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island. That's a great event that obviously supports the organization and work that they do, those people in our communities that are doing work to support this.

I believe that our government is supportive of this, and our Premier is, and I want to lend my support to this resolution here today.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Do you require the podium?

Ms. Biggar: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I just feel that this is important to speak to, having worked in the school system prior to election to the Legislature, as an educational assistant.

I had the privilege, I must say, of working with many children within the school system and their families who are on a day-to-day basis living with autism within their families

and within the community. Within my community of Tyne-Valley and area there are a number of families who do have children with autism. So within the community it certainly is a situation that is part of our community and we try to support that.

Within the school system, I must say, as an educational assistant, the training that the educational assistants receive and the staff within the school is excellent. On a yearly basis those skills are upgraded, and I have had the privilege also of working with the autism specialists within the school boards, and the work that is done in putting together an educational plan so that those children can succeed in the classroom is to be commended. I do feel also that once the diagnosis is made it is vitally important that we start to introduce IBI as early as we can so that they can adapt to the skills and help them transition into a school system as well. But also transition into the community following graduation or completion of their education is also going to be vital as the children coming through the system now are beginning to leave the school system.

I do believe that Prince Edward Island has an autism program that is probably second to very few in the country, having spoken to a number of people across the country. Our programs that we do have in place are certainly excellent, but I would agree, also, we do have further to go in providing supports. The supports that the families need within their homes is a real challenge for the families. We do have excellent supports within the school systems, although there are certainly some areas we're working on, but within the family support system is vital to support the families in the needs that they need to be able to take a break from their everyday stressful lives.

Most of the parents work outside the home, and the struggle that they may have in trying

to juggle the needs of the home life and the work life puts a lot of stress on families. I think we need to make sure that those supports are in place. I know the minister of health and social services is working on the disability supports that are going to be very vital to support the families.

I just want to say that I had the privilege also of working with Joan teRaa. Prior to my work in the school system I worked for ACL, and Joan was so committed to her work. I was very fortunate to have garnered a lot of knowledge from her and it certainly helped me in my role as an educational assistant. I think we as a community, if we can gain more education on the needs of autistic children and their families, I think it will make it easier for the families to go out into the community and to maybe go out for dinner some night without thinking everybody is staring at them. Because sometimes it could be lights in the restaurant or lights in the school system that may just be bothering that child or that person. I think we have to be more compassionate and empathetic to the fact the not everybody has the same abilities as us.

I certainly support this motion and look forward to more programs that we will be able to put into place.

Speaker: Thank you.

Would anyone else like to speak to the motion before I go to the mover to close debate?

The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I apologize, I was out of the House, I didn't hear all the commentary on this, but what I would like to do is I would like to recognize

the great work that Robert and Carol Bateman do, and the Stars for Life. Not only are they wonderful fund-raising financial advocates for autism, but they also send a wonderful message. They work tirelessly in the cause for autism, and I would like to recognize them and the workers and the support staff that they have been able to gather around them to do such great work in regards to children that are challenged with autism.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you.

Would anyone else like to speak?

The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Sherry: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I certainly rise today to support the motion that's been put forth on the floor by the Leader of the Opposition.

I did take down just a few notes. As the chair of the social development committee, I know that we've certainly heard from the autism society, and a number of other groups, that have expressed their concerns and interests to us. One in 150, I think the statistics are at present, and that is staggering. I think one of the things that stuck out when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking was when she talked about the story about the young boy who acted out in the community and the people's response to that. In regards to what the minister of communities and cultural affairs spoke on in regards to educating people, because if we know more, we do better. I think that if people are educated on this disorder they can certainly appreciate, and perhaps not be drawn to stare, or whatever, when you run into these situations in public.

The other thing I wanted to speak about is I have somebody who is very close to me who has a child that would be in the Autism Spectrum Disorder. To say it's daunting is an understatement. I mean, I know there's a scale of severity within the disease itself, or the disorder itself, but I consider myself to be a fairly patient person, and certainly as a mom I've always had an extreme amount of patience. But it would out rule any idea of any of our normal level of patience, I think, to try to provide the support in the home that's required to a child with this disorder. Some of the things I noticed were there's usually more than one child of course in a home, but the child with autism cannot recognize that there are other people with needs in the home. It doesn't matter how many times you try to reason or comfort the child, it is all-consuming in the household. So I think that in regards to what the hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter said, that support in the home is extremely important, and it is a very difficult road.

The other thing I wanted to say was I certainly recognize that in our communities and in our education there have been a lot of supports put in place for children with autism. But we have a long way to go, and I just wanted to say that I know I've been involved in many conversations and discussions with my counterparts, and I'm confident that this government has the will to make the lives of individuals with autism, and their families, better. I recognize that it is a very important motion myself, and I will fully support it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Would anyone else like to speak before I go to the mover to close debate?

The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

It's my pleasure today to stand and support this motion by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

This is something that, as the hon. minister of communities and cultural affairs said, we've been addressing for a number of years now. It's one of those things where I can honestly say you always wish that you could do more, and that you had more answers, and you had more dollars and that you were able to just do more.

Unfortunately, there are difficulties. Dollars is one issue. Recruitment is another issue. Finding root causes is another issue when it comes to discovering really what the cause and effects are here, but what we do know is that early intervention and preventative measures, once a child gets diagnosed, are some of the best ways to help that child for the rest of their lives. We're going to, I'm ashamed of it, we're going to work hard to get down those wait times for Island parents that have a child with autism that are looking to get diagnosed. It's something that I think is wrong. We're going to work extremely hard to get rid of that. We also want more professionals there to help out with regards to helping out families.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition raised a great point, and it's something that we don't always think about. We think about helping out the child, but the stress that goes on the family without providing the supports, and again, I'm going to say it's two-tiered. If you're a family with dollars you can probably go out and hire somebody to come in and help you. I think it's something that as a government we have to work towards.

In the last number of years we've really seen the issue of autism raised to a new level. I'll admit, 10 years ago, I probably would not

have known what autism is. Since I got into politics, of course I have heard a lot more about autism, but I think the general public has as well. There's people like Jenny McCarthy, you see her on CNN all the time now, she has a child with autism. She's out there promoting it. Ernie Ells, the golfer. It's not something that just affects certain people. It affects the entire world, and everyone. There's a lot of research happening right now where hopefully we'll be able to find ways to help out these families even more, or look for more preventative ways.

But I think it's important as a government that we first of all realize where there is a deficiency. And we do. We realize there's a deficiency there in terms of the amount of support we're offering. We have to work at finding ways to help us alleviate that. One of the problems that we have in our system today is we have a health care system where the budget has been growing out of control.

That's why I was very pleased with the direction now undertaken by our government where we're going to look and make changes in our health care system that I know are going to be controversial. I know there's going to be some people that are going to be upset, whether or not we're talking about our boards, whether or not we're talking about services, whether or not we're talking about scope of practice, whether or not we're talking about many things, where there will be some controversies, some debate.

But we believe that if we get that health care funding on course it's going to help us be able to fund programs such as these autistic programs. So, there's also issues with regards to now aging young adults who are autistic and coming into the world. We have a lot of issues out there with other areas, too, whether or not it's intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities where we need to also

offer help. I think we cannot look at things in silos, we have to look at helping out everyone in our society. As a government, we're going to do our best.

The message I want to deliver today is that we're going to support this 100%. We realize that there's more that can be done, and we're going to look at ways to help improve things in the future.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Anyone else before I go to the mover to close debate?

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, I just want to concur with the resolution.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Brown: I want also to thank Shawn Murphy for his efforts in this area. Shawn has been quite active in this area. He's promoted a bill in the Parliament of Canada, but he's also had a number of presentations on this subject down at the Charlottetown theatre. I attended one of them where the parents and the young fellow were there, and they gave a speech afterwards, and it was extremely moving. This is an area of concern with myself and with this government, and I'll be supporting the motion.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition, to close debate.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Thank you to the members of the House who spoke on this very important motion today. I also want to thank the people that spoke who are supporting the motion, and encourage anybody that's listening either at home or through the Internet, that if you have an interest in this subject, please contact your local MLA and make sure your voice is heard. Because together, as we work with people like Natalie Walsh from the autism society and people like April Ennis, we have a tremendous opportunity to make such a big difference in improvement of quality of life, not only for the child, the adult with autism, but also for their parents and community members and friends.

So I thank you and close off debate. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, you've heard the debate on the motion.

Are you ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Speaker: All in favour of the motion, signify by saying 'aye.'

Some Hon. Members: Aye!

Speaker: Contrary minded.

Motion is carried.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We'd like to call Motion No. 6.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Clerk: Motion No. 6.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters moves, seconded by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the following Motion:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that before the next heating season, members of the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island urge government to examine solutions in areas of alternative energies that will benefit home owners.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters to move the motion.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's certainly a pleasure to bring this motion forward. It's a very trying time, I believe, for a lot of people that are trying to heat their homes right today. Certainly what we're asking this government is to examine solutions in alternative energies and work with the people.

Islanders have been facing unprecedented increases in their home heating costs to run their homes. Electricity bills are gone up 40% since this government came in. It's the highest rate of electricity rate increases in the history of the province. A lot of them are shaking their heads in regards to the Premier's lack of direction and his ability not to stand up for them.

As well, the recent downturn in the global economy is also hitting very close to home, and it's impacting a lot of small businesses, post-secondary institutions and many seniors' pensions. When your RRSPs take a hit of 40% and that's where you expect to subsidize your seniors' pension with it, it does cause a lot of concern. There is a lot of people out there in this province that don't

even have that luxury of having RRSPs to draw down on. They just have their pension and they're trying to stay in their homes.

A lot of them are just scraping by every day and they're asking this government - a lot of them have indicated to us that the assistance program that's in place today is of no benefit to them. If you make more than a \$30,000 threshold then you don't qualify for programs. I think it's an opportunity for the Premier to step in and offer some relief for a lot of these people that - the Premier promised he was going to put Islanders first and going to look after them.

Premier Ghiz: We did.

Mr. M. Currie: He went out and he appealed to Islanders to support him and vote for him and that he would look after them. They're wondering where this support now is. They're certainly puzzled.

The Premier has let them down and he's busy making announcements. We have one or two of these every week. There is a lot of coloured pictures in it. There is talk of strategies that they're going to do. We're going to build a museum in five years' time. That's fine. That's seven years out from what they said they were going to do.

They got a billion dollar plan in there for building windmills and they don't have anything signed. It's a billion dollar dream, Robbie's dream. Government offices are going to be moved in three years' time. There are all kinds of announcements and all kinds of talk, but there is very little being done. It must be embarrassing for the Premier to be out making these announcements knowing full well that he's not going to be living up to any of them. In two years' time I think he is going to be vacating the seat, by the way he's going.

I think on this strategy here, one of them

was: We're going to look at, we're going to do a review or we're going to do something in regards to maybe by 2013. These are 10 years' out. It's 2018. They're dreaming in Technicolor. But, Madam Speaker -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Speaker: Hon. members, you're going to get your turn.

Mr. M. Currie: Getting back to the motion, Madam Speaker - (Indistinct) keep them quiet over there, I'd appreciate that.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Speaker: Hon. members, you'll all have your turn to chat on the motion.

Mr. M. Currie: That's right.

Islanders, Madam speaker, certainly need some assistance or some sort of direction from this government to deal with the heating of their homes, and they are certainly deterred, a lot of them, by the initial capital outlay.

A lot of them are family homes that have been passed down from generation to generation. We get calls that they can't afford to heat the house any more, the bathrooms upstairs. Is there anything you can help with? If we close off everything and move the bathroom down, are there any programs for that?

A lot of these people, they want to stay in their homes. They don't want to move to an apartment in the city. I'm sure that all of the members in here will probably relate to the same kind of calls that we are getting in regards to a lot of people trying to heat their homes. There is a lot of Islanders out there that want to move into put in solar panels and new technology, but they just need a little bit of incentive and something that the

government should invest in. It's the taxpayers' money.

Every one of them that has called us and I've talked to, they all believe in being energy efficient. They want to participate. They understand that with the high price of oil that they want to get away from these enormous oil bills and the debt that's incurred. They're buckling under the price of electricity and the Premier is doing nothing about it, absolutely nothing. He's also - hasn't assisted much in regards to furnace oil.

He did, he threw a couple of hundred thousand dollars at them. But I think a lot of them thought that when they saw (Indistinct), they saw him put \$4.7 million into a transmission line. That's for somebody outside. They saw him buy an old building up in Summerside, back again for \$4 million. They saw him put a couple of sets of intersection lights in for some buddies, hierarchy of their party, and all for safety of course. They bought some contaminated land that's soaked in hydrocarbons from another buddy. But there's probably 12 or \$13 million. They could have come up with a program that the taxpayers first benefitted from.

The Premier said in some of his press releases that he will take steps to help Islanders protect themselves from the impact of high oil costs. Like I said, he tossed a couple of hundred thousand dollars at the Salvation Army and said: Here, go spread it around. But that's not the kind of relief they wanted. I think what they wanted was to see some direction from the government to make their homes more energy efficient.

I know the minister himself has said that the biggest gain we could make is by not burning fossil fuels and that's making our home more energy efficient. But nobody qualifies for the program. This is the part

that they're upset with. They want to qualify, they want to participate, and they want some way of the government to listen to them and reduce their dependence on fossil fuels.

There's an energy efficiency loan program that they claim is \$10,000 with an annual interest rate. A lot of Islanders are telling us they're being refused access to this program. There's a low income program that's available to households of any incomes of 30,000 or less. This program is certainly not getting the attention, I think, that a lot of people want to use. They get a voucher to pay for a furnace cleaning. Some of that's fine.

I agree with what the minister has done with the Office of Energy Efficiency. One is education to help a lot of people, prepare them for winter and to assist Islanders in how to make their house tighter, I guess, and more energy efficient. I just would ask that they come up with a program, I think, all Islanders will benefit. Because the Premier said he was going to look after all Islanders and I don't think he's done anything near that. He hasn't lived up to his promise and Islanders are disappointed in him.

