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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



A

Speaker: Hon. Kathleen M. Casey

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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 very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everyone to the gallery, especially Sonny and Freddy from the western end of our province, and some of our more regular visitors. A beautiful day out there. This is our busy time of the year. We see the fishermen are out, the farmers are on the land, we've got cruise ships coming into the harbour regularly. I flew in late last night, and for one of the first times ever I saw three jets on the runway. We've got direct flights from Toronto coming in, from Montreal coming in, from Ottawa coming in, and I think it's a good indication that things in PEI are starting to look on the up and up.

With that, to all those watching on EastLink, channel 10, today, I would like to wish them a very good day as well.

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 all our regulars and new visitors in the gallery today. I'd like to welcome those watching at home.

This is an important week. As we know, on May 8<sup>th</sup> we have lots of young people graduating from the University of Prince

Edward Island. So I'm sure that many people are quite excited and we want everybody to have a great weekend.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. LeClair:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to rise as well and welcome everyone to the gallery this afternoon, especially Sonny Wedge and Freddy Butler, two great supporters from up west in District 27. Certainly they make the trip just as well as I do, from up the west. They're here quite a bit, and I'm glad to see you here today.

I would like to also say hello to Joe Perrier and his wife Rita who are home watching on EastLink, and wish them all a good day, and enjoy the proceedings.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville.

**Mr. Murphy:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would also like to rise and welcome Sonny and Freddy up there. I think Freddy is in the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road's district, but I'm sure at some point he'd like to be in the Alberton-Roseville district. I hear he's trying to sell his house and move there.

I'd also like to welcome all those folks that are watching in Alberton-Roseville via EastLink. I'd like to welcome them to the proceedings today and wish them a great day.

With your indulgence, I would also like to offer congratulations to one of my constituents. The final Quebec major hockey league entry draft rankings are out and the highest ranking Islander is one from the good old district of Alberton-Roseville, Darcy Ashley. A forward with the Western Capitals, he ranked 37<sup>th</sup> overall, and I wouldn't be surprised if you see this young gentleman playing in the NHL someday, hopefully with the Toronto Maple Leafs.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome our visitors today, Eddie Lund, and a former colleague of mine, Bev Boulter. We worked together as education assistants so it's nice to see her up there.

I'd like to send out congratulations to one of my constituents today. Bruce MacDougall, who's deputy mayor of the City of Summerside, has been re-elected to his second term as president of the Federation of Prince Edward Island Municipalities.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Biggar:** Also, to send out 90<sup>th</sup> birthday greetings coming up this weekend of Addie Konderson. She's going to be having a celebration at LeFurgey Centre this Saturday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Just for all of those of you who know the famous Tyne Valley players, get out and buy your tickets, because their *Sulphur and Molasses* play is coming up.

To all the rest of you who are watching today on EastLink, I send out greetings and best wishes.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Premier.

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

The theme of hockey has been suggested already, and the Moncton Wildcats are doing reasonably well in the pursuit of Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. There are four Islanders on that team. I think we ought to tip our hat to them. That's Randy Cameron, Brandon Gormley, Cole MacMillan and Devon MacAusland.

Also, along with that, there's a scholarship given out by the Kenneth R. Stiles and Seaman Hotchkiss Foundation. There's six \$1,000 scholarships, and there's a young man from the Kensington area, Jackson Doughart, that has one of those scholarships, and he attends the University of Prince Edward Island. We need to tip our hat to that gentleman as well.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness.

**Mr. Henderson:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, want to welcome those to the gallery, as well as those watching on EastLink, and a special welcome to Bev Boulter, a constituent of mine, who lives on the Boulter Road in the Millburn area. Bev and her husband and son look after Poplar Line Farms. One point of note of Bev is she does a great job, she's involved with the PEI

Potato Blossom Festival, and she's extensively involved with selecting the potato ambassador for PEI every year who goes to the Royal Winter Fair representing Prince Edward Island. So if anybody knows of some good, young ambassador who could proceed with that role, have them get in touch with Bev.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

**Ms. Dunsford:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everyone in the gallery today, and remind everybody in the Stratford area that it is voting day for the naming of the new school. In fact, starting today until Saturday, residents of Stratford can choose between four different names: Michael Thomas Elementary, Stratford Elementary, Hillsborough View Elementary, and Captain Frederick Thornton Peters VC School. I encourage everyone to get out and vote.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Docherty:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's great to stand today on this gorgeous day. I'll be very quick in the sense that my sisters-in-law, Darlene and Donalda - well, Darlene MacDonald and Donalda Docherty, twins - are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. I don't know if the community will be the same after today, but I wanted to wish them all the best.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everybody in the gallery. Eddie Lund and Wes, there, and especially Bev. Bev does a lot of work for O'Leary. I always say I only see you on the parade days, on O'Leary Day, Bev, but she camps out on our front lawn and we're kind of related by marriage. My mother was a Boulter, and she's seen fit to join the Boulter family. It's good to see you here today, Bev. All the best.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Gallant:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I, too, would like to rise and welcome everyone to the gallery. A special hello to Sonny up there. It's nice to see you.

I'd also like to say hello to everyone back there in the District of Evangeline-Miscouche, and congratulate the volunteer committee at the Miscouche Rec Centre for a wonderful fundraiser Sunday.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gallant:** It was a great roast turkey dinner. It was great to be there.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Statements by Members

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

**Anniversary of liberation of the Netherlands**

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

Today, May 5<sup>th</sup>, is the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands. Remembrance events and activities are being held across Canada and in the Netherlands this week. As the Second World War was coming to an end, Canada played a key role in liberating the people of the Netherlands. This effort is often regarded as one of the greatest military achievements in our nation's history. The liberation came at a steep price, however, with more than 7,600 Canadians giving their lives.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1945, the Canadians negotiated a truce which permitted relief supplies to enter the western Netherlands and end the "Hunger winter." No part of western Europe was liberated at a more vital moment than the Netherlands, and the Dutch people cheered Canadian troops as one town after another was freed. To show their appreciation to the pilots who dropped food from the air, many Dutch people painted "Thank you, Canadians" on the roof tops.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1945, Col.-Gen. Johannes Blaskowitz formerly surrendered the remaining 117,000 German troops in the Netherlands to Canadian Lieutenant Gen. Charles Foulkes of the First Canadian Corps, ending nearly eight months of bitter and difficult fighting. In honour of their gift of freedom, the Dutch people have annually donated 10,000 tulip bulbs to Canada for the national capital region since the war's end.

This week, an official Government of Canada delegation, including Canadian veterans and youth, are travelling to the Netherlands to mark the anniversary of its liberation. This special relationship forged between Canada and the Netherlands during

the difficult days of the Second World War continues today.

As an Islander, whose in-laws lived through the years of German occupation, I have heard, on many occasions, the high esteem held for Canadians for freeing the people of the Netherlands. I ask all members to recognize that on this date, 65 years ago, Canadian soldiers freed the nation of the Netherlands, thus leaving an indelible mark on both countries.

This great event has formed a friendship between two neighbours who are an ocean apart.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**The Lyle House**

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Today I would like to congratulate one of my constituents, Mr. Claude Arsenault of Birch Hill. Mr. Arsenault has been recognized with the PEI Heritage Award for his efforts in the painstaking restoration of The Lyle House.

The Lyle House, some 175 years ago, was operated as an Inn by James Lyle of Lot 16, and provided food and shelter for many who travelled to the shipbuilding centres of Port Hill, Bideford and west to Alberton.

Mr. Arsenault returned to his native PEI several years ago after a 40-year absence and discovered this old building, which at the time was being used as a farm storage shed. But he recognized it as a valuable historic gem in the midst of a field.

Mr. Claude Arsenault hauled the heritage home from Lot 16 to Birch Hill and set about the process to restore it and now, upon completion, calls it home. It is because of Islanders like Claude Arsenault that our heritage homes are lovingly restored and maintained to tell the story of our past in shipbuilding, fox farming, etc. These homes in their unique architectural designs add to the scenic vistas of PEI.

I would like to commend Mr. Claude Arsenault of Birch Hill for saving one of the oldest homes in the area we call Westcountry, and wish him many years of enjoyment in his new home.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

### **Jim Carragher-PEI Habitat for Humanity**

**Mr. Bagnall:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm proud to rise to recognize a great Islander. Jim Carragher, chairman of PEI Habitat for Humanity, took home a \$25,000 national award for his work in the organization. Jim has helped raise approximately \$88,000 for Habitat for Humanity in the past year, with all the funds used to build sustainable houses in Prince Edward Island.

Jim was presented with the award last Thursday during a national Habitat for Humanity meeting in Ottawa. The annual award was created in 2009 in an effort to encourage and inspire individuals to support the issue of affordable home ownership in their communities and encourage more Habitat for Humanity associations to adopt sustainable building practices.

Jim is a great man. His personal life echos his professional life. PEI's chapter of Habitat for Humanity builds about six homes a year. Six houses goes a long way for Islanders. We also applaud his commitment to sustainability.

Further, I would not forget all of the work done by all members of the Habitat for Humanity. This valuable organization helps thousands of people across Canada. We are very lucky to have such an active sector in Prince Edward Island.

Thanks again for all the great work done by Jim Carragher and his team.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Responses to Questions Taken As Notice

### Questions by Members

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

### **DM pay compared to Atlantic provinces**

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

I'd like to welcome the Premier back. My first question is for the Premier. Premier, I know your deputy ministers work very hard for you. Can you tell me today if they are paid on par with the deputy ministers in other Atlantic provinces?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** I'm not sure, Madam Speaker, but I'd be happy to check that out.

If I had to guess, I would say they'd be on par, perhaps a little bit under par.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** It'd be fair to say, Premier, that they provide you with a lot of advice and work hard on policies within your government.

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** It'd be fair to say that they work hard on behalf of all Islanders, Madam Speaker.

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

#### **DMs from Charlottetown**

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

I'm just wondering, Mr. Premier, then why are all your deputy ministers from Charlottetown?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** They're not.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** I believe they are, Mr. Premier. Can you tell me who's not?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Keith Dewar, who's head of Health PEI.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Question then for the Premier, Madam Speaker.

Do you feel, Mr. Premier, there's no one else in rural PEI qualified to be a deputy minister in your government?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Not at all. There's already a lot of them from all over Prince Edward Island, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, I don't believe there is, I think they're all from Charlottetown.

I just find it disappointing in the Premier. That's one of the reasons why a lot of people believe there's such a disconnect with you and rural PEI, and then one of the reasons why you do not have the pulse of rural Prince Edward Island. The Premier has felt that there's no one qualified in rural PEI to work as a deputy minister.

So, Premier, is that the case? That you don't feel anybody in rural PEI is qualified to work as a deputy minister in your government?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

We already know that the hon. member was incorrect in his first premise to begin with. We have other deputies that live in other areas of the province. I'd like to point out that under the previous government a lot of the deputies continued over. What we did, when we came to power, for rural PEI, is we realized - and the member was right. His government did concentrate all government services in the area of Charlottetown.

Our government came to power and we wanted to make sure that was spread out across Prince Edward Island. That's why we were very happy to be able to move the Department of Education and Early

Childhood Development to Summerside. We were able to take the department of fisheries and rural development and move it to Montague. We were able to take part of the paint shop from transportation and public works, move it to Tignish, and that's what our government does, Madam Speaker.

We believe in One Island Community, One Island Future.

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

### **Construction jobs**

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, we know where the One Island Community is and it's not in rural Prince Edward Island.

Premier, you announced a couple of years ago, a 10-point plan and a billion dollar wind project, and you talked about you were going to create 850 jobs in the construction industry for this development. Can you tell me where I could go today and find some of those construction jobs?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

There was a lot done with the construction of the SUEZ development. If you talk to a lot of the contractors from up in the West Prince area, they were very pleased with the development that took place when those windmills were built. You just have to talk to the people of the Summerside area with the wind farm that was put in place for that area of the province.

So we look all across Prince Edward Island. There are jobs being created. We just have to look at our manor replacements that are taking part all across the province, the new Montague high school, other construction at

our high schools. We're a government that believes in investing in all areas of Prince Edward Island and we'll continue to do that.

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

### **Jobs in wind technology sector**

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, I'll remind the Premier that the SUEZ project was left over from the previous government.

Premier, I would like to know where and how many full-time permanent jobs that were created in the wind technology sector. Can you tell me where I can find them today since you came to power?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'm very happy to say that we partner with Holland College and there is a wind technician program now available at Holland College. There's obviously technical work that takes place with our windmills here now in Prince Edward Island.

There's also the construction that takes part when the windmills are being put up in Prince Edward Island, Madam Speaker, and all those lead to economic development in the province.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** In your 10-point plan, Premier, you indicated that there was going to be \$218 million to benefit our Island communities from the construction of windmills. Can you explain today what communities benefitted from that \$218 million?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Obviously, the communities in the east, the communities in the west, the communities in the Summerside area. All the communities where windmills were put up. We're continuing now to work with the private sector to look at enhancing our wind development here in the province. We have a great wind resource.

Unfortunately, probably our only downfall is we don't have a lot of sparse areas where no one lives like in Newfoundland and Labrador, perhaps in Quebec. But we're continuing to work with the private sector to look at ways to expand our wind capacity here in the Province of Prince Edward Island.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, the Premier announced a program two years ago and there's certainly been nothing done.

It's just stalled. So I'm wondering, Premier, could you tell the Holland College wind technology students this year where they're going to find work this year?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I don't tell students where to go to work. The students are smart enough to take the courses themselves, and then they go on to find employment after. As the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters knows, the placement rate for all Holland College graduates is very high and it's a great spot to get an education.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** See, Madam Speaker, there are 12 students over there that have invested a year of their life and a lot of money on tuition to take this course on a promise the Premier made to bring wind development to Prince Edward Island.

Premier, I'm just wondering if you would go to the graduating class this year and give a rousing speech on what you've done for wind energy?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I always love to talk about the great advancements that we have here in wind. You look at the Province of Prince Edward Island. We are a leader in North America in terms of the amount of electricity we consume, based from wind resources - at 20%. Our target is to get to 30%.

We're exporting approximately 100 megawatts of wind as well over to New Brunswick, into the New England market. We're also looking at new opportunities to bring in new developers here to the Province of Prince Edward Island to expand wind. We're also looking at it from a private sector development as well.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, the Premier talks a lot, he makes a lot of promises and he puts out these glossy brochures, but he never follows through.

Now there is one individual that made a

promise and kept his promise. That was Mayor Basil Stewart. He said he was going to look after his people in Summerside and he did build windmills and he did put them up. So can you tell me, Premier, how many windmills went up under your government in the last three years? How many did you put up under your policy?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I'd ask the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters to perhaps give Mayor Basil Stewart a call and ask him where a lot of those funds came from.

