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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



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The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I want to be the first to welcome everyone to the public gallery today, but this day I would like to wish someone good luck. Colton Matheson, of course, is on his tour through Island schools today. I've heard the updates on the radio. It sounds like everything's going great, and I just want to take this opportunity to wish Colton all the best in his endeavours. He's been an incredible ambassador for Easter Seals and I know that he will inspire many on his tour through Island schools. So good luck to Colton.

Thank you, 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 and welcome our guests today in the gallery. I'd also like to say best wishes and good luck to my niece Emma Margaret who's competing in a badminton tournament today. I'd also like to say hello to Grant who watches every day from West Prince. Finally, all the people that watch us on the Internet.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kellys Cross-Cumberland.

Ms. Docherty: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's a pleasure - I have to, unfortunately, kind of lean over to see our guests today in the gallery, but I do welcome them. I could actually be doing a member's statement, which I'm not today, but there's so many things happening in the district of Kellys Cross-Cumberland, starting tomorrow and going on until Sunday, that, yes, I know I could stand for a few minutes.

But I do want to bring attention to the fact that the annual Bonshaw Fishermen's Breakfast is starting tonight, as of 11:00 p.m. It goes until 11:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, and for \$7 as an adult, \$3 for a child, you get your choice of - not choice, you get pancakes and eggs and bacon and sausage and hash browns and brown beans. You name it, it's going to be a great fisherman's breakfast. The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is joining me tomorrow morning bright and early, although we're not going to be fishing. We will be wishing all the fishers on Prince Edward Island all the best tomorrow.

So thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity, and I invite everybody to go out to Bonshaw.

All proceeds are in support of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Dunsford: (Indistinct).

Mr. Campbell: No, no. (Indistinct).

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

Mr. McIsaac: Thank you very much,

Madam Speaker.

I want to welcome everyone in the gallery, especially Bobby Crane from downtown Vernon Bridge. Eddie Lund, a good friend of ours, and a regular here in the gallery.

I want to mention a couple of things that are going on in my district. A lot of stuff going on there, too. There will be a lot of people out fishing because some of the best fishing holes in the province, of course, are in Vernon River-Stratford. I'm not telling exactly where the best parts are, but they're certainly out in that area. The fisherman's breakfast is fantastic, and I'm going to plug it, too, for the hon. member across the hall because it's an awesome event.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to go to the Heritage Fair in Vernon River and judge there. What an awesome display, and the work that those kids did for those projects. Learned a little bit there, too. There's a lot of things that you can pick up. Like I did not know that the poem "In Flanders Fields" is actually on the back of the \$10 bill. So many interesting things like that that you can pick up there.

Last night as well, just as the session was starting here, I had the chance to drop over to see the Eastern School District Drama Festival. There was a great play put on there. One of the presentations was *We Interrupt This Broadcast* by Jennifer MacDonald from Vernon River High School as well.

Last, but not least, I want to say hello to my mom who is in the Park West Lodge, say hello to her.

Thank you very much

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-

Kinlock.

Ms. Dunsford: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to rise and welcome John Morris in the gallery. He's been here many times, and welcome him back today. A former resident of Stratford.

I would also like to say hello to the seniors in Stratford today. There's a great group of people living in Andrews of Stratford, wonderful staff there, and also the people in St. John House, and those who live in the Mutch Drive apartments. Great group of people with a really strong senior community over there. I'd like to say hello to them today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community Services, Seniors and Labour.

Ms. Sherry: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to rise today and welcome all our viewers in the gallery.

I would also like to send a special hello to my mom and my sister Lisa who, I believe, is spending the day with her today. Also, I would like to say a special hello to my Aunt Thelma Murphy who suffered quite a fall about two weeks ago and is in hospital. I know she is certainly resting better because she does have a television and she's able to watch the proceedings of the House.

Also, to all the people of Summerside-Wilmot, I'd like to wish them a great day.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and

Municipal Affairs.

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

I just want to send a special hello out to all those members of Kensington-Malpeque, District 20. I saw the first farmer on the field this morning, heading out to work early on this morning. The fishers all have their traps on the wharves who were ready to go, and I wish them the very best.

I'd like to say a special hello today to Pat McIver and Wade Waddell, the characters that helped put together the championship Vipers this year, and Arnold Moase is a huge supporter out there. Again, for the third year in a row they're Junior B Champs. Congratulations to them.

Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Brown: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I want to welcome everybody to the gallery. I just want to remind everybody, tomorrow is fishing day, opening day. I may be a little late tomorrow, so I'll put you on notice now. I'd appreciate no questions.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd also like to welcome everybody into the gallery today. A good friend of mine sitting up there, Julius Patkai, came in. Welcome. I hope you enjoy the proceedings. I also look up there and see Ronnie MacLean from down in Murray Harbour way. Welcome to the Legislature. I hope you enjoy the

proceedings.

Thank you very much

Statements by Members

Speaker: The hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville.

Relay for Life

Mr. Murphy: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Students and residents of western Prince County will take a stand against cancer by walking from dusk to dawn in the 4th Westisle Composite High School Relay for Life, coming this June.

Fellow members, Relay for Life is the signature fundraising event of the Canadian Cancer Society. It celebrates those people who have beaten cancer and pays tribute to the lives of loved ones who have lost their battle.

The relay includes a night of fun, friendship and fundraising to help beat cancer. Not only does the money raised for Relay for Life on PEI fund programs that provide support services to Islanders living with cancer, it helps to advance research and allows the Canadian Cancer Society to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

The 2010 honorary chair of the campaign is getting used to the idea of being called to the front of the class. Jimmy Doucette, of Tignish, is no stranger to the West Isle's Relay for Life. He's been involved in every event as part of a team, and has supplied tents and other items as needed.

The 2010 relay also has a posthumous chair, Raeanne Dorgan. Raeanne would have been graduating from West Isle High School this year if cancer had not ended her young life. She has been named 2010 honorary chair

posthumously.

The West Isle Relay for Life committee has ensured that the participants will be kept busy with great music and other entertainment. The committee wants to make sure that team members have fun while contributing to the fight against cancer. Last year, the Westisle Relay for Life raised \$143,367, the highest of any school in Canada.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the students and residents of western Prince County for their continued contribution for this worthwhile cause.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Recognition of Thomas and Mary Trenholm

Mr. McGeoghegan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize the wedding anniversary of Thomas and Mary Trenholm of Machon's Point in Murray Harbour. This year, 2010, marks 78 years married.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McGeoghegan: Tom, who recently turned 100 years-of-age on March 9th, and Mary, were raised in the fishing and shipping community of Louisbourg, Nova Scotia. They were married in 1932. They began their courtship a year earlier, when Mary was 15 and Tom was 20.

By the time the couple tied the knot in 1932,

this veteran seaman and boat builder already had a number of years of sailing under his belt. For the first few years of their marriage, Mary followed Tom on many of his seafaring adventures, which included voyages to the Dutch West Indies and British Guyana.

At the onset of the Second World War, Tom's ship was commissioned for service in the Canadian Merchant Navy. During those turbulent war years Tom and his crew sailed on supply missions that took them around Atlantic Canada, always wary of the German U-boat presence in the region.

After the war Tom worked as a tugboat captain in Halifax, before he and Mary moved to Murray Harbour in 1958, where Tom built lobster boats for local fisherman until he retired in 1973.

The Trenholms have enjoyed life in Murray Harbour and have made many friends over the years. They get together frequently with their daughter, granddaughter and neighbours. They have many fond memories of their nearly eight decades together.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate both Tom and Mary for 78 years of marriage, and wish them all the best.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Tribute to Charlie Martell

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

It is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the untimely passing of Charles

Martell. Charlie served as mayor of Georgetown for a handful of terms in the 1980s and 1990s. He helped raise Georgetown's profile through a number of successful initiatives and projects. He put his entire heart into serving Georgetown, and he was rewarded by being re-elected.

Charlie died at the age of 76 after battling cancer. It might have been the only fight Charlie ever lost.

Though he achieved a lot in his career, perhaps Charlie's greatest accomplishment was rebuilding the King's Playhouse a year after it burned to the ground. He tirelessly fundraised, lobbied not just Islanders but the entire nation. We remember Charlie for his spirit and his dedication to serving the citizens of Georgetown. Charlie loved the town and its people, and we are losing a very valued member of our society.

I ask all members to join me and celebrate in this prominent Islander's life.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Responses to Questions Taken As Notice

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Different drug coverages in hospitals (further)

Ms. Bertram: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I certainly would like to bring back responses to the questions from yesterday given by the Leader of the Opposition. They're questions regarding the drug accessed in hospitals. We'd just like to inform the legislature that under the new Health PEI there will be a provincial medical advisory committee that will

oversee all drugs in the province so that, hopefully, will lead to better decisions on what drugs are covered in varying hospitals.

Funds for out-of-province organ transplants (further)

Furthermore, I would like to table responses to the question in regards to the out-of-province support or policy for the budget in terms of the support to lung transplant recipients.

Those are seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Speaker: Thank you.

Madam Minister, I'd ask you to do that under tabling of documents. (Indistinct) okay, you can do it now.

Questions by Members

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

London trip and workers

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The staff of IIDI continue to travel around the world. Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning, my first question today is: During the year of 2008-2009 your staff went to London, England to recruit skilled immigrant workers. Could you tell the House how many skilled workers your department recruited from this trip?

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

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

As the Leader of the Opposition is well

aware, here in Prince Edward Island, as in many other areas of the country, we're now entering a time where we're facing a skilled worker shortage. It's important that we do go to job fairs around the world to try and look for that skilled labour that we can't just provide with training here on Prince Edward Island. Labour market mobility is something that's very much at the forefront for this province and every province in the country.

I can check to see if there are numbers with respect to the Leader of the Opposition's question and if I can get those numbers, I'd be pleased to bring them back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We agree just how important skilled workers are, and especially immigrant skilled workers, so perhaps the minister might want to check your briefing book which I'm sure might have those information and numbers in it and let the House know how many people your staff brought back from that trip.

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

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

It's interesting that the Leader of the Opposition seems to know what's in my briefing book. Again, I will check with staff. Obviously she's speaking about something that's a couple of years ago. I'll check with staff and if there are numbers attached to that particular mission, again, I'd be pleased to bring them back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

One of the big files in your department is actually the prosperity plan, and according to the prosperity plan you want to have 2,000 bioscience people working here in the province. You talked about this in 2008 and 2009. At this particular trip, were any bioscience people brought back to PEI?

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

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

The Leader of the Opposition makes reference to the Island prosperity plan. Bioscience is certainly a sector that we've identified as a key sector.

According to RBC and some of the latest economic indicators, the Island prosperity plan is working. RBC has indicated that our economy has weathered the economic downturn better than most other jurisdictions in the country and they attributed that mainly to our efforts to diversify the economy here in Prince Edward Island.

So I'm very pleased to say that this is a government with a plan and that plan is working.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

So to the same minister, when your staff were at this mission to try and find skilled workers, how many bioscience people did they bring back? Your success is so great, it's talking about 2000. Would they have brought back maybe 200 people? What are you speaking about?

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

Mr. Campbell: Madam Speaker, I guess perhaps the Leader of the Opposition thinks that if we just stay here at home and sit on our hands that the world will come to us.

Obviously that's an approach that was attempted here for 11 years in the province under the previous administration. Again, with respect to skilled labour, we do attend job fairs and I will check on the particular one that she's referencing. If we can put together some numbers (Indistinct), I'd be pleased to bring them back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Follow-up to trips

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We believe it's important to go on these trade missions. We just want to help Islanders see the accountability on actually what the taxpayers' been footing the bill on. So my question to you, Mr. Minister, is: Do you actually do follow-ups when your staff come back to know what the results are from their excursions?

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

Mr. Campbell: Absolutely, Madam

Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Then, to the same minister, perhaps you could tell us how many skilled immigrants your staff brought back from Germany that year.

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

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

Again, I will check with those numbers. She's referring to a couple of years ago. I'll refer to staff and if we can compile that information, again, I'll be pleased to bring it back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Germany trip and IT workers

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. According to your bioscience and your prosperity plan, you also talked about information technology, that you expected 2,000 workers. From your Germany trip, did you bring back any IT workers?

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

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

The Leader of the Opposition seems to have her attention focused on recruiting from around the world. I'd like to take the

opportunity maybe to update the Leader of the Opposition and the House as to what we're doing right here at home as well.

What we've seen from this government is record investment at Holland College, great stakeholders, great partners in a great educational institution. We're working very closely with them through the knowledge infrastructure program and through phase two of redevelopment of Holland College to allow for more seats, to allow us to train more Islanders, more Atlantic Canadians, to bring knowledge to our young people of this province and of this region, and to help with our skilled trade shortage on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Netherlands trip and workers

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We were asking some questions around some of the trips that this minister's staff had done in the area of recruitment of skilled workers. My question: They also that year travelled to the Netherlands. Mr. Minister, how many skilled workers did they bring back on that trip?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, perhaps if the Leader of the Opposition would like to just list off whichever country she wants I'll try and compile that information and bring it back. But again, with respect to skilled labour shortage, we're focusing our efforts on

education right here at home, on recruitment-retention, and that requires some travel around the world to seek out that skilled labour. We're doing that and we're helping to address the skilled labour shortage on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leeds trip and workers

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. We're actually talking about the thousands of dollars your department spent on these international trips, but let's see how the outcomes were. What happened when they went to Leeds, England? How many skilled workers did they bring back?

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

Mr. Campbell: Madam Speaker, again, I'd be pleased to go back with staff and have a look at our recruiting efforts and try and compile some information.

Perhaps we'd even go back a little further than 2008. I don't know. Go back to 2004, 2005. If that's helpful information to the Leader of the Opposition, maybe we could go back a little further and have a look at that as well just to see how the recruiting efforts are going.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

New jobs

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. In your whole area of your prosperity plan you also highlight the fact that you're going to be creating 5,000 new jobs, especially in aerospace, innovative technologies and bioscience. From all these trips, which probably were necessary, what we'd like to know is: What are the results that your staff brought back?

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

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

To speak of results, we now have an aerospace industry here in this province that employs upwards of 900 people. That aerospace industry has grown by 24% over the last two years. It now accounts for 25% of our international exports in this province. It's wonderful to see a government with a vision, a vision for today and a vision for the future.