There's roughly 53,000 homes and businesses in Prince Edward Island and a lot of them want to upgrade their homes. They want to make their house more energy efficient. I believe that if the government would look at putting in place - if the energy audit that was done by the department indicated that you were going to save 20% of your fossil fuels and the total price or a lot more criteria was allowed to be eligible like windows and doors and some insulation and energy efficient furnaces, I think that the government should give a 20% rebate. If the audit indicates that you can save 20% of your fossil fuel intake a year by replacing a window, putting six inches more insulation in the attic, and putting a new energy

efficient burner on your furnace, a few examples like that, and that costs you \$5,000, well, if you gave 20% of that back to a homeowner, government would get a lot of that \$1,000 back.

I'll explain. We certainly are seeing a slowdown in other parts of the country in regards to work. We're going to see a lot of our skilled tradespeople back. This is an opportunity for the government to look at providing employment for these people when they come home. If you give \$1,000 and you have some guy who hangs a door and puts insulations in your attic and he charges you a fee for it, the province gets 20% of his provincial income tax back. They also get 10% on some of the taxes. They can almost say that they'd get somewhere between 40 to 50% of that money probably back when it rolls back in through the economy. It's an incentive to work with the people. The people are saying the program doesn't go far enough. They want it to touch everyone.

I think that the minister could probably make this province a leader in energy efficiency. We had the lead in wind technology for years and we're recognized for that and the wind regime that we have. I think the minister should listen to the people. They certainly listened to the hon. Premier when he was begging and pleading for their support and their votes. They believed in him and they gave them their votes, but they're extremely disappointed now that he's not working with them to work for Islanders.

Probably the minister is somewhat handcuffed because the hon. Premier is holding him back. He probably wants to do something for Islanders. As I indicated before, I think he does have a heart, he does believe in caring in people, but it's probably the backroom boys upstairs that are keeping him from coming through with a program

that will look after all Islanders and look after their energy needs.

There's a lot of companies out there that have great technology. We have a solar company in Kensington, Renewable Lifestyles, he's really pushing the envelope in regards to solar. I think that program would certainly help a small business like that. That I could heat my domestic needs mostly in the summertime with his solar panels. It would probably help a lot of tourist operators that in the summertime use a lot of hot water for washing and restaurants. That's free heat, but that initial capital outlay is a little bit expensive, but if there was some way in there that would allow them to take advantage, I think there would be a lot of them that would jump on board.

We'd on this side of the House support the government if they come up with a program that affected everybody and not just a few, but everybody would benefit and this province would be leaders in the country in regards to energy efficiency. Heck, we'd support the minister and the hon. Premier on that. I think it's necessary for the hon. Premier to move forward. They have all kinds of money that was given to them by Stephen Harper, The Building Canada Fund, \$25 or \$30 million. Nothing attached to it. You can do whatever you want with it. I want to thank the prime minister for that lovely gift that he gives the province here. They can take a few million dollars from that or whatever and kick start this program off and allow people to live a comfortable life in their own home, people that want to participate in energy efficiency. There's an opportunity for the government to do that.

They're extremely disappointed in the waste of taxpayers' money in regards to some of the programs that has taken place. They know that federal money was given to them unattached and they thought that could be

used, but when they see a million dollars go for a friend of the Party for lights - never in the capital budget before. We see money in for buying a building that was never in the capital budget before. All of these things frustrate Islanders and then they see a pittance of \$200,000 thrown at them for furnace oil. Certainly was disappointing also.

They want the government to come forward and work on initiatives that will assist. They're not interested in these glossy brochures and press releases. I don't know who's getting the contract for putting out all these pretty pictures, but programs in here are five to 10 years. We're going to work to review, we're going to look at doing something in the future. There's all kinds of opportunity in cold pressing some of the oil to use in furnaces and there's at least, if you get good yield, you should be able to get somewhere close to 500 litres to an acre. When you do the math on that, it's another way to diversify agriculture and move in to an area that will give them a better yield, a better price for their cash crop. You can go a step further. Some of that oil can be used for human consumption. The part that probably can't be used for human consumption can be used in the biofuel part. I see they're going to look at that and review it and study it, but our farmers are desperate for a diversification program for crops and they need another door to go into besides just potatoes.

We've lost the hog industry so there's nowhere there for them to participate in getting rid of their grains. In some other parts of the world, not too far from here, they have at least four or five avenues, farmers. They have corn for ethanol and this government it appears has turned their nose up at ethanol. That is a growing industry in other parts of the world. I know that they want to do the due diligence on it. That's understandable. I agree with that. But if

everybody else is doing it and trying to relieve themselves of the dependence on fuel, then the government should be doing something. It's two-folded. It's probably three-fold.

You don't have to be so dependent on the fuel, bringing it in from other countries. You give your farmers another cash crop to work with and you also have the mash that can be used for your beef animals. There is opportunity from it. When you add it all up, and if you only go 20%, it's a help. Some countries are even gone near to 100% on their changeover. Ethanol is one. Other provinces are using a lot of oil to inject into their own economy. They also grow crops for human consumption and animal consumption and then some of them also grow potatoes, so a lot of other provinces have four doors to go in for a farmer.

Here we have one door - you grow potatoes. There's not much left for the grain side of it, and I just hope they move quicker in regards to the oil side of it. I think it's very interesting. We were out to Mol's one day to look at what they're doing in relationship to oils, and they do have a plant there, and they're trying to do the right thing. They're trying to move away, they're being innovative, and they're investing their own money into it, and I think this is a great idea. But I look at this document that was tabled today and it says that: the province will identify and explore opportunities and application for the utilization of pure plant oils.

That doesn't say much. It indicates that they're going to look at it, they're going to review, and pretty well all of the book is the same way.

Ethanol is pretty well the same thing. They're looking at introducing something by 2018. That's a long ways off, that's 10 years away, so I don't think there's any chance of

any kind of investments or anybody coming to the Island to make that.

The biogas facility that's being built at Cavendish, our government initiated that and brought that in place with the company, Cavendish Farms, wanting to partner with companies that wanted to meet the challenges of today. With the price of fuel - this was done before fuel went through the roof, but they wanted to be green and they wanted to be more innovative and protect the environment around them. So by putting in digesters and capturing the methane gas, they were going to burn it back in their own boilers. This is the right move, I think, and I think there's probably more opportunity for other companies to do stuff like that.

I think that there is opportunity out there with some of the softwood for pellets, and there is some good technology out there, whether it's with your oil company, whether it's Island Petroleum, or Kenmac, or whoever. They're selling high efficiency furnaces. They're selling furnaces now with zero start, meaning that they don't cost when they come on and come on to heat the oil, the water inside of them, for the hot water. They have very low capacity, some of them two or three gallons, so it only takes a minute.

There's a lot of great technology out there in propane. Propane today, you don't need a 30-gallon electric hot water heater in your basement, or shut off your hot water furnace and put in a hot water heater. They have a unit today that's not much bigger than this brochure, or thicker, and it's instant demand. When your tap goes on, it heats only the water that you need. So it's good technology, and this is what people are interested in doing to put into their homes.

They're asking that the government have some compassion for the situation they're in. They're extremely hard times out there

now, and I know a lot of them are saying Liberal times are hard times -

Mr. Brown: No, they're not.

Mr. M. Currie: They're all saying it, right from one end of the province to the other.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: It's Liberal times are hard times, and they're on them now, and the Premier's got a deaf ear. He's not listening to them. That compassionate voice that he had during the election has been lost. He begged of them, he pleaded with them to support him, and vote for him. He promised them he'd place them first and he'd look after them.

Well, he's vacated that promise, he's broken that promise with Islanders. He's leaving them in the cold. He's allowing Maritime Electric to jack up the prices 40% in 16 months. I know it's going to be a bad Christmas for a lot of them out there. There's another price hike coming this month and I think there's another one in January, so there won't be a lot of Christmas lights up probably this year. It's shameful the Premier would allow that to happen. Ruin all the kids' Christmases, all across PEI -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. M. Currie: It's just terrible the stuff he's at. And he promised. He promised he was going to look after them.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: Usually, most Islanders, when they make a promise, they try and keep it. But this fellow here, he vacates his responsibilities. The moment he was elected he vacated, and he left Islanders out in the cold, and they're freezing out there. They

want to hear from him.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: He ducked out of the House here, he's gone hiding somewhere, and he won't come back here now.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, it's shameful.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: I think with the companies out there, like Ferguson Sales and Service, Island Petroleum and them, they do have the technology, they do want to partner with Islanders to upgrade their homes. They want to have customers, and they want to look after their customer base. They have programs where they'll install furnaces and help them out, but that's only one part of it. I think the other part is fixing those windows that need to be fixed, and putting more insulation in the attic to accommodate the heat loss and stop it. We need to also insulate a lot of the basements. There's a major heat loss.

It's a good opportunity for the province to partner with Islanders who want to stay in their homes, they want to keep these homes. If there was a chance where - here, he just came back. He's got a pound of coverage in him now, I thought he vacated -

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: - I thought he vacated his responsibilities. He made a lot of promises, but they're disappointed in him. They are extremely disappointed in him.

There's a lot of good opportunity out there, and there's a lot of companies that want to work with them, and certainly I think that

they're all expressing disappointment in the people that are eligible for the programs. They think they could do a fantastic job of making this whole province, all Islanders, accessible to programs that would make their house more energy efficient.

I think the Premier, if he was to show leadership, and have some caring and compassion for those people that are freezing out there, and can't turn on their lights, can't afford to turn on their lights -

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) you'd give everything to Maritime Electric -

Mr. M. Currie: - and the kids are going to have a bad Christmas. You won't allow them to have Christmas lights. They can't afford to put Christmas lights on. Up 40%. It's unbelievable.

But I know that the Premier'll be over there, rubbing shoulders soon with the Christmas parties, and he's going to mention to them, that they should back off some, and lower the rates, help Islanders out, I know he's going to do that. He's going to go over and intervene on behalf of Islanders.

An Hon. Member: We are.

Mr. M. Currie: Yeah, he is going to do that sometime. Probably another three years or something, he'll do something. But anyway, by that time, we'll all be back to candles, and lanterns. Won't be able to turn the lights on in the house.

This motion, I guess, is one that asks for the province to work with Islanders, to work with all Islanders, and come forward with a plan that every Islander can access. It's their money, their taxpayers' money. Let's leave this energy efficient for the whole Island. We are trying to do it with wind energy, and certainly we have already started that process. We're into biogas, and some of the

farmers are taking the initiative to get into oils, but they need some more support and leadership on that file and that's going to take place. So I ask the good Premier -

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters has the floor, and you will all get a chance to speak to the motion.

Mr. M. Currie: I don't know if they're going to get a chance today, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct) Keep going. More.

Mr. M. Currie: Madam Speaker, the technology that's out there, there's all kinds of it. There's been some move by the province to do pellets. I commend them on that. I think that's a good opportunity to use some of the waste wood that's out there, and to use that and start by doing pilot projects in the schools. I think those are good initiatives.

There are other problems. I think they should use quite a bit more straw maybe also because these farmers need another place to sell some of their crops, and they've got to do that. The woods, they lent a lot of money out to some of the sawmills and stuff there, but we don't know what's happening there.

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct)

Mr. M. Currie: They need to do more in regards to some of the poplar and some of

these low grade woods, and make that into pellets. We don't know how much they're going to go with of that, but pellets, as was mentioned here earlier, is a concern because a year ago they were \$4.00 a bag, and I'm not sure, I think now they're \$7.50 -

An Hon. Member: Four dollars and ninety-nine cents at Canadian Tire.

Mr. M. Currie: - or \$8 or something a bag. That was troublesome to a lot of people out there, that made the investment in a pellet stove, and then the price of the pellets went up fairly quickly. Then there was the fear that there was no inventory out there, but I believe some of that has been rectified.

There's a lot of people that have been converting over to high efficiency wood stoves. The call I got today, now, we see Montreal is initiating a bylaw that you can't have wood stoves now. So that's scaring people that want to convert and burn a few cords of wood to slow the flow of oil going through their furnaces, and trying to keep them warm. There's a lot of people that have converted to wood in the last little while. When I was talking to one supplier here not long ago, they can't find any seasoned wood, they just have green wood.

When you talk to the people that are selling wood stoves, they put your name on a list, if you want to get a hot water boiler, or whatever. At one time there was 38 names on one company I was talking to that was waiting for a list. You had to put your name on the list, and that was in October, so there was a lot of interest. There still is a lot of interest in Islanders trying to make their homes more efficient.

I do ask that the Premier consider looking after all Islanders. It is their money, and Stephen Harper was so gracious to give you \$25 million, nothing attached to it. You can use some of that money to assist Islanders.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: The Premier's in power, he can do whatever he wants. He's always looking to blame somebody else. He's always looking -

Premier Ghiz: I wasn't blaming. You made the deal.

Mr. M. Currie: - to pass something off on somebody else. You are the Premier. You are the leader.

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: You made a lot of promises, and certainly not living up to them. Islanders are getting wary of you.

Premier Ghiz: Yeah.

Mr. M. Currie: They're looking at you through the corner of their eye now. Madam Speaker, I'd just ask that the Premier and the government give serious consideration to look after all Islanders as promised.

Put Islanders first. They do want to participate, and they do want to make their homes more energy efficient, and I think it would be a great move on behalf of the Premier and the government to do every house and every business, and make PEI a leader in energy efficiency, and complement it with what we do in wind energy and some of the biogas projects. This province could be a model for all the provinces and a model for the country. I'm sure he would have the blessing of the taxpayers in this province to do something like that. We need him to participate, we need him to pay attention, and listen to Islanders. Don't be gallivanting off on the plane all the time, trying to get air miles, and flying all over the world. They want you to pay attention and they want you to look after their needs now, and I hope the Premier will do that.

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: I'll pass it on there, Madam Speaker.

Premier Ghiz: That was the best speech yet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Order.

Premier Ghiz: Good old-fashioned (Indistinct).

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition to second the motion.

Mr. M. Currie: I was gentle on them. They're going to get it now.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

You know, although sometimes some things sound a little bit funny, in this case, it really isn't. As you think about people who tried to heat their homes last year, I can see all kinds of people that I talked to even over the summer. People like Art, a gentleman that lived for 70-plus years, who is at risk of losing his home. Last year in July, in August, he was still paying his heating bill off from the year before. Or people like the family of Marlene and Cetus who have two young boys, who although they rent a place, they were responsible for their own heat. Normally, their heat would be paid by June, but they, too, were struggling with paying their heat bill in August. Or people like Kevin and Stacy, with a family of three, or Jeanine, and the list goes on and on.