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

#### Copy of lease process

**Mr. M. Currie:** I believe we know where the idea came from. Basil usually follows through when he keeps his promise.

Premier, in that 10-point plan there was talk about a standardized lease process to be put in place to protect our landowners. I'm just wondering: Could you table a copy of that standardized lease process that would protect the landowners in Prince Edward Island?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Good question, Madam Speaker.

One of the difficulties that we discovered after we came to power was that a lot of thought had not been put into the processes with regards to wind development in the province prior to us taking power. So we did a lot of community consultations. We looked at ways that we could improve on the

processes that were in place and one of the areas that we wanted to protect was communities in this province.

Unlike the previous government, our government believes in communities all across this province, ranging from West Prince to the east. You can see that with all of our policies. We wanted to find a way to protect the landowners, protect the communities, so that they could enjoy the benefits of wind development in the province.

Any future wind development that will be approved will have to meet a strict criteria when it comes to helping out the community, Madam Speaker, and protection of our landowners in the province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, that didn't sound like he was going to table any kind of standardized lease for our landowners, and especially those that live within the wind regime that's been marked out by the province.

I think, since the Premier announced this \$1 billion wind project, there's been a scramble by developers to come to Prince Edward Island and tie up the land. They're getting five- and 10-year leases, but if they don't win the contract or the RFP, they still hold the land, and that is a problem. Premier, I think there are probably 25,000 acres that are leased today that is going to stifle further wind development because you have not put in place a standardized lease. Can you tell us when that lease will be tabled?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much,

Madam Speaker.

I guess there have been wind developers coming to the province now for the last five or 10 years, under the previous government as well. What landowners choose to do with their land is their choice, as long as it's in the overall best interest of the quality and environmental attributes of our land.

What we're trying to do, under the RFP process, is make sure that any wind developers that come to the province now, that there are provisions put in place to make sure that the landowners are hopefully properly compensated, and to make sure that money that is made is also contributed back to those communities. Those are provisions that were not put in under the previous government. I'm not sure why they didn't believe in communities. Perhaps that was their mantra, but our government does believe in communities, and that's why we have that in the RFP process.

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

### **RFP on wind power**

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, the previous government owned the wind farms, and it was the PEI Energy Corporation.

The Premier wants to go with the private sector with his, but what we see from you, Premier, is we have no windmills, we have no green power, we have no cable, and we have no jobs. So when are you going to issue the results of the RFP that was put out three or four months ago, or five months ago. That was supposed to be closed in April. Premier, can you tell us, has a decision been made on the 30 megawatts of power?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I guess when the department's ready to release that information. Let's just point out how the hon. member, since he stood up today, is really not doing very good research. First he thought every deputy minister was from Charlottetown. We know that that's not true. Then he said that we didn't do any development whatsoever when it came to wind, that they did it all. But then he just said that they did all the public windmills in the province. Well, there are 50 megawatts when it comes to public windmills. There are 100 megawatts when it comes to private. So if we didn't do any, how can there be 100 windmills?

Unfortunately, this is what happened: when that member was the minister of business development in this province for eight years, he did not do his research, he did not go through the processes. We've discovered that we've got Polar Foods, we've got Dundarave, we've got other deals where this province is being sued for millions and millions and millions of dollars based on poor decision making by the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

So our government is going through a process, and we're going to make sure that process is in the best interest of Islanders.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Madam Speaker, we see here a Premier that announced a \$1 billion dream, and he never even had a cable, nor did he have a market, nor did you have transmission capacity, and still he goes out and makes this announcement two years ago, and I guess we are where we are today because there's no development.

It's my understanding that the decision has

been made - it was in April. This is the middle of May, almost. So can you please give us the results of the RFP for 30 megawatts of power and the 100 for export?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I have not seen the RFP process. I have not received a brief on it. When I do, and when it's ready to be made public, I'll be happy to do so.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Question then to the minister of energy.

Minister, could you please tell us the results of the RFP that was issued six months ago for 30 megawatts of power and for 100 megawatts of power for export?

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

**Mr. Brown:** Madam Speaker, the Province of Prince Edward Island did go out with a 130 megawatt tender - 100 megawatts for export, 30 megawatts for domestic use.

We hired a fairness auditor that would look after issues like the hon. member has mentioned, about the leases to property owners. That fairness auditor was available to any landowner that wanted to call him to talk about their lease. We put that in place.

We weren't going to issue a standardized lease because then wind developers would have said: That lease, I don't like it, so I'm not coming. Then the person that owned the property would say: It's my property, I have the right to know about it.

We set up a fairness auditor that these people could call in order to ensure that they could talk about their lease and see if it's good for them. If they did sign a lease, our recommendation to anyone was: If you're going to sign a lease for your property, make sure that if the contract is issued to that person, you get payment. If the contract is not issued to that person, then that option ceases to exist at that point in time. That was our recommendation to anyone that called. Okay?

As for the tender, Maritime Electric was in charge of the tender. We had a fairness auditor in place to look at that. It is my understanding that they've gone through the proposals and they have issued letters back to the wind developers, and now we're back to negotiating with the wind developers. There are some issues around what we can do and what they can do. So there are ongoing negotiations right now, Madam Speaker, in terms of these wind farms on Prince Edward Island.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Question for the minister of energy.

Could you please tell us today: Has Maritime Electric accepted the bids that were put forth by the developers?

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

**Mr. Brown:** Madam Speaker, the proposals that went out were received by us and by Maritime Electric.

They reviewed the procedures. They have now come up with some ideas to say: If we took this on or we did this, maybe can we

get a lower price? Because that's what this is about -

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Brown:** - a lower price. Okay, madam Speaker?

I want to ensure -

**Premier Ghiz:** Why (Indistinct) set the higher price for Islanders? You would.

**Mr. Brown:** - that wind farms are benefitting Islanders. No way are we just going to go out and give some big multinational company our wind regime. We want the most benefits for PEI. I can assure this member, Madam Speaker, that Maritime Electric is now out negotiating with the companies to see if they could reduce their prices.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** So, minister, we're starting to pry some more information out of you. What you're indicating today is that Maritime Electric has not accepted any of the bids from any of the developers for the 30 megawatts of power.

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

**Mr. Brown:** Madam Speaker, in the current state that they were in, in the proposals that were submitted, no.

This process is, number one, getting affordable energy for Prince Edward Island. We're not just going to go out and make an announcement on a 30-megawatt wind farm and increase power rates on Prince Edward Island because of it.

Let's take a look at Ontario. They went out

on all the renewable energy stuff and said: We're going to (Indistinct) of 14 cents. We're going to do all this stuff. Power rates are going up in Ontario. We're not going to do that for Islanders. Wind production on PEI has to benefit Islanders first, and we'll continue to fight for Islanders first in terms of this, Madam Speaker.

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

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

I'm hoping that you're going to start looking after Islanders some day soon because you've already put the price of electricity up 42%. Could you please tell us when you expect this other, second round of negotiations to finish?

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

**Mr. Brown:** Madam Speaker, on the 42% increase in power rates, that all goes back to 2004.

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, the real story.

**Mr. Brown:** That all goes back to eliminating NB plus 10. That's when power rates when up 42%.

**Ms. Bertram:** Shame, shame!

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Brown:** And you know what, Madam Speaker?

I remember that when the bill came for the floor of the Legislature -

**Ms. Bertram:** You fought on it.

**Mr. Brown:** - I told the government of the

day: power rates are going to exceed 40%. On the weekend Maritime Electric and the government got together, had a Sunday afternoon press conference, and said: This person is absolutely wrong, he does not know his facts. They issued a press release guaranteeing Islanders power rates won't go up.

I told them 42%. It was going to go over 40%. It has gone 40%. I knew what I was talking about then. I know what I'm talking about now. I'm in it for Islanders, and Islanders come first, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear! Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** Order, please!

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** Order, please!

The hon. Member from Georgetown -

**Mr. M. Currie:** If the minister knows so much about energy, how come the Premier failed to put you on the negotiation team with Hydro-Québec?

**An Hon. Member:** He was.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Was not. You stood up and took him off.

**Mr. Brown:** Madam Speaker, we are involved in the negotiations.

These are high-level negotiations. These are premier-to-premier office negotiations. I can assure the member that we are providing our Premier with all the information he requires. We are working day and night to provide all the information that the Premier needs in order to get the best deal for Islanders.

Again, it's about Islanders. It's about the best deal for Islanders. We're going to put Islanders first and not some big multinational company that comes here and takes our wind and sells it, Madam Speaker, for a profit, and takes those profits offshore.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Lottery system for kindergarten teachers**

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Islanders are aware of the mess and the mass confusion in education, especially in the last three years. We've now heard reports that they've resorted to using a lottery system to hire our kindergarten teachers. To the minister of education: Can you explain this lottery system?

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

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

I rise today, and am very excited about the opportunity and the leadership by our Premier. It's one of our major policy initiatives to bring kindergarten into the public school system.

Through that process we have listened to and talked to the sector. I know that in

December and January of this year interviews were done. People were identified. As I indicated on the floor of the House yesterday, I would bring forward information to the Leader of the Opposition in respect to the final selection process of hiring. I was not directly involved with that, but I do know that the department was extremely involved in respect to the interviews and the opportunities for individuals that were coming in to teach kindergarten, to have some input and say in respect to opportunities where they saw themselves working in communities across Prince Edward Island.

We're excited about the opportunity. We've just completed our early year evaluations and assessments. We've just announced yesterday that we'll be extending, by two days, the opportunity to bring our five-year-olds in, to give parents and schools time to adjust to the transition with the double cohort of children coming in the system.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the minister, we're talking about a lottery system, a lottery draft system that you're using to chose kindergarten teachers. Explain: Why would you do this?

**Mr. Bagnall:** That's shameful, shameful.

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

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

Order, please!

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

Two weeks ago the PEITF ratified their contract. I know that I did get a lot of feedback from kindergarten teachers who were very anxious about the process after the department had conducted interviews with the health human resource staff in all the boards across the province.

I know that the feedback that I've gotten from kindergarten teachers, they're extremely excited and very happy to be embraced and welcomed into the public schools. I know that the school principals that I've talked to, most recently last week, are very excited about the new staff that will be coming on board to introduce and provide quality kindergarten education.

We will be bringing in approximately 112 kindergarten teachers, with 20 teachers to accommodate support programming for them. I've got tremendous confidence in the department and the boards across the province that that process was done equitably and fairly and treated Islanders with respect.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister. We're talking about this week. This week you guys used the lottery and a draft system to hire kindergarten teachers. Who decided to use this method and why?

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

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

As I indicated, our government and Islanders are excited. I'm getting a lot of calls from families who are very pleased with the kindergarten transition. This month we will be hosting welcome to kindergarten sessions in all our elementary schools across Prince Edward Island. I know that the kindergarten teachers have been introduced to their school principals and their staff. There's a lot of positive discussions going on right now. Families are excited.

We are ready. Classrooms have been built, buses have been purchased, materials, resources. We basically have listened to and respected the report by the former member of the Leader of the Opposition's party, Pat Mella, as we brought her in and asked her to commission the work on the kindergarten. Have followed that, and have tremendous confidence in the hiring part of the process. I look forward to bringing our kindergarten teachers into the school system next September.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, Pat Mella certainly didn't introduce a lottery system, but you did, minister.

Can you explain why you're using a lottery and a draft system to hire kindergarten teachers?

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

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

As I indicated yesterday on the floor of the

House, I did indicate to the Leader of the Opposition, I did respect her question yesterday, and have asked my staff to clarify the final process.

But this process has started months ago and kindergarten teachers have been identified. The feedback that I'm getting, as I've indicated, has been very positive. Schools and staff are ready to welcome kindergarten teachers in. The sessions will be held over the next number of weeks in schools all across Prince Edward Island. We're pleased to finally be the last province in this country to allow our five-year-olds the same opportunity as every five-year-old in this country, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

### Teaching positions

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question today is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General. Minister, you recently announced that your department is maintaining teaching positions. In light of projected declining enrollments in the province over the next two years, can you inform the House what is the total number of positions that will be retained?

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

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

We were pleased, and our government did support the investment of teachers into the public education system. Last year we were

fortunate with the staffing allocation model. We exceeded that model by 20 positions last year. This year we were very pleased to announce in the budget process that we will be holding 40 more positions over the next two years, for a total of 60 positions over a total of three years.

We're pleased with our kindergarten teachers and our 20 additional teachers on top of this. We'll be bringing the teacher workforce in this province to a total of 1,668 positions, the largest number of teaching workforce in the history of this province, and we'll look forward to strengthening and building our public system into the future.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Supplementary for the same minister, Madam Speaker.

How will these positions be distributed to strengthen our public education system?

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

**Mr. D. Currie:** Good question, real good question, and you'll get a good answer, too.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The question from the hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Linkletter is a good question. Right now with the investments that we've made in early literacy in grades 1, 2 and 3 we're seeing some tremendous results and gains by children in literacy. We are looking at a number of key areas now. We're working very closely with the boards across the province to look at key areas of

investment. Those discussions are ongoing and hopefully we'll have some clarification in respect to where those investments.

The early literacy investments came, obviously, from the task force on education which did a positive job over the last five years of strengthening our system. We want to make sure that we continue to make the investments. With the investments that we make with the additional resources, we can challenge and attack the issues in the public school system to make it stronger for future Islanders.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Literacy in grades 4, 5 and 6**

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Minister, you mentioned you were focusing right now on grades 1 to 3 in literacy. I want to know, please, if you would inform the House, how you're going to focus - or will you give consideration on strengthening the grades 4, 5 and 6 in literacy?

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

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

The focus in the early literacy years has been with the investment of literacy coaches and Reading Recovery Programs and (Indistinct) programs - the direct investment has shown direct results in respect to the improvements in bringing literacy rates in the province.

Right now there is a lot of discussion going

on with literacy investments in grades 4, 5 and 6. So we can capture those 1, 2s and 3s as they move forward to make sure we support them and sustain them.

We certainly know across the province, and the PEITF has come out strong in respect to the challenges with class composition. But we are pleased today that our ratios are stronger in the classroom than they've ever been. We'll continue to work with the boards across the province as they target and identify where they see the investments need to be made in the weeks ahead.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

### **Coyote bounty**

**Mr. Gallant:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question today is for the Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry. Recently Nova Scotia instituted a bounty on coyotes as a means to control the population. For the safety of our residents in rural PEI, does your department have any plans to follow their example?