Our bioscience industry is growing. We have new companies: one in Summerville, Phytterra Yeast, another one in Kensington, Nature's Crops International. Our bioscience and our aerospace industries are growing in this province.

As I indicated, our economy has weathered the economic downturn because of our efforts to diversify the economy. We have a plan, the plan is working, and I'm very proud to serve under the leadership of Premier Ghiz, the man with the plan, and we're going to implement that plan, and continue to grow the economy here in Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the

Opposition.

Belgium and Scotland trips and workers

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister who's going to implement that plan. My question: When your staff were in Belgium and in Scotland, how many people did they bring back to work in the aerospace, innovative technology or bioscience industries?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I want to compliment the staff of both our Population Secretariat and at IIDI for their efforts in trying to recruit skilled workers to this province. I also want to complement my department, the Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning, its staff, for all their hard work in trying to move forward the post-secondary programs here in this province and working with our great institutions here in this province to help train and deliver a skilled workforce.

This government has made great strides after 11 years of neglect by the previous administration. We're very proud of our accomplishments and there are more to come.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Tabling of trip information

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister your department spent thousands and thousands of dollars on these trips. We just want to know what the results are. You tabled some of that information last year here in the House.

My question: Will the minister please table the same details for all trips that your department have taken in the fiscal year 2009-2010? Will you table that information?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I believe that the information that the Leader of the Opposition requested will be tabled during budget estimates, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Number of skilled workers recruited

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister, just how many skilled workers, collectively, do you think your department recruited from all these trips and brought back and nominated here in PEI?

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

Mr. Campbell: Again, Madam Speaker, I've made the commitment to the Leader of the Opposition to go back and refer with staff to our recruiting efforts.

Again, she's talking about something from two years ago. I'll go back and meet with the staff, try and get that number, and be pleased to bring it back to the Leader of the

Opposition.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, to the same minister.

Mr. Minister, your government has been in now for three years. The prosperity plan is two years old. Constantly we ask for information and update. You seem to be having awful difficulties with this file.

My question to the minister is: It's my understanding from all those great trips your staff actually nominated less than 10 people. Would that be an accurate number, Mr. Minister? Of course I have the numbers.

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

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

I don't know whether the Leader of the Opposition is inferring that the bureaucrats at IIDI and in my department are all about taking these great trips that she speaks of. They work very hard, and I'm very pleased and very proud to have such a dedicated staff working on behalf of all Islanders.

If she has some information she'd like to share, I encourage her to share it. I told her I would try and compile the information and bring it back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, to the same minister.

Mr. Minster, you're also responsible for the entire PNP fiasco, so these questions around skilled workers - tell us, Mr. Minister, how many people did your staff actually recruit and bring back? It's such an important area. You talk about your prosperity plan, you talked about all that growth. So how many people did they actually bring back?

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

Mr. Campbell: Again, Madam Speaker, recruitment is one aspect of what we're trying to do through Population Secretariat and IIDI.

We're also focusing a lot of our attention on repatriation and retention of our young Islanders. The best way to retain our young Islanders is to create opportunity for them right here at home here and to provide them with a quality education so that they are well trained and well (Indistinct) to work in those opportunities. We're doing both. We're very proud of our efforts, and those efforts will continue to grow the economy of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Tabling list of companies

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Usually when you go on trips there are usually reasons for it. So I guess what we'd ask you: Could you table a list of all the Island companies requiring skilled workers that necessitated those trips? Will you table the list of companies?

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

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

With respect to the Leader of the Opposition's question, of course, with respect to private companies, I'll check to see whether that information can be provided and if it can be provided I'll be pleased to bring it back.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: To the same minister. Mr. Minister, it's obvious that skilled workers are available. We see Ocean Choice and other private companies successfully brought in over 150 foreign workers last year, yet your department has gone on many trips and it looks like they've only brought in less than 10. What we'll do is we'll move out of that area and go to your settlement strategy.

Settlement strategy

Mr. Minister, many immigrants choose to move to Prince Edward Island because of their interest in the Canadian dream. Minister, you promised a settlement strategy a year ago. The former minister promised it the year before that. Where is the strategy, Mr. Minister?

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

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

We have a draft strategy. Now it's my intention that we go back out for more discussion with our new Islanders. The Leader of the Opposition has constantly called for a comprehensive strategy, yet she sits and says: Hurry up and get it done. I

don't understand how those two things go together.

We need to exercise our due diligence here and make sure that what we have is a comprehensive document that addresses all the needs of our new Islanders. Also, we'd like to have new Islanders to have an opportunity to add their input to this as well. That's what we going to do. We have that draft, we're going out for discussion with our new Islanders, and we'd be pleased to present this great document once that process is completed.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. In regards to this great new document you're referring to, you're the same minister that last year in April told us you were actually in discussions with the federal minister, but you weren't.

But my question to the same minister. On April the 8th last year in this House here's what you said: We're building our settlement strategy here to make sure we're working with groups like the association of newcomers, that when these immigrants arrive in PEI they're made welcome, they're made to feel at home, they're given every opportunity to make a smooth transition into life here on Prince Edward Island.

So where's the strategy, Mr. Minister?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I think I just indicated where we're at with that strategy. I want to take a moment again to thank the association for newcomers to Prince Edward Island for the hard work they do in helping us and partnering with us. We're very pleased as a government to have greatly increased the investment to the association for newcomers to assist them in doing that fine work. They're great partners in this province.

As a matter of fact, as I indicated yesterday, I had the opportunity last Saturday to attend an event to mark the 25th anniversary of the Singh decision with respect to refugees in this country. That of course was put on by the association for newcomers. Great partners, great people doing great work to welcome and help transition our new Islanders to this society.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister, you have a Population Secretariat, a full secretariat of probably eight people, very professional, and I'm sure capable. Their salaries add up to over \$350,000. They've been working on this file for the last two years.

My question to you is: Why is your settlement strategy so difficult for you to deliver on?

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

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

Of course, when you're dealing with new

Islanders from different parts of the world there are a lot of complexities to that. Yes, we do have a very professional and dedicated staff at the Population Secretariat. We've chosen to go out for professional consultative advice for someone else to take a look at the settlement strategy as well, for a second opinion, and to also give us some extra resources in addressing the new Islanders.

Again, as I indicated, we have a draft ready. We're going back out to our new Islanders for some more discussion for their input. It's important that we clearly recognize, understand and meet the requirements of our new Islanders in helping them settle and transition into the society here on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the Premier. Mr. Premier, you've spoken about this strategy that was available. You said last year that you actually had deputies committed working on this strategy. Are you disappointed and embarrassed that this minister still cannot deliver a strategy?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'm very pleased with our Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning. I think that what our government is trying to do is work collaboratively with the different immigrant communities. We know that Prince Edward Island, going back now over the last probably nine years has gone from a population of the low 130,000s to now

140,000. We know that (Indistinct) other provinces we're going down in terms of their population, Prince Edward Island's was actually increasing. I have to commend the former minister of economic development, he started that, he was the one who saw the vision with regards to the PNP program. We were very happy to continue on with it.

It's unfortunate the Leader of the Opposition is so against it. But what we're doing now is - and if there was a mistake before - because everything's new. Most provinces had a lot of immigration taking place within their provinces. It was new to Prince Edward Island. We're now starting finalizing our settlement strategy here in the province. It's not something that you can just copy and paste a settlement strategy. It's something that I know that our department has been working on for quite awhile. There has been a deputies group and now we're going to go out and do some consultations.

We might as well get it right. I know the Leader of the Opposition is just more concerned with getting the settlement done. Well, I'd rather make sure that we get the settlement structure done properly. I have the utmost confidence in the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning to make sure it gets done right.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, that's pretty disappointing to all the people that this Premier is comfortable with the fact that no work's been done on this file.

Your retention rate from one report that was done by the Institute of Island Studies suggested that you were retaining 25% of people. But we'll go back to the minister and have some questions with him on what's

actually in this draft document.

Could the minister describe to the House perhaps the employment services that would be included for immigrants under the settlement strategy? What would they look like, Mr. Minister?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

That's interesting information that the hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned there with regards to this study that was done at I think it was the University of Prince Edward Island. That information was actually old information. I'm not sure if the media picked up on that, but I believe it went back to 2004, 2005, when that was done.

I just want to point out that according to the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada, last year retention among government-assisted refugees in PEI was very high with little turnover. The number is just shy of 100%. The number of (Indistinct) is 77 with five more expected to end - to the end of March - bringing the total to 82 from March 2009 to 2010. The Provincial Nominee office has retention information on the skilled worker connection and entrepreneur categories 2007-2009. In fact, skilled workers 76% retention -

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Premier Ghiz: - connection 82% and entrepreneurs 55%.

As we know, that is over 100% increase in just the last two years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to go back to the minister, but just before that, this report I'm referring to was dated November 25th, and it was actually work done with Shine XiongYoung Chung, and she actually interviewed immigrants. And 25% retention rate.

Question to the minister: Could the minister describe to the House perhaps what the employment services would look like under this settlement strategy?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I stated earlier, we have a draft document now. I think it's only fitting that our new Islanders have a chance to review that draft document, and to add their input and to give us their thoughts with respect to how we're addressing the needs and concerns on issues of transitioning our new Islanders into society.

Once that process is complete I'd be pleased to bring the settlement strategy forward, but until that time I'm not going to add any speculation or anything with respect to the Leader of the Opposition's questions. When the document is complete I'll be pleased to bring it forward.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

That's an interesting answer. Last year, Mr. Minister, I had Dr. Chung finally get an

interview time with you and the Premier. Dr. Chung, from the South Korean association, presented to you many concrete ideas. In addition, some of the needs of the South Korean community, who really want to stay here in the province. That was a year ago. At that meeting you told him and the association that you were working on the strategy. So what, for the South Korean people, is in that strategy for employment services? What would be in it?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Myself and the hon. Premier did have the opportunity to meet with Dr. Chung and a contingent from our Korean community, and a fine group of individuals who bring a lot of diversity and a lot of skills to this province. As I indicated, our new Islanders are being consulted with. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, Dr. Chung was consulted. He will be consulted further if he so chooses, and we will continue to consult with our new Islanders with respect to our settlement strategy.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister, about two weeks ago Dr. Chung was in the media describing a little bit of surprise, I guess. Because he was under the impression that you were working on a settlement strategy for about a year or two, as he's been told, and instead he found out from a phone call that you hired another consultant to work on the settlement strategy.

So my question: Please tell the House what your department has done to date on a settlement strategy?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I believe I've already told the House we have a draft document prepared. That draft document was prepared by both our staff, again, with consultative professional advice from an outside source. We've gone out for consultation - extensive consultation - with our new Islanders. We want to go back now to our new Islanders with a draft document for their input and for their comments, and then we'll be pleased to bring that strategy forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

My question is for the Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry. I want to start by saying I'm very glad that I could get this question in today, seeing the minister may be away tomorrow. As the minister's responsible for the sports fishery, it's very good to see a good minister dealing with this situation in a hands-on basis.

C&D site in Hazelbrook

My question has to do with the C&D site in my area. The minister stood in the House last November 17th and announced about the year opening, that this site will be open for. I'd just like to get a little update on the time frame, make sure that's in place. Some residents have approached me about this

white mountain that's rising in the district. It's soon going to be rivalling Brookvale.

Can you just update us on making sure the whole thing is in compliance, how much more this might hold, and if the time frame still holds?

Mr. M. Currie: Good question.

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

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) facts.

Mr. Brown: You'll get the facts. Tomorrow.

Mr. Bagnall: Read the answer now.

Mr. Brown: Madam Speaker, I want to inform the House that the contractor at the C&D site has been working with the department and he has been providing all the data that we require. He is putting the proper caps on, he's drilling the proper holes, in order to be testing the site.

The contractor is in compliance with the order to date, and I must say he's working very well with the department. The white material that he has there will be going. Prices are a little down now for scrap metal, but once it gets back up that'll be going Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. McIsaac: On the water quality, Mr. Minister, can you tell us for sure if the water quality is being checked on a regular basis and there's no need for the residents to be concerned in that area, and it will be ongoing after this site is shut down?

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

Mr. Brown: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I can assure the member that the testing is being done and it will be done after the site is closed down. Because this is a part of the new procedures we have in place for closure plans for any C&D sites that are being closed.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Timeline for new Stratford school

Ms. Dunsford: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

A question for hon. Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General. The residents and the children and teachers in Stratford are currently looking out the window and seeing a wonderful structure being built. They are curious as to the timeline and would like an update. So I'm asking the minister if he could please inform the House as to the update on the construction of the new Stratford school, as I'm sure soon the Eastern School District, and possibly the residents of Stratford, will be involved in naming this new school.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

I know that the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock is extremely passionate about her school, Glen Stewart, and the students that attend. Right now, Glen Stewart Elementary is a very full school with approximately over 700 students. As part of our capital budget this year we'll be investing \$30 million in

schools all across Prince Edward Island, \$9 million of which will be going towards the new investment in Glen Stewart.

The new school is on target. Right now, as of today, we're approximately 65% complete, with work being scheduled to be finished and on target. School to be opened in the middle of August. We will be embracing an additional 125 kindergarten children. The kindergarten children will be housed - the K to 3 program will be housed in the old Glen Stewart, and the new school will be home for the new grades 4, 5 and 6.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Settlement strategy (further)

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My next question is to the innovation minister. Mr. Minister, we were speaking there, a little while ago, about the famous settlement strategy that your department's struggling with. My question is: Why would you hire a consultant four weeks before the House to actually have them start work on the strategy when you've told us time and time again that there was a strategy going to be released almost any day?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I believe, as I indicated earlier, we did seek some professional consultative advice with respect to the settlement strategy. As I and the hon. Premier have stated, this will be a comprehensive document, and deals with a lot of complex situations.

We want to make sure that we do everything we can and take the time and do the due diligence to get it correct because this is of the utmost importance. We have a lot of new Islanders who are settling into our great province here of Prince Edward Island, and it's important that we as a government - and further than that, we as Islanders, we as a society - we have an inherent responsibility to do everything we can to maintain and retain our new Islanders here in this province.

