

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Carolyn Bertram

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The Legislature sat at 10:00 a.m.

**Speaker (Bertram):** Good morning everyone.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests

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

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

It's a privilege to rise in the House and welcome the guests in the gallery, some familiar faces and some new faces as well.

Another event that's going to happen right away is the Women's Institute is going to start their roadside cleanup right way. I urge everyone to drive safely because there are going to be folks on the side of the road. If you happen to own a nice pickup truck, like some of the opposition members do over there, maybe they could pick up some of the bags when they land on the side of the road. It would be very much appreciated.

The Women's Institute is celebrating their hundredth year of service to Islanders this year. It's going to be a tremendous event for their anniversary.

The other issue that's out there happening now to some extent is grassfires. Under the Department of Agriculture and Forestry we've had 29 grassfires across the province – with the assistance of the fire departments in local areas have had to go out and extinguish. That does present some problems. The fire hazard chart went from low to moderate just this week. There's a little higher risk right now.

I think there are some students in the building and some of them may be in here from Halifax. We do want to extend our sister province students a welcome here from PEI and hope they enjoy their visit.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

It's a privilege to stand here today and welcome everybody to the gallery, and those following along at home. It's a privilege and an honour to represent here. I'm fortunate to have the good health to be able to stand here. I'm fortunate that the people of District 2 have put their faith in me to do this job for them. I appreciate it.

Those of you who leave Charlottetown, which most of the Cabinet here don't, you'll notice that a lot of tractors are on the roads these days as the farm work has begun. I urge everyone to drive with a little bit of caution this weekend. The farmers need to do their work. They're a very important sector on Prince Edward Island and the work that they are doing now is a very important step in their process. Be patient. Take your time. It's a very short planting season. The tractors will be on the road slowing things down a little, but I ask everyone to be patient because they are very important to Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

I, too, would like to rise and welcome everybody here today. I see Eddie Lund is here again, a regular. I'd also like to mention that, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition has mentioned about the tractors on the road, all the farmers are busy now. The fishermen, of course, have had a – just coming to the end of their first week, a very successful week on the water.

I also notice that I have a couple of students up here. Actually, they belong to the minister of transportation's district: Justine Vessey, who is graduating from Charlottetown Rural this year. She'll be going to UPEI this year. My grandson, Josh Vriends, is here too. Josh, he'll be going to university this fall. He has been offered five different scholarships. Among those five universities that have offered him scholarships, among them is a full tuition scholarship from UPEI, and also a scholarship from the University of Ottawa. Josh's first year in university will be at the University of Ottawa because yesterday he got word that he has been selected to be a

Page in the House of Commons. It may seem that I'm bragging here, but just a little bit of pride oozing out.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors.

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

It's indeed a pleasure to rise in the House once again and welcome the visitors to the gallery: Eddie Lund, and I see Paul Cudmore up there. I see two people I saw on the weekend at the Islewards, a gentleman and his son, who were there to be there for Eileen Higginbotham from Prince Street School. Welcome to the gallery.

I heard via the Internet this morning that a good friend of mine who lives in my district – friends Won and Tommy Noonan are proud grandparents of Lydia Page. Lydia Page was born yesterday on my wife's birthday. Also a proud aunt is Lana Page Noonan and a great-grandmother, Mary Noonan. They all live in my district. Congratulations.

It's going to be a busy weekend in District 22 and indeed in the province. I'm attending the CWL AGM on the weekend. Also, there's the annual walk for hospice that is being held throughout the province on Sunday. In Summerside it's at 2:00 p.m., registration at 1:00 p.m., at the Shipyard Market. Also, the Greater Summerside Chamber of Commerce is having its annual showcase.

It's a busy weekend. I hope everybody in the province has a wonderful one.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

If you drive through Stratford you quickly realize that it is spring. That means lobster season is upon us. As happens every year, the Stratford Lions Club has their annual lobster sale. I encourage anybody who lives in Stratford or might be driving through to

please stop in. See Claire Jenkins and the crew there. Some of the best lobster plate you could ever have.

I'd also like to say as a proud owner of a truck that my truck will be put to great use this weekend as it always is, as I'm actually on the set-up committee for the Hike for Hospice in Stratford, which is being sponsored this year by the Stratford Rotary club of which I'm also a member. If you see me out on the road give me a wave. I'll be hauling tables and water stations all weekend.

Thank you very much.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General.