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

**Mr. Brown:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

No, we're not going to put a bounty on coyotes on Prince Edward Island, for two reasons. In Nova Scotia they have a big wilderness area where no hunting or trapping of coyotes is allowed to go on. So the coyote becomes less and less fearful of human beings. We have a great association here on Prince Edward Island, the trappers association that can go out and trap these coyotes or (Indistinct) or get rid of the coyotes.

As the head of the wildlife federation said one day, coyotes will not go to a place where they're going to get shot or trapped. He put it more less in terms of people go to Florida, they don't go to Afghanistan. So coyotes aren't going to go to places where they're going to get shot. That's what he said, Madam Speaker.

So we're not going to put any coyote bounty on them at this point in time.

**Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Gallant:** Supplementary question to the same minister.

Is there a person in your department who people can contact if they do see coyotes?

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

**Mr. Brown:** Yeah, Madam Speaker, Randy Dibblee is in charge of that.

We did have three sessions across Prince Edward Island in terms where people came, and there was a great session. There was over 100 people attended some of these sessions. There was a great discussion over it.

Just one bit of advice. If you do see a coyote, don't run away from it. That's what the advice is. Because if you run away, then -

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Brown:** - well, it's - that's the professional advice and I'm going to take the professional advice.

What happened in Nova Scotia is the person ran. I know there was an incident in Nova Scotia. The person ran and they were in a

wilderness area. It was a devastating thing in Nova Scotia. If you do see a coyote, the first thing you should do is stand firm, look at it, try to make yourself look big, or carry a stick if you're out walking, carry a whistle or carry some mace. But my advice to you: if you see a coyote don't run, because they'll catch you. They're a pack animal and that's what they'll do, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Lottery system for kindergarten teachers (further)**

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm sure this is the only education minister all across Canada that's ever used a lottery system to hire kindergarten teachers.

Minister, in this system, a teacher from Charlottetown could end up working in Souris, and a Souris teacher could end up in Charlottetown. To the minister of education: Was geographic location of teachers taken into account here at all? Was it?

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

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

As I did indicate - this will be my third time I'm indicating to the hon. Leader of the Opposition - that I am very comfortable with bringing in specifics. I as the minister do not get involved with the hiring process of kindergarten teachers. That is left up to the Western School Board, the French language school board and the Eastern School District. They do work closely with my HR

people in the department.

I do not have discussions on hiring of teachers in this province, but am very excited about this government's commitment to five-year-olds in this province. We're hiring 112 new kindergarten teachers. We've invested in a total of 151 new school buses over the last three years, a million dollars in equipment and infrastructure to bring in play-based instruction, the only province in Canada to do that, and certainly I'm excited.

There's a lot of positive discussions going on. Parents are pleased that their children are going to get the opportunity that other children are getting across this country to implement - one of the only provinces in Canada - a full-day kindergarten program for next September, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

You can rest assured no one's pleased over your lottery system. But my question to the minister: Were teachers at least given a choice, at least at a number one or two preference, where they'd like to be located, at which school would hire them? Were they at least considered for a choice?

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

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

I have great confidence that the process was very respectful. Any time you bring in a major hiring process there are details to that process. I have not been privy to that discussion, nor should I be privy to any

discussion on the selection process for hiring. The decisions were made by the school principals and the boards did interviews with the potential new teachers in the system.

I don't have any indication who those people were who were sitting at the table, but as I indicated, I'll bring specifics about the hiring process. But I have great confidence that the staff that are being brought into the public school system have been treated with the utmost dignity and respect, and there was fairness and equality through the whole process.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the same minister, you are the minister of education and you are using a lottery system. Teachers should be chosen on merit and not who drew the first number in the lottery draft. Minister, this is not the NHL. We're talking about the education of our children, and they are using a lottery.

Explain to us, and explain to these poor kindergarten teachers, why you're treating them like a number and not a professional person. Why?

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

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

The selection and hiring process, interviews and screening, started back in December of

last year. Kindergarten teachers were all given an opportunity, and a fair opportunity, to be screened and interviewed. Obviously, their criteria, there was an interview process, they had to reach a certain mark, an evaluation, just like any other interview.

We're excited to bring these teachers in. Their income will be substantially increased. They'll be part of a learning faculty, an environment in elementary schools all across this province. The feedback that I've been getting, kindergarten teachers are extremely excited about their new opportunities and that they took a program. We are investing in 2.7 million, with the support of the Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning, to provide programming training at the University of Prince Edward Island to give them an opportunity, while they're working full-time in the public school system, to get their degrees at the University of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Speaker, we know the treasurer always rolls a dice to see how the budget's going to end up, but we're shocked to hear the education minister's spinning a roulette wheel to hire kindergarten teachers -

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Education Minister, will you please explain to the people why teachers were not considered in any way, shape or form here? You used a lottery system to hire them. Why?

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education

and Early Childhood Development and Attorney General.

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

I, as I indicated, have a tremendous amount of confidence in the system. I spent 20 years as an educator, and through that process witnessed and watched school boards in this province be very professional and very ethical in respect to their hiring processes.

Kindergarten teachers were very much part of the discussion and very much part of the dialogue. The feedback that we're getting - we're excited as a government that finally, after a long time, that we're making the investments in teachers, in school buses, in classrooms, in schools, to strengthen our public school system, to make sure that our five-year-olds have the same opportunity as every five-year-old in the rest of this country. Because we are putting Islanders first, and most importantly, we're putting our kids first as a priority, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

They used a lottery system to hire kindergarten teachers.

**An Hon. Member:** Oh, oh!

**Leader of the Opposition:** My question to the minister: Why would you give 24 hours for these teachers to actually make up their minds? Why were you coercing them into signing right away? Why?

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

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

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

Once again, I'm not directly involved in the hiring process. The Western, and the Eastern, and the French language school board have human resource staff. I was part of a day-long discussion, I did meet with all the kindergarten teachers across the province, where the process was explained. There was an opportunity for the kindergarten teachers at that point in time to have questions asked. We spent a full Saturday, right from Summerside through to Charlottetown meeting with kindergarten teachers, and the feedback was very positive.

There were a lot of questions, and the Eastern, the Western and the French language school board did an incredible job of getting the information out, and it settled any anxieties there were at the time.

But we're excited about embracing - this is another step forward to bringing 1,400 children and their families into the public school system. We're excited about the infrastructure and the capital investments. We're excited about the curriculum. We're excited about the teachers who are getting to be part of schools across this province. We'll look forward to that transition and we'll look forward to welcoming 1,400 children on the first day of school next September.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To the education minister: So you agreed with this lottery system. Kindergarten teachers are not part of the union. There's no - not yet. There's no one to stick up for them. There are members in this House, there are teachers going from Charlottetown to Morell, there are teachers from Morell going to Souris, there are teachers from Murray Harbour going to Souris.

You'd better start checking as MLAs who you're working for. But my question to the education minister is -

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Leader of the Opposition:** - why are you treating people like numbers instead of people?

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**An Hon. Member:** One Island community.

**Speaker:** Order, please!

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

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

In respect to kindergarten teachers working in Souris or Charlottetown, we have doctors that live in Charlottetown that work in Montague, we have lawyers that work in Charlottetown that live in Summerside.

We're a population of 140,000 people. We're One Island Community with one Island future. We made a decision to move a department. It was a bold decision by our

government. Because we believe in communities in this province, and we believe that communities deserve the best, and we are delivering upon those promises.

I can't speak specifically about where staff are being employed and what they're doing. I know as an educator, when I was at schools, whether I was working in Charlottetown, we had teachers that were living in rural Prince Edward Island, whether it was in Summerside or whether it was in Souris that were coming to Charlottetown. We had teachers that would drive from Charlottetown to Murray River, to Morell, to Souris, to Summerside, to Kensington, to Kinkora.

That has gone on for decades and I'm sure it's going to continue to go on as long as this government's in power, Madam Speaker.

Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Statements by Ministers

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

#### **Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month**

**Premier Ghiz:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am pleased to rise in the House today to proclaim the month of May 2010 as MS Awareness Month on behalf of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

Multiple sclerosis is a chronic, often disabling neurological disease affecting an estimated 55,000 to 75,000 Canadians. As far too many Islanders know, the symptoms of multiple sclerosis vary widely and may lead to problems with numbness, coordination, vision and speech as well as extreme fatigue and even paralysis.

Unfortunately, there is no known cause of or cure for multiple sclerosis. However the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, which was founded in 1948, does tremendous voluntary work and assists MS research and services for people with MS and their families.

In fact, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada has provided more than \$127 million for MS research in over 60 years as well as a wide range of programs and services for people with MS.

I think it's very important for Islanders that the MS Carnation Campaign will take place this month in our community, which will help to fund MS research and services.

I want to pay tribute to the dedication and commitment of the supporters and volunteers here today. Volunteers like Carolyn Macleod, publicity chair for the MS society, Debbie Salter and Mary MacKinnon, which help to make all the assistance and research possible.

In conclusion, I want to quote from the operative clause of the proclamation that I had the privilege of signing, which says:

We do hereby proclaim the month of May 2010 to be MS Awareness Month for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

### **ScreenScape**

**Mr. Campbell:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today to congratulate an information

technology business from the Island that has received national recognition for its work. The Branham Consultancy Group recently ranked the top 300 technology companies in the country. In this list, Branham named the Island company ScreenScape as one of the top 25 emerging start-ups in the Canadian IT industry. ScreenScape was the only Atlantic Canadian company on the list of start-ups.

ScreenScape has developed an international digital signage network that is affordable to all companies and organizations, regardless of size. ScreenScape's clients can use their platform to control what is displayed on one screen or on a network of hundreds of screens.

I am pleased that my ministry has been able to support ScreenScape through several of Innovation PEI's programs and help them grow over the last three years from one hard working entrepreneur to a company with 26 employees.

Government is working closely with the Island's IT sector and it is growing quickly. As recent RBC and Statistics Canada reports have shown, PEI weathered the economic downturn well. Government is committed to ensuring a prosperous future for the province by diversifying our economy and the IT sector is a key part of our economic strategy.

It is important that there are well-paying jobs available to young people who would like to live and work on PEI, and a strong IT sector will create many job opportunities for Islanders.

I would like to congratulate ScreenScape founder Mark Hemphill and his staff on their success. I wish them all the best as they continue to do business on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

### **Shelter rate increase**

**Ms. Sherry:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to announce that effective June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, there will be a 2% increase to the shelter rates for social assistance clients.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Sherry:** This increase will provide much needed support to social assistance clients for shelter costs. It's based on the type of accommodation and family size. This increase represents a \$270,600 investment for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

I am also pleased to say that since 2007, this government has increased the Social Assistance Shelter Rate by 11%, which has been in agreement with the allowable rent increase set by Island Regulatory Appeals Commission.

Social assistance rates are reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with the regulations of the *Social Assistance Act*.

Our government is committed to helping low-income Islanders during their times of need and we know that adequate, affordable housing promotes the safety, comfort, health and well-being of all Islanders, including children, families, seniors and persons with disabilities. By raising the rate for shelter allowance we are responding to the needs of vulnerable Islanders.

The decision to increase the shelter allowance rate aligns well with the work of the Disability Action Council and recommendations represented in the Disability Services Review which was

completed in 2009.

In closing, we are pleased to introduce this increase to the shelter allowance to support Islanders who are in need of support.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

### **Child and Youth Services Commissioner**

**Mr. Sheridan:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and with your indulgence, I may need an extra 20 seconds.

It is with pride and anticipation that I rise today to speak to an issue of paramount importance to our One Island Community, the issue of the well-being of our children and youth. As a government, we recognize the basic truth in this statement, 'our children are our future,' and we are committed to a goal of ensuring that our Island children receive the support and services necessary to assist them in their journey towards becoming healthy, contributing adults in our province.

To this end, our Liberal government, over the past three years, has undertaken several initiatives. We invested in Best Start programs, announced increased funding and support for early childhood development; and have taken the historic step of fully integrating kindergarten into our one Island school system. While each of these initiatives moves us closer to our goal, we remain aware there is much more to be done.

We are proud of the commitment and dedication of the many people in our province who work with children and their families. We acknowledge and appreciate

that great work is being done on a daily basis.

However, we also know that the work is too often carried out in isolation and that a sharing of resources and practices across our government departments could make a significant difference in service delivery and support.

There is great strength and success to be realized through collaboration and teamwork. We are determined to create a model of inter-departmental cooperation and shared service that would provide Island children, youth and families the support they need and provide our workers with an opportunity unheard of until now - a chance to share best practices and resources across government departments and across this province.

To best facilitate the coordination of our efforts across several government departments, including Community Services, Seniors and Labour, Health and Wellness, Education and Early Childhood Development and the Office of the Attorney General, we are introducing a child and youth services commissioner for PEI who will work from the evaluation division of the Department of Finance and Municipal Affairs.

I am delighted that Mr. Jeff Clow, currently employed as an administrator with the Western School Board, has agreed to take on this exciting and challenging new position.

Mr. Clow comes to us with a rich background in child and youth-based service. An Island native, he completed undergraduate studies at St. Francis Xavier University and graduate studies at the University of Prince Edward Island before embarking on a 22-year career in teaching and administration in Ontario and Alberta.

Over the span of his career, Mr. Clow has garnered several excellence in teaching awards, including being chosen as the recipient of Alberta's Distinguished Leader of the Year award in 2009. Mr. Clow brings to this new role a passion for and a commitment to the welfare of children and youth, as well as a level of expertise necessary to undertake this challenging role.

We look forward to very positive outcomes.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

Reports by Committees

#### Introduction of Government Bills

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Real Property Tax Act (No. 2)*, and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry that the same be now received and read a first time.

**Speaker:** Shall it carry? Carried.

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Real Property Tax Act (No. 2)*, Bill No. 49, read a first time.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs, would you care to give a brief explanation?

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

This is simply - there's many housekeeping items on this, but inside of it we are stating that the minister shall collect tax for municipalities as we have in the past, simply under the direction of the department. Very minor changes.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. D. Currie:** Madam Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Provincial Court Act*, and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning, that the same be now received and read a first time.

**Speaker:** Shall it carry? Carried.

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Provincial Court Act*, Bill No. 46, read a first time.

**Speaker:** Minister, would you care to give a brief explanation?

**Mr. D. Currie:** This is just a couple comments. It amends the reference to the *Legal Profession Act* to reflect the name change for the act. It amends the disability pension entitlement for judges appointed before April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1997 to allow a disability pension in accordance with the disability pension plan for judges on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1997.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Lotteries Commission Act*, and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of

Innovation and Advanced Learning, that the same be now received and read a first time.

**Speaker:** Shall it carry? Carried.

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Lotteries Commission Act*, Bill No. 48, read a first time.