It's important, as the hon. Premier indicated, that we get it right. We're taking the time to do that. Again, we sought a second look at this from a professional firm.

Premier Ghiz: And she worked for them.

Mr. Campbell: Yes, I believe that's correct Madam Speaker.

Of course, as I indicated too, we'll be going back out to our new Islanders to share our draft strategy and to get some final input, and when that process is complete we'll be very pleased to bring it forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct) in terms of a settlement strategy, I know in the last year-and-a-half we've lost a number of exceptionally good health professionals that were immigrants to the province. There were two South Korean people that wanted to purchase a couple of businesses. With no help, one bought a business, 250,000, in Ontario, the other person 750,000.

To the same minister. Mr. Minister, the public's not sure what's going on in your department. In 2009 you told the House and the public that you were in discussions with

federal CIC in regards to a new PNP investment program. We found out you didn't even have one discussion. Then in January of this year we found out, once again, that the settlement strategy was slowing down. But in last year's throne speech, and I quote, you said: to build on these measures my government has worked with 40 partners to develop a settlement strategy.

Well, what's going on? Why are you going back to start the process all over again? You've had two years. What's going on?

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, this government is taking the time, it's doing our due diligence to get it correct. The Leader of the Opposition wants to rush this through like she wants to rush a lot of things through, and we've seen the results in the past of what happens when people rush things through. Rush decisions, that's what brought us things like, for instance, Polar Foods. I would guess that NOFG was a lot of rush decisions. I've had the opportunity to look through the last report of the Auditor General that just came out recently, and in section six it refers to crab loans. I'm certain that there were some rush decisions made there, too, and I think it's easy to see what the outcome of making rush decisions in this province are.

This government is not interested in that approach, and we're taking the time to get our settlement strategy right -

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)!

Mr. Campbell: We're taking our time to get the settlement strategy right. When it's completed, I'll be pleased to bring it

forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In that same Auditor General's report, your department told the Auditor General - guess what you told them? The department's working with its federal and provincial partners, as well as the association of newcomers, to move forward on issues such as language training, translation and interpretation, diversity, single-window services, and the Population Secretariat are refining settlement services.

Where is your strategy? Why did four weeks before the House you hire a consultant to do the work of your department? Why?

Premier Ghiz: You don't like that consulting firm?

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

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

I guess the answer to the question: Where is your strategy? The Leader of the Opposition referred to our federal and provincial partners, the association for newcomers. We have great institutions like Holland College, like Study Abroad Canada.

The results of our settlement efforts to this point, last session the Leader of the Opposition referred to people waiting for English language training in this province, and of course, English language training, as I'm sure she is aware, is a federal responsibility. However, this government

has made the decision to invest, and invest heavily, in English language training because the language barrier is the biggest barrier for newcomers and new Islanders transitioning into society here in Prince Edward Island. I'm pleased to say there are now more seats available than people on the waiting list. That's action. That's what this government has been doing, and the efforts towards settlement and retention in this province are working, and they're working well.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, in the 2009 throne speech the government said, and I quote: The strategy will be released shortly.

Where is the strategy? Why don't we have it tabled in the House today? In fact, why don't you bring it tomorrow, the draft report, and table it in the House?

Mr. M. Currie: Good question.

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

Mr. Bagnall: If there is one.

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

I'm looking forward to this draft strategy going out for discussion with our new Islanders. I think it's important that they have their input. In fairness to those new Islanders, I would like them to have the opportunity to add their input to our settlement strategy here because it is those new Islanders that we have a responsibility to help to remain and stay, that we have an inherent responsibility to help assimilate

into our society here. They're of the utmost importance. They are a top priority for my department. We're going out for discussions with them to complete our settlement strategy and then we'll be pleased to release it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: To the same minister. Mr. Minister, you've been telling us in the House and the people in the public for the last two years that you've been working with these 40 partners. Why, again, would you hire a consultant four weeks ago, before the House started, to actually come do the work that your staff were supposed to be doing? Will you be releasing the draft settlement strategy? As well as the strategy that you said in your throne speech was ready to be released any day. Can you release both of those?

Premier Ghiz: No.

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

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

We're not in the habit of releasing draft strategies before strategies are completed. We won't be doing that in this case, either. As I indicated, out of respect to our new Islanders, it's important that we get their input and we get their views. It's these new Islanders that we have the responsibility to retain here in the province. It's important that they get a chance to look at this, to share their issues, to share their input, to share their concerns. From that we'll be completing that strategy and we'll have it here very shortly.

I'm not sure why the Leader of the Opposition is, I guess, so objective of having professional consultative advice from this company here in Prince Edward Island that employs a lot of Islanders. I think they've done a fine job so far. They do great work, and we're pleased to have them here and we're pleased to have them be a part of this process.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, this minister says one thing, and then he tells us something else, and then he goes back and he changes his mind again.

But we'll go to the Premier. Mr. Premier -

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: There is no excuse why there is not a strategy done. Will you tell us what the problem is with this minister and his department?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Again, we know that the minister and his department are doing a great job. Again, Prince Edward Island has really been new with regards to immigration, going back to 2001 when we've been aggressive with it. When we came in, obviously the Leader of the Opposition - it's too bad when she was a backbencher before that she didn't raise these issues because they were in power for six years.

We've now, I, myself, have met with many different associations from our immigrant community. We know that the department

has been working on this now, going back to 2009, the Speech from the Throne, when we announced it, which was only back in November. There is a draft done. We want to make sure that we do some more consultations because we want to make sure that we get it done right the first time.

As the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning mentioned, there's many instances where we've seen governments rush through things: NOFG, the beef plant, the crab loans, Polar Foods. We've been cleaning up those messes the same as we've been trying to rectify this as well.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This is the same Premier that's comfortable with Brooke MacMillan, Neil Stewart breaking every rule. Comfortable, obviously, with preferential treatment for MLAs, probably relatives, on this lovely PNP mess.

Holding minister accountable

But we'll ask the Premier the question. Mr. Premier, this minister of innovation has actually shown zero leadership on this file. It's three years now. For the last two years this file's been in the media almost every day. He really can't handle this file. He calls it complex. I think it at one point he even used the word confusing.

My question to you is: When are you going to hold him accountable for doing nothing on this file?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition had so many problems with her facts in that question it's hard to know where to start.

First of all, we have a great department which has done a great job on this file. She talks about preferential treatment. The Auditor General reviewed all those files. That is not the case. It's a shame that the Leader of the Opposition of this province would challenge the Auditor General in that effect.

I know that the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning has done a great job on this file, and really, it's quite unfortunate that it's been the Leader of the Opposition in this province that has probably tainted this in more ways than anyone else, because we know from the Auditor General's report that our government has followed up on every single recommendation that the Auditor General has made.

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

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's not my voice that's taped on a conversation with a particular person in regards to PNP, but we'll go back to the innovation minister -

Mr. Bagnall: It must have been Rob MacEachern you were talking (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: Mr. Innovation Minister -

Mr. Bagnall: Was that Rob MacEachern you were talking to, Premier?

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: - when are we going to see a settlement strategy in the

House delivered?

Mr. Bagnall: Was that Rob MacEachern you were talking to, Premier?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

My voice taped? I think I called back someone who called my office and said we'd look into that.

Mr. Bagnall: Was that Rob MacEachern?

Premier Ghiz: I think every - it was Rob MacEachern, absolutely.

Mr. Bagnall: (Indistinct) telling you what to do (Indistinct).

Premier Ghiz: I'm sorry, Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition doesn't think we should do our job, but if you look at this program, thousands of new immigrants have moved to Prince Edward Island.

Our car dealerships are doing well. Our apartments are all filled up. The housing starts in this province have been doing well. Our sales tax has been doing well. We are one of the only provinces in Canada that did not fall into a recession last year.

A lot of it is because the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning in this province has done a fantastic job. I think it's time that the Leader of the Opposition stand up and congratulate the minister just as I'm doing right now.

Congratulations to the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bagnall: (Indistinct) congratulate him

for (Indistinct).

Statements by Ministers

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

Parenting Program Offered with Charlottetown Police Service

Mr. D. Currie: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and inform the House of an important new partnership the Office of the Attorney General and Public Safety has formed with the Charlottetown police department.

Together we are offering a new program that will help kids out of trouble. This new parenting techniques program is an eight-week course that provides parents with information on Internet safety, parenting strategies, adolescent development and other topics relevant to today's teens.

Interested parents are able to choose from a variety of topics and pick the resource person who can best address their concerns, including resource people from other agencies and government departments such as addiction services, education, child and family services.

As a former educator who spent close to 20 years working in the Island school system, I know there's no simple solutions to the many challenges faced by youth. However, by working across departments and with non-governmental agencies we can develop a multitude of strategies that address the needs of young people.

This is just one example of how my department is working with other departments and outside agencies to improve services to youth in our One Island Community.

Just last month I had the privilege of opening a youth summit hosted by the community and correctional division of my department, the Office of the Attorney General. The two-day workshop explored current issues facing adolescents and was attended by over 200 staff and students from youth serving agencies across the provinces.

I would like to thank the City of Charlottetown and the Charlottetown Police Service for working with us to develop this innovative program. I would also like to thank the John Howard Society for generously providing us with a meeting space.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Chuck MacPherson, the department's youth outreach worker who is located with the Charlottetown Police Service. He has been working with youth at risk for 20 years and was instrumental in developing the program.

I understand that the initial course is full and the participating parents are finding it very useful. There will be another session beginning in September and all interested parents should contact the Charlottetown Police Service. Together we can help all Island youth reach their full potential.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Frommer's magazine

Mr. Vessey: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am pleased to rise today to announce that Prince Edward Island has been named in the top 10 extraordinary islands by a leading international travel magazine, Frommer's. Frommer's is a guidebook series and one of

the best selling travel guides in America.

The series began in 1957 with the publication of Arthur Frommer's book, *Europe on \$5 a Day*. Frommer's has expanded to include over 350 guidebooks across 14 series, as well as other media including the award winning Frommers.com website which covers over 3,500 destinations.

In 2007 Frommer's celebrated its 50th anniversary of guidebook publishing. Since May 2007, Arthur Frommer has been actively blogging about travel on Frommers.com website.

As Islanders, we know first-hand the many hidden gems we have from one end of the Island to the other. However, it is wonderful recognition to have Frommer's Magazine list Prince Edward Island as one of the top 10 extraordinary islands in the world. We rank up there with islands such as Bora Bora in the French Polynesia, Lamu in Kenya and the Isle of Wight along the English Channel, to name but a few. This is a great honour for Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community Services, Seniors and Labour.

Minimum wage increase

Ms. Sherry: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform members of the House that minimum wage on Prince Edward Island will increase in two phases in 2010 to \$9 an hour.

Executive Council has approved the decision to implement the 60-cent increase as follows: from \$8.40 to \$8.70, effective

June 1st, 2010, and by an additional 30 cents to \$9 on October 1st, 2010.

We realize that the minimum wage impacts many workers on Prince Edward Island, particularly young workers and those who rely on seasonal employment. We also recognize that employers need time to incorporate increases into their operational plans and that is why government has chosen to implement the wage increases in two stages. This approach will provide the Island business community more time to integrate the salary adjustments into their budgets.

The Employment Standards Board, which is made up of representatives of employers and employees with a neutral chairperson, meets to review the minimum wage rate every year and makes recommendations to government. The board considers the social and economic effects of the minimum wage rates in the province, the cost of living increases, current economic conditions and the minimum wages in the neighbouring provinces. The decision to implement the wage increase in a two-phased approach is supported by the Employment Standards Board.

Approximately 62,000 Island employees are covered by the *Employment Standards Act* in this province, which means that they are not working under a collective agreement.

This scheduled increase will also help to put us more in line with the other Maritime provinces.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. M. Currie: Thank you, Madam

Speaker.

This certainly sounds like very good news, especially on the heels of a bill that was brought forward by the Premier and this government to cut the minimum wage. It must mean that the polling has suggested that that wasn't very favourable and now they've rescinded that bill and brought that back. I'm glad to hear that.

This is a good day for the working person that they're going to increase the minimum wage in this province and they're going to rescind that bill that says they're going to cut the minimum wage.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada- Legislative Breakfast

Ms. Bertram: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Certainly, I would like to just bring the Legislature - just in terms of what happened this morning, and there were some members of the Legislature, including yourself, Madam Speaker, that attended a breakfast for legislative members and for stakeholders in our community relative to colorectal cancer.

The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada was at the Delta this morning and put on a lovely breakfast. It was to bring awareness and education to our Island community and how government, how community stakeholders, can work together to bring a better awareness to Prince Edward Island.

I think it's very important, Madam Speaker, like you heard this morning from our speakers, Barry Stein, who was the national

president of the association, that this is the second most deadly form of cancer among men and women. Here on Prince Edward Island we are above the national statistics in terms of women with colon cancer in Canada. So we have work to do.

As Minister of Health and Wellness, I want to thank Deborah Bradley, who is our director of primary care and Susan Philpott, who's leading the screening program that our government has initiated. Election platform of 2007 was to initiate a provincial screening program for colorectal cancer and I'm happy to tell the House and update the House that we have conducted a pilot. There is a pilot taking place east of Charlottetown and in the West Prince area, and later this fall that it will be an Island-wide provincial screening program. I think that's very positive and a good step forward.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bertram: We have to tackle this, Madam Speaker, it's very important.

I think it was shared by all speakers - Dr. Champion was there this morning, Dr. Schaefer who is a surgeon - all shared the message that we had to take away the shyness and the embarrassment of speaking about this topic and bring Islanders more aware, in line of what they have to do to prevent this deadly form.

What is most important to realize is that colorectal cancer is preventable but it is not inevitable. It is 90% curable if detected early. Today, if there's one message that I can share with those that are listening here in our Legislature and in the community of Prince Edward Island of all ages, we have to talk about this and we have to prevent this disease. We as government, community stakeholders, have to work together, bring awareness, and folks, let's get screened and let's prevent this.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Programming and curriculum committee for Souris students

Mr. D. Currie: Madam Speaker, I rise today to inform the House that a special committee has been established to look at the provincial programming and curriculum possibilities for students in the Souris area.

We want students in the Souris area to have access to educational programs that enables them to reach their full potential and capacity. We want to ensure the program requirements are incorporated into the future construction plans for the new Souris school.