I'm sure many of the MLAs in the House probably heard the same stories from people. Look at the fear in people's eyes. Right now, yes, energy's costs have gone down, but many of us realize energy costs

are going to continue to rise.

It's my pleasure to second this motion that speaks to the core of an issue facing all Island home owners, particularly as we approach the winter season. We continued to meet with a number of individuals this summer, especially in July and August, who were still paying off their heating bills from the year before. With energy costs going through the roof, many Islanders are scrambling to prepare their homes for the coming winter through basic cost saving measures such as installing weatherstripping, draft sealants, insulation and so forth.

Last winter was tough on a lot of people, but it was also tough on some of the people that even work in the oil companies. In July I actually spoke to one of the managers who told me what it was like for the first time when people would be so angry and upset, but also other people would be crying in their offices, trying to figure out how were they going to pay off last year's bill, and then figure out how this year's bill was going to be paid. Kenny actually explained to me about one lady who - actually, she worked for a little bit over minimum wage, and had a child, and when you think about the pressure, many Islanders, yes, they'd like to take further steps to retrofit their own homes to become more energy efficient for the long term.

Some Islanders are telling us they would like to reduce their dependency on fuel and to install alternative heating sources, but unfortunately, as many Islanders struggle to make ends meet from pay check to pay check, they are financially unable to afford the initial costs of energy upgrades. You know, too, often we concentrate on people that own their own homes, but there's a considerable number of people who rent in the province. Sometimes when these people rent, they may be renting from landlords that

have had buildings or homes, apartment buildings for a long time, and often these buildings and homes may not be as energy efficient as possible.

So, the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters had offered a solution there of a 20% rebate, but also, maybe there's something government could be doing for landlords, especially landlords who rent to low income people or people on a fixed income, that if they were able to change over heating systems and received a rebate back, then it would also be able to benefit people that are on low incomes, because they are responsible for their own heat.

In the past few weeks, as more people both in the private sector and in the public sector start to worry about the downturn in the economy, and now people are starting to worry about whether or not their pay cheques will be reduced, or actually that they may in the next several months start to lose their jobs. That even includes more stress on the people as they're trying to figure out ways to meet their basic needs.

For many Islanders, their wish lists are basic. For example, some may include replacing drafty old windows with modern, energy efficient windows and doors, installing high energy efficient furnaces -

Mr. M. Currie: Call the hour.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. members, the hour has been called.

This House is in recess until 7:00 p.m. this evening.

The Legislature recessed until 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Good evening.

Government Motions

Orders of the Day (Government)

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Campbell: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Government House Leader, that Motion No. 57 be now called.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Campbell: Bill No. 57, I'm sorry. Order No. 13 be now called.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 13, *An Act to Amend the Wildlife Conservation Act*, Bill No. 57, in Committee.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Campbell: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health Social Services and Seniors, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said Bill.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Ms. Biggar: I believe there are visitors up there that have come in from the District of Tyne Valley-Linkletter. If I could acknowledge them? Chris Bulman, the

president of my district is here, Allan O'Brien, Leigh Winchester, Ryan Walfield, an up and coming young poll captain - it's great to see young people like that involved - as well as Courtney Simmons, another young woman involved in the district, Fred Walfield, Dave Parker, Robert Noye and Marie Walsh. It's a pleasure to have them down here. We had a nice supper together and a chat with the Premier, and looking forward to having them with us this evening.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Sorry, I'd like to welcome the members' guests here tonight as well. I, too, had a little conversation with a couple of them walking over to the House together. Hopefully you'll enjoy your evening here.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: I'll call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood to chair the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Chair (Mitchell): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a Bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Wildlife Conservation Act*.

Mr. Webster: Mr. Chairman, I would ask the House to bring on one of my staff, Barry Jackson.

Chair: Permission to bring on Barry Jackson?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Beginning on page 13, section 20, is where we'll be starting from. However, prior to that (Indistinct).

Mr. Webster: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move an amendment to *An Act to Amend the Wildlife Conservation Act*. It was passed over two or three days ago, picked up by our legal people, and the amendment that I'd like to present is:

I move that the bill be amended in subsection (1), (a) by the deletion of the clause (t) and (b) by renumbering clause (u) as clause (t).

Mr. M. Currie: What's the reason for that?

Mr. Webster: I believe it was an error when the legal people put the act together and it was overlooked by us and the House.

Mr. M. Currie: Agreed.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Webster: Thank you.

Chair: We will be beginning on page 13, section 20.

Section 28 of the Act is amended by the addition of the following after clause (a):

(a.1) respecting the qualifications required for appointment as Chief Conservation Officer or as a conservation officer;

(a.2) respecting the requirements for appointment as a cadet conservation officer;

(a.3) prescribing the oath or solemn affirmation of office of a conservation officer and a cadet conservation officer;

(a.4) respecting the information required to be contained in an information card issued to a conservation officer or a cadet conservation officer.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. M. Currie: The other day I asked a question about the deputy being deputized. Were those questions answered?

Mr. Webster: Yes, they were.

Mr. M. Currie: You're carrying that section, then?

Mr. Webster: We cleared that quite awhile ago when you were away for a day.

Chair: 21. Section 30 of the Act is amended

(a) by renumbering it as subsection 30(1); and

(b) by the addition of the following after subsection (1):

(2) In any prosecution arising out of the possession of anything, the burden of proof is on the accused to prove that he or she did not have possession of the thing within the meaning of subsection 1(2).

(3) In the absence of evidence to the contrary, wildlife found within the province shall be presumed to have its place of origin in the province, and where the wildlife is dead it shall be presumed to have been killed within the province.

(4) Where a person is charged with a contravention of any provision of this Act or the regulations by reason of the person having

(a) taken or kept any wildlife, the taking or

keeping of which is prohibited;

(b) taken or kept any wildlife in an area where, or during a period or a time when, the taking or keeping was prohibited;

(c) had in his or her possession any article the possession of which is prohibited; or

(d) had in his or her possession any article in an area where, or during a period or at a time when, possession of the article was prohibited.

Mr. M. Currie: Could you give us an example there?

Mr. Webster: Mr. Chairman, what does happen is hunters travel between provinces.

I think that's what this means. A hunter could be from Magdalene Islands and he could have been in New Brunswick hunting deer. When he has his deer in his truck on the way back to Magdalene Islands he drives through Prince Edward Island. So what laws apply on Prince Edward Island vis-à-vis where the deer was actually killed? So I believe that that's what this means.

Barry Jackson Pollution Prevention

Officer: Is this question specific to clause (4) or -

Mr. M. Currie: No, not really. What I'm thinking of is a lot of people, like you say, they travel from province to province. But a lot of people will have in their possession a lot of wildfowl that they have shot or whatever or people give them. I'm just wondering. Can you come into their home and search their residence for an inventory of geese that's in their deepfreeze?

Barry Jackson Pollution Prevention

Officer: I think that's probably a section that we've already covered in terms of seizure and rights of conservation officers

like we discussed I guess yesterday regarding being able to access properties and personal dwellings and stuff to gain evidence.

But I'm just not sure of your specific question in this section to give you a good answer.

Chair: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Okay.

Chair: The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford.

Mr. McIsaac: (Indistinct) that section, section (3): "In the absence of evidence to the contrary, wildlife found within the province shall be presumed to have its place of origin in the province" - if this was a deer? - "and where the wildlife is dead it shall be presumed to have been killed within the province"? So I could be trucking an animal through PEI from Nova Scotia, through PEI to the Magdalenes. It's not tagged -

Mr. M. Currie: You have to have it tagged.

Mr. McIsaac: Then it would give evidence. But if it wasn't tagged it would be presumed to have been killed in the province?

Barry Jackson Pollution Prevention

Officer: Just to clarify. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, that's sort of the catchphrase here. We know that there's no deer on PEI. A conservation officer is not going to charge somebody that he sees travelling from Souris to the bridge or whatever with a tagged Magdalen Island deer with this offence. That's (Indistinct) use evidence of the contrary that we know that this isn't a deer that was harvested on PEI, simply because -

Mr. McIsaac: That's what it almost sounded like. Good.

Mr. M. Currie: Minister, I has asked -

Chair: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: - the other day, and I raise this matter only out of concern for the hon. Premier. I know he has a major concern with crows in here in his riding, and you have indicated that your field technicians could assist maybe going to a public meeting with the hon. Premier and maybe try to resolve this issue in his riding.

I know a lot of people are really concerned with it. I myself would go. I remember him coming down to a public meeting about caterpillars. I'd certainly go in if you have a public meeting.

Premier Ghiz: That's true, I was there at that meeting (Indistinct).

Mr. M. Currie: I'd do you the same favour. I'll go in and -

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct) I had to go to that meeting. The only problem with those crows is that - I think why it didn't get fixed - I don't know who heard the story, but there's some journalist in PEI now that's doing these sites of PEI. They're doing a book on it, and they did one with Pat Binns: What's one of your favourite sites in Prince Edward Island? He listed off the crows of Victoria Park as his destination that people should check out when they come to PEI. Well, that's obviously why nothing happened about it before.

Mr. MacKinley: Where are these crows?

Premier Ghiz: The crows are -

Mr. M. Currie: The issue over the crows.

Premier Ghiz: That's not my district any more. I forgot about that.

Mr. M. Currie: You can dump the issue fairly quick, can't you?

Mr. Brown: I tried to get rid of the crows. My brother tried to get rid of the crows.

Mr. M. Currie: That's all right.

Premier Ghiz: He got rid of the bootleggers.

Mr. M. Currie: I know the minister expressed that he would go in and bring his field technicians and help you out. Anyway, if you're not concerned about the residents, that's good.

Chair: Premier.

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Minister.

Chair: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: (Indistinct) scare all of them away (Indistinct).

Chair: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, any other questions on that part?

Mr. M. Currie: No. Keep going.

Chair: Okay. We'll carry on, then:

if it is shown -

Mr. M. Currie: The hon. Premier is not interested.

Chair: - if it is shown to the satisfaction of a justice that the wildlife or the article was found in the person's possession or under the person's control, the person shall be presumed in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have committed the offence with which the person is charged.

(5) No exception, exemption, proviso, excuse, or qualification prescribed by law is required to be set out or negated, as the case may be, in an information or a summary offence ticket respecting an offence under this Act or regulations.

(6) In any prosecution for an offence under this Act or the regulations, the burden of proving that any exception, exemption, proviso, excuse or qualification prescribed by law operates in favour of the defendant is on the defendant, to prove on a balance of probabilities, and the prosecutor is not required, except by way of rebuttal, to prove that the exception, exemption, proviso, excuse or qualification does not operate in favour of the defendant, whether or not it is set out in the information or summary offence ticket.

Section 21. Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 22. This Act comes into force on a date that may be fixed by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Thank you for your assistance.

Mr. Webster: I move the title.

Chair: *An Act to Amend the Wildlife Conservation Act.*

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Webster: I move the enacting clause.

Chair: Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of

the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Webster: Mr. Chairman, I move the Speaker take the Chair, and that the Chairman report the Bill agreed to with amendment.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Chair: Madam Speaker, as Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House, having under consideration a Bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Wildlife Conservation Act*, I beg leave to report that the Committee has gone through the said Bill and has agreed to same with amendment. I move that the report of the Committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Speaker: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to ask now that the Speaker would allow us to listen to Order No. 21 that has been read for the Second Time and we'd like to bring it back up on the floor for discussion.

I move that Order No. 21 be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 21, *Innovation PEI Act*,

Bill No. 54, ordered for Second Reading.

Speaker: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Sheridan: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said Bill.

Clerk: It needs to be read a second time.

Mr. Sheridan: I thought it had been introduced. I'm very sorry.

Speaker: That's okay. Read it a second time.

Mr. Sheridan: We'll do that? Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors, that the said Bill be now read a Second Time.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Clerk: *Innovation PEI Act*, Bill No. 54, read a Second Time.

Speaker: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said Bill.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Speaker: I'd invite the hon. member from Vernon River-Stratford to come down and chair the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Chair (McIsaac): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a Bill to be intituled *Innovation PEI Act*.

Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the Bill be now read clause by clause?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Brown: This bill is a part of the plan Island Prosperity-A Focus for Change. In this plan, it requires that the new act be established called *Innovation PEI*. It's basically taking the BDI act and revamping it into *Innovation PEI* and adding a few more control points to it and a few more committees to it and combining some credit review management in it. There's some protection now and some identification for intellectual property and for innovation in Prince Edward Island.

Chair: 1. In this Act

(a) "Audit Committee" means the Audit Committee established under subsection 15(1);

(b) "Board" means the Board of Directors of the Corporation;

(c) "Chief Executive Officer" means the Chief Executive Officer appointed under subsection 9(1);

(d) "Corporation" means Innovation PEI established under section 2;

(e) "Credit Management Committee" means the Credit Management Committee established under section 13(1);

(f) "Department" means the Department of

Innovation and Advanced Learning;

(g) “Director” means the Director of Lending Services appointed under subsection 12(1);

(h) “economic sector” means a sector of the economy of Prince Edward Island that

(i) is a strategic sector, or

(ii) is prescribed as an economic sector by the regulations;

(i) “financial assistance” means assistance by way of a grant or contribution, loan, loan guarantee, the purchase or guarantee of bonds, debentures, notes or other debt obligations or the purchase of other acquisitions of any common or preferred shares or other equity securities;

(j) “innovation” means the process of knowledge creation through research to add value to goods and services for economical or social beneficial purposes;

(k) “intellectual property” means a patent, licence, permit, knowhow, commercial secret or other similar property constituting knowledge, including a trade mark, industrial design, copyright or other similar property constituting the expression of knowledge;

(l) “Island Prosperity Strategy” or “IPS” means the economic development strategy for the strategic sectors of the economy of Prince Edward Island that is identified in the regulations as being the Island Prosperity Strategy for the purposes of this Act;

(m) “Minister” means the Minister of the Crown designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to administer this Act;

(n) “private sector members” means, in respect of the Board, the members of the

Board appointed under clause 4(1)(d), and, in respect of the Credit Management Committee, the members of the Credit Management Committee appointed under clause 13(1)(b), and in respect of the Audit Committee, the members of the Audit Committee appointed under clause 15(2)(b);

(o) “strategic sector” means any one of the following sectors of the economy of Prince Edward Island:

(i) biosciences,

(ii) aerospace,

(iii) information and communications technology,

(iv) renewable energy.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Brown: Can I -

Chair: The minister’s going to speak for a minute.