**Speaker:** Minister, would you care to give a brief explanation?

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

The main part of this is to add a definition to the act for the term "lottery and gaming services."

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Brown:** To include the department of education.

Government Motions

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 hon. Government House Leader, that the 2<sup>nd</sup> order of the day be now read.

**Speaker:** Shall it carry? Carried.

**Clerk:** Order No. 2, Consideration of the Estimates, in Committee.

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** Thank you very much, 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 grant of supply to Her Majesty.

**Speaker:** Shall it carry? Carried.

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

**Chair (Biggar):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to further consider the grant of supply to Her Majesty.

We -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Where are we at?

**Chair:** Page 94. I'm just going to read.

**Mr. M. Currie:** We didn't get to - we didn't do the first one, did we?

**Chair:** No, I didn't get a chance to read the total, so while the minister is setting up there, perhaps I'll just read those totals.

**Mr. MacKinley:** (Indistinct) minister why you were -

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

**Mr. MacKinley:** I'd just like to say that it was a great announcement there you did yesterday. I'm getting a lot of compliments about it. Also, people were complimenting about your picture in the *Guardian* today, the coloured picture. I think that it serves a lot for this side of the House.

**Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Page 94. Administration.

**Ms. Bertram:** Permission, Madam Chair, to

bring my finance - Mr. Barnes on the floor?

**Chair:** Could you get a desk for the minister's assistant?

Permission to bring a guest on the floor?

**Mr. M. Currie:** Minister, I know we were just having a little bit of a chat there yesterday when you were on the floor -

**Ms. Bertram:** A little chat, yes.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Yes. Have you set a time when you're going to meet with the unions over introducing the ambulance drivers to do this?

**Ms. Bertram:** There was a letter that went out to the unions - to that letter - you saw the press announcement that went out to media. We have written a letter out to those unions, and I have told them in due process we will meet with them.

**Mr. M. Currie:** You'll meet soon, or this summer?

**Ms. Bertram:** As I told you yesterday, we're very much in the planning and early stages of that. It's just been allocating our budgets. It will probably be before the fall that we'll meet with them.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Before the fall. Okay.

**Chair:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Madam Minister, yesterday we were speaking about government policy.

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Since the Premier's here today, whether both of you would like to just respond to the notion of what principles you expect to transfer over

to the health authority? What will your policies be around health that you expect delivery of?

**Chair:** Madam Minister.

**Ms. Bertram:** I will reiterate what I said yesterday, that we are looking at a framework within government and with operations going over to Health PEI, that we want to transform our health care system to be the most effective and appropriate care. Obviously, those health providers in our system, that their full scope of practice is realized, and that we're fully working as an integrated health care system on Prince Edward Island.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Again, though, I would wonder what are the principles? What is guiding government's policy on health? Perhaps, since the Premier's here, he might want to make some comments.

Yesterday, Premier, I used the example of, your government told the people of O'Leary and Alberton you were going to keep two acute care facilities open. We know you changed your mind on that. What is your expectation for health services here and what are your principles that are guiding moving from the department of health over to Health PEI?

**Premier Ghiz:** I'll be two seconds.

**Chair:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier Ghiz:** Bottom line, moving the operations over to Health PEI is the proper thing to do. You don't want yourself, if you ever get into government - no offence - I don't want you deciding which nurses work on what wards. The same as you probably don't want me deciding which nurses work on what wards. That's not the job of the politicians. The job of politicians is to provide the policy direction and then let the

professionals run the department.

When it comes to delivering health policy in the province, primary care is the key. There are going to be changes all the time. What people have today will not be what they'll have in 20 years' time, and they'll stand up and scream in 10 or 15, 20 years. Perhaps when you're sitting over here they'll scream at you for changing things. Health care is constantly evolving, and the best thing we can do for health care today is make sure that getting someone in for primary care is the secret.

Hospital beds are not what we need. Primary care is what we need, and that's going to be our focus.

**Chair:** The Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** To the Premier. What model of care do you expect to be practised at our hospitals here in Prince Edward Island? If you don't mind, tell us your vision of which hospital would be using which model of care?

**Premier Ghiz:** It's just exactly what I said. We have our primary care hospitals, we have our referral hospitals, and they all work together. I want to see our five community hospitals work in cooperation with our other two hospitals in Charlottetown and Summerside.

You want to know what? If someone's in a bed in Charlottetown and they want to go home to their bed in O'Leary, I want to make sure they get there. I want to make sure that the doctor who's in Charlottetown is talking to the doctor in O'Leary and vice versa.

The same if you're in Summerside and you're from Montague. I think that people have to - I'm going to say - realize that things are going to change. If they don't,

they're going to have to come to the reality. The same things happened to myself. I know, I tell this story all the time. How once I had to go for a test and the nurse told me that I had to go to Summerside to get the test. I was a little bit ticked off, and so I took a second breath and said: My God, I have to drive 45 minutes to go have a test that could save my life.

We're spoiled in Prince Edward Island when it comes to health care. We're very close to everything else. If you live in another province you could drive hours before you get to a lot of these things, and I want to see everything work together cohesively.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Leader of the Opposition:** In terms of delivery, no one is arguing there. We're just all really curious about what principles and what model of care you expect for the people of PEI, while you're still sitting there are Premier. For example, to my knowledge, and other people, I'm not sure what model of care is in practice at the QEH. So maybe you want to elaborate on that?

**Ms. Bertram:** I will comment as minister. I think the model of care is care that's being given by our front line professionals.

Hon. Leader of the Opposition, we have a dedicated staff at the QEH, and the PCH, at Alberton, at O'Leary, at Tyne Valley, at Souris, and at Kings County Memorial Hospitals. All those facilities are offering top-notch care to whatever patient, whatever age, Madam Leader of the Opposition.

We are now going to a health authority that will do the day to day operations of the previous health department. We are going to be setting policies within the department. That's what the Department of Health and Wellness is going to be all about, hon. Leader of the Opposition. I told you

yesterday that we will have a provincial health plan. They will have a strategic plan to work around, and we stay true to what we are committed to today. We affirm that with core values of equity and value and service delivery in the province of PEI.

**Chair:** Hon. members, we just are getting into the numbers here.

**Mr. M. Currie:** This is good.

**Chair:** Yeah. It's fine.

We're doing top of page 94.

Finance and Corporate Management.

General. Administration: 60,700.  
Equipment: 21,500. Materials, Supplies and Services: 51,400. Professional and Contract Services: 67,500. Salaries: 1,243,400. Travel and Training: 46,500. Total General: 1,491,000.

Any questions?

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Under this section, for professional and contract services, the page that I have here talks about the Abegweit Rainbow Coalition, Arts Guild, Bluefield High School. Is that what's in this section or should you have supplied me with different figures?

**Ms. Bertram:** Well, no, see - and that's sort of with the old department as well. That's what was tabled, hon. member, totalling \$12,000?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes. And you've got \$67,000 here.

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, and with that increase, hon. member, it's just with the previous department that was the allocation, and we

expect that there will be more.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Just clarify that for me one more time. Last year you spent what looks to be around 12 - in your estimates you have 32, but you're up to 67 and your department of health is actually shrinking and you're health authority is actually increasing. So could you explain the difference?

**Ms. Bertram:** I guess, hon. member, it's relative to that previous number was from the department of communities, cultural affairs and labour. That wasn't the associated number with health.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, so this is from your wellness section?

**Ms. Bertram:** Wellness and health policy like - everything within the department.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So, in terms of where it's \$67,000 here, is there extra contracts that would have been under health, not the wellness part, that's not tabled to me in information?

**Ms. Bertram:** What we have done is we're very open in terms of all the contracts with every section. So if there are contracts to come it will be under either Health PEI - we're tabling everything that is in every section. It's just a little bit because of the old department.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, so we'll see the difference in Health PEI which is missing from here.

**Ms. Bertram:** Some of that. But in terms of if you're looking for contract services, this did not exist within health last year. This is a whole new area. A department structure will go to Health PEI after.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Finance and Corporate Management: 1,491,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Health System Planning and Development.

Health Policy and Planning. "Appropriations provided to support the Department in carrying out its corporate management responsibilities in the areas of planning and evaluation, health policy development and analysis and legislation." Administration: 21,000. Materials, Supplies and Services: 6,000. Professional and Contract Services: 67,500. Salaries: 851,000. Travel and Training: 21,200. Grants: 5,300. Total Health Policy and Planning: 972,000.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** In terms of professional and contact services here again, in my package under this section -

**Ms. Bertram:** And there is nothing there.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** This is a whole new section. We have nothing. Right now, obviously this is a very integral part of the department is the new policy direction. Or not new policy, but it's policy development. That's a provision of contract services within this new coming year.

**Leader of the Opposition:** How did you chose the 67.5? I'm just curious. It's the same amount that you've used in the previous.

**Ms. Bertram:** Maybe I'll ask Mr. Barnes that question.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** I think we just essentially had to look at what might be coming up in the next year in terms of the

role of this section, in terms of policy development, facilitation, those types of things, and look at, essentially, an overall total between the two sections of around 135,000.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, so you just divide it.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Divide it by two.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Who heads this section?

**Ms. Bertram:** There will be actually the provision for a new director within this.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Are you going to advertise?

**Ms. Bertram:** As I said yesterday, these provisions will be advertised after our budget is approved.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Okay, carried.

**Ms. Bertram:** Obviously, they would go internal first.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Health Recruitment and Retention.  
 “Appropriations provided for the Health Recruitment and Retention Secretariat to provide workforce planning and support the development and implementation of recruitment and retention strategies for physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals experiencing shortages.”  
 Administration: 15,700. Equipment: 4,500.  
 Materials, Supplies and Services: 151,300.  
 Professional and Contract Services: 30,500.  
 Salaries: 1,073,400. Travel and Training: 20,700. Grants: 1,563,900. Total Health Recruitment and Retention: 2,860,000.

Any questions, members?

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

**Mr. M. Currie:** A petition landed on your doorstep for 1,300 names, and with a shortage of doctors in some areas and a lot of people without a family physician -

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. M. Currie:** - why are you cutting this section \$500,000?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think what's important to note is that those dollars, hon. member, we looked at this part of our budget line. We have continue to support programming that has been - the uptake has been there and we have reallocated dollars in other parts to our budget.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Is there where Dr. Richard Wedge is?

**Ms. Bertram:** No, he's under medical programs under Health PEI. This is Marney MacRae, Sheila MacLean.

**Mr. M. Currie:** So you feel that they have sufficient staff and budget to meet the needs of Islanders in recruiting doctors and professional services to this province?

**Ms. Bertram:** Very much so. We're not taking away any dollars. We've looked at the programs that have existed and those that have been - the uptake is positive. We continue to support those. I think it's been very positive. Like I shared yesterday, we're doing more advertising in overseas medical journals, North America sort of thing, also. We've had some very positive site visits over the last month at all those sites I listed yesterday.

**Mr. M. Currie:** But we're 18 months without a doctor in Tyne Valley.

**Ms. Bertram:** The hon. Chair that's with us today has been doing a great job to bring those concerns forward from the community. No different than my home community of Hunter River. We've been looking for a physician for awhile as well. But we are working very hard and, again, the site visits were very positive. As I said yesterday, we're following through with the process that the packages of (Indistinct) are going forward, that everything is checked out. Again, things are looking very positive.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Is there a minimum or a base line when you're recruiting overseas that the doctors accept? How do they accept a doctor from another country, the college of physicians?

**Ms. Bertram:** Can you repeat your question?

**Mr. M. Currie:** The college of physicians, is this section here - do they decide who comes or the college of physicians?

**Ms. Bertram:** For example, there are a few of the doctors that have made or are interested that are from overseas. Their application would have to go through the college of physicians.

**Mr. M. Currie:** First?

**Ms. Bertram:** Before the offer from the province goes out? Yes, I believe that - we have the final process. So the college of physicians would obviously - it's the credentials, the licensure package, all that, and, you know, the qualifications to match Canadian standards and guidelines.

**Mr. M. Currie:** So you set that, do you?

**Ms. Bertram:** The college of physicians would do all that, yes.

**Mr. M. Currie:** So they choose and pick

who comes in? You don't?

**Ms. Bertram:** But this is a professional body, hon. -

**Mr. M. Currie:** I'm not arguing with that.

**Ms. Bertram:** This is a professional medical body in the province of PEI. Those individuals that are wanting to come to Prince Edward Island, within our recruitment office, those applications would go to the college of physicians and they would then look for the documents that are necessary and see and ensure that qualifications are met. If that is deemed, then it would come from the province and the letter of offer would be given from us.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness.

**Mr. Henderson:** Those programs under that section, are those programs for doctors specifically or are they to try to do things at the BN program, health futures and some of those? Are they under those grants? What's under that grant section, I guess.

**Ms. Bertram:** They are physician programs. The physician familiarization visits, the physician relocation allowance, return in service grants, locum support, debt reduction grants, Islanders studying medicine abroad, internationally - those types of things.

**Mr. Henderson:** So if a medical student is in -

**Ms. Bertram:** And then, there are non-physician parts of this. Like you've said, the BN, recruitment planning, grants, workplace wellness, medical lab tech, radiation therapist sponsorship, research initiative, and like you said, the BN student sponsorship program and health care futures.

**Mr. Henderson:** Do you feel that there's certainly a lot of students - I'm getting large numbers of people that are applying to these types of programs. But do you feel that's working in the respect that there's a whole lot more people entering the field and is that a reason why we're slowing down a bit?

**Ms. Bertram:** I have great statistics to actually share. If you look at the number of nursing graduates at UPEI, last year, in the regular program, there were 48 grads last May and of the sponsored students by government we had 44. This year, graduating in May, we have 57 graduates in the program of nursing at UPEI, and of those 57 we have 48 that are sponsored.

Also, in the accelerated program, this coming December, we have 12 as part of that program, and of the 12 we have 11 that have been sponsored. The retention rate is very high.

**Mr. Henderson:** Those are really good numbers. Any idea, though, how long it may take us to get caught up? Another two years, five years, or what? Or is that a fair question to even ask, I guess?

**Ms. Bertram:** I would have to bring that information back, hon. member. But I guess the reality is, if we're seeing the uptake from these graduates, it's a very positive message that they're staying within our system. I think it's so important that we're being able to provide those opportunities here on Prince Edward Island.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah. No. I think you've got to try to retain them once you've got them too.

**Ms. Bertram:** In your area, or whether they be in the Kings County -

**Mr. Henderson:** But I'd just be curious to know how far along it's going to take us to

what - based on the numbers that we've seen over the last maybe two or three years, how long it might take to get us to a point where we're filling the needs as they (Indistinct) the system.