The fundamental goal of the planning committee is to provide opportunities for people from my department, the school board, the Souris schools and Home and Schools to consider the best program offerings for students in the Souris area.

Government is following the consultative approach to planning to help ensure students in the Souris area have access to programming that is relevant to their interests and relevant to their community.

I've asked the committee to begin their consultative process as early as possible in order to have the necessary time for community discussions about the curriculum and programming at each level: K-6, 7-9 and 10-12. They will submit their final report to my department next March.

Provincial programs such as the skilled trades, computer robotics, culinary arts,

intensive French, distance education or advanced math are some of the possibilities for students in the community of Souris. When it is determined what programming would be offered, these recommendations will guide the construction planning committee in their work.

I am excited about this new process for educational planning and what it means for students in the Souris area. When government invites students, parents and the community to become actively engaged in educational planning and preparing for the future, everyone comes out a winner.

This is exactly the kind of educational partnerships that will help strengthen our public education system, our Island communities, and our future.

We are One Island Community with One Island Future. We look forward to a creative and practical plan for an educational program that would best meet the interest and needs of children, families, the future and the community of Souris.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Completed Building Canada Fund Projects-West Prince

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

This afternoon I'm pleased to announce the completion of two Building Canada Fund-Build PEI projects in Alberton and Tignish. The Alberton project saw thousands of dollars of improvements to several streets within the town. I won't even name the streets, there are so many.

The streets were re-paved and new culverts were installed to improve the flow of storm water. The project not only improved the overall look of the town, but also helped reduce the possibility of flooding in residential areas.

Mr. Brown: Great MLA in that area.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKinley: The project in Tignish was designed to identify a second well field for the community. The current well field is working well for the town, but it could soon reach capacity. A second site was necessary for future growth and in case of emergencies that affected the existing well field.

This project, as well as the project in Alberton, was cost-shared between the federal government and the Building Canada Fund. The hon. Gail Shea was representing Keith Ashfield there and the province through Build PEI and the municipalities.

These two projects are excellent examples of how the province is working hand in hand with the federal government to improve rural communities throughout the province, and as the minister responsible for infrastructure I'm very pleased to see them completed.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. MacKinley: I'd like to recognize Wayne Ballem in the audience and Mrs. Culleton, I believe. Wayne is a director of the PEI Trucking Association, he's on the board of directors, and it's people like Wayne that keeps the MLAs in line up there. Also, as minister, doesn't mind phoning you

at any time to represent the truckers in the province of PEI.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Biggar: With your indulgence, I'd like to make a correction to what the minister said. Also welcome my constituent, Mr. Wayne Ballem and Mila Culleton. They're great supporters and great workers. Mila is a wonderful worker in the community.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

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Reports by Committees

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Orders of the Day (Government)

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General, that the 11th order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 11, *Gift Cards Act*, Bill

No. 27, in Committee.

Speaker: Hon. members, I'll ask the treasurer to move into the Committee of the Whole House.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General, 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? Carried.

I call on the hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter to chair the Committee of the Whole House.

Chair (Biggar): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intituled *Gift Cards Act*.

I'm going to give way first, hon. members, to the hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness for recognition of guests.

Mr. Henderson: Madam Speaker, I am going to correct everybody here in this House on whose constituents these people actually are.

They're very popular people. But anyway, Mila Culleton is actually a constituent in the riding of O'Leary-Inverness, and although Wayne Ballem is a constituent of the Member of Tyne Valley-Linkletter's, he lives across the road from the riding of O'Leary-Inverness and his business, WB Trucking, is in the riding of O'Leary-Inverness.

We want to welcome them to the gallery here today. Wayne certainly is a very passionate man about what goes on in

western PEI as well as with the trucking industry and the construction industry. So I welcome them to the gallery.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Chair: Hon. minister - permission for guest to come on the floor -

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: - from the minister.

We had discussion on this yesterday. Are there any further questions on the bill from members?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Minister, it was brought to my attention in the last day or so that there is a site on the Internet right now that are out buying gift cards that have gone past their date of expiry so that they can take them to other provinces and use them. Can you tell me how many scams like that are going on on these gift cards across the country?

Mr. D. Currie: Can you repeat that question so I understand it?

Mr. Bagnall: There is a site on the Internet where you can go on and buy gift cards that are outdated. Like, once you bring this in, anybody that has cards - so if they're outdated, they're selling them on the Internet, taking them to other provinces where they can use them.

Tell me now, what piece in this legislation protects that type of fraud?

Mr. D. Currie: First of all, I'd like to get access to that website so my department can

follow up on it. It's never been brought to my attention. So if you could table that I'd appreciate that and I'll pass the question off to Katharine -

Mr. Bagnall: I'm not the only one that knows about this.

Mr. D. Currie: - to help us understand it.

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

Mr. Brown: If you have a gift card - there are companies going: We'll buy your gift cards and resell them. They buy the gift card for a discount of 75% or something like that, and they'll put them on sale to other places. So if a province doesn't have gift card legislation and all the people in that province that say: Okay, I'll take my gift cards and sell them to this site and then they'll be transferred to the province that has a gift card legislation. How do we get around that?

Katharine Tummon Director: This legislation does not protect buyers in that situation. If you are buying not from a retailer directly but from a third party, you are essentially in a buyer beware situation. It could be irregular or it could be an outright fraud. We are aware that this activity is going on out there. Outright frauds obviously are directed to the police and the police can look into those.

In terms of the third party buying, what we would advise people is if you are doing that you are simply not protected. You can't prove whose legislation governs. You won't have a receipt that says you bought that card at a certain time so that you can prove what law was in place and what jurisdiction, and you are in a buyer beware situation.

We would advise everyone, especially as this act comes into force, to keep your

receipts, be very careful as we move to a regulated system, to be able to prove you bought your gift card on or after September 1st and the law protects you.

Mr. Bagnall: One question (Indistinct).

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: First one is, let's say I bought a card last month, and it has an expiry date of September the 30th, or December 30th. This bill comes into law on - when did you say?

Mr. D. Currie: September 1st.

Mr. Bagnall: What?

Mr. D. Currie: September 1st.

Mr. Bagnall: September 1st, okay. Does my card automatically become -

Mr. D. Currie: Go ahead.

Mr. Bagnall: - no expiry date once September 1st comes - that I have in my hand now?

Katharine Tummon Director: No, that is not what will happen. The agreement that was made with the retailer was made under a law that permitted them to put expiry dates on their cards, so we are going to honour those agreements.

Mr. Bagnall: So there's nothing - there's no retroactive for when you bought the card to cover that?

Katharine Tummon Director: No, there is none.

Mr. Bagnall: Why?

Katharine Tummon Director: That is

because there was an understanding of the law in place at the time the card was purchased. The retailers understood it, and consumers might not individually understand it, but that was the law in place when they purchased the card, and generally it is appropriate to honour the law that was in place at the time of transaction.

Mr. Bagnall: So you're going to -

Mr. D. Currie: That's why we're bringing in this legislation.

Mr. Bagnall: But what you're going to do is you're going to put every retailer in a hassle, because with the new law in - and everybody's going to come in with that card and say: Now under the new law you're supposed to allow me to use my card, and now you're not. Why are you doing that?

Katharine Tummon Director: I think we will be doing some public education, both for consumers and for retailers, working through the Retailers Associations, and using the media to get the word out. It is a very clear line for people. Cards bought before September 1st are not covered by the legislation, cards bought on or after are covered. So that's a fairly easy message to get out. There will be a transition period, of course.

Mr. D. Currie: That was the rationale for part of the reason why - to give us some time to get the information out between the time when the legislation is tabled, and the time that it's enacted, September 1st. So, give us an opportunity. I mean, it's a change, so obviously we're going to need to make a commitment to retailers and the public to educate them about the changes.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, and one more thing on that.

Like, when we talked about free gratis gift

certificates and books of tickets or whatever for Tim Hortons or Wendy's or Burger King or any of these things, we always used to get charitable organizations coming in and getting - and you'd give them some of these certificates, right?

Mr. D. Currie: Yeah.

Mr. Bagnall: Well, you can still allow a date to be on those now, because it's a charitable donation, right? But what happens about it, they take those things, they take them to an auction. I or anybody in this House could go to that auction and turn around and buy those - pay 25 - pay the price value if they're worth \$25, pay \$25 for that and then there's no - there's a date on them. So actually, somebody's buying them, they're paying the full price for them, and yet there's a date on them telling them that they can't use them. What have you got there to cover that?

Katharine Tummon Director: There's two ways I'm thinking. One is, depending on how that's done, you could again be in the buyer beware situation when you're buying from a third party who can't even tell you really what the origin of the card was, so you can't prove is it a charitable card, is it a promotional card, when was it bought, in what jurisdiction. The other side is that the prohibition on the expiry date is no person shall issue. So if a third party is attempting to sell that gift card with the expiry date on it, the law is going to take the expiry date off, if it's sold for full value.

Mr. D. Currie: Yeah, and that would be part of the full disclosure. The changes in the act will require full disclosure in all terms and conditions. So if you're purchasing a gift card or a gift certificate, it's the responsibility of the retailer to make sure the terms and conditions are clear and understood.

Mr. Bagnall: I understand that, but you're still not addressing - so what are you telling me? That if I'm franchisee and I have these tickets, so I tell the guy: I'm giving you these, but you tell anybody that buys them to beware.

So how does that make me look when I'm giving out a gift certificate, or a business is giving out a gift certificate, and you have to tell whomever I'm giving it to: I'm going to give you this, but beware. Because the law can come back at you if you sell them.

Katharine Tummon Director: The situation you were talking about, I thought, was the situation where a charitable gift card was converted into a bought for full value gift card, which is probably not the intention of the initial retailer, and there probably is a prohibition on doing that when they give the cards to charity.

Mr. Bagnall: That happens all the time. I mean, right across the province, every time there's a benefit, every time there's a crippled children's auction, or there's any of these fundraisers, we go. As a charitable person, you go to these businesses and you say -

Mr. D. Currie: The term crippled children.

Chair: Yes, I know. It should be disabled children.

Mr. Bagnall: - would you like to make a donation? They will make a donation to you of things, because it's going in for a crippled children's auction, or it's going into something, and they give you these.

An Hon. Member: Handicapped.

Mr. Bagnall: Or handicapped, you know, a handicapped auction or whatever.

Mr. D. Currie: Not crippled, handicapped.

Chair: (Indistinct) we'll say disabled.

Go ahead, hon. member.

Katharine Tummon Director: If that is done upfront and it's at the charity, and the person purchasing it, knowing it's for a charitable purpose, they pay the full value, but they know it's for a charitable purpose, and then they are going to be informed - there's going to have to be full disclosure of the expiry date and the other terms and conditions.

Mr. Bagnall: So who discloses that?

Katharine Tummon Director: Any fees that might be on the card, too.

Mr. Bagnall: Who discloses that?

Katharine Tummon Director: That has to be when the card is issued.

Mr. Bagnall: I just think you're making it difficult for -

Chair: Hon. member.

Mr. Bagnall: - charitable organizations to move forward on this because of the situation that you're putting them into -

Mr. D. Currie: It's under consumer protection.

Mr. Bagnall: - because of the cancellation and the complaint that somebody will get that and they'll turn around and go to cash it and say: Whoops, this has an expiry date on it. I paid for this at an auction after September 1st and there's two messages out there.

Katharine Tummon Director: There are two messages in that this is an exemption from full consumer protection, but it's an exemption that has been granted in all the

provinces. It's been granted because of the concern that we not hurt the charitable sector. Because if we don't permit businesses to put expiry dates on the cards they're not going to be able to claim that as a tax deduction and they won't want to be donating. So, all the jurisdictions have permitted both expiry dates and fees on cards that are charitable cards -

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Katharine Tummon Director: - and we're following all the -

Mr. Bagnall: No, I just want you know I support this legislation. I think it's great legislation. But I still think there are a few holes that are going to cause some problems to retailers down the road on this that haven't been addressed. I don't know. Are the regulations for this bill being drawn up?

Katharine Tummon Director: We have draft regulations. They're very brief. They set out the three kinds of cards that can have expiry dates.

Mr. Bagnall: Can you table a copy of that?

Mr. D. Currie: Yeah, do you want -

Katharine Tummon Director: The minister's -

Mr. Bagnall: If they're tabled, I'll carry the bill.

Mr. D. Currie: Yeah. Tabled.

Chair: Could I just have that part?

Mr. D. Currie: Yeah. As we move forward between now and September, the division, which is led by Katharine, we will be asking these questions and getting more feedback from the retail sector. So as we - I mean, you know -

Mr. Bagnall: No, minister, I commend you for bringing in this legislation. It's a good piece, and it's been long overdue, and I just think there are a few changes in it that -

Mr. D. Currie: Yeah.

Mr. Bagnall: - or something that can be looked at there where a few of these loopholes might be closed, but other than that, it's good.

Chair: I believe the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood had a question.

Mr. Mitchell: Yeah, actually I was just going to speak to the benefits of the businesses that do go to those charities but you've touched on that.

Just one thing that's popped into my head in the legislation. To clarify, and I don't know how you do it, but there are registered charities, but there are lots of charities that are not registered or not of a legal nature. Can it be somehow addressed in the legislation that it's - I don't know how you do that, but just to make sure that the hockey team from wherever does have that ability and not limit it because of it's -

Katharine Tummon Director: There are registered charities with Canada Revenue Agency and then there are charities that are not registered.

Mr. Mitchell: Exactly. So I mean, you know, I don't know how you word the legislation so that it's open for sure to everybody without limited so - you know, don't nail it down to registered charities.

Chair: The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: I just want to make a point that a gift certificate was given as an act of charity but it's also purchased as an act of

charity, so I don't think there will be an issue there because of that connotation.

Thank you.

Chair: Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. D. Currie: I move the title.

Chair: *Gift Cards Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. D. Currie: 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? Carried.

Mr. D. Currie: Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to without amendment.

Chair: Shall it carry? Carried.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Chair: Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of a Whole House having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *Gift Cards Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same without amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Premier.