Mr. Brown: Can I call my policy person to the floor first, Gordon Cobb?

Chair: Okay.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: The Credit Management Committee, is that in place?

Mr. Brown: No. It’ll be in place after this act comes in place.

Mr. M. Currie: Would they be appointed by yourself or Executive Council?

Mr. Brown: They’re appointed by myself.

Oh no, the director of the credit department will be automatically on it and six persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council from the private sector, including three from the strategic sectors and three from the other economic sectors.

Mr. M. Currie: The director means the director of lending services appointed. Is that appointed by Executive Council also?

Mr. Brown: Yes. No, it's appointed -

Mr. M. Currie: Who's the director of lending now?

Mr. Brown: It'd be appointed by the CO. Who's the director of lending now?

Mr. M. Currie: Yeah.

Mr. Brown: None.

Mr. M. Currie: None?

Mr. Brown: None.

Mr. M. Currie: You got a big -

Mr. Brown: No, the PEI Lending Agency is not being merged in yet.

Mr. M. Currie: Oh, okay.

Mr. Brown: So let's take the loans at BDI right now. Before, they were just done without a credit committee. So now those loans will be going through a credit committee.

Mr. M. Currie: So you're going to - maybe you could just - on a topic of lending and BDI, you're going to merge the two of them into one?

Mr. Brown: Eventually, yes.

Mr. M. Currie: So you would have over

\$200 million lent out then?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Mr. M. Currie: I think they're 150 and you're about 60 or 70. Over \$200 million.

Mr. Brown: The intent of the act is, at a future date, to put all lending under one division, BDI Lending Agency, and the IIDI money.

Mr. M. Currie: Will they both - they'll all just fall under one umbrella. So the criteria for lending will be a lot stricter? Because lending has more requirements. They do not go into maybe so much new startups or some with a limited amount of risk. I thought in that document, prosperity, that you said that you were going to take risks.

Mr. Brown: We are going to take risks. But -

Mr. M. Currie: You showed that today with the concert.

Mr. Brown: Yes. And you know, the people that take risks are the ones that benefit the most at the end, as long as your risk is well calculated. You got to understand that risk is a part of doing business. If we're not going to accept some risk, then we're not going to be doing much business in Prince Edward Island.

Mr. M. Currie: I know, minister, that you're going to have a lot of people go in there and tell you how to run a business and all they need is 100% of the money.

Mr. Brown: Oh -

Mr. M. Currie: You'll get three of them a day.

Mr. Brown: Oh yeah, if I see any more -

Mr. M. Currie: Or more.

Mr. Brown: If I see any more -

Premier Ghiz: We see them every day.

Mr. M. Currie: Every day you're going to get them.

Mr. Brown: But you know -

Premier Ghiz: And we're going to ruin the economy if we don't give them money. They've got the million dollar answer. They're going to turn around the economy, the Island is going to be (Indistinct).

Mr. Brown: You were the minister one time. What would happen is that if they didn't get it at the lending agency they'd come to the BDI and then they'd go around in circles. We thought just by putting them under one umbrella and that -

Mr. M. Currie: I agree with the concept. I'm just wondering about - development is just that, it's development. It's working with new sectors and some of them are startups, and sometimes you have to go along the trail for awhile to get them on their feet. I don't see that with the way lending does it. Lending does more blue chip.

Mr. Brown: What's that, more -

Mr. M. Currie: More blue chip .

Mr. Brown: Yeah. As you will read later on, the lending board is going to be instructed that loans shall be made to foster economic development on Prince Edward Island. Meaning that some risk has to be taken and that we're willing to take some of the risk. But we're not willing to take all of the risk.

Mr. M. Currie: Agreed.

Chair: Question from the Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: I have two questions. One in terms of the credit management committee. Will your role there be ex officio?

Mr. Brown: I'm not on the credit lending board.

Leader of the Opposition: You're not?

Mr. Brown: No.

Leader of the Opposition: So is your deputy there?

Mr. Brown: No.

Leader of the Opposition: So in terms of explaining then, if someone comes in to do business, is there a certain amount of money that people have to go in front of the committee to have decisions? Or if you're talking about a business borrowing \$40,000, do they have to go through that process?

Mr. Brown: That would be set up in regulation what the process will be. But most of the time the people will come in with their business plan. Hopefully we'll get the business development section of the department review the business plan, see what grants are available, or subsidies, or what can we do for the business in terms of putting them in Slemon Park, putting them in the new biocommons park, or putting them in the industrial park, rent subsidies, payroll subsidies or LMDA subsidies.

Then move on to: What equity are you putting into the company as a private sector person? Now what lending can you get from a commercial bank? If you can't get lending from a commercial bank, then we will then move over to the lending services area of the department.

I'm not criticizing, it's been in previous - all types of - administrations, is that sometimes the person that is promoting the company, the business development officer, they were also approving loans at the same time. They became too involved in the project. It was: We'll give you this, this and this, I want to see this project develop. That's one of the reasons we said: Let's split it out and have a lending services division with a committee. The business development officer and the person that's in with the new business plan will make their presentation to that committee in order to get financing. It just splits it to say: Let's take a second look at it in terms of lending.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay, another question, then. Did you guys go through (o)?

Mr. Brown: (o)? Yeah.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. How come you have nothing there for agriculture or aquaculture or any of the fisheries? I'll give you an example. Gerard Mol, the oil extraction facility, he's a farmer, but that's very innovative what he's doing. He needs three-phase power, he needs to borrow money some place. Why would you not have those sectors included in that? Go ahead, Gordie, if you want to answer.

Mr. Brown: Go ahead, Gord.

Gordon Cobb Director: The differentiation here is, yes, the four strategic sectors are enshrined in the legislation. But also, their vision defined in (h) and discussed later in the text of the bill, the economic sector. So in the regulations of this corporation, while the emphasis is on the four strategic sectors, there's ample room to define and provide for other economic sectors as well, besides the four strategic sectors.

Leader of the Opposition: In terms of, again, I can think of aquaculture, closed-

system SERT, some of the work Dr. Wayne Peters is doing there, some of the work Dr. Gerry Johnson's doing in Victoria. You're even talking about intellectual property. So, it just seems like it's kind of an insult to those sectors that are doing some leading edge stuff that they're not included there.

Mr. Brown: But what I would consider there, I would consider that under bioscience.

Leader of the Opposition: No, not in those cases.

Chair: Question, the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Yes, minister. Tourism and agriculture and fisheries, they're an important part of the pillar of our economy here and I have trouble wondering why you don't list them as the building blocks of our economy.

Mr. Brown: Again, we have the department of fisheries, we have the Department of Agriculture that works with those two sectors. If the departments come together there and have ideas and proposals for other sectors, we're going to look at them. But it's this department -

Leader of the Opposition: Don't you think, though, minister, it'd be awful difficult of you go in front of a committee that's made up that has the strategic plan in front of them that says these are the priorities and you're talking about an agriculture project?

Again, I'd use three-phase power in Kinkora for Gerard Mol. I'm not sure whose district that is, but you should be very interested in that, because it's such a great project and really has the chance to be very innovative in a number of ways. The renewable energy strategy that you have, the wind energy. A number of innovations could come from the

agriculture sector, but you have nothing there. So it would be weighted more towards - for example, the people from Summerside tonight, straw burner technology, there is a number of them, but according to this, they wouldn't even rate.

Mr. Brown: Well, yeah, I guess you can read under regulations:

(21) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

(a) prescribing one or more sectors of the economy of Prince Edward Island as economic sectors for the purpose of clause 1(h).

We will add -

Leader of the Opposition: Will you add? It'd make me awfully happy if under (o) there you added the primary sectors.

Mr. Brown: Okay, we'll take a look at that.

Mr. M. Currie: Agriculture, fisheries.

Leader of the Opposition: Aquaculture.

Mr. M. Currie: Agriculture is still the main driver in this province.

Mr. Brown: Yeah, I agree with you, and I agree that -

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct) and all kinds of opportunities, especially with fruit crops. Everybody has heard from Raymond Loo. You're looking about extraction. There are some of his even organic blackcurrants. Some of the work that's being done in the area of tea leaves, especially from the fruits. I mean, you're eliminating such a great sector, and it's not bioscience, it's agriculture.

Mr. Brown: That's where we can agree and

disagree on the definition of bioscience. We have departments running the agriculture, we have departments running fisheries and rural development. What we're saying in this act is that when an item gets to a commercialization stage or to a change in the value added, then we will jump in. But the Department of Agriculture will run the agriculture programs and the Department of Fisheries will run the fisheries program.

When it becomes a level of: Okay, we're going to test changing this agriculture product around or changing that fishery product around and we're going to get in, that's when I start saying: Okay, that's bioscience -

Leader of the Opposition: Okay, well, let's use another example, minister.

Mr. Brown: - that's into functional food and functional food additives. We met with a company down in the States just two days ago in Chicago. They have a extraction, two extractions, that they're looking at. They don't want to put it in capsule form. They want to put it in ingredients and sell it back to the big processors. That's what I see. The Department of Agriculture will run the agriculture policies and the department of fisheries will run the fisheries policies.

Leader of the Opposition: In that example that you're using about that type of extraction, you're right, that is a bioscience project. But the other kind of extraction we were talking about with Raymond Loo's different.

But let's use an aquaculture example. I don't know if the fisheries minister is in the House. Salt system (Indistinct) SERT technology. There's intellectual property right. There's probably a company from England. There's about two other leaders in the world there. Again, I use the name Dr. Gerry Johnson. He's doing some work, as

you know, in Victoria. Again, how would he get his project through this? It's aquaculture.

Mr. Brown: We could add them under the regulations or we could define them as bioscience.

Leader of the Opposition: I think it'd be nice. Sometimes, too, it's about interpretation. There's rumour around your Premier is changing the Cabinet. If he's changing the Cabinet some other minister may not be as clear in their mind about which programs belong where. So it has to be in writing.

Mr. Brown: The definition of bioscience?

Leader of the Opposition: And to make sure that aquaculture, agriculture, some of the other tourism products, etc., are able to get money to be able to be invested in.

Mr. Brown: Leader of the Opposition, we're putting a bioscience park together. We're putting scientists out there. We have the Food Technology Centre. We have the Atlantic Vet College. I consider that the bioscience cluster. Every time I look at one of their projects they're taking an agriculture product and converting it into, or adding molecules to it or extracting molecules from it, and I consider that the science of food.

Leader of the Opposition: That's true, but let's go to the other side. Let's look at the receptor capacity that's out on the farm. Whether that's a dairy farmer or whether that's a potato farmer, whatever, that wants to flip around and do a project that they have in mind that already has the potential of commercialization, and they go backwards to get a scientist involved. How do they do that? Because real wealth creation comes from the receptor capacities in the community to be able to convert the knowledge into actual money.

Mr. Brown: Yes. Most of the big -

Leader of the Opposition: This sounds like it's set up primarily just for the scientists, I guess is my only point, and that's one part that's certainly important. But let's not forget all the people across PEI, the entrepreneurs, and people - again, you can find them almost everywhere, and they come again through the primary sectors.

Mr. Brown: I agree, and we support the primary sectors. We have the Food Technology Centre. We're building the BioCommons Park that is going to research with agricultural products, fisheries products, and changing them into new products that consumers want.

I guess that's where you and I differ. You think your interpretation of bioscience is a scientist in the backroom working at things. My interpretation is food science is bioscience. They're out at the National Research Council now testing various things, and we have Chemaphor out there testing products. That's directly related to the agriculture industry.

I think this plan is investing heavily into our primary sectors. We're committed to changing our primary sectors in adding the most value to those products.

Chair: We're going to take a question from the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: By just listing the four here, minister, does that mean they will get favouritism over tourism, agriculture and fisheries in relationship to money being loaned? Are they going to be marked quicker and faster and better than somebody who's got a tourism project or somebody who's got a fisheries project?

Mr. Brown: No. All the projects will be

reviewed on their business potential. What this strategic sector is is that tourism - we have a Department of Tourism. They will develop the plans and policies and what they want to do in that department. If they need some assistance from this department, they'll come over. They will be the lead. The Tourism department will be lead and the Department of Agriculture will be the lead in agriculture, and the department of fisheries will be the lead in the department of fisheries.

There's got to be a split here that says: You do your thing and you do your thing good, and we'll do our thing and we'll do our thing good, instead of everybody running around trying to do everything and nothing getting done. All we're saying is: Let's cut it. Each line department will do their job and when it's going to be commercialized or going to be IP added to it, then we get involved in that IP development. We get involved in that commercialization.

Mr. M. Currie: I understand that. By not naming tourism or agriculture and fisheries and them, I just hope that you don't provide favouritism to the four that are mentioned as your sectors and you'll leave out the other ones. That's what scares me about it. But anyway, if you feel - you're confident over that then -

Mr. Brown: The loans and the programs are set in place. The loans will be available to everybody. The lending agency, when it's put under the department, they will still have their commercial lending, they'll have their risk lending, they'll have their agriculture lending and they'll have their other lending. It's just that what we're saying in this bill and what we're saying in the strategy is that at a certain point in time we'll bring in the scientists.

To me, number one, bioscience takes in agriculture, fisheries and all the food

products. Every plant I go and see, it's in bioscience. It's to deal with plants or it's to deal with animals. They're creating things from those sectors. I'm saying -

Mr. M. Currie: Where does tourism fit into these four?

Mr. Brown: Tourism fits under the Department of Tourism, and if they need -

Mr. M. Currie: You said farming and fishing fit under science. I'm just wondering where tourism fits under one of those four.

Mr. Brown: It fits under the Department of Tourism.

Mr. M. Currie: It's not listed here.