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

I, too, would like to rise and welcome our guests in the public gallery this morning.

Also, to wish Islanders a great weekend. It's a little chilly out there this morning but there is promise of warmer temperatures, and it's certainly evident around my district that people are out doing yard work, the grass is greening up, and with the sunshine comes great spirits.

This morning I'd also like to say hello to all of my former colleagues at Notre Dame Place clubhouse in Summerside who I know are busily preparing for the start of mental health week. I want to send out a big hello to all of them and wish everyone a wonderful weekend.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

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

I, too, would like to rise and welcome all those visiting us in the gallery today. Paul Cudmore and Evan MacKinnon are here joining us from the Canadian Paraplegic Association, and yesterday they had a successful Chair Leaders Day. I'd like to welcome them to the gallery.

I'd like to especially to welcome the students who chose on their day off to join us in the gallery today. We appreciate them making a good choice to view the proceedings.

To all of my constituents in Charlottetown-Lewis Point, I hope they all have a great weekend.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

I'd like to say hello to all of the people in my own district of Morell-Mermaid. Last night the member from District 4 and myself helped celebrate 42 adults of the Holland College recognition ceremony in Morell for an adult of grading class.

Also, today in the gallery we actually have someone famous on our side: young Craig Steadman from St. Peter's Bay. He attends their French school in Fortune. He played hockey this past winter with the Kings County AAA atom team and he also is off to Boston next week to play, not with the Bruins, but close, with the riptide hockey team. This summer he's actually going to play baseball, and I think for the first time in years my husband's actually coming back to start coaching young people again and he'll be there on that team as well.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood.

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

I, too, am pleased to rise today to welcome everybody into the gallery. It's always a pleasure to have the students in on Fridays with us.

I, too, would like to welcome a couple fine gentlemen to the gallery today, Paul Cudmore and Evan MacKinnon with the

Canadian Paraplegic Association. Of course, as mentioned earlier a successful Chair Leaders Day yesterday, and I was once again pleased to participate in that event. I think I've been in it the last four years, I think it's all since it came to be, so, always pleased to be a part of that as well.

To Mr. Vriends, congratulations. Well done, and always continue to make your grandfather proud, sir.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

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

Welcome to everybody both in the gallery, those watching and listening to us via the Internet or TV. Excuse me, Madam Speaker, I think the session has decided that it's going to give me a cold here now, so I apologize.

My District of Kelly's Cross-Cumberland is no different than any other district about being terribly community minded. In regards to that, there are two benefits happening this weekend. One is for Carl and Barbara MacDonald from Crapaud at the Crapaud Curling Club. Unfortunately, Carl's cancer has returned and he's having to undergo treatment, so they're doing a benefit for he and his wife between 7:00 and 11:30.

Then there's another benefit, same evening, at the APM Centre in Cornwall for Noreen Gallant of Bonshaw, and it's a prize bingo. Noreen was involved in a bad car accident last year and still has to deal with the injuries she received from that accident. To those listening who like to play bingo or who enjoy silent or live auctions, you've got a choice of two events.

We also have, not just in my district, but in the district of Malpeque, we have a fundraiser for our MP Wayne Easter tomorrow evening in your district, Madam Speaker, at the New Glasgow Lobster Suppers, and a little bit different this year. Typically, it's always the night before Mother's Day, so it's a little bit early this

time, but it's always nice to have that first taste.

To everyone this weekend, it seems that the weather's going to be lovely and I encourage everybody to get outside and make a point of enjoying the weather.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

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

It's a pleasure to rise again in the House and welcome everyone to the gallery, and to young Craig Steadman. He would be the grandson of George MacDonald, and when he gets to Boston hopefully they'll turn him into a Boston fan when he's down there.

I'd like to say hello to everybody watching on EastLink, especially to all of my constituents in District 1, and especially to all of the seniors that are watching faithfully.

As I was driving in today I noticed people were raking their yards and cleaning out the ditches. Just to let the people know, if they don't carry garbage cans in their rig, hold onto their garbage until they get home and put it in the garbage home, or the best idea is to carry a garbage bag in your vehicles for your garbage as you're travelling.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

I rise today to welcome Paul Cudmore who is in the gallery, he had a fantastic job yesterday and heightened the awareness of individuals living and the challenges they deal with every day, so I want to acknowledge his tremendous leadership.