Premier Ghiz: Thank you very much.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Cody MacRae to the gallery today. For anyone who doesn't know Cody, he's at

Colonel Gray High School. He's hopefully heading off to university next. A star athlete, hockey, soccer, many different sports, and to top it all off, he's also a great Liberal. So I'd like to welcome Cody to the Legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bagnall: He used to be.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 12th order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 12, *An Act to Amend the Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act*, Bill No. 32, ordered for second reading.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that the said bill be now read a second time.

Clerk: *An Act to Amend the Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act*, Bill No. 32, read a second time.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, 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? Carried.

I'll call on the hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford to chair the Committee of the Whole House.

Chair (McIsaac): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

Ms. Bertram: Permission, hon. members, to bring my legislative support from our department, Janet Christian, to the floor?

Chair: Granted.

Ms. Bertram: Perhaps just to give a bit of a background to this, so we have quite a detail at the back in terms of the explanatory notes, but we have about four pages. Within the department of health we have various pieces of legislation, obviously, that we're responsible for. But with the *Canada Health Act* we have two specific pieces of legislation that deal with that, and this is one of the two. The other is called the *Health Services Payment Act* for physician services.

So this one - when bringing forward amendments to the *Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act* today - and this is basically just taking language that's outdated, bringing us in line with the Health PEI structure. There's just some old language that exists that has really passed quite a few years ago so it needs to be changed. Basically we need this in place to access Health Canada payments and things like that.

Chair: Any questions prior to beginning reading?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Is there any place in this act that gives the authority to the health authority and to start charging people for a fee for service for some of the diagnostic assessments?

Ms. Bertram: No.

Leader of the Opposition: There's not? Okay.

Chair: Begin with section one.

1. Section 1 of the *Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. H-8 is amended

(a) by the repeal of clause (a) and the substitution of the following

(a) "approved hospital" means a hospital that is approved under the regulations for the purposes of the plan of hospital care insurance;

(b) "Health PEI" means Health PEI as defined under the *Health Services Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. H-1.6.

Question to the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: With regards to Health PEI, have you announced who's on the Health PEI board yet?

Ms. Bertram: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, we're hoping that's going to take place in the next couple of days.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Approved hospital. What changes are you making?

Ms. Bertram: The definition of an approved hospital has been added to reflect that hospitals are approved under the regulations for the purposes of the hospital care insurance plan and to facilitate the definition of operator. It has no bearing on the hospitals that exist in our province today.

Mr. Bagnall: So it has no bearing on the hospitals or the scope of practice or anything that they do in the hospital?

Ms. Bertram: No, it's just using the definition of operator.

Chair: Any more questions?

We'll continue on.

(b) by the repeal of clause (d) and the substitution of the following:

(d) "hospital" means, unless the context indicates otherwise,

(i) a hospital as defined in clause 1(1)(d) of the *Hospitals Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap.H-10.1, or

(ii) a health facility in the province that is designated in the regulations as a hospital for the purposes of this Act and the regulations.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Last year you removed or changed the name of O'Leary and Souris hospital and it took the designation of hospital away from them. How does that impact on their facilities?

Ms. Bertram: Maybe I'll just call on Ms. Christian to -

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Sure. The definition under the *Hospitals Act*

that it refers to is provincial hospitals and community hospitals so it includes all the hospitals on PEI.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Mr. Bagnall: They're talking over there. There are too many noises.

Chair: Okay, they can't hear. Keep it down and I'll ask you to speak up a little bit, please. Thank you.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Sure. The definition that it refers to there, clause 1(1)(d) in the *Hospitals Act* that -

Leader of the Opposition: Right.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: - it refers to is provincial hospitals and community hospitals, which is all the hospitals on PEI.

Chair: (d.1) "insured person" means a person who is entitled to receive insured services in accordance with this Act and the regulations.

Mr. Bagnall: What do you mean by that? Insured person?

Ms. Bertram: Again, I think I'll ask Ms. Christian to speak to this, but I think this, again, just brings us in line with the Canadian health regulations, but she can allude to that.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: The definition was added because the term insured person is used throughout the act but it wasn't defined at the beginning of the act.

An insured person under the act basically is a resident of the province. There are some exclusions for members of the RCMP, members of the Canadian military, people

who haven't been resident in the province for less than three months are not considered residents, but that's what that determines -

Mr. Bagnall: So it means anybody who has a hospital card, in other words?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Basically, yes.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Okay.

(c) by the repeal of clause (e) and the substitution of the following:

(e) "insured services" means insured services as defined in the regulations;

(d) by the addition of the following after clause (f):

(f.1) "operator" means, in respect of an approved hospital, the person responsible for the management and operation of the approved hospital.

Any questions to there?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: This means, then, Keith Dewar will have the authority over the hospitals and not your deputy?

Ms. Bertram: Can you just repeat that question? Sorry.

Leader of the Opposition: In terms of this section, operator in respect to an approved hospital responsible for the management, does this give the authority to Keith Dewar, who's the interim CEO of Health PEI over your deputy minister?

Ms. Bertram: The definition of operator has been added to reflect that hospitals are

buildings that are operated by a governing entity, and a governing entity will be Health PEI, but ultimately under the act that will govern the health authority, I'm responsible.

Leader of the Opposition: So Keith's responsible to you.

Ms. Bertram: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: Which I understand, but that means, then, your own deputy of health doesn't have the same authority as Keith does here?

Ms. Bertram: Yes.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. Thank you.

Chair: Shall Section 1 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Bagnall: That's scary.

Chair: Section 2 of the Act is amended

(a) by renumbering subsection (1) as subsection (1.1);

(b) by the addition of the following immediately before subsection (1.1):

2. (1) The Minister shall administer and enforce this Act and the regulations and may designate another person to act on the Minister's behalf.

(c) by the deletion of clause (1)(f).

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: Question, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: So will this mean that you have to ask - or give your

authority over to the CEO of the health board?

Ms. Bertram: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, this section has been added to clarify that it is the minister, me, as minister responsible, my responsibility to administer and enforce the act and to permit me, as minister, to delegate my responsibilities under the act, and these are just standard provisions.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. So, that would be the head of the health board then, right?

Ms. Bertram: Possibly, or another (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: Do you have the name of who that's going to be?

Ms. Bertram: I cannot disclose that information. We have an acting CEO -

Leader of the Opposition: Yes.

Ms. Bertram: - at the present time, and that is Mr. Keith Dewar.

Leader of the Opposition: So are you going through a competition to replace him, or what's going to happen?

Ms. Bertram: In terms of the board, that's part of the legislation that was in place. We have gone through our Participate in PEI process, and that will all be announced as part of the -

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. So the board itself will also then make the decisions on hiring or is the government hiring the CEO first?

Ms. Bertram: I'm not at pleasure to really comment right at the moment on that. All I'm telling you right now is that Mr. Dewar

is the acting CEO for the government for (Indistinct) department until the board is named.

Leader of the Opposition: That's going to happen this week, you said?

Ms. Bertram: We believe so.

Leader of the Opposition: Tomorrow?

Ms. Bertram: I don't believe - I think we're looking at Friday.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Chair: Shall we carry that section?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 3. Section 9 of the Act is amended

(a) in subsection (2),

(i) by the deletion of the words "eligible for services" and the substitution of the words "eligible for coverage of the cost of a hospital or diagnostic service", and

(ii) by the deletion of the words "he is not entitled to the same services under this Act" and the substitution of the words "the person is not entitled to coverage of the cost of the same service under this Act or the regulations"; and

(b) by the repeal of subsection (3) and the substitution of the following:

(3) No person is entitled to receive an insured service unless, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, the service is medically necessary for that person.

Any questions there?

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: What does that statement mean, that last one?

Ms. Bertram: We're just making it more clear, the clarity that is addressing the coverage of the cost of hospital and diagnostic services, not access to such services. Just making it clearer, and subsection (3) has been reworded to clarify that a hospital or diagnostic service -

Mr. Bagnall: Give me an example if they're not insured, then.

Ms. Bertram: I guess if they walked into the hospital and asked for a specific -

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Not an insured service?

Ms. Bertram: Yes.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Plastic surgery that wasn't -

Ms. Bertram: Perhaps plastic surgery that wasn't necessary -

Mr. Bagnall: But some of that would be insured, though, so that wouldn't be really -

Ms. Bertram: Deemed under by, it says right in section 3 where: "No person is entitled to receive an insured service unless, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, the service is medically necessary..." So it's defined there. So it's defined as medically necessary.

Mr. Bagnall: So plastic surgery is kind of one - you could be in a car accident where it automatically could, but what else would be, other than that? You must be putting it in there for some reason -

Ms. Bertram: I don't think we're trying to take away any service that already exists today, hon. member, it's just to bring clarity

in terms of what's insurable to an individual from the medical practitioner when services are to be -

Mr. Bagnall: No, I understand that, but I know, plastic surgery, but there must be something else that wouldn't be covered that you're putting it in to protect. What would it be?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: There are specific services that are listed in the regulations -

Mr. Bagnall: I'm sorry, but I can't hear a word you're saying.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: The insured services that are covered under the insurance plan are listed in the regulations, and they're basically your accommodation, your room while you're in the hospital, your food while you're in the hospital, your operating room costs and equipment, any of the diagnostic services that are medically necessary while you're there. So all of the insured services are set out in the regulations. Anything that falls outside of that is not covered, and the insured services that are covered have to be medically necessary. That's not a change from the existing act, it's just clarifying that point.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Shall we carry that section?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 4. Section 10 of the Act is amended

(a) by renumbering it as subsection 10(1);

(b) by the repeal of clause (1)(b) and the substitution of the following:

(b) to determine the amounts to be paid to and to pay an operator for insured services

provided by the operator to insured persons;

(c) by the repeal of clause (1)(d) and the substitution of the following:

(d) to approve or disapprove charges made directly to patients by an operator for hospital or diagnostic services that are not insured services -

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct).

Chair: Question?

Mr. Bagnall: Do you want to go through them, or do you want (Indistinct)?

Ms. Bertram: I guess the biggest thing here, it's not, it's again, it's just rewording things, not to take away, again, services. It's just there's old language. Where before, in this section 10, clause (b), it's simplified and amended to reflect that the payments for Islanders, for insured persons, provided to insured persons, would be made to the entity operating a hospital, not to the building. See, under the old legislation -

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: So (b) section, explain to me why you're putting it there and what it's there for.

Ms. Bertram: That's what I just explained. It's because we no longer - it's old language to say that it's the building that's responsible as the entity for paying the services. Where now the change, hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir, is that it's going to be seen as the hospital as the operator.

Mr. Bagnall: You're going to have to explain that a little bit.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-

Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: It says here: determine the amount to be paid, to a paid operator. So who's the paid operator?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: The operator is the entity that's responsible for operating the hospital.

Mr. Bagnall: Which is who?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: In this case, for all Island hospitals, it's Health PEI. So this insurance plan, Health PEI provides insured services to people, and then they get reimbursed for the cost of those services from the insurance plan.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Okay?

An Hon. Member: Carried.

Mr. Bagnall: Now, (d), explain that one to me (Indistinct). I need an explanation like I just got from the member on the -

Ms. Bertram: That's fine. That's what we're here for, to answer the questions.

Mr. Bagnall: Yes. I know that. Thank you.

Chair: (d) I didn't read yet, but I'll -

Mr. Bagnall: You read that one already.

Chair: (d)?

Mr. Bagnall: You read (d).

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Clause (d), as the minister indicated, we're just, I guess, improving the language so that it reads better. Basically what it means is that the minister can approve or disapprove charges that an operator makes directly to

patients for hospital services that aren't insured services.

For example, there are going to be some services, like semi-private rooms or private rooms, those are not insured. The cost of a ward is insured, but if you have a semi-private room or a private room you have to pay extra for that. That's the type of thing that it's talking about here, is that the minister can make sure that the operator of a hospital is not overcharging for a service that is not an insured service, that they're billing the patient directly for.

Mr. Bagnall: So if I go in the hospital, and I ask for a ward, and they put me in a semi-private room, you're going to charge me?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: No. If you haven't requested a semi-private room but you've had to be put in one because there is not enough room in a ward or you have a special medical condition that requires that you have semi-private or private, you're not charged for it. It's if you've requested specifically a semi-private or private room and there is no reason for you not to be in a ward.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Question, the hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter.

Ms. Biggar: I think you may just have answered that question. If there are no wards available and you're put in a semi-private it's not charged.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Right, correct.

Chair: We'll continue on reading.

(e) by the repeal of clause (1)(l) and the substitution of the following:

(l) to supervise and ensure the efficient and economical provision of insured services to entitled persons and to withhold or reduce payments under this Act to an operator who does not comply with the regulations regarding such.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, can you explain that one too? I want (Indistinct).

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Basically this clause is replacing a couple of clauses that were specifically dealing with making sure that hospitals were efficient and economical in their, say, purchase of drugs and supplies and that type of thing. It's basically protecting the insurance plan from having to pay operators who are wasting money on supplies or not being (Indistinct) responsible. So services are insured but not if the operator - the operator can be penalized and not reimbursed if they're not providing the services in an economical and efficient fashion.

Mr. Bagnall: Who does the penalizing, then? Who goes in and says if you paid too much for those materials than you should have?

Ms. Bertram: This is also going to be governed by the health - the act and as a CEO or the board will be part of that process. They'll be looking at the financials of the operators that are part of this system, and if they'll be the ones to go in and - obviously, they're probably going to approach it first in a way to say: Can you realize efficiencies?

Mr. Bagnall: So in other words, any of the small hospitals that go out and buy supplies, you can go in there with the health board after and say: You paid too much for those supplies and we're going to charge you more money.

Ms. Bertram: No. I don't think -

Mr. Bagnall: That's what you just told me.

Ms. Bertram: No, no, hon. member. Perhaps if someone was questionable - perhaps activity, and maybe there was some of the materials weren't being used at the hospital. There are situations where things exist, but certainly we treat everything with equity.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Just a question on that. If, for example, your wish is that our hospitals across PEI serve local food from farmers and the CEO of the health authority thinks that it's cheaper to bring food in from other places, will this act allow you to give the direction to say: Here's the criteria around what we expect for you to make your decisions? For example, we expect you to source locally turkeys that are going to be used in the hospital.

Ms. Bertram: That's a really good question, hon. member, and something that I've been working on since I came to this portfolio.