Mr. Brown: Why should I be doing the Department of Tourism? We have a Department of Tourism that will be do tourism. Why would business development be into tourism? We're into the business. If they come in with a business case and they're a business, we will look at them as a business for lending for our business development section. That's all we're saying.

What we're saying here is we're going to concentrate in these areas because our strategic areas here are bioscience - which is basically agriculture, fisheries - aerospace - you've seen how well aerospace has done of the last couple of years - information technology and communications, and renewable energy.

Mr. M. Currie: I just want it in the Hansard that these four are not going to be favoured over tourism, agriculture and fisheries and left out. That's all I want to know, and if you say yes, then that's fine.

Mr. Brown: I say yes.

Mr. M. Currie: Okay.

Chair: Okay.

There's one question from the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct) question. The Credit Management Committee, how is that going to be made up? Are they all people from the private sector or are they so many people in the bioscience field, so many in aerospace, information? Who sits on that committee?

Mr. Brown: There are three from the strategic sectors and three from the economic sectors.

Leader of the Opposition: None from any of the other sectors?

Mr. Brown: The economic sectors, we could put agriculture and fisheries on that.

Leader of the Opposition: Can we get that in the regulations? That one of those positions has to come from the primary sectors?

Mr. Brown: Sure.

Leader of the Opposition: One final question. How would you describe Joe Dorgan's project that he's doing?

Mr. Brown: Joe?

Leader of the Opposition: Yes. Is that a bioscience project?

Mr. Brown: With the seaweed and the drying the seaweed and making it into food? Yeah.

Leader of the Opposition: Did he get his PNP units?

Mr. Brown: Like again - look. I've seen so many times where a minister has disclosed something and the privacy commissioner has come back and the minister had to leave his seat.

Chair: I think that's getting away from the bill anyway -

Mr. Brown: I'm not - I'll get it settled. I'm not going to disclose that information because - I'm told by the privacy commissioner that that is private, personal information and if you disclose it you lose your - the Premier will have no choice but - you know, you broke the law. I'm not going to break the law here, hon. Leader of the Opposition.

You know Joe's project, I reviewed Joe's project. You want to go over Joe's project. Joe needs CFIA approval. He's working with them to get CFIA approval.

Leader of the Opposition: Good. And you're returning his calls?

Mr. Brown: Yeah. You know I've returned Joe's call because every time I return his call, he calls you.

Leader of the Opposition: I know. I just spoke with him last week and he's still wanting more calls.

Chair: Any other questions on section 1?

Leader of the Opposition: Not under this section.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Leader of the Opposition: Carried.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 2, Corporation.

There is hereby established a Crown corporation to be called Innovation PEI, which has the same general powers as conferred upon companies incorporated under the *Companies Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. C-14, except where such powers are inconsistent with this Act.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 3. (1) The Corporation is for all purposes an agent of the Crown in right of the Province of Prince Edward Island and its powers pursuant to this Act may be exercised only as an agent of the province.

(2) Property acquired by the Corporation is the property of the Government of Prince Edward Island, and title thereto may be vested in the Government of Prince Edward Island or in the name of the Corporation.

(3) Actions, suits or other legal proceedings in respect of any right or obligation acquired or incurred by the Corporation, whether in its name or in the name of Her Majesty, may be brought or taken by or against the Corporation in the name of the Corporation in any court that would have jurisdiction if the Corporation were not an agent of Her Majesty.

Shall it carry?

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: The other night there was a financial assistance act passed here. How do the two of them interrelate?

Mr. Brown: The *Financial Administration Act* as - concerning with the reporting?

Leader of the Opposition: Yes.

Mr. Brown: This will be a Crown corporation and it will have to follow then *Financial Administration Act*. You will see sections further on that we're even going beyond the *Financial Administration Act* in this Crown corporation in terms of reporting.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Board of Directors.

4. (1) The affairs of the Corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors consisting of

(a) the Deputy Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning;

(b) the President of UPEI;

(c) the President of Holland College; and

(d) six persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council from the private sector, including at least one person representing each of the four strategic sectors.

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: Question.

Leader of the Opposition: In terms of the deputy minister of innovation, are they covered under the conflict of interest guidelines in the province?

Mr. Brown: Under our guidelines?

Leader of the Opposition: Yes.

Mr. Brown: Not under our guidelines as

ministers, but there is a set of guidelines for
-

Leader of the Opposition: Do you have that, or could you bring that back?

Mr. Brown: Sure.

Leader of the Opposition: I'd like to see that set of guidelines.

Mr. Brown: There's (Indistinct) council order.

Chair: (2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall designate one of the private sector members of the Board to be the chairperson of the Board.

(3) The private sector member of the Board shall be appointed to hold office for a term not exceeding three years and may be reappointed.

(4) A vacancy on the Board caused by the death, resignation, removal or incapacity to act of a private sector member may be filled by the appointment of the Lieutenant Governor in Council under clause (1)(d) of a person to hold office for the unexpired portion of the term of office of such member.

(5) Subject to subsection (6), the members of the Board

(a) shall serve without remuneration; and

(b) shall be entitled to be reimbursed out of the funds of the Corporation for the expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their duties as members of the Board.

(6) The private sector members of the Board are entitled to receive such remuneration as the Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine.

(7) Five members of the Board, at least three of whom shall be private sector members, constitute a quorum.

(8) A decision of the majority of the members of the Board present and constituting a quorum is the decision of the Board.

(9) Subject to subsection (10), each member of the Board is entitled to one vote.

(10) The chairperson of the Board shall exercise his or her voting rights only to break a tie on a vote among the members of the Board.

Shall it carry?

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: Question.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Could we make recommendation that there has to be gender considered here in terms of the board, how it's set up, that the board has to represent women and there also should be somebody bilingual -

Mr. M. Currie: Good point.

Leader of the Opposition: - on the board as well as someone representing the primary sector?

Mr. Brown: I agree 100%.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. You'll put that in the regulations?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Mr. M. Currie: No, a question.

Chair: Question.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: In the private sector, people that are going to be appointed, did you have any problem finding any to go on the board?

Mr. Brown: We are out looking for people in the community now to sit on this board, and we may bring someone in from outside of the province to sit on the board.

Mr. M. Currie: That's interesting. I think the reason I asked that is, over time, you'll find that people don't like to sit on a board if they're going to make a decision about their neighbours -

Mr. Brown: Good point.

Mr. M. Currie: - or maybe even sector. So they get nervous, I guess, of making decisions because it affects a neighbour up the road or their whole business or family business. Anyway, you'll find that from time to time.

Mr. Brown: I agree with you. I know it's hard to sit on a board, and once you sit on a board and your neighbours know that you're sitting on that board and your neighbours know that you're sitting on that board - they have a loan in - and that's one of the reasons - the president of the university and the president of Holland College - the main reason they're on the board is to see that the plan is put forward and hopefully that they'll see our strategy and see the province's strategy and see where we want to go.

Then we'll say: Okay, we can develop courses or we can develop programs at either Holland College or the university that will support that. That's one of the main

reasons we put the Department Innovation and Advanced Learning together, in terms of saying: We need people that have the skills and the abilities to see projects through. We need our colleges and universities outside here in order to make the programs available.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 5. (1) The Board may make bylaws and policies, not inconsistent with this Act, for its internal organization and the regulation of its operations, including bylaws and policies respecting

(a) the functions of all officers, agents and employees of the Corporation;

(b) the operations of the Credit Management Committee and the Audit Committee; and

(c) the conduct of the affairs of the Corporation not otherwise provided for in this Act or the regulations.

(2) The Minister may issue policy directions to the Board where, in the opinion of the Minister, it is in the public interest to do so, and the Board shall comply with the policy directions.

Shall it carry?

Question.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Would one of those examples be - if you said: Out of x amount of loans, the percentage that has to go towards innovation, say in the agriculture sector, would be 15% of all loans? Is that what that means?

Mr. Brown: We let the board make some

bylaws, or let the board make policies that would say: On this loan, in this sector, here's what's required, here's how many loans we're going to put in each portfolio. But -

Leader of the Opposition: In terms of section 2, explain that one.

Mr. Brown: Okay. Section 2. We're going to allow the board to run the corporation. The board will run the corporation, but if I feel as minister that it is not abiding by the terms of the prosperity plan or the regulations - or they're going off on a tangent and doing their own things - I have the right to step in with a policy document or a policy statement to say: You're not doing the direction of government. You must go back and start doing it again.

We're going to try to make the board as independent - and run the corporation independently. But, if I feel or that Cabinet feels or that you in the Legislature get up and say: You got a bunch of people over there running this corporation and I don't think they're running it properly. Their policies have - only 5% in the lending to the primary industries is wrong. That's a wrong policy. I would send a policy document over to them and say: Change that policy.

This is what we, in the Legislature or the Executive Council - because ultimately the Executive Council, and ultimately this House, is responsible for the running of government. We want to allow this board to run as independently as possible. If there are directions or policies coming from this Legislature that this Legislature wants done, then a policy statement will be sent over.

Leader of the Opposition: Before that happens, will you be providing the board with expected outcomes and expected measures of how you're going to measure success in terms of how they're going to

make decisions?

Mr. Brown: They will be doing their policies, and they will be reviewed by the department, and any regulation has to be put through the department and then up to Executive Council and approved there.

Leader of the Opposition: Not so much the regulations, but I'm thinking about, again, almost in a governance model, that if these folks are going to handle your portfolio to do loans, then they sort of need an overall statement in terms of - or principles, is what I'm looking for, I guess is the word. So will you be forming principles that will go to this committee so that they can sit and make those guidelines up?

Mr. Brown: Yeah. You'll see later on that this bill, which is unique in its structure and form, unique in terms of - this bill is - we're not setting up - we're setting up a corporation, but the objectives of the corporation are to implement the plan that we put forward.

In that plan, you'll see on page 46 sector goals and the timing. We have a number of goals there to meet, and those are going to be the goals of the corporation to meet. For example, bioscience, increase sales from \$70 million to \$300 million. Increase full-time equivalent employees from 750 to 2,000. Become recognized as a national centre of excellence for natural product development. These are goals that that corporation will have to abide by.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. Just -

Mr. Brown: Far too many times corporations are set up without goals and objectives, and these are a tough set of goals, but I've agreed to take on the challenge, and the department staff has agreed to take on the challenge.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. Usually if you're going to take on a challenge like that, you'll have an evaluation framework set up prior to doing that. Could we see a copy of your evaluation framework so that when you reach those goals we know? Do you have that with you?

Mr. Brown: No. No, I don't have it, hon. Leader of the Opposition. My goals are: \$70 million to \$300 million, 750 employees to 2,000 employees; information technology, \$30 million to \$100 million, 1,200 to 2,000; aerospace, 280 million to 400 million, 900 people to 1,400 people; energy renewable, that's being done by the department, and they're already out with their plan, 100 megawatts to 500 megawatts.

That is what I'm going to be looking for. Each and every month the staff now: We've got our list, and it's okay. Are we increasing sales? Are we increasing employment? We're going to the strategic sectors. We're meeting with the aerospace sector and saying: How can we reach these goals and objectives? You'll see a nice little announcement, hopefully next week, one step at a time. But at least we have goals that says: 900 over so many years, I need 100 this year, I need 200. We'll determine on a year by year basis how we can do it.

Leader of the Opposition: Sure, but usually before you start out on such an innovative kind of plan you would have an evaluation framework set up, and your work plan.

So, for example, it may suggest, if it's aerospace, you know who in your department is either going to expand an aerospace company, help them find financing. I understand that's become very difficult for some of the private sector aerospace companies to actually get some money right now. You'd know who's going to do what, when, with how much money,

how much it's going to cost, what are the human resources involved.

So at the end, when you take a look at did they land and create x amount of jobs, you know what it did cost, and that evaluation framework is usually done before you set out. So, what you're talking about is goals and objectives, but what I'd like to see is what type of evaluation framework and who designed it, what methodology did they use.

Mr. Brown: Okay. The first thing we've done is the last couple months when the new deputy come on was to reorganize the department to meet -

Leader of the Opposition: Sorry, I couldn't hear you.

Mr. Brown: Okay. One of the first things we did when Dr. Michael Mayne was assigned deputy was to reorganize the business development department. The prospecting division, now we have a strictly prospecting division. It was divided up before.

Leader of the Opposition: Who heads your prospecting division?

Mr. Brown: Brad Mix will be in charge of prospecting, and Brian Keefe will be in charge of business development.

So what I've done there is I feel we're going to have a team of people out searching for companies to move to PEI. But at the same time I told the department it is just as important for this government, this department, to work with local businesses. Ten or 15 or 20 jobs created in a local business in Prince Edward Island is just as important as bringing a company in from away. As a matter of fact, I'd argue that it would be better to go out in the business community in Prince Edward Island and say: How can we help you? How can we

help you create jobs? How can you help us meet these objectives? We met with the aerospace industry, they're coming up with some ideas. We're meeting with the information technology. The deputy has been meeting with the bioscience, and Island companies are coming forward and saying: If we can do this, or will you allow us to do this, will you lighten up this or lighten up that? We can meet these objectives.

Leader of the Opposition: I'm talking about -

Mr. Brown: I'm extremely impressed by the private sector out there. Trout River Industries, comments were made earlier today, that is an excellent company. I know your government with the previous government assisted that company. They took quite a chance on it. That's a big risk that was taken, but it's a big payoff at the end of the day. It's a great company. A big risk was taken in 1990, when the base was shut down. I remember, I was around at that time, people could have laughed at the administration of the day, saying: Aerospace, what kind of brains do those people have to think we can have an aerospace industry on PEI? You go to Slemon Park today and you see that.

We're working with those companies. Those companies are also giving us leads to other companies. They're saying: We work with this company, maybe you can get them to come to PEI. That happened with Action Aero which is now a little company on Belmont St. That was a result of one of the companies in Slemon Park saying: Here's a person that we'd like to get back to Prince Edward Island to help out here. We got that person back, and they're creating jobs in Prince Edward Island.

Leader of the Opposition: Just to finish off there, minister, the evaluation framework, I know you have Rick Adams over at the

QEH hospital, but he'd have a lot of familiarity in terms of how you'd put one together. That's one point that you may want to consider.