**Ms. Bertram:** I guess we could just use these statistics. If we're seeing that almost 100% are being absorbed this year, there's still a need base.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, exactly.

**Ms. Bertram:** A great need base.

**Mr. Henderson:** I guess that's what the question is. In three years, when we catch - based on those numbers -

**Ms. Bertram:** We can look into that for you.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Health System Planning and Development: 3,832,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Moving on to Population Health, page 95 at the top.

Chief Health Office. "Appropriations provided for administration of the *Public Health Act*, supervision of provincial public health programs, immunization programs, disease surveillance and communicable disease control." Administration: 20,700. Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,448,500. Professional and Contract Services: 175,300. Salaries: 698,100. Travel and Training: 26,100. Grants: 31,500. Total Chief Health Office: 2,400,200.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Under professional and contract services -

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** - can we have a copy of those?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think - it was tabled.

**Leader of the Opposition:** They're not -

**Ms. Bertram:** But maybe it was missed in photocopying.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I just have the salaries.

**Ms. Bertram:** We'll table it. It's right here.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. I'd like to have that now.

**Ms. Bertram:** Sorry about that, hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Maybe, Madam Chair, just to take the opportunity, I just want to thank the individuals that serve in the capacity in the Chief Health Office, and also public health nursing, at this time. Because this past year it has been a very challenging year with H1N1.

We have so much to be thankful for on Prince Edward Island with the program and with the interventions that were put in place. We had no deaths on Prince Edward Island due to H1N1. That is an excellent message to be able to send as a system. Many dedicated people on the front line. I want to thank Dr. Heather Morrison, Dr. Lamont Sweet, and all the staff within this, because they did over and above - they did a lot of hard work in this. Obviously, too, our public health nurses.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So that was the reason for the extra spending last year?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Epidemiology. "Appropriations provided to monitor and report to the public on health status and trends in the Province and to support evidence-based decisions and continuous improvement throughout the Health system." Administration: 3,600. Equipment: 1,400. Materials, Supplies and Services: 2,700. Professional and Contract Services: 29,500. Salaries: 363,800. Travel and Training: 5,300. Total Epidemiology: 406,300.

Any questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** In professional and contract services, what was spent on the 29,000?

**Ms. Bertram:** I'm sorry, hon. Leader of the Opposition, can you repeat your question?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Sure. In professional and contract services -

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** - because I don't have that of the epidemiology -

**Ms. Bertram:** We didn't spend anything.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. So that's just an amount you just put in there?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** For the coming year?

**Ms. Bertram:** For the coming year.

**Leader of the Opposition:** And that's

based on - if you didn't spend any last year, what are you -

**Ms. Bertram:** The provision is there. Again, when we talked, I know yesterday we spent time talking about statistics and gathering of information. We will value that as a policy branch of the whole department. Dr. Carolyn Sanford is our full-time epidemiologist in the province. You will note, though, that there is a reduction in salaries. That is because we have been trying to recruit another full-time epidemiologist to the province but we haven't been able to. We're just moving to a half-time position, and maybe that will attract another person.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Thank you.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Environmental Health and Inspection Services. "Appropriations provided for the services to educate, consult and inspect under the *Public Health Act* in areas such as food protection, occupational health, accommodations and slaughter houses. Inspection services are also provided for community care facilities and nursing homes as well as enforcement under the *Tobacco Sales & Access Act* and *Smoke-free Places Act*." Administration: 15,600. Equipment: 4,100. Materials, Supplies and Services: 13,800. Professional and Contract Services: 63,100. Salaries: 992,800. Travel and Training: 61,800. Total Environmental Health Inspection Services: 1,151,200.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I noticed that there are a lot of hand-washing clinics because of H1N1. You've got it in the budget then for this year, again?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think it's all done periodically, through the year.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. So -

**Ms. Bertram:** What's really positive in this section this year, with the population health, we've been wanting, over the last few years, to add positions to bring us up to national standard for health inspections in the province, and we're creating three new positions, which will bring us to the national standard.

**Leader of the Opposition:** This is the section that does the tobacco?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Is there a reduction in the number of people that are actually charged?

**Ms. Bertram:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition, it's a good question, and I don't have that information at my fingertips today, but I can bring that back to you.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just bring it back. We'll still carry it. I'm just curious, because I know a lot of (Indistinct) had gone on that.

**Ms. Bertram:** We will get that.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Page 96, hon. members.

Vital Statistics. "Appropriations provided for the Office of Vital Statistics which is responsible for the collection, registration and maintenance of vital event information for the Province, including: births, deaths, marriages, adoptions, divorces, stillbirths and changes of name." Administration: 9,400. Equipment: 400. Materials, Supplies and Services: 12,900. Professional and

Contract Services: 2,500. Salaries: 315,000.  
Travel and Training: 4,700. Total Vital  
Statistics: 344,900.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I know you provided a list of the schedule of fees. I'm just curious. When a person goes in to get a birth certificate, now there's a fee that day that's based on if the person wants it within 48 hours, and there's a different fee if the person waits for a week. Is that the case in terms of all the other fees here? Could you explain why you set it up with different fees based on timing?

**Ms. Bertram:** I believe there are different rates if you're out of the province or in the province. If you want to have a rush service basically for a certificate - a lot of times it has to do with passports and things like that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Right.

**Ms. Bertram:** That applies to any of that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** It used to be, years ago, though, it was just the one fee. I'm curious why now the change of the different fees, like in the last two years.

**Ms. Bertram:** You mean a rush fee?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah. For example, if you went in five years ago and wanted to get a birth certificate, it was one fee, no matter if it had to take two days -

**Ms. Bertram:** I do have the activity levels, if that is of interest. How many people applied under the rush side of things last year. We had 340 applications for rush certificates last year outside of the province, and inside of Prince Edward Island, we had 2,500 applications for rush certificates.

**Leader of the Opposition:** That, again, is just because of the demand for passports, you think? Or is it because of the fees?

**Ms. Bertram:** Mostly passports, yeah.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** But maybe - I add one thing here - is the Leader of the Opposition yesterday had a question in regards to - and I know in Health PEI there'll be another area to talk about it, but we talked about vital stats with PEI medical cards.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** It's important to know that this department, or section of our department, does notify Medicare - like PEI - which in our other divisions, if there is a death, all that other information is forwarded onto the other shop.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** You also asked a question yesterday, and I might as well get it out right now, about the 10,000 cards, or the extra cards.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** They are bringing that down. Right now, we're about - with Stats Canada - we're at about 140,000 PEI right now, as a population.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Right. Sure.

**Ms. Bertram:** Right now, we have about 142, around that 143,000 cards. So we are working hard to deliver on the Auditor General's suggestion that there are extra cards.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Good. When you made such progress there, was it mostly

just because people had died and they were still in the system, or were people living out of province? Or do you know that?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think cards have expired. But I think it's important to know that if a card has expired, they cannot use it to bill the province.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, you had a question?

**Mr. M. Currie:** If I may, I missed asking a question in regard to the previous section.

On the licenses for our food facilities, how many licenses would you pass out in a year across PEI? That's the sign you see on the lawn where you go in.

**Ms. Bertram:** It depends on the seating of the establishment. Last year, there were -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Total?

**Ms. Bertram:** Under 25 was 471.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Four-hundred and seventy-one, like restaurants and take-outs across PEI?

**Ms. Bertram:** Oh, I'm sorry. Over 25 is 471 and under was 498. Non-commercial 153, special events 44, and major events 22.

**Mr. M. Currie:** The tobacco and sales. Isn't that under the minister of finance? This is just about checking (Indistinct) -

**Ms. Bertram:** Reduction.

**Mr. M. Currie:** I thought we got away from smoke-free rooms.

**Ms. Bertram:** This is selling to minors.

**Mr. M. Currie:** And they check on the -

**Ms. Bertram:** Our health inspectors go in - and we've seen that in the media lately, too, making sure that vendors are not selling to minors.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Okay, I'll ask the minister -

**Ms. Bertram:** The Leader of the Opposition asked the question and we'll bring it back in terms of: Have we seen a reduction in those stats? Like, if we compare the stats last year of those vendors that are selling to minors, have we seen a reduction?

**Mr. M. Currie:** Do your staff think there's an increase in illicit cigarettes coming into Prince Edward Island?

**Ms. Bertram:** I certainly have had briefings and I don't feel that has been shared in any of our meetings. Again, I'll bring back some of that information.

**Chair:** Total Population Health: 4,302,600.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Sport, Recreation and Health Living.

General. "Appropriations provided for development, implementation, delivery and monitoring of programs and services in the areas of sport, recreation, active living and disease prevention." Administration: 19,600. Equipment: 4,100. Materials, Supplies and Services: 34,600. Professional and Contract Services: 25,000. Salaries: 782,900. Travel and Training: 54,500. Grants: 2,770,800. Total General: 3,691,500.

Questions?

**Leader of the Opposition:** First, in terms of the professional and contract services, the 25,000.

**Ms. Bertram:** Same situation as before. It was not spent and it just carried over.

**Leader of the Opposition:** The next question I have, whether it's the town of Souris or Kensington or Murray River, how do people apply to do a particular project to be able to participate in this fund for the facility development grants?

**Ms. Bertram:** Sure, it's a good question. We've supported many with that. They would contact our sport and rec division and I think some of those applications are online as well, hon. member.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Generally, is it used just for actual facility usage inside or is it structural or -

**Ms. Bertram:** Facility development. For example, I think a positive story was the monies that we allocated that the Government House Leader provided to Evangeline last weekend. We were providing dollars to support Evangeline in the centre for the fitness equipment for the development of their new site.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Was there a promise made by your government to do a legacy fund for SportPEI, for the Canada Games?

**Ms. Bertram:** I don't believe that there was any promise, hon. member. The Canada Games, they will be releasing their public statements in terms of their budget.

**Mr. M. Currie:** I'm sorry, can't hear you.

**Ms. Bertram:** The Canada Games will be releasing, I believe, over the next couple of weeks, a document that will be talking about the budget over the last three, four, five years, since 2006, in terms of whether

they're in a deficit or surplus state.

If there is a surplus, then there's a committee that will form and that will examine where that goes.

**Mr. M. Currie:** I thought I understood that there was a commitment made by your government to go forward from this Canada Games with a legacy fund to promote sport and recreation in PEI, I guess to take us forward. I thought that the chair and some other very interesting individuals wanted to come forward with a legacy.

So you're saying there was no commitment by your government?

**Ms. Bertram:** I don't think there was any promise, hon. member, but there has been a tradition in the past. Like Orin Carver in 1991, there was a legacy fund set up after that, but that would be up to government, to the Premier, to the host.

**Mr. M. Currie:** And you don't know if there's been any commitment made? Okay, thank you.

**Chair:** Total Sport, Recreation and Healthy Living: 3,691,500.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Page 97.

Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat.

General. "Appropriations provided to cover Aboriginal-specific programs and initiatives under the Canada-PEI-Mi'kmaq Partnership Agreement together with grants to the Native Council of Prince Edward Island and the Aboriginal Women's Association." Administration: 15,000. Equipment: 7,600. Materials, Supplies and Services: 11,500. Professional and Contract Services: 91,100. Salaries: 197,700. Travel and Training:

20,400. Grants: 149,700. Total General: 493,000.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So what did Dunne Consulting Group do for you through Aboriginal Affairs?

**Ms. Bertram:** The contracts that are there, one was the duty to consult, and then Dunne consulting did the archeological study work for the department.

**Leader of the Opposition:** You have the archeology program with you -

**Ms. Bertram:** Helen Kristmanson.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who else is the staff that's in that?

**Ms. Bertram:** We have Tracy Power and Andrew Ramsay.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Are they all permanent positions?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, they're full-time permanent positions.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Do you have any interns in that program?

**Ms. Bertram:** Any interns? I believe there's just one that's been hired.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Do they just work - I'm sorry.

**Leader of the Opposition:** At the Aboriginal. I'm just curious. If we're promoting Aboriginal people, if they were Aboriginal.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** I'm not sure of

that. I do know there is an intern that has joined the section for six months. She started very recently.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I just want to make sure we're giving opportunity here. If you just tell me sometime -

**Ms. Bertram:** We certainly take that, definitely, into consideration for this when applications do come forward.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** No, that's fine. Go ahead. Carried.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat: 493,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Department of Health and Wellness: 13,810,100.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Moving on, hon. members to - yes, hon. Minister of Health and Wellness?

**Ms. Bertram:** Since we're moving now, onto Health PEI, I'm going to thank Mr. Barnes for his help. Thank you very much, Kevin.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Bertram:** Now, I'm going to ask permission to bring on Terry Keefe, who is our finance guru for Health PEI.

**Chair:** Permission granted.

Page 99, members, before we get started.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** How did you make the decisions, I guess? Is Terry in a permanent position or an acting position?

**Ms. Bertram:** Terry's permanent.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Permanent over at Health PEI? You just transferred the position?

**Ms. Bertram:** He's under the corporate section.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Sure.

**Ms. Bertram:** Finance.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'm just curious. Before, when changes would be made, often you'd go through a competitive process. But you just transferred the positions over?

**Ms. Bertram:** All our health, and that's one of the -

**Leader of the Opposition:** The people that were in health are transferred over -

**Ms. Bertram:** Just transferred over to Health PEI.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Chair:** Corporate Services. Page 99. General.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just before we start, maybe he'd pass out the paperwork.

**Chair:** Oh, sorry about that.

**Ms. Bertram:** Just give us one moment.

**Chair:** Just getting organized.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Sure.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Terry, are you Ron's brother and Brian's?

**Terry Keefe Director:** Yes.

**Mr. M. Currie:** You look like them.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Thank you. Is that good?

**Chair:** Definitely relevant to (Indistinct).

**Ms. Bertram:** I'll take one copy of each to table and then you can pass them out.

Just the numbers.

There are copies that are going to be distributed, but I'd like to table professional services and grants of Health PEI and the employees' salary listing for Health PEI.

Copies will come, yes.

**Chair:** Perhaps I could just read it, if that would be fine with everyone, while they're passing things out.

“Appropriations provided for the operations of the offices of the Board of Health PEI and the Chief Executive Officer to support its corporate role in the areas of human resource management, planning and evaluation, policy development and analysis, system projects management, French language services, quality and risk management and wait times.”

Administration: 305,800. Equipment: 15,900. Materials, Supplies and Services: 118,500. Professional and Contract Services: 849,900. Salaries: 5,863,300. Travel and Training: 290,800. Grants - Education: 605,000. Total General: 8,049,200.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** The professional and contract services, do you want to tell us some of the consultants that you've used, and probably why? This question's probably for Terry. I'm looking back, Terry, at the audited public accounts from the year before, and it looks like this section has increased quite a bit in money. I'm just curious as to why.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Most of that increase would be related to the integrated health project.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Terry Keefe Director:** That was started a year ago.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Do you want to go over the consultants that you've used and what work they were doing?