Because as Minister of Health and Wellness I think it's important to ensure that agriculture and aquaculture products here on PEI are in our hospitals, in our institutions within our health care field. I'm working on that in partnership with the Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs. I don't know if you've seen that the Nova Scotia government has a policy in place for procurement for Atlantic -

Mr. Bagnall: They've had that for quite awhile.

Ms. Bertram: They've had it for a year. Again, I believe it's something important and it's something that we will be putting

great value in in terms of the new Health PEI.

Leader of the Opposition: So for the health CEO though, and their board, if they have x amount of dollars to deliver services with and they have to live within that amount, and perhaps to source locally might be a little bit more expensive, describe the process that would be put in place to ensure that your wishes are followed through with.

Ms. Bertram: Again, we're working for a policy for Prince Edward Island through finance on that. But again, we have to respect the Atlantic Procurement Agreement that does exist. If you look at the Nova Scotia policy that exists there is a threshold, and Health PEI being a corporation will give us a little bit more leeway there in terms of purchasing locally.

Leader of the Opposition: But Health PEI, the acting CEO will be responsible to Health PEI board, correct?

Ms. Bertram: And ultimately responsible to myself as minister.

Leader of the Opposition: Is the board - he or she is responsible to you? I thought the board was supposed to be based on a governance model.

Ms. Bertram: It is on a governance model, but the CEO would report to me, and obviously report if there are any type of issues across the board including food purchases, I'm sure.

Leader of the Opposition: So what's the role of the board then?

Ms. Bertram: The board is a governance board like you just said.

Leader of the Opposition: It's interesting, though. If government may be hiring the

CEO, the board may not have any influence on that. If they are given x amount of dollars to live with, I guess what I'm wondering is: How is that going to work in the line authority in the future?

Ms. Bertram: I guess, hon. member, under the legislation it is government that is to call on an acting CEO until the board is appointed. As I told you just a few minutes ago, we're looking at Friday announcing the new board. The board will then appoint the CEO.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Ms. Bertram: Okay?

Leader of the Opposition: So if they're only being put together on Friday they will have six months to find a CEO -

Ms. Bertram: But I will not release - I still would have the authority to do things. I have to sign off some authorities to that board and I would not do that until I feel that they are adjusted and prepared to do that.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Back to the buy local.

Ms. Bertram: Yes.

Mr. Bagnall: Minister, why can't you implement that right off the bat by telling the hospitals that they don't have to buy over \$50,000 or they don't have to buy - and they stay under the figure and they can do it immediately. Instead of buying a month's or six months' supply, buy it by the month.

Ms. Bertram: I'll tell you this. I've had senior officials from our department and we've had senior officials from finance in

the room together discussing this very issue. It's something, again I say, that I'm very committed to and we're working on that. But we have to ensure that there is policy in place because it's the Atlantic Procurement Agreement and we cannot contravene that as a province, and we have to respect that. But we're working within that to develop the parameters.

Mr. Bagnall: Yeah, but all you have to do is cut back the quality of your contracts and your purchasing contracts and the quantity, and you can get underneath the Maritime figures without any problem whatsoever. So why is it taking you three years? Because when you were in opposition you kept talking about we should be doing this, we should be doing it, over and over and over. But now you're in government, nothing's happened in three years, and that was in your first throne speech that you were going to do.

Ms. Bertram: Hon. member, again, I give you my word. I've been in this portfolio since January and it's something I'm very committed to and we're working on. We're looking at that protein contract that exists within our department and we're working on realizing local products within that.

Mr. Bagnall: So when are we going to see some action? I mean, it's three years now.

Ms. Bertram: Hon. member, we have a budget that's coming down, and again, we have to work in collaboration with the Department of Finance and Municipal Affairs also.

Mr. Bagnall: So are we looking at a month? Are we looking at two months? Are we looking at two years?

Ms. Bertram: I cannot give you that time frame, but I can tell you this. That there has been a posted tender for the protein contract

which has probably 90-plus products on it. I believe that is closed and I can't comment in regards to that. But we're taking into consideration local products.

Chair: (f) by the repeal of (1)(m); and

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

(2) The Minister may pay to Health PEI, as part of its operating budget, an amount determined by the Minister to cover all or part of the cost to Health PEI of the provision of insured services to insured persons.

Questions?

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Explain that. Is that the full budget of the hospitals or is that (Indistinct)?

Ms. Bertram: Okay, hon. member, this clause has been added to clarify the payments to Health PEI to cover the cost of insured persons provided by Health PEI, to insured persons may be made in a lump sum as part of their operating budget.

Mr. Bagnall: So they do a budget, is that what you're telling me?

Ms. Bertram: Yes.

Mr. Bagnall: Health PEI are going to do a budget. They're going to tell you how much they need to operate and you're going to cut them a cheque.

Ms. Bertram: No, hon. member, I didn't say that.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, so what are you going to do?

Ms. Bertram: We will be coming to the floor of this Legislature just like any other year and we will have, like other Crown corporations do have, in their budget.

Mr. Bagnall: You're going to pay them a lump sum of money, so obviously they're going to give you a budget telling you you're going to need so much money, right?

Ms. Bertram: I think we're taking this out of context, and I'm just going to pass it over to Ms. Christian to give you more information.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: This deals with payments. When I spoke earlier about the operator providing services and they get reimbursed from the insurance plan for the cost of those services, this just means that rather than have Health PEI invoice the insurance plan for every time they provide a service, they'll get a lump sum of insurance money as part of their operating budget to provide insured services (Indistinct).

Mr. Bagnall: So basically, they submit a budget and you cut them a cheque.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: No, that's not what I said.

Mr. Bagnall: Well, if you're paying it in advance, then how else is it?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: This is the operating budget that Health PEI is granted through the process in the Legislative Assembly. They're going to be given a certain amount of money to operate with every year. There's a component of that that is to provide insured services with.

Mr. Bagnall: Yes.

Ms. Bertram: No difference when the federal government funnels the payments for health to the province for these types of insured services.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay. So who's going to cut the cheque to Health PEI?

Ms. Bertram: Ultimately, the taxpayers of Prince Edward Island, right?

Mr. Bagnall: But where's it coming from?

Ms. Bertram: But it will come -

Mr. Bagnall: I mean, I don't cut a cheque.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist:
Through the appropriations.

Ms. Bertram: Through the appropriation process. We will be coming to this floor during the budget estimates.

Mr. Bagnall: So it's going to come through the department of health.

Ms. Bertram: Yes, we will -

Mr. Bagnall: So you're going to have the budget, and you're going to cut the cheque to Health PEI.

Ms. Bertram: In terms of the operations, yes.

Mr. Bagnall: That's what I said and you said no.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist:
You said they were going to submit a budget and we're just going cut the cheque.

Mr. Bagnall: Well, aren't you? Did you just say you were going to have a budget?

Ms. Bertram: I'm going to cut - we're going to cut them a cheque as the

Legislature in terms of accepting the health budget.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, so how do you know how much to cut them a cheque for?

Ms. Bertram: Hon. member, we're going to - if you look at the budget book from last year and previous years, we're going to respect that process and what has been allocated.

Mr. Bagnall: I've got no problem with that.

Ms. Bertram: There will be a fair process to go through, but it'll be a very responsible way to deliver dollars for the operating side to the department.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay. So you're going to cut a cheque to Health PEI. How do you know how much to cut?

An Hon. Member: They are going to submit -

Ms. Bertram: No different than there's estimates for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. Bagnall: So they're going to give you a budget of what they need, and you're going to pay them based on their budget. Is that not correct?

Ms. Bertram: Hon. member, as minister responsible for Health and Wellness, I will be providing them, as taxpayers have provided to us, to be able to provide health services and health delivery in this province and wellness activities. We will be associating that, the budget process, with saying you have - let's say - I'm just pulling a number out of the sky - but let's say you have 400,000,000 to operate. I'm just pulling a number, but here's -

Mr. Bagnall: But where's that figure

coming from? Their budget?

Ms. Bertram: No, hon. member. We're looking back -

Mr. Bagnall: Health PEI's budget?

Mr. Bertram: Obviously, hon. member, this is the first year of this process for a Crown authority. We will be using previous budgets that the department has used in the past, but -

Mr. Bagnall: So you're going to turn all that money over to Health PEI?

Ms. Bertram: And be - the accountability will be there as well, and the mechanisms, and the governance side of -

Mr. Bagnall: So in other words, you get your budget for health, you turn it all over to Health PEI, and your hands are free of it?

Ms. Bertram: Hon. member, if you look at the legislation that was passed under Health PEI, ultimately as minister I am responsible for the legislation -

Mr. Bagnall: Yes, I understand that.

Ms. Bertram: - and the health authority.

Mr. Bagnall: But you turn your whole budget over to Health PEI then to operate.

Ms. Bertram: Hon. member, there will be a CEO, there will be governance in terms of the board, and the CEO will be responsible to me as minister.

Mr. Bagnall: So who's going to pay the bills? Who's going to have the money to work with? Health PEI?

Ms. Bertram: Right now, hon. member, the acting CEO is Mr. Keith Dewar, and he reports to me as minister.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, so what you're doing, you're applying for budget as minister, you take your money, you turn it all over to Keith Dewar, and Keith Dewar is your financial person and looks after it, and he runs the whole thing. So all your health money is going to be turned over to Health PEI.

Ms. Bertram: (Indistinct) if that's the way you want to look at it -

Mr. Bagnall: Well, is there any other way? Show me another way, then.

Ms. Bertram: If that's the way you want to look it. But ultimately as minister responsible for Health and Wellness, I will be the one responsible at the end of the day.

Mr. Bagnall: I understand that. But you turn all the money over to him -

Ms. Bertram: Short answer, yes.

Mr. Bagnall: - and rely that he's going to (Indistinct) pay the bills.

Ms. Bertram: On the operating side of health, yes it will, hon. member.

Mr. Bagnall: That's all I asked to begin with. Why did it take so long to answer?

Chair: Further questions on it?

Shall that section carry? Carried.

5. Subsection 11(1) of the Act is amended

(a) by the addition of the following after clause (b):

(b.1) defining "insured services" for the purposes of clause 1(e);

(b) in clause (e), by the deletion of the words "and other details relating to

payment” -

Mr. Bagnall: Wait a minute.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Ms. Bertram: Which clause did you want explained?

Mr. Bagnall: The last one he just read.

Chair: (b), 5(b), “deletion of the words ‘and other details relating to payment.’”

Mr. Bagnall: What’s that change for and why does it -

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Simply, it said that twice in the clause so we deleted it so it didn’t repeat the words twice.

Mr. Bagnall: So it’s still there, only it’s only there once now?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Yeah.

Mr. Bagnall: Is that what you’re saying?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Yeah.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Okay?

(c) in clause (g), by the deletion of the words “and other facilities”.

Mr. Bagnall: So what’s that mean?

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: You’re going to change hospital names to other names?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: The words ‘and other facilities’ are not necessary because they are included in the definition of hospital, and the other facilities that are currently designated under - that are covered under this act, is the addiction treatment centre.

Mr. Bagnall: Just the addiction treatment centre?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Yes.

Mr. Bagnall: Nothing else?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: No. Well, the hospitals and the addiction treatment centre.

Mr. Bagnall: What about O’Leary hospital? It’s not called a hospital any more. What’s it under?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: It’s included in the definition of community hospitals.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: (d) by the addition of the following after clause (g):

(g.1) designating health facilities in the province as hospitals for the purpose of clause 1(d);

(e) in clause (j), by the deletion of the word “hospitals” and the substitution of the word “operators”.

Mr. Bagnall: What’s the -

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Why are you taking hospitals out and then changing it to operators?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: I'm sorry, can you say that again?

Mr. Bagnall: Why are you taking out the word hospital and changing it to operators?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Because hospitals are not legal entities, they're buildings, and the term operator has been added to the act as operator is the governing entity that runs the hospital.

Mr. Bagnall: And that will be PEI -

Ms. Dunsford: Health PEI.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: In this case it'll be, for the provincial hospitals and the addiction treatment centre -

Mr. Bagnall: So who will it be?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: - it's Health PEI.

Mr. Bagnall: Health PEI?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Yeah.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Okay.

(f) by the repeal of clause (k);

(g) by the repeal of clause (l) and the substitution of the following:

(l) respecting the efficient and economical provision of insured services to insured persons and the withholding or reduction of payments under this Act and to an operator who does not comply therewith.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-

Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: I need an explanation on that.

Ms. Bertram: Is that (l)?

Mr. Bagnall: Yeah.

Ms. Bertram: It's just again, using the different language, hospital, and now operator.

Mr. Bagnall: So give me an example.

Ms. Bertram: The QEH.

Mr. Bagnall: Where the payments would be - the reduction of payments under this act?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: I'm sorry, can you just repeat that question?

Mr. Bagnall: I guess I'm trying to find out what you're saying here with this, and give me an example of it.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: It's basically giving the Lieutenant Governor in Council the authority to make a regulation respecting efficient and economical provision of insured services and allowing the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make a regulation respecting withholding or reducing payments under the insurance plan if the operator doesn't act in an efficient and economical way. It's what we talked about previously under the authority that the minister has to supervise that. This is allowing the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations with respect to that.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir? No.

The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-

Linkletter.

Ms. Biggar: Yes, I'm just trying to think up an example myself around that particular - so if the operator takes his money and doesn't spend it on hospitals - necessary things to operate the facility, such as they may need new beds but they went out and bought a bunch of flat screen TVs - would that be an appropriate example of not efficient and economical use? I don't know. Would that be a -

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: I mean, it's dealing with the cost specifically of providing insured services. So it's not necessarily about purchasing equipment and that type of thing.

Ms. Biggar: Okay.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: It's about the cost of maybe drugs, and I suppose equipment and facilities could be included. It's an extreme example, I guess, but that's the idea. It's the idea that the insurance plan is not going to cover costs for - reimburse operators for providing insured services if they're doing it in a completely fiscally irresponsible manner.

Ms. Biggar: So if somebody came in for a bit of necessary plastic surgery, because of an injury, and they went overboard with the plastic surgery, would that be -

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: That might be an example, yes.