The other question that I was going to ask: Who would work in the department to sort of lead, for example under innovation, information technology? I understand that for that sector to grow more requires even stronger firewalls, a different type of infrastructure, especially when they're dealing with private sector IT, intellectual property and such. Would you or someone be able to use any of that \$25 million from the Building Canada infrastructure that was given to the province?

Mr. Brown: Yes. You know -

Leader of the Opposition: So you'd take the lead over community and cultural affairs, or how does that get determined?

Mr. Brown: What do you mean?

Leader of the Opposition: The federal government, through Building Canada, had given the province quite a bit of money this summer. It's my understanding that some of the infrastructure typically goes to sewer lines, water, etc. If information technology is a pillar, how do you get to use that money?

Mr. Brown: That money's in the department of community and cultural affairs, and -

Chair: The hon. Minister of Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour.

Ms. Bertram: As an example, the Build Canada fund is portioned off with more (Indistinct) projects versus larger strategic projects of the province, and this certainly would be something that could be considered.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Shall it carry?

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct) the department take the lead on that?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Brown: The Leader of the Opposition, the Building Canada Fund is, I consider, community funding. I have to say that we have an excellent working relationship with ACOA here in Prince Edward Island. The staff at ACOA are outstanding, the leadership down there is outstanding. We have a great relationship with the NRC and the IRAP people.

Chair: 7(1) The Minister may

(a) establish advisory committees; and

(b) appoint individuals to advisory committees,

for the purpose of providing the Minister with advice regarding policy with respect to any matter governed by this Act.

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct).

(2) The term of an advisory committee shall be determined by the Minister at the time the advisory committee is constituted.

(3) Members of advisory committees

(a) shall serve without remuneration; and

(b) shall be entitled to reimbursement of expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their duties as members of the advisory committee.

Mr. Brown: That's the advantage we have in PEI with our universities and our colleges, we're small. I get criticized sometimes when I walk into the ACOA office to see some of the people that are working there and trying to move a project forward. It's like: Minister, really, you shouldn't be - you should be minister to minister. Like, I'm sorry, I can't operate that way. I have objectives here, that ministerial protocol goes out the window when it comes - not unlike the previous minister. I've taken a page out of his book. I saw him in action. This ministerial stuff, he did away with it and said: Let's just get the job done and never mind the protocol. I've taken a page out of his book.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Okay. Shall it carry?

Chair: 8. The Minister may, at any time, require the Board, the officers and staff of the Corporation, the Credit Management Committee and the Audit Committee to meet with the Minister in respect of any matter mentioned in the last annual report of the Board or any other matter relating to the economy of Prince Edward Island that is of concern to the Minister, and the Minister may invite to such a meeting such persons from the private sector or such persons representing the economic sectors as the Minister considers appropriate.

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Administration.

Shall it carry?

6.(1) The Minister has the general supervision and management of this Act.

(2) The Minister may delegate the administration of any function of the Corporation upon terms and conditions the Minister may determine.

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Question.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: How often do you think the board should meet?

Mr. Brown: The main board of the corporation?

Mr. M. Currie: Yes.

Mr. Brown: At least monthly. 7(1), I just want to get one quick one in on that. Let's say there is a special item that comes up like last year with some of the energy stuff. There was a committee put together called ERIC. They reviewed some projects and put a framework together, a multi-departmental committee, and one of the recommendations of that committee was: Do not get into ethanol at this time. It was funny, some of these states in the United States are ending up owning ethanol plants that are not operating at right now. So I'm just lucky that when you get the Department of Agriculture together, the department of development together and get their brains working together, and the department of environment, that way you get the input of all the departments.

Sometimes what happened in the past was we went along and developed a business plan, or a business came in, we put a bunch of money into the business and then all of a sudden the Department of Agriculture or the department of environment said: You shouldn't be doing that, or the inputs can't be made available for that. At least now this gives us the authority to say: Let's put an advisory committee together for a particular item. Let's get information back on a multi-departmental committee.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Chief Executive Officer.

9. (1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall appoint a Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation, who, under the direction of the Minister, shall

(a) supervise the administration and management of the Corporation;

(b) supervise the management and processing of all applications for financial assistance along with applications for financial assistance in the form of loans or loan guarantees;

(c) serve as secretary to the Board; and

(d) perform other duties as the Board or the Lieutenant Governor in Council may assign.

(2) The Executive Officer shall be paid out of the funds of the Corporation such remuneration as may be determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 10. The Chief Executive Office shall review each quarterly report submitted under subsection 14(3) to the Chief Executive Officer by the Director, on behalf of the Credit Management Committee, and the Chief Executive Officer shall, following such review, make such strategic financial recommendations to the Board for its consideration as the Chief Executive Officer considers appropriate.

Shall it carry?

Question.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Is Neil chief officer now?

Mr. Brown: No.

Mr. M. Currie: He's not?

Mr. Brown: He's chief operating officer right now. We have not appointed the chief executive officer yet because we're waiting for this act to be passed.

Mr. M. Currie: So, it will be somebody inside the department?

Mr. Brown: Right now the deputy is in charge of the department. It could be the deputy that could be the chief executive officer of this or we could bring someone in.

Mr. M. Currie: Could be somebody new?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 11. (1) Not later than June 30 in each year, the chairperson, with the assistance of the Chief Executive Officer, shall prepare and file with the Board an annual report respecting the activities and operations of the Corporation during the fiscal year ending on March 31 in that year, which shall include

(a) the annual audit report for the immediately preceding fiscal year that has been approved by the Audit Committee; and

(b) if the chairperson considers it appropriate to do so, a statement respecting any matter pertaining to the activities and operations of the Corporation that, in the opinion of the chairperson, should be

brought to the attention of the Minister and the Legislative Assembly.

(2) The Board shall, after receipt of a report under subsection (1), forward the report to the Minister who shall

(a) lay the report before the Legislative Assembly if it is then in session; and

(b) if it is not then in session, lay the report before the Legislative Assembly within fifteen sitting days following the commencement of the next ensuing session.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Director of Lending Services.

12. (1) The Chief Executive Officer shall appoint a person as the Director of Lending Services.

(2) The Director shall

(a) manage the lending services provided by the Corporation in accordance with the bylaws and policies of the Board; and

(b) carry out such other duties to further the purposes of this Act as may be required by the Chief Executive Officer.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Credit Management Committee.

13. (1) There is hereby established a committee, to be known as the Credit Management Committee, consisting of

(a) the Director; and

(b) six persons appointed by the Lieutenant

Governor in Council from the private sector, including three from the strategic sectors and three from other economic sectors.

(2) The Director shall serve as the chairperson of the Credit Management Committee.

(3) The private sector members of the Credit Management Committee shall be appointed to hold office for a term not exceeding three years and may be reappointed.

(4) A vacancy on the Credit Management Committee caused by the death, resignation, removal or incapacity to act of a private sector member may be filled by the appointment by the Lieutenant Governor in Council of a person to hold office for the unexpired portion of the term of office of such member.

(5) Subject to subsection (6), the members of the Credit Management Committee

(a) shall serve without remuneration; and

(b) shall be entitled to be reimbursed out of the funds of the Corporation for the expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their duties as members of the Credit Management Committee.

(6) The private sector members of the Credit Management Committee are entitled to receive such remuneration as the Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine.

(7) Five members of the Credit Management Committee, at least three of whom shall be private sector members, constitute a quorum.

(8) A decision of the majority of the members of the Credit Management Committee present and constituting a quorum is the decision of the Credit Management Committee.

(9) Subject to subsection (10), each member of the Credit Management Committee is entitled to one vote.

(10) The Director, in his or her capacity as chairperson of the Credit Management Committee, shall exercise his or her voting rights only to break a tie on a vote among the members of the Credit Management Committee.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Question.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: The Credit Management Committee, are they going to meet every Friday and go over all the applications that are presented? I'm just trying to think of the process to expedite loans sometimes. Sometimes you as a minister will have to carry a memo right into Cabinet. In some cases that'll happen someday, I'm sure. Probably already has. Not to go around them, I guess, I'm not asking you that question. I'm asking you how can you make - it seems you're putting a lot of steps in here -

Mr. Brown: I know.

Mr. M. Currie: Nothing wrong with the steps. How soon are they going to meet so that they can get the business of the day done?

Mr. Brown: We have constituted a quorum, and hopefully, at least once a week, we can get enough of them together to get a quorum and to put the loans through.

If the board determines we're going to continue on with the policy your

administration - you know, \$1 million loans go to Treasury Board. Anything 2.5 goes to Executive Council, and it's posted out on the board. We're going to continue with that policy. But if the board directs the committee: Look, loans of this value that meet this criteria, the executive officer can make the loans of this criteria and this credit limit, the credit manager or the director of lending and the CEO can make that decision.

Mr. M. Currie: So not all applications for loans go through the Credit Management Committee. I thought that's what you were doing.

Gordon Cobb Director: Yes, they do, but as the minister has indicated, either the Cabinet has regulations or the board can establish a minimum threshold. That's possible. That's an option open to the board and the Cabinet to establish a minimum threshold that can be done at the officer level.

Mr. M. Currie: Is that written in here or is it in the regulations?

Gordon Cobb Director: That'll be dealt with by regulations.

Mr. M. Currie: That'll be done by regulations.

Gordon Cobb Director: That would be in the interest of expediting, as you indicated earlier, expediting some of the smaller applications.

Mr. M. Currie: They'll still go to the Credit Management Committee, all loans?

Mr. Brown: The Credit Management Committee will see all loans. Credit Management Committee will know what loans are being done when they meet. They'll say: What loans are on the table,

what loans are you approving? Are they going to discuss every \$50,000 loan or \$100,000 loan? I'll leave that up to them. But hopefully, the big ones, anything over a million has to go Treasury Board. Anything over 2.5 million has to go to Treasury Board plus Cabinet. They'll be given a lot of scrutiny.

The way it's set up, the business development officers are out there. They meet with the local company, they meet with ABC Company. They have a great business plan. They get it through the business development section. They put a package together and hopefully they will help lead the project through the lending agency. But if a person comes off the street with their own plan and lending, then they'll go through the lending agency itself. Hopefully, by working together but separately -

Mr. M. Currie: Do you still go to Treasury Board every quarter and present?

Mr. Brown: Yes. Every quarter all the loans are presented to Treasury Board, both for BDI.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 14. (1) In this section, "financial assistance" means assistance by way of a loan or loan guarantee.

(2) Subject to the regulations, the Credit Management Committee shall, on behalf of the Corporation,

(a) receive, review, assess, and approve applications that are made to the Corporation for financial assistance; and

(b) advance financial assistance from the funds of the Corporation to applicants whose applications the Credit Management

Committee has approved.

(3) The Credit Management Committee shall carry out its functions under subsection (2) with a view to obtaining the maximum benefit for the economy of Prince Edward Island.

(4) The Credit Management Committee, through the Director, shall provide quarterly reports to the Chief Executive Officer containing all of the following information:

- (a) the number of applications received, broken down by economic sector and region of the province;
- (b) the number of applications approved, broken down by economic sector and region of the province;
- (c) the terms of the approved applications;
- (d) the dollar amounts of the loans and loan guarantees advanced in respect of approved applications;
- (e) such other information as may be required by the Chief Executive Officer.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Audit Committee.

15. (1) There is hereby established a committee to be known as the Audit Committee.

(2) The Audit Committee shall consist of

- (a) The Chief Executive Officer;
- (b) four persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council from the private sector; and

(c) a person appointed by the Chief Executive Officer who is an auditor from the private sector.

(3) The chairperson of the Audit Committee shall be a private sector member elected by a majority of the members of the Audit Committee.

(4) The private sector members of the Audit Committee shall be appointed to hold office for a term not exceeding three years and may be reappointed.

(5) A vacancy on the Audit Committee caused by the death, resignation, removal or incapacity to act of a private sector member may be filled by the appointment by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under clause (2)(b) of a person to hold office for the unexpired portion of the term of office of such member.

(6) The member of the Audit Committee appointed under clause (2)(c) shall hold office for a term not exceeding one year and may be reappointed.

(7) Subject to subsection (8), the members of the Audit Committee

(a) shall serve without remuneration; and

(b) shall be entitled to be reimbursed out of the funds of the Corporation for the expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their duties as members of the Audit Committee.

(8) The private sector members, and the member appointed under clause (2)(c), of the Audit Committee are entitled to receive such remuneration as the Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine.

(9) Three members of the Audit Committee constitute a quorum.

(10) A decision of the majority of the members of the Audit Committee present and constituting a quorum is the decision of the Audit Committee.

(11) Subject to subsection (12) and (13), each member of the Audit Committee is entitled to one vote.

(12) The chairperson of the Audit Committee shall exercise his or her voting rights only to break a tie on a vote among the members of the Audit Committee.

(13) The member of the Audit Committee appointed under clause 2(c) is not entitled to vote.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Do you think you're smothering yourself with red tape?

Mr. Brown: I knew you were going to ask that question and that was a concern of ours, that there's a lot of red tape here. What we ask for - if the private sector is expected to do things, we should be expected to do the same things as the private sector.

Company regulations right now, anyone on the TSX or on the exchanges, the requirement now is to have an audit committee and an independent audit committee. If the private sector has to have that, I felt that we should have to live under the same rules as the private sector. If we want to be a private sector driven department, we should live under the same rules.

All this is doing is sometimes - what happened was the executive board of

directors of the company got the auditor's report and there was comments in the audit that criticized the board and the board just basically said: We'll put it away and we'll say we're doing things to it. That's one of the reasons some of the failures in Canadian companies and the US companies happen. We determined that - we looked at the audit committee of these private sector corporations and basically, what that says is it takes an independent view, it challenges the board of the audit report. It says: The auditor has told you this and told you that, what is the board going to do? It's not a red tape of a day-to-day operations. It's just a committee to say: The auditor has said you do this, are you doing it, why aren't you doing it? And forcing the board to follow up on the audit.

Mr. M. Currie: Minister, you're losing control of your department here. The people don't want to go to the board of directors nor will they go the Board of Directors when they have a complaint or an issue to deal with. They're going to go to you or the Premier. I feel you're giving up all your control of your department. You won't be able to walk across the room unless you get somebody to give you permission to do it. How are you going to run this department?