**Terry Keefe Director:** Most of that in the consulting area would have been for Corpus Sanchez.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Besides Corpus Sanchez, Grant Thornton from Alberta did a piece of work for you. What was that work on and why was it done?

**Ms. Bertram:** That was to do the governance document that you've often spoke to in the House.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'm just curious, because there was that contract from Alberta and there was one from Nova Scotia, why you wouldn't have had that work done locally.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Again, I guess it was the expertise. There was some contact with Grant Thornton locally, I believe, and what they did was a lot around the accountability model. So it was sort of setting up how that accountability between

the department and Health PEI would evolve. So that's where the expertise came from.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. There's been a number of times in health that changes have been made and boards set up and the governance model and stuff. It's just kind of surprising that those services and skill sets aren't here.

**Ms. Bertram:** I think that what's key is that we tried, in terms of the local Grant Thornton, but anything that could be done locally, the firm used local.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. So in terms of, do you have the terms of reference for that?

**Terry Keefe Director:** No, not here with me.

**Leader of the Opposition:** No. Would you bring it back? We won't hold you up, but I'd like to see the terms of reference.

**Ms. Bertram:** Sure, we can bring that back for you.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Some of the other consultant contracts that you've used, the one from Nova Scotia, what were they doing?

**Terry Keefe Director:** I'm not sure which from Nova Scotia (Indistinct).

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'm just doing this out of my head because I - you don't have time to go through all these (Indistinct).

**Terry Keefe Director:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** Which one are you speaking to, hon. Leader of the Opposition?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Again, it was a piece of work that was done last year.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Is it in (Indistinct) services? We have a lot of consulting -

**Leader of the Opposition:** Sure. Why don't you just do this? Because I'll be asking you for all your consultants that you've used. Why don't you just tell me what consultants you've used and what was the purpose? Was the work tendered? Who did the work?

**Ms. Bertram:** Isn't that what we just tabled? That's the document that we just tabled, is it not, hon. member?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes, but it just helps to go through them one by one, because it takes time to -

**Ms. Bertram:** I think the bigger pieces that are happening right now in terms of contracts is we have the Hay Group that is doing the -

**Leader of the Opposition:** The Hay Group?

**Ms. Bertram:** The Hay Group. That was RFPed. Full process has taken place on that. I believe there were 10 different companies that tendered for that. That work has not been completed. It's close to completion. They are doing the physician resource plan for government and that will be a public document. So that's one of our larger pieces. Also, Grant Thornton, locally, was also employed to look at physician billing.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** So those are two larger pieces. The Hay report will be a large report, with recommendations to government, and I would expect that that would probably be in the next couple of months that we will see that come forward.

**Leader of the Opposition:** See that, and that will be public, as soon as it's done?

**Ms. Bertram:** It will be made public.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. There's a consultant fee for the QEH redesign and others. Wouldn't that have been done well before this? Because the work is nearly completed.

**Ms. Bertram:** Hon. member, I would have to come back with the fine details for that, but there's a lot of different work happening at the QEH in redevelopment. Maybe Mr. Keefe has further information on that, but -

**Terry Keefe Director:** No, I'd have to go -

**Leader of the Opposition:** You'd have to go back. That's fine.

**Terry Keefe Director:** It's ongoing consulting, though, for sure. I mean, it's a \$16 million project.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Sure.

**Chair:** Anything else under that section?

**Leader of the Opposition:** No.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Corporate Services: 8,049,200.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Financial Services. "Appropriations provided for the administration and operation of financial accounting, auditing, payroll, materials management, financial reporting systems, financial planning and analysis." Administration: 1,052,100. Debt: 134,300. Equipment: 51,400. Materials, Supplies and Services: 316,900. Professional and Contract Services: 720,000. Salaries: 9,638,300. Travel and

Training: 63,800. Grants: 29,000. Total Financial Services: 12,005,800.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who does your audit?

**Terry Keefe Director:** Who does the audit? I think it's Grant Thornton this year. Yes, Grant Thornton.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Chair:** Georgetown -

**Leader of the Opposition:** No, go ahead.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** You show debt. Explain that. It's the first time I ever saw it in a line.

**Terry Keefe Director:** What that is, hon. member, is bad debt expense. So we have receivables that we are not able to collect in the system. We have about \$20 million in revenue that we manage.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Do you bring in from Blue Cross, so on and so forth?

**Terry Keefe Director:** We bring it in from long-term care, hospital, charging people from out-of-province using our facilities, those types of things.

**Mr. M. Currie:** So what does your accounts receivable usually run at?

**Terry Keefe Director:** Right now, what you're looking at there is less than 1% of the total. So it's not a large amount, but it's less than 1% of -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Do receivables usually run around 10 million?

**Terry Keefe Director:** I don't know the exact amount. What they are is outstanding right now, but \$20 million in revenue and at any point in time, it's collected throughout the year. So what we're doing here is writing off what we weren't able to collect during the year, so that's like less than 1% of the total revenue.

**Mr. M. Currie:** So, you spend - you've got \$10 million almost just in salaries to collect 20 million.

**Terry Keefe Director:** They're not all collectors. There's a -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Payroll?

**Terry Keefe Director:** We have payroll. We have a whole -

**Mr. M. Currie:** I thought payroll all went over with the minister of finance.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Yeah. We do the timekeeping and the reporting over to Public Service Commission who actually do the processing of the pay. We still do the time sheets, sort of the front end part of the payroll side.

**Mr. M. Currie:** But I thought that was all -

**Terry Keefe Director:** There are about seven or eight people involved in that. Most of the people involved in this part - we have a separate accounting system - complete separate accounting system - than government. We're on an Oracle system which is separate.

**Mr. M. Currie:** I thought they were going to join that together and marry that.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Well, marry the -

**Mr. M. Currie:** One accounting system across PEI. That not done yet?

**Terry Keefe Director:** No, and it probably won't be done. We're actually back out to Health PEI now as a separate corp as well. We can't operate within the government sector because it has different coding structures than what we have. We have to comply with CIHI, and it's quite a different separate coding system and whatnot, so it's very difficult for us to change over.

Scott Stevens had made some progress to try to amalgamate it together, and it worked with DeltaWare over the last couple of years. We weren't able to sort of finalize that to get it onto one system. But he does have access to our system. We have our own comptroller as well.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Okay.

**Chair:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Questions. One is: Now that people are moving back to Health PEI, are they staying in their existing unions, or will there be union change of work?

**Ms. Bertram:** No. We thought perhaps we'd have to bring in legislation with the changeover, but everything seems to be -

**Leader of the Opposition:** People are staying.

**Ms. Bertram:** They're just Health PEI.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** It's the same as -

**Leader of the Opposition:** The other question, then. Public Service Commission staffing and classification, you pay for that service?

**Terry Keefe Director:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Did you have to when you were at the department too?

**Terry Keefe Director:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Page 100.

Medical Programs.

General. "Appropriations provided for administration and payment of health services under the *Hospitals Act* and the *Health Services Payment Act*, medical aspects of health programs and services, physician services, out-of-province hospital services, the medical residency program and other physician medical training programs." Administration: 40,000. Equipment: 100,400. Materials, Supplies and Services: 61,800. Professional and Contract Services: 99,526,900. Salaries: 24,507,100. Travel and Training: 799,600. Grants: 4,974,300. Total General: 130,010,100.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** No. I don't have a question.

**Chair:** No?

Shall it carry? Carried.

Ambulance and Out-of-Province Liaison. "Appropriations provided for the delivery of in-province and out-of-province ambulance services including costs associated with liaison activities to coordinate patient transfers to and from out-of-province hospitals." Administration: 39,000. Equipment: 400. Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,900. Professional and Contract

Services: 460,000. Salaries: 365,800. Travel and Training: 24,000. Grants: 8,715,900.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** One question is to the minister. Minister, again I go back to my conversations with Dr. Whalen last week, with the number of times that ambulances are on diversion from the QEH. When you look at the Montague and Souris, that do not have ERs open after 10:00, if people are coming in from Kings County and they have to divert from the QEH and go on to Prince County, if Prince County's in an overflow, what happens?

**Ms. Bertram:** With the diversion, again, our systems work collaboratively together. There is coordination - no different than when we had the discussion or the conversation around surgeons at the Prince County Hospital. QEH took the overload in terms of cases during that time. The same would apply here. We work as a system together.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'm just curious. Because when I spoke with Dr. Whalen he said perhaps three years ago a diversion had happened a couple of times a week. Now it happens on a daily basis.

**Ms. Bertram:** But again, I still commit to that - over the next few months we're going to see improvements. We are going to have the opening of the expansion in June. That should make - obviously, space, critical space will be there. We're adding human resources to that expansion, almost a million dollars I believe in salaries to that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Will that expansion increase the number of actual beds that are at the QEH?

**Ms. Bertram:** I believe so, hon. member. I did share that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Could you check that?

**Ms. Bertram:** There will be 37 patient care spaces within the new emergency department.

**Leader of the Opposition:** The total -

**Ms. Bertram:** The old had 19 official patient care spaces.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Right.

**Ms. Bertram:** So this will be very significant with space. The physical nature of the new facility - it will be very positive. Like I said, it's not just about bricks and mortar and space. It's also about the health professionals, and we're adding to that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** But that's on later when we get to the QEH.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. The overall beds at the QEH has increased too.

**Ms. Bertram:** At the emergency department.

**Leader of the Opposition:** No, but I'm asking for the overall beds and total for the hospital. I'm just curious.

**Chair:** There is a complete section of the QEH. Maybe it will be under that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Sure.

**Ms. Bertram:** I can give it to you right now. It's here. Just give me one second. Total beds at the QEH is - open beds are 259.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Two fifty-nine. Thank you.

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

**Mr. M. Currie:** Minister, how many ambulance workers do we have in the province now?

**Ms. Bertram:** I'd like to have that information at my fingertips, but I don't. I'll have to get back to you. Are you looking for all of the paramedics within our entire Island?

**Mr. M. Currie:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** Because obviously some of them would be outside of EMS.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Just that are working here in the province. Do you feel we have sufficient numbers to accommodate our needs?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, and I think what's very positive - government has supported a bursary program for Holland College, for the paramedic program. There has been keen uptake on that. Speaking to those students that have followed, that are now working in the field with the -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Do you feel that their equipment is up to today's standards also?

**Ms. Bertram:** Obviously, we are - you take the multi-transport unit that we put in the system this year, that has been very important so that a regular truck is not taken out of the Island service. When people are having to need treatment in Halifax, Moncton, or whatever, the new multi-transport truck is used versus taking another truck out of circulation.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** But equipment is improving. I think what's also positive -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Can you bring those numbers back?

**Ms. Bertram:** I can. Also, I think, in terms of first responders, I know it's not all specific to our shop, but I think we also have to thank, too, our rural fire departments, our volunteer fire departments across PEI. There has been a lot of collaboration with that. Again, some of that - with the hon. Attorney General and Public Safety office now.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Are they still using the ambulance for picking up people that are deceased at home?

**Ms. Bertram:** I believe so.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Are they?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Do you feel that's necessary? If they're already proclaimed deceased?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think it has to do with the availability of maybe -

**Mr. M. Currie:** Will funeral homes pick them up?

**Ms. Bertram:** But I believe in Queens County it's the ambulance. I believe in Queens County it's the ambulance that goes to the place of residence or a scene. But I can bring back that information to you.

**Mr. M. Currie:** Have you found a coroner for up west yet?

**Ms. Bertram:** Not yet, hon. member.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Medical Programs 139,617,100.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Provincial Acute Care.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital. "Appropriations provided for the delivery of a wide range of programs and services through the Province's primary referral hospital, including: Emergency Department and Outpatients, Surgical Services, Ambulatory Care and Inpatient Services, Support Services, MRI Services, and the PEI Cancer Treatment Centre." Administration: 1,383,500. Equipment: 417,300. Materials, Supplies and Services: 33,222,900. Professional and Contract Services: 2,310,300. Salaries: 83,169,200. Travel and Training: 507,900. Total Queen Elizabeth Hospital: 121,011,100.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** A question to the minister: What's the biggest issue at the QEH right now?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think you have addressed it during Question Period -

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just (Indistinct).

**Ms. Bertram:** - relative to the emergency. What I think is very positive and exciting is the redevelopment out there, that you're going to see - well, we have seen, too, the positive side, the stroke care program that we launched last week. That is something that has been called for for such a long time, that we have two basic units that are going to be supporting stroke patients in the province.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Last year we heard quite a bit about these superbugs. Are

the superbugs under control and are the antibiotics, etc., working for people now? Because we don't hear about it.

**Ms. Bertram:** I think that's why. I think things there they're keeping - I think they're doing a really great job. I also want to take the liberty to thank Rick Adams who does a really great job out at the QEH, and all the staff, to coordinate. We really haven't had major - it hasn't been out there, people are doing a great job, and that's also visitors, too, to the facility.

But I think it's an exciting year for the QEH with the redevelopment, and also with the Cancer Treatment Centre. That facility has been supported by government, whether it be through human resources, whether it be obviously with the expansion, and with the equipment cost, as well.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Prince County Hospital. "Appropriations provided for the delivery of a range of programs and services offered through the Province's second largest acute-care hospital, including: Emergency Department and Outpatients, Surgical Services, Ambulatory Care and Inpatient Services and Support Services." Administration: 435,600. Equipment: 36,000. Materials, Supplies and Services: 8,784,900. Professional and Contract Services: 467,000. Salaries: 31,634,100. Travel and Training: 170,600. Total Prince County Hospital: 41,528,200.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Quick question for the minister. What would be the number one issue here? The other part of the question is: The surgical services, are they back to full complement of physicians?

**Ms. Bertram:** We're not back quite yet.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** I'll get back to you with a date with that, hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Prince County Hospital, I'm so pleased at how collaboration is happening with the QEH and the PCH. I just continue to use the mammography topic as a good example. You know, we have this central calling system now, and Islanders, women, now have the opportunity, they can either ask to go to the PCH, the QEH, that staff are being shared between facilities. Doctors are being shared between facilities. That's a really positive step forward, with health professionals going from facility to facility, that we're truly working at the system. I'm not saying we're there completely, but - and then, we have to be working as a total system with our community hospitals as well.

I want to take also the opportunity to thank Arlene Gallant-Bernard who is the executive director there for her work, and all the staff that do great work. It's a lovely facility. I have had the opportunity to be up there on a couple of occasions, and I had the opportunity to meet with the foundation there, as well. They do great work, and we're moving forward with that facility as well.