Ms. Biggar: A silly example perhaps, but -

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: I mean, I think this would be a pretty extreme response, and it wouldn't be something that would be done automatically. I think there would be a lot more discussion and negotiation that went on before it came to the point where they stopped reimbursing an

operator for insured services. It's just a security mechanism in there to say that the insurance plan is not just going to reimburse for any services you provide, regardless of whether you do it in a fiscally responsible manner or not.

Ms. Biggar: Health PEI will have checks and balances in there, obviously, before things are purchased to address that so that it doesn't happen.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Yes. Under the *Health Services Act*, Health PEI has a number of ways that it has to be accountable to the minister. It has a business plan approved by the minister every year. It has to submit a three-year strategic plan that's to be approved by the minister. It has to submit whatever financial information the minister requests. It's responsible under the *Financial Administration Act* to provide an annual report and to have an audit. So I mean, there's all kinds of accountability mechanisms in the *Health Services Act* that would - this act kind of works in concert with that.

Ms. Biggar: Those would fall in place certainly before any of this was necessary.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist: Yes. I would hope so.

Chair: (h) in clause (m), by the deletion of the words "which must be provided by hospitals in order to qualify them" and the substitution of the words "that must be provided by an operator in order to qualify the operator";

(i) in clause (n), by the deletion of the words "by hospitals and the returns and reports to be made by them" and the substitution of the words "by operators and the returns and reports to be made by operators".

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: In those last two, they're just changing the word from hospital to operator, taking it away from the building, putting in the identity. Is that right?

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist:
Yes.

Chair: (j) in clause (o), by the deletion of the words "rendered by hospitals" and the substitution of the words "rendered by operators";

(k) in clause (q), by the deletion of the words "by hospitals within or without the province to insured persons" and the substitution of the words "to insured persons within or outside the province".

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Perhaps if they could explain (k) there to me.

Ms. Bertram: Letter (k), hon. member?

Mr. Bagnall: Yes.

Ms. Bertram: That's just because we're repealing that because it doesn't reflect the current practice and regulations.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, so when it goes to insured persons within or outside the province, what do you mean by that?

Ms. Bertram: Oh, (q). So we're on (q).

Mr. Bagnall: No, we're on (k).

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist:
That one's (q) that you're talking about.

Mr. Bagnall: It's under (k).

Chair: Under (k), to insured persons within or outside the province.

Janet Christian Legislative Specialist:
Okay. It's an amendment to clause (q) of the act. It's just rewording the clause. It doesn't change the meaning of it. It's just rewording it so it flows better.

Ms. Bertram: Because if you look in the earlier legislation, before it was amended, it was worded: respecting the amount and manner payment for insured persons or services rendered by hospitals within or without the province to insured persons of the province.

That's what was in the old. It's basically saying the same thing. It's just reworded to make it a little easier to understand.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: Okay?

(l) by the repeal of clause (t); and

(m) by the repeal of clause (u) and the substitution of the following:

(u) respecting the admission, treatment, and discharge of patients or any class of patients in approved hospitals in Prince Edward Island.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: What did you repeal?

Ms. Bertram: We're rewording to remove the references to conduct and discipline.

Mr. Bagnall: Pardon?

Ms. Bertram: We're taking out the words conduct and discipline.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, why were they there before?

Ms. Bertram: We're just using different

language, more -

Mr. Bagnall: So why were contact and - why were they in there before and why are they being taken out?

Ms. Bertram: The old wording was respecting the admission, treatment, conduct, discipline and discharge of patients, where we're changing it to respecting the admission, treatment and discharge of patients. The discipline wasn't very positive language.

Chair: Shall we carry that section? Carried.

6. Subsection 14(9) of the Act is amended by the deletion of the words "charges of the hospital" and the substitution of the words "charges for the insured services received".

Shall we carry that section? Carried.

7. Subsection 15.1(3) of the Act is amended

(a) by the deletion of the words "If a physician, practitioner or hospital" and the substitution of the words "If a person"; and

(b) by the deletion of the words "the physician, practitioner or hospital" and the substitution of the words "the person".

Question, hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. M. Currie: Number 7, this is regarding our doctors. How many salaried doctors do you have now?

Ms. Bertram: I think there's 100, hon. member. I might be able to get you that information.

Mr. M. Currie: Do you pay insurance for those doctors now, medical insurance? For malpractice.

Ms. Bertram: Do we pay the insurance for those doctors?

Mr. M. Currie: Because they are your employees. The other ones that are on for fee, they pay their own.

Ms. Bertram: So specific to the salaried doctors, do we pay the malpractice insurance?

Mr. M. Currie: Yes.

Ms. Bertram: I honestly don't know the answer to that and I can bring that information back to you. We'll bring that back to you.

Mr. M. Currie: Because that would certainly increase - your health department now, do you book a provision for loss, like for malpractice suits?

Ms. Bertram: Within our budget, do we book a certain amount?

Mr. M. Currie: That's what this section deals with.

Ms. Bertram: No, but that's your question.

Mr. M. Currie: My question is: Is there anywhere in your operating budget that not only do you pay, but you are putting the province at risk for liability for malpractice suits because they are now your employee?

Ms. Bertram: I don't believe that this section - that's what this is about, but maybe Ms. Christian can give you a little bit more background to section 15.1(3).

Mr. M. Currie: What this section says, it bars an action against a physician, practitioner or hospital, provide information in good faith as required by the act. So I'm taking that now we have a lot more salaried doctors, we are at a lot bigger risk because

they are your employees now. They're not self-employed.

Ms. Bertram: I know what you're asking. I don't know -

Mr. M. Currie: You'll bring that information back.

Ms. Bertram: I will bring it back.

Mr. M. Currie: Can you tell me also how many malpractice suits we have today against our salaried doctors? Not interested in the names or anything else, just if there are any suits now filed in the province against salaried doctors.

Ms. Bertram: Okay, I also have some information for you, hon. member, in terms of the numbers of doctors. I don't have my sheets in front of me for the updated numbers but this was as of March of this time last year for the budget.

We had about 139 FTEs, and that includes the family physicians or other and specialists. But you were specifically asking about the salaried ones. Under the specialists category we have 52.4 FTEs and the contracted ones were 7.5, family doctors salaried were at 38.1 FTEs, and family physicians or other that were salaried were around two. But I will bring that information back to you.

Mr. M. Currie: Yeah, I would like to know, how many salaried, and if you are paying the medical insurance for malpractice for them, how much that was costing us a year and if there are any suits against us for salary doctors today. Not interested in names, nothing like that.

Ms. Bertram: That's fine.

Chair: Further questions on section 7?

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

Shall it carry? Carried.

Ms. Bertram: I move the title.

Chair: *An Act to Amend the Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

Ms. Bertram: 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? Carried.

Ms. Bertram: Mr. Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to without amendment.

Chair: Shall it carry? Carried.

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of a Whole House having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Hospital and Diagnostic Services Insurance Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same without amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. House Leader, that the 10th order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 10, *Statistics Act*, Bill No. 36, ordered for second reading.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable House Leader, that the said bill be now read a second time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *Statistics Act*, Bill No. 36, read a second time.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable House Leader, 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? Carried.

I call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood to come down and chair the Committee of the Whole House.

Chair (Mitchell): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intituled *Statistics Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

An Hon. Member: No.

Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Dunsford: No. Carried.

Mr. Bagnall: (Indistinct).

Chair: Clause by clause? (Indistinct).

Sure thing.

Would you (Indistinct) before I begin?

Mr. Bagnall: Sure. No problem.

Mr. Sheridan: The *Statistics Act*, we'll be the last province in Canada to bring forward a statistics act.

One of the main things with regards to a statistics act is that we are allowed to share this information both with the order of government at the federal level and with municipality and community side. It's very important. There's a lot of information. One of the things that costs us mightily is that we're not allowed to share information with the federal government, say, right after a census is taken. They come back to us and they say there's a follow-up report. If you don't have a statistics act you're not allowed to work with the federal government on that type of thing.

The only reason I'm telling you this one little part of it is that back when the last census was done, say 2001 I think was the year that they did it, we were among, at that time, three provinces that didn't have a stats act, so we weren't allowed to follow up with the report to help Revenue Canada come up with a final number for census. It cost us over \$50 million in equalization by not having those stats to trade back and forth with the federal government to ensure that our census was right.

I mean, this is one of 4,000 things that the stats act does but that's the one that costs us

most heavily.

The greatest part about it right now, is that it complies with our rural action plan so that we can really pinpoint things that we want to do in rural Prince Edward Island with regard to stats that come right out of communities. So if we can garner the right amount of statistics with regard to demographics and everybody that lives out in rural areas, we'll be able to make better informed economic and investment ideals.

I also have my manager of statistics here with me today, Mr. Nigel Burns. I'd like to bring him on the floor as well.

Chair: Permission to bring Mr. Burns on the floor?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Agreed.

Will it be acceptable if I read each section prior to questions fully?

Mr. Bagnall: I think it's better if we do it as we go along.

Chair: We can do it as we go along.

I'll begin as Mr. Burns gets situated there.

1. In this Act

(a) "Bureau" means the Prince Edward Island Statistics Bureau established by this Act;

If there are any questions, just shout out and I'll stop.

(b) "Director" means the Director of Statistics designated under this Act;

Mr. Bagnall: Who is that by now?

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Sheridan: Director?

Mr. Bagnall: Yes.

Mr. Sheridan: There's no director right now. As I mentioned, Nigel, our manager of statistics here on Prince Edward Island, we'll be creating this bureau. The bureau will consist of our three-person group that does statistics right now. This is not going to be an investment by Prince Edward Island. These are the pieces that are inside the act, director meaning the director of the statistics. Nigel is right now manager of that sector.

Mr. Bagnall: So will he become director of this sector?

Mr. Sheridan: We're not saying that at this time. This is to prepare it so that we could go forward and do that if we wanted to have that in place. The actual bureau will be the same group of three that we have now in place.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay.

Chair: 1.(c) "Minister" means the Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs;

(d) "record" has the same meaning as in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. F-15.01;

(e) "respondent" means a person from whom any report or information is sought under this Act;

(f) "return" means the record of any report or information provided by a respondent;

(g) "Statistics Canada" means the statistics bureau referred to in the *Statistics Act* (Canada).

2. If a provision of this Act is inconsistent with or in conflict with a provision of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or of any other enactment, the provision of this Act prevails to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.

3. (1) There is hereby established, within the public service of the province, a statistical branch to be known as the Prince Edward Island Statistics Bureau.

(2) The Bureau, for administrative purposes, shall be attached to and form a part of the department over which the Minister presides.

4.(1) The Bureau may plan, promote and develop integrated social and economic statistics relating to the province or the government or both and, in particular, may

(a) collect, compile, analyse, abstract and publish statistical information relating to the commercial, industrial, financial, social, economic, educational, recreational and other activities and conditions of the province and persons in the province;

(b) collaborate with or assist departments in the collection, compilation and publication of statistical information, including statistics derived from the activities of those departments; and

(c) promote the avoidance of duplication in the collection of information by the departments.

(2) In addition to the powers conferred upon the Bureau under subsection (1), the Lieutenant Governor in Council may authorize the Bureau to collect, compile, analyse, abstract and publish such other statistics or statistical information as the Lieutenant Governor in Council may deem necessary.

(3) The Minister may establish such rules, instructions and forms as may be necessary for conducting the work of the Bureau.

5.(1) Such employees as are required for the administration of this Act shall be appointed and employed in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. C-8.

(2) The Minister shall designate a person employed in the public service under the Minister to be the Director of Statistics who shall carry out the duties of the Director under this Act.

(3) The director designated in subsection (2) shall be the manager of the Bureau and shall

(a) advise the Minister on matters relating to the Bureau;

(b) advise and help departments with statistical matters, projects and programs; and

(c) under the direction of the Minister, supervise the administration of this Act and matters arising under the Act.

(4) The Minister may, for such period as the Minister may determine, use the services of any employee in any department in the exercise or performance of any function by the Bureau under this Act, and any employee whose services are so used shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be a person employed under this Act while the person's services are so used.

(5) The Minister may engage any person under contract to perform services for the Minister or the Bureau under this Act, and any person so engaged and the employees and agents of that person shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be engaged under this Act while performing those services.

6. A certificate purporting to be signed by the Director certifying information or calculations using information obtained under this Act is evidence of the information and calculations stated in the certificate.

7.(1) The Director and every person employed or otherwise engaged under this Act shall, before entering upon their duties, take and subscribe an oath or affirmation in the following form:

I,, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully and honestly fulfil my duties on behalf of the Prince Edward Island Statistics Bureau in conformity with the *Statistics Act* and all rules and instructions under it and that I will not, without due authority, disclose or make known any matter or thing that comes to my knowledge in the performance of my work under the *Statistics Act*.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct).

Mr. Sheridan: Mr. Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and that the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

Chair: Shall it carry? Carried.

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *Statistics 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? Carried.

Hon. members, I am now advised that the Honourable Lieutenant Governor has arrived in the Confederation Chamber to receive this House and its Address in Reply to the Speech From the Throne.

I now propose to leave the chair, and would

ask all hon. members to accompany me to the Confederation Chamber to greet Her Honour.

[Recess]

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. House Leader, that the 10th order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: Order No. 10, *Statistics Act*, Bill No. 36, in Committee.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Government House Leader, 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? Carried.

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

Chair (Mitchell): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intituled *Statistics Act*.

We stopped on page 3. 7(2) is where I will be beginning. We'd like to ask permission for Mr. Burns to come back on to the floor.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Okay, we'll begin on page 3.

7(2) The oath or affirmation referred to in subsection (1) shall be taken before a commissioner for taking affidavits for Prince Edward Island and shall be recorded in a manner authorized by the Minister.

8. (1) No person shall, in the performance of his or her functions under this Act, discriminate between persons to the prejudice of any such persons.

(2) The Minister may authorize the use of sampling methods for the collection of statistics.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: What do you mean by sampling methods?

Mr. Sheridan: What we would be looking at is whenever you're doing any kind of gathering of information, sometimes it's impossible to get 100% collection. So you'd say: We're going to take every tenth household or we'll take every fifteenth member of that community so that - there is no way that we can get 100%. You would just predict or sanction a sampling that would be fair to get your numbers.

Chair: 9. A person having the custody or control of any information or records in any department shall grant access to the information or records for the purposes of this Act to the Director or a person authorized by the Director.