Mr. Brown: That was a concern, but there are clauses there, like I said. There's an out clause there. I agree with you. There is a matter of running it like the wild, wild west or putting a set of controls in. We've determined to put a set of controls in. By the looks of the bill, it may be over-controlled, but I'm a firm believer that as a politician - and you know as a politician - people come in with all kinds of scams or all kinds of ideas -

Mr. M. Currie: Be careful with your words.

Mr. Brown: I know. All kinds of ideas.

Mr. M. Currie: Too much information.

Mr. Brown: All kinds of ideas. All I'm saying is: I will take your case to the board, I'll take your case to the committees we have set up, I'll promote you to them. But we have to work with the private sector groups that are on these boards. We have to work our way through the system.

Am I going to override and order things to be done? There are clauses. There are policy documents that I can issue to do that. At the end of the day we found out that the ones who usually end up overriding the department or doing it without consultation, they're usually the ones that end up on the front page of the paper and they're usually the ones that cost taxpayers a lot of money.

I'm committed to somebody coming through the front door, seeing the minister, seeing myself. The deputy who is in charge of the innovation corporation sits right across from me. I know I will be in and out of his office asking him about particular projects and why isn't it being done, or I think it should be being done. But at the end of the day, it's hard for politicians to say no. I'm being up front here. But at least this ties the hands of myself a bit and forces me to present the case to various committees that are set up in here.

Mr. M. Currie: I know what you're trying to achieve. I just think that you've strangled yourself with the red tape. Knowing that you come from the private sector and grew up in businesses, you'd be frustrated with the amount of paperwork you're not only going to hamper yourself with, but you're going to allow the private sector to jump over these fences to get through here. I'd say you probably have a bit of a short fuse from time to time -

Mr. Brown: Yes, I do.

Mr. M. Currie: - and that you'd be frustrated with this.

Anyway, if you seem to have developed the patience now as a mature - certainly your hair's getting whiter -

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Chair: On the section 15, line one, it's been brought to my attention there is a typo. I'd ask the minister to move an amendment to that.

It states: There is hereby established a committee to be - it should be known as.

Mr. Brown: Okay.

Chair: Do you move such an amendment?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Chair: To correct that.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Section 15.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Section 16.

(1) On the request of the Board, the Audit Committee shall

(a) review and audit any program, service or activity of the Corporation; and

(b) provide recommendation to the Board

(i) for improving the accountability of the Corporation

- (ii) for improving the risk management of the programs, services or activities of the Corporation; and
- (iii) for maximizing the economic benefit obtained for Prince Edward Island from the programs, services, and activities of the Corporation.
- (2) Not later than June 30 in each year, the Chief Executive Officer shall
- (a) prepare, in accordance with the regulations, an annual audit report for all programs, services and activities of the Corporation for the fiscal year ending on March 31 in that year;
- (b) submit the annual audit report to the Audit Committee for its approval; and
- (c) after the annual audit report is approved by the Audit Committee, submit it to the chairperson for inclusion in the Corporation's annual report.
- (3) On receipt of the annual audit report, submitted by the Chief Executive Officer under (2)(b), the Audit Committee shall
- (a) review the report; and
- (b) approve the report if the Audit Committee is satisfied that
- (i) the report presents fairly the financial position, results of programs, services, activities and changes in financial position of the Corporation for the fiscal year ending on March 31 in that year in accordance with the disclosed basis of accounting; and
- (ii) the report meets such other requirements as are established by the regulations.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Section 17. Objects of the Corporation.

The objects of the Corporation are

- (a) to implement the Island Prosperity Strategy;
- (b) to recommend changes to the Island Prosperity Strategy to the Minister;
- (c) to serve as an ambassador in the regional, national and international communities for developing the awareness of the capacity of Prince Edward Island for innovation;
- (d) to facilitate cooperation and communication amongst Government, the research and development community, education and training institutions, and the business community;
- (e) to promote communications and awareness of the role of innovation and technology commercialization to the general public;
- (f) to advance the value-added role of intellectual property in the affairs of the Corporation and the Government, and in the economy of Prince Edward Island;
- (g) to promote Prince Edward Island as a destination of choice for the commercialization of intellectual property;
- (h) to provide financial assistance to Prince Edward Island businesses and entrepreneurs in order to create, maintain and expand business activity in Prince Edward Island;
- (i) to provide business development advice, information, infrastructure and services to the private sector, public sector and industry association to assist in the promotion of innovation, commercialization, productivity, competitiveness, and wealth creation in

Prince Edward Island.

(j) to provide leadership with respect to the prospecting and locating of off-Island firms in support of designated strategic sectors and areas of potential wealth generation in other economic sectors;

(k) to provide leadership in the research, development and implementation of marketing and trade strategies for Prince Edward Island goods and services;

(l) to work with economic development agencies, including federal and municipal bodies, to develop policies and agreements in support of innovation and economic development in Prince Edward Island;

(m) to promote strategic partnerships in commercial ventures;

(n) to enable the development of incubator facilities for new technology-based companies and business support services to technology-orientated companies and organizations;

(o) to work with the Department, other departments and agencies of the Government of Prince Edward Island, the Government of Canada the government of other provinces or jurisdictions, educational and training institutions, industry associations and the public to develop and to deliver a human resources development strategy in support of the Island Prosperity Strategy.

Shall it carry?

Question from the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: No, (f), what do you mean by that, “to advance the value-added role of intellectual property in the affairs of the Corporation and the Government...” What

do you mean by that, minister?

Mr. Brown: What it says, “to advance the value-added role of the intellectual property in the affairs of the Corporation and the Government...,” what we’re looking at is when the corporation has a company or working with the Atlantic Vet College or the new BioCommons Park, that there is a value-added in intellectual property that has been discovered out there.

It is the job of the corporation to maximize advantage to the economy of Prince Edward Island. We’ve seen too many times where people have come to Prince Edward Island, have taken advantage of our programs to develop research and develop products, and then move those products off PEI. Our objective is going to be if we’re going to invest in the development of an IP for your company, you’re going to be expected to keep that IP and develop the maximum benefits to Prince Edward Island.

I was extremely disappointed to read in the paper there one day where we gave a guy some money and he developed an electronic pad that senses you’re in a particular building or facility. He says: Oh great, I developed all the IP on PEI, but money on PEI - I’m going to set my company up in USA. That extremely upset me and disappointed me. Because if Islanders invested in an intellectual property or a value-added property, I expect and I will demand that that company develop the maximize return to Islanders because Islanders are the one that took the risk and the chances. We took this person or company under our wing and we expect them to return their value here. Anybody that gets money out of the Province of Prince Edward Island will be expected not to run off with their IP after it’s developed.

Mr. M. Currie: So if a scientist comes in here tomorrow and discovers or works on

and finds an active ingredient that he can take from tunicate that's going to be available for medicinal purposes, does he not already strike a deal with somebody for that in the university because he's accessing funding from them and sometimes he's access funding from the pharmaceutical company?

Mr. Brown: That's right. If he's getting money -

Mr. M. Currie: He probably sold his rights already. In advance.

Mr. Brown: I know. I'm saying if he gets his rights - if we invested in his company and we helped him develop that IP, I want him to give that portion back to Prince Edward Island. I'm extremely happy with Regis Duffy. Regis Duffy is a person that developed excellent products and excellent techniques and methods with the help of the Prince Edward Island government. When he had an opportunity to sell part of this company, one of his demands to the new company was: You must keep it on PEI. I really want to thank Regis Duffy for his efforts there. He probably could have got more money for this company. That person said: PEI helped me develop this, I want this to stay on PEI, and that was one of the demands that he made when he sold part of his company. That's the kind of people I want in Prince Edward Island.

Mr. M. Currie: Okay. Can I ask another question? There's always an idea and the idea is taken to the lab and the idea goes from the lab to commercialization. I'm just wondering: Where are you going to capture this property? Right at the start? If you help finance somebody in the bioscience community to come up with an idea, can you stop him from selling that right to somebody in Montreal that wants to do the commercialization on it? Is that what you're going to do?

Mr. Brown: We're going to take a partnership and ownership on the IP.

Mr. M. Currie: I have no problem with that. Just wondering how the mechanics are going to work.

Mr. Brown: The mechanics of it is going to work. We're going to invest in your company. We're taking a partnership in your IP. You develop IP on Prince Edward Island, Islanders have invested in you. Islanders have put their money in your company and we took a substantial chance. IP is a very difficult one, but when they hit, they hit good and they return good returns to Islanders. There's going to be losses in it and there's going to be wins in it. When there's a winner, we want our money.

Mr. M. Currie: And you'll run when they have their loss.

Mr. Brown: Well, we're going to have to.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Just a couple of questions on that section. Are you saying you're going to be funding re-commercialization?

Mr. Brown: Helping in commercialization?

Leader of the Opposition: No. Re-commercialization. Are you going to be funding projects? That's what this section says to me.

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. What is the role, then, between what the corporation's doing and what someone like Dr. Catherine Schultz would be doing with the university?

Mr. Brown: What is Catherine Schultz

doing?

Leader of the Opposition: She's the person responsible for commercialization and intellectual property. The science community.

Mr. Brown: For the university?

Leader of the Opposition: For the university, the vet school. I guess that would lead to my next questions: How many IPs have been signed from university and the vet school? How many projects have been fully commercialized?

Mr. Brown: I'll get back to you with that. I'll ask that question.

Leader of the Opposition: Sure.

Mr. Brown: But she will handle the IP of the work that's being done under the university. As you know, the university has an agreement with the faculty that IP has been shared and that's her job to ensure that the university gets its cut of the IP when IP is developed. In the United States, IP that's coming out of the university is owned by the university.

Leader of the Opposition: Some places out west, that's similar too. But again it comes back to how many times - like, most of the dollars and the research work that's required is in pre-commercialization. I'm just curious if that's an area you guys are planning on funding. Workers are planning on funding.

Mr. Brown: One of the reasons that the biocommons park will be to - as with the industrial park - is to take an idea and commercialize it. Let's take a look at Donnie Allan. Donnie Allan was making machinery. They work with government and work with various organizations to commercialize his product. We're taking that same concept in putting it into

intellectual property and into the development of value-added products and intellectual property.

Leader of the Opposition: So will you also be working with NSAC?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: In what way?

Mr. Brown: Again, NSAC - the companies that they have in there, Chemaphor is in there now. Let's say Chemaphor develops its IP and its research proves to be viable and economical. We'll then be encouraging that company to say: How do we commercialize that product or your IP on Prince Edward Island? What do we set up? Do we try to set up a little production facility at Cornwall Industrial Park? We're trying that again.

But I must say that the PEI Food Technology Centre, the staff at the PEI Food Technology Centre, and the development of the additional space out there has allowed a number of small companies on Prince Edward Island to develop IP. I was extremely impressed by Dykerman foods. She has done a fantastic job. She has the energy of 20 of us when it comes to promoting and working her company. I saw her in Chicago. She just works day and night on her project. She worked with the PEI Food Technology Centre. She has a little production line set up there and that helps her.

One of the things I saw in one of the food shows that we're looking into right now was a lot of companies are - they have to buy individual machines for their packaging. We saw a machine at one place that can vary the packaging size to different packages. I said: Why don't we take a look at buying that for the food technology sector and saying we can do a packaging at the PEI Food

Technology Centre? You could batch up your stuff in your own production facilities. But instead of buying a 200,000 or \$300,000 machine, we'll schedule a time for small companies on PEI to put their product through that packaging.

Leader of the Opposition: Just I'm curious, because that's sort of what Dr. Richard Ablett at NSAC does for Atlantic Canada. So is your department of innovation working with Dr. Ablett?

Mr. Brown: At NRC, yeah.

Leader of the Opposition: At NSAC. Because what you're talking about is actually what they are doing. They have mobile units there. I'm just curious. Again, I go back to some questions around the pre-commercialization. Another example, and again it's an agriculture one. Many people recognize the benefits of rhubarb, however there hasn't been a lot of equipment developed. So would there be funding available, for example, to develop new technology for a rhubarb harvester?

Mr. Brown: Oh, okay, yes. Blueberry harvester?

Leader of the Opposition: No, rhubarb.

Mr. Brown: Oh, okay.

Leader of the Opposition: It has tremendous capabilities, it's one of those functional foods you were talking about awhile ago. Rhubarb is grown here now in the province but the technology hasn't been there yet. So if there was - again, around the intellectual property. That wouldn't come out of the university in that case, it may come out of the farmer. How would that work?

Mr. Brown: You bring up a great example here. My brother's shop across the river

there, there is a little shop across the road, and I'm extremely impressed when I walked in it. There was a couple of people doing the blueberry harvesters. They're working and they're making gadgets there each and every day trying to improve things. I'm in there watching these people day and night working and testing and working.

They're great people. They spend a tremendous amount of nights there, daytimes there. I commend them for the work they do. Looking at them I said: Maybe if we could hook them up with a - maybe we could - and I'm not saying that particular company, but I mean, if a person is doing something and working extremely hard and saying: I want my department to go out there and if somebody is developing something or developing a machine or wants to develop a machine that - let's work with the university, let's work with the engineering department, let's pull in whatever we can pull in in order to see this project (Indistinct). That's what we're trying to do here.

Leader of the Opposition: The Minister of Agriculture has a gentleman by the name of Jimmy Doucette, Acadian metals in Tignish, that's one of the most innovative companies on PEI. He was telling me this summer that he requires someone like an engineer or whoever to help him as he's trying to work through patents. Like, this section covers intellectual property, but he's been pretty innovative in cranberry harvesters, blueberry harvesters, etc. I'm just curious in terms of is there some point in this act that talks about patents?

Mr. Brown: Yeah, Intellectual Property. I've talked to a company - we're looking at legal firms to say - there's one in the US and there's a good one in Canada - that says: Can we in some sort of a way - patents cost a lot of money, especially if they're a complicated patent they cost a lot of money.

If we in the department can pick one company to say: You know your patent laws, and let's work out a deal where if we can channel all our patents or our patent documentation through you, we get a better deal. Instead of, now, companies happen to go out and looking for the patent person, we'll help them patent their development. We have to (Indistinct) -

Leader of the Opposition: Will you help them with the process of going through the patent, too?