**Chair:** Thank you.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Hillsborough Hospital. "Appropriations provided for the delivery of specialized acute and long-term treatment and rehabilitative psychiatric services to Islanders who have serious and persistent mental illness and psychogeriatric patients." Administration: 146,100. Equipment: 47,900. Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,578,100. Professional and Contract

Services: 161,500. Salaries: 8,724,400. Travel and Training: 65,200. Total Hillsborough Hospital: 10,723,200.

Question?

Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Provincial Acute Care: 173,262,500.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Community Hospitals and Home Based Care.

Community Hospitals. "Appropriations provided for the service delivery and program needs of five community hospitals responsible for the delivery of a variety of medical hospital services including short-term acute care, outpatient and emergency services, convalescent/rehabilitative, palliative and respite care." Administration: 318,800. Debt: 5,200. Equipment: 45,800. Materials, Supplies and Services: 4,449,100. Professional and Contract Services: 461,100. Salaries: 19,165,000. Travel and Training: 142,700. Total Community Hospitals: 24,587,700.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** With the community hospitals, what are their biggest issues? Not so much in terms - I know you made some significant changes, but what kinds of things are staff dealing with there on a day to day basis?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think when you meet with the community hospitals, one of their messages, and I know members in the House that represent those areas, concerns that they have are in regards to the staff, that the PCH and the QEH will refer out the patients that need to convalesce in those facilities.

I think that's the biggest, that they see that the whole system is working as an integrated system. That's what's very important, and I think - I also want to take the opportunity here to list off all our administrators within these facilities: Andy MacDougall, John Martin, Gayle Lamont, Jean Fallis, Terry Campbell in Souris. They all do an excellent job, and all their staff. I think that's the biggest thing, to know that our community hospitals are working as part of a collaborative, integrated health care system. That's what's key.

Can I also say, the rehabilitation side, I think there's some key health professionals that exist, new positions that exist in our community hospitals. These patients that need to rehabilitate - and they're from West Prince, or they're from Kings County - they can go to these facilities and rehabilitate closer to their home. I think it brings great value, and, too, the real sense of a community hospital.

**Chair (McIsaac):** Any further questions on that section?

The hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness.

**Mr. Henderson:** To further discuss that utilization, I know the day we were up there, we talked - I'm trying to get a handle on how that's been going since we've been up there. I think there were 13 acute care beds in O'Leary. There were eight patients in on that particular day. How has that been going? Because we did have some issues around getting enough patients into O'Leary insofar as working between Alberton and O'Leary in that regard.

**Ms. Bertram:** So in community hospital in O'Leary there are 13 acute beds -

**Mr. Henderson:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** - and there are 24 long-term

care beds there.

**Mr. Henderson:** Twenty-five, I think.

**Ms. Bertram:** Twenty-five, 24, and I think there are improvements that are being made. I'm not saying that we're there yet.

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** But I think it reaffirms, though, that we all have a job to play in terms of ensuring that our system is working in an integrated fashion.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yes, but I think we've implemented a few things to kind of correct that a little bit. Maybe you could elaborate a bit on that. With having Dr. Grimes, I believe, overseeing the admissions.

**Ms. Bertram:** We have a director for physicians for the facilities in the West Prince region, and that's creating collaboration, and -

**Mr. Henderson:** Yes.

**Ms. Bertram:** - I think a positive thing, too, that we can, with Dr. Grimes in that position, when we are trying to recruit physicians to the West Prince area, that it's seen as a collaborative area to go to in the province, that physicians are working together, and it's been seen very positively.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yes. The other issue I have - and I get this a fair bit on Mondays - on Sunday we only have the one facility providing urgent/emergency care, and I'm just wondering if there's any - at what point in time with the new expansion that's going on at Beechwood clinic in O'Leary when Sunday urgent care may be in the plans to be reinstated there?

**Ms. Bertram:** Right now, hon. member, we stay to the urgent care side of things. We

will certainly reassess things as we move forward, but right now we're staying firm to that.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, I realize that, but when the construction's complete I'm hoping the department would take a strong look at that and see what the numbers -

**Ms. Bertram:** But the new facility, the new Beechwood clinic, is going to be - and we'll get into that in the primary care side of things - but it is a beautiful new facility for the community.

**Mr. Henderson:** Final question. Run into this a fair bit with constituents. Ambulance transfers. So a patient is in O'Leary. Their condition changes and they're transferred to Alberton or vice-versa. How would the fees work on that? Is there any -

**Ms. Bertram:** The way it works -

**Mr. Henderson:** Like when you get admitted once, would that be considered one admission? You pay an ambulance fee to go to that and maybe when you go home - but the in-between, transferring them back and forth, is there any part of the budget that allocates for that?

**Ms. Bertram:** I believe that is under - we passed over that program under Medical Programs. It's sort of a case by case situation. Everything is different. We do have, as a government, emergencies - ambulance fees for seniors have been absorbed by -

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, well, I realize that. It's the inpatient transfers, I guess, is what I'm referring to. So you're in O'Leary, something changes in your situation and you're now transferred to, say, Summerside, or transferred to Alberton. That fee, is that under this section of the budget or is it under the paramedics and the ambulance? It would

seem that it wouldn't be under the ambulance fee.

**Terry Keefe Director:** There are some budgets within the hospitals for transfer fees, so if you transfer from Prince County Hospital to QEH and then back to -

**Mr. Henderson:** Yes, same situation.

**Terry Keefe Director:** That's paid by the hospital budgets.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Thank you.

This is community hospitals, right?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. Bagnall:** My ER.

**Ms. Bertram:** Your Montague? Your Kings County -

**Mr. Bagnall:** Yes. When are we going to be opening the ER to 24-hour service?

**Ms. Bertram:** Hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir, we have been consistent in saying and demonstrating that safety is for all, for the patient that's coming into a facility and for the health professionals working in that practice, in that facility, it's paramount. As you know, because it is your district, last April it was based on combined lab techs and the shortage of those health professionals.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Yeah, but we've got those now.

**Ms. Bertram:** I know, and as of January we had the shortage in ER nurses. We don't have that. We don't have those positions in the system and we're recruiting. We are

recruiting. Without that proper compliment we cannot operate 24/7.

**Mr. Bagnall:** My understanding, and what I've been told down here, is that we do have a staff in place that we can run ER, that they have enough people in place, as many as they've ever had, and that the reason - I don't know why we're not opening.

**Ms. Bertram:** Hon. member, I certainly, as Minister of Health and Wellness - and obviously we have key professionals within our department and Health PEI now. We have Jean Fallis, who is -

**Mr. Bagnall:** I know Jean well.

**Ms. Bertram:** We are using the statistics, using what we have to operate effectively and safely as a system.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Do you have a briefing note on that?

**Ms. Bertram:** As that presents, we cannot operate 24/7.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Do you have a briefing from the hospital to that (Indistinct)?

**Ms. Bertram:** I don't have it right here with me, hon. member, but I'm telling you today -

**Mr. Bagnall:** No, no, I know. But do you have a briefing from the hospital coming back? Because what I'm hearing down here and what I'm hearing in here are two different things.

**Ms. Bertram:** I will tell you this, that we work in coordination with the hospital, with Jean, and that message is clear that we don't have that complement of ER nurses. This is no different.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So what are you missing?

**Ms. Bertram:** ER nurses.

**Mr. Bagnall:** One?

**Ms. Bertram:** I believe it's three.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So we're short three ER nurses in Montague?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, I have the number somewhere. It's in my books.

For example, Nova Scotia just put out a study, too, about community hospitals and things like that. How they're having - it's not just a PEI issue relative to ER nurses. They have the same concern right now attracting ER nurses. That's across the system. It's not just PEI. It's not just community hospitals. It's all facilities.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Minister, we had a nurse come home from Newfoundland, from Montague, and yet she wasn't allowed to nurse in Montague and they made her go to Charlottetown and take training in order to go there. I mean, her preference would have been to stay in Montague but she had to go to Charlottetown to get a job and yet you're telling me we're short of nurses in Montague.

**Ms. Bertram:** Hon. member, we do have a nursing shortage of 3.5 full-time permanent ER nurses. Those are the vacancies that exist at Kings County.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So we have - say that again.

**Ms. Bertram:** Three point five FTEs -

**Mr. Bagnall:** Those are emergency room or just nurses in total?

**Ms. Bertram:** ER nurses. Again, Marney MacRae, in our office of recruitment and retention, continues to work to recruit for that facility.

**Mr. Bagnall:** I'm just mentioning one that I know for a fact, she moved -

**Ms. Bertram:** I would say to you, if that's the case, you have that individual contact our recruitment and retention office. If that's the case -

**Mr. Bagnall:** It came back through the recruitment and retention office and they told her that they had to go to Charlottetown.

**Ms. Bertram:** I cannot comment to that. I don't know the exact case. It's not fair for me to comment on an individual here on the floor of the Legislature.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Then, in order for her to go into Charlottetown, they turned around - because where they were going to put her, they put her in training for I don't know how many months.

**Ms. Bertram:** But maybe that particular - I don't know the individual. There is specific training for ER nurses as well and that would all be taken into account. But again, have that individual contact our recruitment and retention office.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Have you met with the staff down there in the ER?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. Bagnall:** What's the feeling of the doctors and the staff there?

**Ms. Bertram:** I thought it was a very nice environment to go into. It seemed like a very community-oriented facility, hon. member.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So what was their feeling on reopening the emergency?

**Ms. Bertram:** They appreciate where government is in terms of trying to recruit.

That we need to operate effectively and safely as a system. It's not just about doctors. It's not just about nurses. It's about every other health professional, whether it be LPNs in the system, whether it be RCWs, we all have to work together. If we don't have the ER nurses, that's all part of working effectively.

**Mr. Bagnall:** I guess, minister, what my concern is, when we started, it wasn't ER nurses where the problem was. You were telling me it was lab technicians and it was X-ray technicians.

**Ms. Bertram:** That was the truth, hon. member.

**Mr. Bagnall:** We couldn't open up the room because of it.

**Ms. Bertram:** We recruited. We recruited and that's great -

**Mr. Bagnall:** And we have them, and now you won't open it.

**Ms. Bertram:** But you know what? That just demonstrates that recruitment and retention and those programs that we have in place back in the section that we did earlier on Medical Programs - those grants that were given in terms of the recruitment and retention are working. So those combined lab techs were attracted. So it's not to say that we're not going to attract those ER nurses too.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Have you got it in your budget to hire 3.5 ER nurses?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, it would be, hon. member. It just carried over.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Can I ask you another question?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. Bagnall:** If they get their (Indistinct), are you going to open the emergency?

**Ms. Bertram:** Hon. member, we will reassess. If those positions come available, we will reassess.

**Mr. Bagnall:** What do you mean, reassess? The reason you're saying you're not opening is because we don't have the nurses and we're short 3.5. If you get the nurses, will you open?

**Ms. Bertram:** Hon. member, again, I've already stated this in the media. We will reassess when those positions are filled.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So you won't open it. So you don't plan on opening it.

**Ms. Bertram:** I'm not saying that whatsoever, hon. member.

**Mr. Bagnall:** You're not saying you will.

**Ms. Bertram:** I'm saying we will reassess as a department, as Health PEI, we'll reassess.

**Chair:** Any more questions on this section?

Shall it carry? Carried.

Provincial Homes and Manors.

"Appropriations provided for the operation of the nine provincially-owned manors and Sherwood Home." Administration: 409,500. Equipment: 179,800. Materials, Supplies and Services: 5,292,300. Professional and Contract Services: 469,300. Salaries: 41,857,800. Travel and Training: 209,100. Total Provincial Homes and Manors: 48,417,800.

Any questions on that?

Shall it carry?

Question, hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Did you give us a breakdown for that 5,292,000?

**Ms. Bertram:** Under medical and surgical supplies, it's a hundred and -

**Mr. Bagnall:** Pardon?

**Ms. Bertram:** Any specific area, hon. member? It's almost -

**Mr. Bagnall:** I just want to see what the - I can't find the breakdown on that.

**Ms. Bertram:** Okay. Blood collections supplies, 100; books and periodicals, 7,700; carpentry supplies, 900; dietary cleaning supplies, 12,300; dietary supplies, 18,600; disposable linen, 27,000; drugs, 62,000; electricity, 621,600; equipment rentals, 25,000; field supplies, 82,100; food, 1,713,800; fuel, 698,400; general supply draperies -

**Mr. Bagnall:** Maybe if you just get them to do off a page - if you could just send that and they could photocopy it for us. Save you from going through it all, minister. I'd just like to have a look at it.

**Ms. Bertram:** It's just more or less - it's just paper goods. We can bring that forward to you, hon. member.

**Chair:** Any other questions?

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Henderson:** Questions. Margaret Stewart Ellis -

**Chair:** The hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness.

**Mr. Henderson:** Margaret Stewart Ellis Wing - just to have it on the record - any idea of the time frame and the plans for that?

**Ms. Bertram:** At this time, hon. member, we don't have those plans in place. We met with you and the foundation, probably a month ago or so, and government has said and committed and we are working towards that.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

No. The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

**Mr. Bagnall:** The 41 million, are there doctors in that or what is the breakdown of that salary?

**Ms. Bertram:** Sorry, where are we here? Under the salaries for this particular section, there are 635 full-time employees under this section.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So, are we talking doctors, are we talking nurses, or what are we talking about?

**Ms. Bertram:** Those individuals that are working within our provincial homes and manors.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So there would be no doctors.

**Ms. Bertram:** I don't believe so.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay. A question for you. Have you been negotiating with the doctors for an increase? Are their contracts up? Are we negotiating for -

**Ms. Bertram:** It is up. The new Master Agreement - the negotiations haven't started yet, but it's over - I think it was March.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Hasn't there been some discussion back and forth - what they're

going to be looking for?

**Ms. Bertram:** No.

**Terry Keefe Director:** Just preliminary discussions.

**Mr. Bagnall:** So, it's not right that they're looking for \$30 million more money from your budget?

**Ms. Bertram:** We haven't entered into any negotiations.

**Mr. Bagnall:** No?

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Home Care and Support. "Appropriations provided for the operation of the Home Care and Support Program for individuals and families to provide home care and support services to enable people to remain in their own homes as well as for the Renal Care and Dialysis Program." Administration: 154,300. Equipment: 481,500. Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,675,000. Professional and Contract Services: 233,900. Salaries: 13,612,600. Travel and Training: 728,900. Grants: 125,000. Total Home Care and Support: 17,011,200.

Any questions on that section?

Shall it carry?

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Back to the professional and contract services again - no, materials and supplies, 1,675,000.