10. (1) Except as otherwise permitted by this section or for the purposes of a prosecution under this Act, no person, other than a person employed or otherwise engaged under this Act and sworn or affirmed under section 7, shall be permitted to examine any

return under this Act that identifies a respondent or other person.

(2) Except as otherwise permitted by this section or for the purposes of a prosecution under this Act, no person employed or otherwise engaged under this Act and sworn or affirmed under section 7 shall disclose or knowingly cause to be disclosed, by any means, any information obtained under this Act in such manner that it is possible from any such disclosure to relate the particulars obtained from any return to any identifiable respondent or other person.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: If they file for information through the privacy or whatever they file through to get it, can they get that information?

Mr. Sheridan: Yeah. Under the bureau they would be able to get information that may not be available under the information act.

Mr. Bagnall: They got to go to FOIPP to get it?

Mr. Sheridan: They don't have to go to FOIPP to get it, they will be able to go in and get this information under this new act. What they're doing - and that's why you'd have to go in and take this oath, is to say that anything that you find out in there you would never release out to anybody else that would -

Mr. Bagnall: But is that staff that you're talking about?

Mr. Sheridan: That's staff. Those are the staff that we are saying would be sworn in under this oath and affidavit.

Mr. Bagnall: Okay, fine.

Chair: 10. (3) The Minister may authorize

(a) the particulars of any information obtained in the course of administering this Act to be disclosed to Statistics Canada pursuant to an agreement under section 12; or

(b) the particulars of any information collected pursuant to an agreement under section 13 to be disclosed to a party to the agreement.

(4) The Director may authorize the disclosure of

(a) information that was collected by a respondent from other persons for the respondent's own purposes and then disclosed to the Bureau, but such information shall remain subject to

(i) the same confidentiality that the information was subject to when collected by the respondent, and

(ii) may only be disclosed by the Bureau in the manner and to the extent agreed upon by the respondent from whom the Director obtained it;

(b) information relating to a person or the person's business if the person consents in writing to the disclosure;

(c) information available to the public from other sources under any enactment or other law; and

(d) information in the form of an index or list of

(i) the names, telephone numbers and locations of individual organizations, establishments, firms or businesses, and

(ii) the products produced, manufactured, processed, transported, stored, purchased or sold, or the services provided, by individual organizations, establishments, firms or

businesses in the course of their business.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Just give me an overview of this section, minister.

Mr. Sheridan: Sure thing. What they're saying is - you see the very first sentence? "The Director may authorize the disclosure of" information of any of those only under these conditions. You go down and take a look at some of those, as in "(d) information in the form of an index..." So that would be something that would already be available in any kind of thing like a phone book or a business directory. So that would exempt that.

Another one that would be there is that it would be allowed to be released if the people sign off to allow that disclosure or a business that comes in with information available to the public from any other sources under any other enactment or law. That they would already be public information. Otherwise, you can't disclose information on a person or a business that's going to be obtained under this kind of an act.

Mr. Bagnall: So if you refuse it, do they have the option to FOIPP it, then?

Mr. Sheridan: What this is, is that this is taking care of the people or the respondents that are part of a survey, say, for instance. This is protecting those respondents that give that information. So we could not, under this bureau, ever release it without these kind of disclosures. The only way a director may authorize a disclosure of any of those is under this kind of (Indistinct) -

Mr. Bagnall: So is this overruling FOIPP?

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Sheridan: This will be stronger than FOIPP in the fact that they can go in and get information that would not be FOIPP-able. Their information that they would be taking would then be construed and put forward in a form of a survey or results that would never identify anybody's individual rights or private information. It would always be in the form of 73% of people in Montague wear glasses, for instance. So it would never come down and say that all the Bagnalls do those types of things. So it's that kind of stuff is what you're protected over. A very important part that these types of disclosures are covered off very well.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: So in the system we have now, it couldn't overrule FOIPP before, could it?

Mr. Sheridan: With statistics? You could say that and (Indistinct).

Mr. Bagnall: Is there a change in the powers here?

Nigel Burns Manager: In the absence of a statistics act, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* prevails. The *Statistics Act* has a mandate to plan, collect, promote statistical activities of the province.

In terms of the release of the information, as part of the mandate of the organization is to publish statistics, aggregate statistics, to inform the public and policymakers about the government, the people, the industry, the economy of PEI. Individual information is not released except for under these specifics.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: Has it been before if it was requested under FOIPP?

Nigel Burns Manager: No.

Mr. Bagnall: So it's never been?

Nigel Burns Manager: Never will.

Mr. Bagnall: So what's the change? I'm not trying to be -

Mr. Sheridan: No, no. As I stated in the opening comments, there is a number of important pieces of statistics gathering that we loose out on because we do not have a statistics act. It does not allow our bureau to go out and do the types of things that would enable us to do certain things like exchange of information with the order of Canada government, the order of different communities.

When it is impacting us, as we talked about, with regard to dollar loss, when we do those census, for instance, it impacts us in a real and monetary way. The other part that we want to do this for is the growth and economic development of our rural areas, or any part of PEI for that matter. If we can actually gain all of the information that we can garner right now, if we can get all it, compile it into good material - important information - we can then direct and better implement plans in those areas. So it is very key that we get this right, to be able to go forward and do these gatherings.

Mr. Bagnall: So the act will give you more powers to get more information.

Mr. Sheridan: That's correct. In order to use it in very consistent and precise and absolute ways. If you work outside them, then you are breaking the act and -

Mr. Bagnall: But you're also getting power here to - for the minister not to release anything.

Mr. Sheridan: No.

Mr. Bagnall: On the private information.

Mr. Sheridan: No.

Mr. Bagnall: Over and above like -

Mr. Sheridan: No, there's nothing that would be - it gives us the power to go get it, but we can't withhold anything that is FOIPP-able. The FOIPP process will not change. The FOIPP, you - anyone, CBC, or anyone could go and continue to FOIPP what is FOIPP-able. They wouldn't be enabled to go in and get the information that we would have inside a survey, for instance, that's not FOIPP-able. But the FOIPP laws would not change with regards to anything else out in around government.

Chair: The Leader of the Opposition has a question.

Leader of the Opposition: Stats Canada sometimes charges for some of their services for specialized reports. Will this allow you to charge for some services from this division?

Mr. Sheridan: Will they charge us or will we -

Leader of the Opposition: No, will you be charging if you were a private sector company and you were interested in expanding in the bioscience sector, and you wanted the most updated economic indicators and other such - and it's specialized to PEI. Because often, PEI is so small, the samples just don't match, right?

Mr. Sheridan: Yeah.

Leader of the Opposition: So will this allow this bureau to actually charge a fee for service?

Nigel Burns Manager: Probably a very separate question. The act doesn't have

anything in it about charging for (Indistinct).

Leader of the Opposition: No, but having a bureau like this would enable the government to start charging for some services if they wanted to, just like Stats Canada does for specialized statistics.

Nigel Burns Manager: The mandate of the bureau, just going back to 4 for a moment -

Leader of the Opposition: Sure. I have no problem with that -

Nigel Burns Manager: (Indistinct) a -

Leader of the Opposition: - but I'd ask the minister, then: Is it the intention of the government, then, when you set up this bureau, if private sector or other people - maybe it's a company coming from someplace else wants a specialized report - will you be charging a fee for that service?

Mr. Sheridan: We'd have to look at even releasing any of those reports.

Nigel Burns Manager: If I -

Mr. Sheridan: Please do (Indistinct).

Nigel Burns Manager: The mandate of the bureau is to publish statistics.

Leader of the Opposition: Sure.

Nigel Burns Manager: With the idea that more information produces better results and understanding of the Island, its society, its people.

In terms of charging for material -

Leader of the Opposition: For some specialized - like, Stats Canada provide information out - if we wanted to get the latest census you can get that, but say I wanted something detailed because I'm

planning on expanding a business, they give a really good profile on something, but you're going to pay for that. Because often, whether it's polling or whether it's stats or whatever, PEI's sample is so small most people say it's not -

Mr. Sheridan: From Stats Canada.

Leader of the Opposition: Yeah. Or any place.

Mr. Sheridan: Yeah. Absolutely.

Leader of the Opposition: But this is going to allow you have such detail. My question: Is it the government's intention, then, to provide that service?

Mr. Sheridan: Yeah. We haven't even gone there. As Nigel has said, the mandate is laid out as to what we're planning to do with this. It's very much for our own purposes, and continuing to have this government thrive in the way that we propose development. But that is something that we could certainly take into consideration, and if we had information that would be saleable we could look at that. Right now that isn't what the mandate is, and the plans aren't in place to do it, but if we had something that would be in that kind of order, it's something that we could certainly entertain.

We'd have to look at -

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Sheridan: - what it would be that we'd be releasing just to make sure it doesn't contravene any of the act.

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just clarification - and I know the Member from Montague-Kilmuir brought it up around the FOIPP and the extra extent that the bureau can go to - we're not talking about going into people's businesses and find out what contract they got and who they gave it to and who got what contract and all that kind of stuff.

Mr. Sheridan: No. None of that kind of thing at all. I mean, these powers that will enable the *Statistics Act*, or the bureau to forward and gather information that is critical to the operation of the province, wouldn't have anything to do with any of that kind of information. This is just to find out particulars about what kind of business they may operate under.

Ms. Biggar: Yeah. So we might have - sorry, hon. Chair.

It might just indicate we have this company involved in aerospace and this company involved in whatever and what could the demographics of their employees might be, in terms of education or -

Mr. Sheridan: Absolutely.

Ms. Biggar: - gender and that kind of stuff.

Mr. Sheridan: That's correct.

Ms. Biggar: Okay.

Chair: Before I go to the hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry I'm going to ask for consent of the House to carry the first 10 sections of the bill that have not been carried thus far, before I (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry with a question.

Mr. Brown: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition. If there are tables available, like Stats Canada's site shows you the tables, and then you can write them and say: I want this table sorted this way and this information.

There's a good idea there that we should be making the tables available to researchers at UPEI or the Island studies group. If they say: I want a statistical table this way, or I want data this way, then they could use their SPSS programs, or statistical packages, in order to do it.

Mr. Sheridan: It's very interesting.-

Mr. Brown: Yeah. It's a good idea - give out -

Mr. Sheridan: - concept. There's no question.

Mr. Brown: (Indistinct).

Mr. Sheridan: Just in the original mandate it's going to take us a lot of time to start to do this and collect them and get any kind of database -

Mr. Brown: Yeah.

Mr. Sheridan: - but it's certainly something to look at down the road. It's a great idea. (Indistinct).

Mr. Brown: Yeah. No, it's good. I think it's great.

Chair: Okay, no further questions?

I'll begin reading section 11.

11. (1) Except for the purposes of a prosecution under this Act, any return made to the Bureau or the Director pursuant to this Act and any copy of the return in the possession of the respondent is privileged

and shall not be used as evidence in any proceedings, and no person employed or otherwise engaged under this Act and sworn or affirmed under section 7 shall be required in any proceedings to give oral testimony or to produce any return, document or record with respect to any information obtained from a respondent in the course of administering this Act.

(2) Subsection (1) applies in respect of any information that the Bureau is prohibited by the Act from disclosing or that may only be disclosed pursuant to an authorization under subsection 10(3) or (4).

Can I carry that section please?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Chair: 12. (1) The Minister may make agreements with Statistics Canada

(a) for the purpose of sharing with Statistics Canada

(i) replies to any specific statistical inquiries,

(ii) replies to any specific classes of information collected under this Act,

(iii) any tabulations or analyses based on replies referred to in subclause (i) or (ii) or both, or

(iv) information obtained by the Bureau under this Act; and

(b) for the collection of information jointly with Statistics Canada or on its behalf, for the sharing of that information with Statistics -

Mr. Bagnall: This just gives you the power to share with the feds? Is that right?

Mr. Sheridan: That's correct.

Mr. Bagnall: That's all we're asking.

Mr. Sheridan: Share both ways, yeah. That's the big one, that's the one I was talking about, where that census was done in 2001. Because we didn't have the right to exchange it back and forth they actually downgraded our population. Once our population is downgraded we get paid on a per capita basis on a equalization formula, and we lost \$50 million because of the fact that we didn't have this act in place. That's, I mean, just irresponsible. Irresponsible on (Indistinct).

Mr. Bagnall: Tell me something, minister, will this give you the power to do the census rather than the feds in the future?

Mr. Sheridan: Certainly not a census. We'll cooperate with Stats Can in their operation of a census and be able to cooperate in following up on the census after the fact. They have, like, it's called a post-census survey type thing, so we have to - we'll be enabled, through having a stats act, to be able to cooperate with them and make sure that we both feel that the numbers are real and we're both being treated fairly.

Chair: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Bagnall: I know when the last census was done, especially in Montague, our numbers got downgraded in Montague and I'm sure there's no way in the world they went down because the apartments and everything else that have increased there and everything is still full. Yet they took it down for 150 or so people. There should have been a growth of that showing rather than a downgrade.

So it's very important - and I don't know if this act will make it sure - of the accuracy that's being done, because it seems to me it was pretty flawed the last time it happened.

Mr. Sheridan: Absolutely. But you can just imagine, for us to lose \$50 million in the difference, how flawed it was. The difference in that would probably be 2,000 -

Mr. Bagnall: It wouldn't be 50 million in one year, minister, would it? No. It'd be over a period of time

Mr. Sheridan: Yeah, it's over a period of time. Until the next fix was out, until the next time we had a new number to (Indistinct) -

Mr. Bagnall: So it could be the \$50 million from one census to the next.

Chair: Are you satisfied with your question?

Mr. Sheridan: From one census to the next.

Mr. Bagnall: Pardon?

Mr. Sheridan: Fifty million between one census and the next.

Chair: Before I -

Mr. Bagnall: That's what I thought you meant. I was wanting to get that clarified.

Ms. Bertram: Call the hour.

Chair: The hour has been called.

Mr. Sheridan: Mr. Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

Chair: Shall it carry? Carried.

Madam Speaker, as Chair of the Committee of the Whole House having had under consideration a bill to be intitled *Statistics Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move the report of the committee

be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness, that this House adjourn until tomorrow at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Have a great evening.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 2:00 p.m.