Mr. Brown: Yeah, the legal cost.

Leader of the Opposition: Not just the cost, but how the process works?

Mr. Brown: I'm a strong believer that I want the inventor or the person that does the work of the inventing on the floor inventing the thing, inventing a new machine or inventing a new IP. I'm going to allow that. I'm going to try to help that person to say: You stay on your research project, you stay working on it, you got a good idea there, work the bugs out of it, keep working as good as you can with it. We'll try to support you in terms of getting you through government regulations, through the patent office, and things like that.

Far too many times the inventor gets so far along on his patent or so far along on his invention and then he got to spend the rest of his time trying to get it through the legal system. All of a sudden he didn't change a patent here or change something here, or he didn't complete his project. The next guy comes along and says: He's two steps away from it, all we have to do, boys, is just go in, do the additional two steps, file the patent, and he loses his patent. I'm saying: You finish your patent, you finish the work on your patent, you let us help you and assist you getting the patent documents through the system. I want the person doing what

they do best, inventing, not filling out paper work.

Leader of the Opposition: Just a final question. Has the process gone that you've designed the programs and services that will be available for people to be able to apply? Has that work been done yet? I know you have the act here, but you're working on the regulations. Do you have the design of the programs and services?

Mr. Brown: We did issue one program out there, the Innovation PEI Pilot Fund. I understand there was a tremendous take up in it. They're just evaluating they projects now. I'm extremely impressed by the number of Islanders that have applied to it and the number of ideas that are out there. When it comes -

Leader of the Opposition: Are they all listed on your web site?

Mr. Brown: Who's applied?

Leader of the Opposition: No, no. The program.

Mr. Brown: The program should be on the web site and it is a part of the prosperity plan.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Mr. Brown: But I can say here, a lot of people think 140,000 people, small island, what can you come up with? I'm telling you, some of the ideas that I see out there, we don't have to take a back seat to anybody, we don't have to take a back seat to any big state or big province or big country out there that says: We've got a trillion dollar or a hundred billion dollar research budget. Look at all the work we're doing.

We can match up to them any day. I think the people on Prince - all it takes is an idea.

Our idea is: Today's idea is tomorrow's jobs.

Chair: Okay, before we carry that section there, it's brought to my attention there is another typo -

Mr. Brown: Gee, I must have written that.

Chair: In section (o), at the end of the second sentence there, the Government of Canada - there should be a comma. Can you move an amendment?

Mr. Brown: Sure, I'll move an amendment.

Chair: Okay. It's been moved.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Shall we carry that section?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Powers of the Corporation.

18. (1) Subject to the Island Prosperity Strategy and other economic development policies by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the Corporation may

(a) provide financial assistance out of the funds of the Corporation and establish applicable rates of interest and terms of repayment;

(b) make advances upon the security of, and as security for, any financial assistance made by the Corporation, or any debt or liability to the Corporation, on real or personal property, including intellectual property;

(c) borrow, and receive, by way of a grant or loan, money from the Government or any corporation and give as security therefor

bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments and securities;

(d) borrow, and receive, by way of a grant or loan, money from the Government of Canada or any department or agency of the Government of Canada and give as security therefor bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments and securities;

(e) enter into agreements pertaining to intellectual property;

(f) apply for or acquire by purchase, assignment or otherwise and hold intellectual property, or any right or interest therein and sell, grant, assign, or otherwise dispose of any such intellectual property so acquired or right or interest therein;

(g) develop programs, strategies and partnerships that encourage the commercialization of intellectual property in Prince Edward Island;

(h) enter into agreements for the performance, on behalf of the Corporation, of research projects or the conduct of investigations and studies, as it deems advisable;

(i) conduct research in subjects that may be beneficial to the development of resources or industry in the province;

(j) conduct research, and undertake development, consultation, design, innovation, investigations and studies for other persons or bodies upon such terms and conditions, including remuneration for its services, as may be decided by the Corporation;

(k) Cause the Corporation to be registered and recognized in a foreign country or place, designate persons there, according to the laws of the foreign country or place, to

represent the Corporation, and to accept service for or on behalf of the Corporation or a process or suit;

(l) acquire, take and hold by purchase, lease, donation, mortgage or otherwise, real and personal property;

(m) sell, convey, lease, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of, real or personal property or any part thereof and for such purposes execute any agreement, deed, lease, mortgage, pledge, lien or conveyance and designate the officials or employees of the Corporation to sign the required documents or conveyances;

(n) construct factories and buildings for sale, lease or rent;

(o) make improvements to land and buildings;

(p) attach covenants as prescribed by regulation on any land sold, leased or conveyed by the Corporation;

(q) convey any of its real property to any department or corporation of the Government;

(r) invest, either directly or through companies established for the purpose, in Prince Edward Island businesses;

(s) guarantee the payment of a debt or obligation;

(t) acquire, hold, deal with and dispose of shares, stocks, bonds, debentures and other securities as if the Corporation were an individual;

(u) invest any surplus funds in such securities as the Minister may determine;

(v) do any other thing as may be required to be done and exercise any of the power

required to be exercised for the purposes of carrying out the provisions and intent of this Act.

(2) The Corporation shall carry out any mandate entrusted to it by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to achieve any project of economic importance to the province.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Section (u), "invest any surplus funds in such securities..." Typically it's the treasurer that's responsible for investment - for pension funds, etc.. Explain what that section is referring to.

Mr. Brown: We go and borrow money. We set that money up in bank accounts and we lend it out.

Leader of the Opposition: So when you borrow money you're talking about debentures?

Mr. Brown: Yeah. We could issue debentures or we can borrow money from the Crown itself -

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Mr. Brown: - BDI. All that means is when we - let's say we took out a 20-year bond or a 20-year issue and we haven't lent all the money out at the particular time or there's transition that gives us the ability to invest that money within the corporation until we get to spend it again or invest it back out -

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 19. For the purpose of carrying into effect the objects of the Corporation or any project referred to in subsection 18(2), the Corporation may enter into and carry out agreements with any person, including any body corporate and any corporation of the Crown in right of Canada or of any province.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: Question.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: I'm sorry, I can't - with the noise behind me.

An Hon. Member: Well, it's a two-party problem.

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct) so he can get the party quiet.

Chair: The Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

Leader of the Opposition: Just on this. I notice that you keep writing in about the Crown and Canada. Do you have a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the corporation and the province of Canada?

Mr. Brown: In terms of?

Leader of the Opposition: You have them included in the act so I would expect you have a Memorandum of Understanding signed with someone representing the

Crown.

Mr. Brown: We're working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the federal government -

Leader of the Opposition: You're working? Which lead department?

Mr. Brown: Department of industry, and ACOA. I must say that Peter McKay - he's in charge of ACOA. We met with the president of ACOA several times to work out: How can we work together here in order for the prosperity of Prince Edward Island, and not have the two corporations running as two separate corporations?

I must say that Peter MacKay and the president of the corporation have agreed that we as a province - our prospectors and their prospectors should be working together more closely. If we do that, it's just beneficial to the province. We are working on agreements -

Leader of the Opposition: We'd like to see a copy of that signed agreement when it's signed, the Memorandum of Understanding -

Mr. Brown: Sure. The agreement will have to go through Cabinet and be signed.

Leader of the Opposition: Sure. It also relates back to, again, the board. I know we talked about the president and we talked about the composition of the board. Will there be somebody, either from ACOA or one of the federal departments - even in an ex officio stance - sitting on that committee?

Mr. Brown: I'd love to have that. If the feds are allowed to do that, we'll entertain -

Leader of the Opposition: Well, usually you are. They're not allowed to have a vote but they get to sit there. Because again,

when you're talking about strategies and investment -

Mr. Brown: All I can go back and say is the cooperation, and the work between ACOA and the Province of Prince Edward Island, is second to none. That's the easy way to put it. The people that work down there - the director general, the people that are in charge, all the staff - I'm totally impressed at how well we work together in certain areas - in areas. They and us, we have the best interest of Prince Edward Island at hand. There's no big political or jurisdictional issues here. It's a matter of sitting down, rolling up the sleeves and saying: What can we do for Prince Edward Island?

I found that talking to my colleagues in the other provinces - and I know I talk long but this is a major piece of legislation - I talk to other people, and all it is is the feds and the province are against each other or there's always - I must say even with different parties in Ottawa, the cooperation is still phenomenal.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 20. (1) The Corporation may

(a) employ administrative, accounting, clerical and professional staff; and

(b) engage consultants and professional specialists,

that the Chief Executive Officer considers necessary to carry out the functions of the Corporation.

(2) The *Civil Service Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap C-8 shall not apply to any person employed by the Corporation.

Shall it carry?

Leader of the Opposition: Is this a change?

Mr. Brown: No. This has been the BDI act, the IIDI act, the other acts, and all through history. It's just a thing that if we're out there working with private corporations, I want the employees of this corporation to feel the pressures of the private corporation, and to work in the same way.

Leader of the Opposition: Typically there are classifications for program officers, etc. So are you saying that the CEO can describe any job description and put any remuneration based on the going rate rather than going by dollars or in the pay scale through the civil service?

Mr. Brown: The corporation has that authority and has had that authority, but I must say that the vast majority of the time, in all functional areas of the department, we do use the civil service commission and classification review and they do -

Leader of the Opposition: That's what I thought.

Mr. Brown: - an excellent job there. But there are certain jobs that we're going to require in here that - you get out and you get us companies in PEI.

Leader of the Opposition: So in terms of chief executive officer, what kind of pay scale - would that person fall in remuneration similar to a deputy minister?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. So it's an excluded employee, one year worked to two years' pension, \$140,000 a year? Is that what you're looking at?

Mr. Brown: It's comparable to the senior

compensation but they're not on the senior compensation.

Leader of the Opposition: It's comparable? Is this where then you write it in that you can put bonuses and incentives?

Mr. Brown: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Regulations.

21. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

(a) prescribing one or more sectors of the economy in Prince Edward Island as economic sectors for the purposes of clause 1(h);

(b) identifying the economic development strategy for the strategic sectors of the economy of Prince Edward Island that is the Island Prosperity Strategy for the purposes of clause 1(1);

(c) respecting the making of applications for financial assistance;

(d) respecting the review, assessment and approval of applications for financial assistance;

(e) respecting the advancement of financial assistance to any person whose application for such assistance has been approved;

(f) respecting the annual audit reports required by section 16, including the requirements for the approval of such reports under clause 16(3)(b);

(g) defining, for the purposes of this Act and

the regulations, any word or expression that is used in this Act but not defined in this Act;

(h) respecting any other matter that the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary or advisable to carry out the intent and purposes of this Act.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: This is such an important act. Do you have the regulations written and are they with you tonight?

Mr. Brown: They're not completely drafted yet. The regulations will basically be carried over from the regulations that are currently there and I must say, there's very few regulations but there will be more coming forward in the future.

Leader of the Opposition: We talked about a number of regulations tonight. Now, the minister of education has been very kind and his staff are actually briefing us tomorrow on a draft of regulations in regards to the police act. Can we ask the same from your department?

Mr. Brown: Yes. I have no problem with that. The regulations are developed and they're posted. There's nothing secret about the regulations.

Leader of the Opposition: Just like we pointed out some things on the board, there may be - this is an important act that's going to affect the future of the province. I think it's important that we give it due diligence.

Mr. Brown: Yes. I'll commit to you that the regulations, before they go to - they go to you and your caucus -

Leader of the Opposition: It would be nice if Gordon maybe, and whoever else, comes over and we do a briefing.

Mr. Brown: As long as we understand that - and I'm not saying it wrong or anything like that - as long as we say they're confidential until they're passed.

Leader of the Opposition: Absolutely. In terms of the draft part, that's the whole idea. Getting briefed there may be other things that tonight - it seems like everybody's in a rush. It's a real important piece of business. We could slow it down and have some good discussion.

Mr. Brown: I agree. I know you've been in government and you know how the regulations are developed and that. I look forward to your input into the regulations as they go forward.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you.

Mr. Brown: You and your colleagues.

Chair: With that understanding, shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Transitional Provisions.

22. (1) In this section, "Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc." means the corporation established pursuant to the *Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc. Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. B-62.

(2) On the date this Act comes into force,

(a) the Corporation becomes the successor to Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc. and assumes responsibility for

(i) the management and administration of the programs of Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc.,

(ii) all contracts and agreements entered into by Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc.,

(iii) the real and personal property of Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc.,

(iv) the assets and liabilities of Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc.;

(b) all legal proceedings and rights of action by or against Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc. may be brought or continued by or against the Corporation;

(c) any reference in any enactment or document to Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc. shall be construed as a reference to the Corporation; and

(d) for accounting purposes, the transactions of Prince Edward Island Business Development Inc. from April 1, 2008 until the date this Act comes into force, shall be included in the operations of the Corporations for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Do you have a copy of your organizational structure of this - the CEO, the line of authority, different directors' positions?

Mr. Brown: Sure. I'll send that out. It'll be available tomorrow.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 23. (1) In this section, “Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation” means the corporation established pursuant to the *Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. P-19.1.

(2) On the date this Act comes into force,

(a) the Corporation becomes the successor to Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation and assumes responsibility for

(i) the management and administration of the programs of Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation,

(ii) all contracts and agreements entered into by Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation,

(iii) the real and personal property of Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation,

(iv) the assets and liabilities of Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation;

(b) all legal proceedings and rights of action by or against Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation may be brought or continued by or against the Corporation;

(c) any reference in any enactment or document to the Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation shall be construed as a reference to the Corporation; and

(d) for accounting purposes, the transactions of Prince Edward Island Science and Technology Corporation from April 1, 2008 until the date this Act comes into force, shall

be included in the operations of the Corporation for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009.

Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Leader of the Opposition: Call the hour.

Chair: The hour has been called.

Mr. Brown: Did you call it?

Leader of the Opposition: I called the hour.

Mr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Speaker take the Chair and that the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

Chair: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: Madam Speaker, as Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House having under consideration the grant to be intituled *Innovation PEI Act*, I beg leave to report that the Committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again.

I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Vessey: I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood, that this House adjourn until tomorrow, November 21st, at 10:00 a.m.

Speaker: This House is adjourned until

10:00 a.m. tomorrow.

Have a good evening.

The Legislature adjourned