**Ms. Bertram:** You would like what some of the things that that's gone into?

**Mr. Bagnall:** Yeah. What are the major expenditures in that?

**Ms. Bertram:** The medical and surgical supplies - just like the other line item that was over a million dollars. Other larger drugs.

**Mr. Bagnall:** What drugs?

**Ms. Bertram:** Drugs to supply under the Home Care Program, or the palliative home drug program, which was a major announcement and support from our Premier to have the drug program available to palliative patients at home.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Grants to Private Nursing Homes.  
“Appropriations provided for payments made to private nursing homes for health care services provided to all residents and for accommodation subsidies for residents who qualify.” Private Nursing Home Grants: 14,038,300. Total Grants to Private Nursing Homes: 14,038,300.

Question, the hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Get a breakdown on that, minister? Which -

**Ms. Bertram:** Of the nursing homes?

**Mr. Bagnall:** - of the grants. Yeah. Who gets them and -

**Ms. Bertram:** They're all the -

**Mr. Bagnall:** - what nursing homes.

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Could you just table that?

**Ms. Bertram:** Sure. We can. I don't have a document to table, but I can bring it back to you. Do you want me to just list off the long-term care facilities that we do have -

**Mr. Bagnall:** No. If you'd just table it. It would be -

**Terry Keefe Director:** It depends on the beds.

**Ms. Bertram:** It depends -

**Mr. Bagnall:** I want to check all of the different ones that are getting it in their grants. If you could table that for me.

**Ms. Bertram:** Okay, but I think just for the information of people I'll just read them off. There aren't very many. East Prince, Andrews Lodge, 10 beds; Clinton View Lodge, 35 permanent beds - these are all permanent beds by the way; South Shore Villa, 31 beds; Atlantic Baptist - this is in Queens now - 101; Garden Home, 117; MacMillan Lodge, 20; Park West Lodge, 15; Whisperwood Villa, 61; and in Kings County, the Gillis lodge is at 49. With a total of 439 permanent beds in the private nursing homes in PEI.

**An Hon. Member:** They're listed right there.

**Ms. Bertram:** Oh, the breakdown is tabled? Okay.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay. Can we have a copy of that?

**Ms. Bertram:** It's in your package.

**Chair:** It was circulated earlier.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay. No, that's fine. If it's here -

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, hon. member. I didn't - thank you.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Community Hospitals and Home

Based Care: 104,055,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Provincial Drug and Dental Programs.

Provincial Drug Programs. "Appropriations provided for the delivery and administration of provincial drug programs delivered through community retail pharmacies, or in the case of Provincial Pharmacy Delivered Programs, directly to clients."

Administration: 31,100. Equipment: 7,200. Materials, Supplies and Services: 36,400. Professional and Contract Services: 3,000. Salaries: 1,150,800. Travel and Training: 11,000. Grants: 34,408,900. Total Provincial Drug Programs: 35,648,400.

Questions there? Shall it carry?

**Mr. Bagnall:** (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Question, the hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

**Mr. Bagnall:** The grants on that.

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes? Those go to the pharmacies. I think almost 30 million goes to pharmacies within the grant.

**Mr. Bagnall:** It goes to where?

**Ms. Bertram:** And that's in your tabled information.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** It's on page eight of the tabled information.

**Chair:** Okay?

**Mr. Bagnall:** No, just a second.

**Ms. Bertram:** Again, I think we were just at today the -

**Mr. Bagnall:** So the diabetic program in those grants, what's that money being used for under the diabetic program?

**Ms. Bertram:** For the blood glucose strips. Provision of 100 test strips per month for insulin dependant diabetics with a co-pay of \$11. The blood glucose -

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** We have approximately 8,450 registered clients, yearly, with this program. Through this program the clients obtain oral diabetes medications, urine testing materials, insulin products from pharmacies of their choice. This has been a very positive - the blood glucose -

**Mr. Bagnall:** What's high drug costs?

**Ms. Bertram:** High drug costs, primarily, are cancer drugs, hon. member. But last week, when we announced Lucentis, which was for macular degeneration - and actually at lunchtime we went to the CNIB, had a launch for their vision awareness month that they're having at the Lieutenant Governor's house. They couldn't express enough what this means - Lucentis - because that drug is going to mean -

**Mr. Bagnall:** So what's that drug going to cost you? Is that going to cost you 1,300,000 for that drug?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay. That's fine.

**Ms. Bertram:** But they only spoke about - and any of the members that were at that only spoke about the positive nature to that, and what it's going to give quality of life. It will also reverse, in some cases, the loss of sight - not loss of sight - but improve the quality of life and prevent further loss of sight relative to that form of macular

degeneration.

**Chair:** Shall it carry?

**Mr. Bagnall:** There's also a new drug that's just starting for that that's supposed to be - it hasn't been approved yet, but on their test that it's been working really well.

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, but this one was approved, and we're very happy that we now have this one, and any new drugs will be taken under consideration.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Provincial Dental Programs.

"Appropriations provided for the services to achieve and maintain good dental health under the Children's Dental Care Program, Preventative Orthodontic Program, Long Term Care Facilities Dental Program and Cleft Palate Orthodontic -"

**Mr. Bagnall:** We'll carry that section.

**Chair:** Carry that section?

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Bertram:** Teeth are doing well in the Province of PEI.

**Chair:** Total Provincial Drug and Dental Programs: 38,274,300.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Primary Health Care.

Primary Health Care. "Appropriations provided for the general administration of the division, primary care policy and program development, and various special projects such as collaborative practices and Aboriginal Health transition projects." Administration: 28,800. Equipment: 30,200. Materials, Supplies and Services: 97,400.

Professional and Contract Services: 136,600. Salaries: 710,900. Travel and Training: 19,800. Grants: 6,000. Total Primary Health Care: 1,029,700.

Question, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just in terms of what you passed out to us. You've got, under other, computer service fees and consulting for \$20,000. What's that about?

**Ms. Bertram:** That's probably with the family health centres that are at the Beechwood, Central Queens, Four Neighbourhoods, Harbourside or Eastern Kings - all of those falling under the family health centres. It would just be the provision for services for computers within those facilities.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So the consulting, though, you didn't hire anybody to change the system or -

**Ms. Bertram:** I don't believe so.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, because it just says computer fees and consulting.

**Ms. Bertram:** If there's a change in that we will certainly bring anything back.

**Chair (Biggar):** Shall it carry? Carried.

Health Centres. "Appropriations provided for the operation of provincially-owned Health Centres providing health services which focus on diagnosis and treatment, health promotion, illness prevention, chronic disease management and same-day access for non-emergency care through urgent care and walk-in clinics." Administration: -

**Mr. Bagnall:** Carry that section.

**Chair:** Thank you. I'll just read the total.

Total Health Centres: 5,340,300.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Chronic Disease Management.

“Appropriations provided for the delivery of a wide range of programs including Integrated Chronic Disease Prevention and Management, Provincial -”

**Mr. Bagnall:** We'll carry this section.

**Ms. Bertram:** Can I just say one thing in this section? This section is our screening programs. I just want to reiterate the importance of screening and something that we - you probably have heard the radio announcements. We really want - we have to talk about it, but the colorectal screening program, there is a pilot underway. We need Islanders to take part in that. It's both men and women. We have one of the higher rates of female colorectal cancer in the country, and I hope anyone that's watching today's proceedings really reaches out to get the package that's available to get screened.

This is 90% preventable if detected and screened early. So we need to talk about it. We need to take the stigma away from talking about some of these issues. People have to get screened. It's only for their own good and you have to see this as a positive. There is a pilot out there. Access it. We are bringing, in the fall, a full provincial screening program for colorectal screening and we also introduced, in the drug announcement last week, a drug as well to treat colorectal cancer.

I just put that plea out there that people get screened. And it's not just colorectal cancer. It's pap screens, it's cervical cancer, diabetes screening. Get screened. It's very important.

**Chair:** Total Chronic Disease Management: 1,741,600.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I just have one question in addiction services and we can pass that. In terms of consulting services, you had spent 68,000 here. Who did you hire and what were they doing?

**Ms. Bertram:** I think, hon. member, that was just for program development.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who was doing the work?

**Ms. Bertram:** We'll have to come back with that information.

**Leader of the Opposition:** We can pass it, but just bring it back to me.

**Ms. Bertram:** Sure.

**Chair:** Total Addiction Services: 10,047,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Community Mental Health.

Would you like me to read that in full, hon. members?

“Appropriations provided for mental health services which focus on community mental health teams, counselling, support, after-care, community outreach, community maintenance program and special projects focusing on primary prevention, research and standards. This includes funding for the crisis intervention program.”

Administration: 102,600. Equipment: 5,600. Materials, Supplies and Services: 28,200. Professional and Contract Services: 54,600. Salaries: 6,520,200. Travel and Training: 112,400. Grants: 1,350,300. Total Community Mental Health: 8,173,900.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Again, you have

listed another consulting fee and then you say program development for 54,000. If you'd bring back that information?

**Ms. Bertram:** Sure, we will, hon. member.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Public Health. "Appropriations provided for the delivery of public health, speech language pathology, audiology and nutrition services under programs such as maternal and child health, communicable disease control, health education, school health and family life education." Administration: 98,400. Equipment: 3,900. Materials, Supplies and Services: 99,600. Professional and Contract Services: 28,100. Salaries: 6,324,700. Travel and Training: 127,700. Grants: 31,000. Total Public Health: 6,713,400.

Questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I just got a question on that. Speech language pathology was always hard to attract and keep the required number of speech language pathologists in the province. At one time social services had a good group of professionals and then they moved to the education system. Can you tell us, are we up to complement? Are we still trying to hire these professionals and are there wait lists for services?

**Ms. Bertram:** Just the actions to date, hon. member. We have four new speech language positions that were created in the department of early childhood - within education in 2008/2009, and a permanent position, clinical leader position, in our department last fall. We're working collaboratively with the department of education to -

**Leader of the Opposition:** How many do

you have under public health?

**Ms. Bertram:** Total complement, hon. member, there's 18.9.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Eighteen point nine?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Are they all filled now?

**Ms. Bertram:** I believe those are all filled.

**Leader of the Opposition:** They're all filled?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Shall it carry?

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir for recognition of guests.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to recognize a couple of guests in the gallery there. They're travelling from Ontario. Actually, Gizelle has been teaching here in Summerside for the last number of months on a term. Welcome to the Legislature. She's looking to go to Nunavik after here. So it's great to see her. Also with her is her daughter, Stephanie. Stephanie tells me that she just finished graduating with her second degree in law and she's taking on a new position, starting at the first of the week.

So just welcome to the Legislature. I hope you enjoyed the afternoon and it's good to see you here.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Bertram:** I want to go back to the Leader of the Opposition. I just want to double-check. I'll bring that back, (Indistinct) 18, because I do think that there's an issue around West Prince, I believe.

**Leader of the Opposition:** West Prince was always short. (Indistinct).

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes, and I just want to double-check on that. Okay?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** But it is, the complement is 18.9 -

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** - but we will bring back that information.

**Leader of the Opposition:** We'll pass that, though.

**Chair:** Okay.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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Interoperative Electronic Health Record.  
"Appropriations provided for the development -"

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Yes. We just finished that one.

Sorry.

"Appropriations provided for the -" pardon me? Did we not -

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct)

Information Management Section.

**Chair:** Oh, sorry. You're right. I'm sorry.

Total Primary Health Care. I have to carry that total: 33,045,900.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Sorry, hon. members. We didn't do the Health Information Management.

General. "Appropriations provided for the operation of the Chief Information Office including record information management, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, health information as well as coordination and strategic planning for health information and computer systems."

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Sure. Okay.

**Leader of the Opposition:** How many requests would your department of health get for use of freedom of information? How many responses would you be giving out?

**Ms. Bertram:** That's a good question. We don't have that statistic with us, but we'll bring it back to you.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just, I'm curious, again. Often we get calls from people wondering about their health records, or wondering about some issue of health. Would it -

**Ms. Bertram:** I do think there's a lot of requests.

**Leader of the Opposition:** A lot of requests, that's what I wondered.

**Ms. Bertram:** In terms of the actual number, I'm not sure.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Ms. Bertram:** But we'll bring that back.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Fine. We can pass that.

**Chair:** Total General: 1,144,600.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Okay, members. Thank you for your patience.

Interoperative Electronic Health Record.  
"Appropriations provided for the development, implementation and support for the integrated health record."  
Administration: 300,000. Equipment: 2,589,800. Materials - oh, I'm sorry, going back.

Administration: Nil. Equipment: 300,000.  
Materials, Supplies and Services: 2,589,800.  
Professional and Contract Services: 280,200. Salaries: 3,236,300. Travel and Training: 120,000. Total Interoperative Electronic Health Record: 6,526,300.

Questions, hon. members, under that section?

**Leader of the Opposition:** We do have a few questions. We recognize this is the CERNER project, right?

**Ms. Bertram:** Yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Under the licensing and maintenance, often we hear that the system doesn't necessarily have the supports in it when it's going to be up and operational due to changes in the technology. Do you want to respond to that?

**Ms. Bertram:** I'm not a specialist in terms of technology, but this has been a huge project, in terms of operating systems with

technology, and that languages mesh, as I understand as being presented information, that there are 23 of the 25 operating systems up and running. Those languages all have to mesh together because obviously those inputs have to be recognizable whether they're the QEH and they work together with the Alberton hospital, that everything is working as a system, whether it be our pharmacies, doctors' offices, that there will be a system that will be working together and the language is interoperable.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Minister, we don't have a breakdown for the materials, supplies and services in that section of 2.5. Could you just table that?

**Ms. Bertram:** Most of it, hon. member, is hardware and software.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay. Would you just table that? I don't want to break - I just want to see the information.

**Ms. Bertram:** Okay. There's just three lines. That's really it.

**Mr. Bagnall:** Okay. So you don't mind tabling it, then?

**Ms. Bertram:** No. We can bring it. I don't have the document, but I'll table it.

**Mr. Bagnall:** We're not going to carry it, I mean, we're not going to hold the section up, I mean, we just -

**Ms. Bertram:** I'll bring it back.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Health Information Management.  
7,670,900.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Health PEI: 515,980,700.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow,  
Thursday, at 2:00 p.m.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Thank you, hon. members, for your patience today.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you, Madam Minister.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you.

**An Hon. Member:** Great work.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Bertram:** Madam Speaker, I move that the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

**Chair:** Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Terry.

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having under consideration the grant of supply to Her Majesty, 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.

The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Gallant:** I move, seconded by the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springdale, that this House adjourn until tomorrow, Thursday, at 2:00 p.m.

**Speaker:** Shall it carry? Carried.

Have a great evening.