Also, I would like to acknowledge that we have Peter Rukavina in the gallery today, and I believe his son Oliver is with him. Last

week I had an opportunity – last Saturday – my daughter and I went to his open lab, Minecraft, which is an activity and a game that the children play in communities, and a very popular game, but was quite impressed with the volume of students that were participating, and Peter's vision for the game in respect to using it as educational opportunities in math and strategy and architecture. I want to point that out and (Indistinct).

I also want to acknowledge the Member from Souris-Elmira. Great discussion yesterday on ground ambulance services and he did offer, as a result of that nice headline in the *Guardian* today, that he would bring in a feed of lobster for me. So I'll meet him in Morell at the Co-op at 12 noon on Saturday to make that exchange.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to welcome everybody to the gallery. It's good to have Eddie Lund with us today, and I'd also like to welcome Paul Cudmore and Evan MacKinnon. You know, Paul called me up and asked me to go in the Chair Leaders campaign, so I said to my colleague the Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood: Who is this Paul Cudmore? He quickly piped back that: He lives in your district. I said: That's good enough.

Anyway, it was a pleasure to participate in that event yesterday. It was very rewarding, and I guess I possibly got fined this morning in regards to knocking down a sign on Victoria Row. I want everybody to know here that I did actually pick that sign – I just grazed it, and I actually picked the sign back up, and without leaving my chair. I'm quite proud that I was able to replace the sign and I haven't got a call from any lawyers yet this morning so I figure I'm okay.

Also, I'd like to wish a happy birthday to Everett MacDougall. He's 100 years tomorrow and he's celebrating in Andrews

of PEI, Stratford. Maybe the Member from Stratford-Kinlock might be dropping by between 2:00 and 4:00 tomorrow for Everett's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party. I'm looking forward to seeing a good western boy and I'm looking forward to seeing all of his friends and colleagues there tomorrow.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

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

#### Statements by Members

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

#### **Milton Community Hall**

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

The community of Miltonvale Park is a rural community of 1,153 people on the northwestern boundary of Charlottetown. In the North Milton area of the community, the Milton Community Hall has recently undergone a major renovation, funded in part from the Island Community Fund, Skills PEI and Rural Jobs Initiative, along with federal funding programs and money raised in the community.

Many of the hall committee are also involved with the Miltonvale Park community council: Hal Parker, George Piercey, Gail Long and administrator Shari Macdonald, and they are especially pleased to have the community council offices back in the community. Other board members include Bob Hooper, Joyce Blackett, Pauline Smith and Ernie Coles, with significant contributions from Nanne Garnham, John Hooper, Phil Hooper and many other community members.

The hall is now a beautiful facility with a stage, office space, kitchen and bar, along with a main auditorium, and an upstairs office and meeting spaces. The installation of a generator has also allowed Milton Community Hall to be named an emergency warming and operation centre for the municipality.

Since its official re-opening in January, it has hosted community meetings, first aid session, dances, go!101 classes, and

fundraisers and even a wedding, and the schedule is very busy for the summer with two PEI Mutual Festival of Small Halls shows, ceilidhs and card parties and many more events scheduled. A number of seniors' activities are also planned, supported in part through the Age Friendly Community grants from the PEI Seniors' Secretariat.

It is heartening to see another example of Islanders working well together to nurture the culture and social heritage of rural PEI.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

#### **Chair Leader Experience**

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

I'm pleased to rise today to thank the Canadian Paraplegic Association, its executive director Paul Cudmore, Evan MacKinnon, and their board of directors for their kind invitation to be part of the Chair Leaders day on Prince Edward Island.

The day saw business leaders and Members of the Legislative Assembly go about their daily routines in a wheelchair. It was quite an eye-opening experience for me.

I would say that I'm an organized person, but my organizational skills were in overdrive yesterday during Chair Leader day. I found myself thinking: Where will I park? Will I need more time to get from point A to point B? And, yes, what will I wear for the elements?

While in the chair I was always aware of the condition of the path that I was travelling. Cracks in sidewalks, missing bricks, cracked curbs, can I make it up that incline? And the dreaded transition from the end of the sidewalk to the street.

People stopped me on the street with looks of concern and questions as to my well-being. I was able to explain to them that I was part of an awareness campaign for the Canadian Paraplegic Association.

As the former chair of the planning board of the city of Charlottetown I am very well aware of the conversations that go on between the planning department and developers. I believe today no public building should be allowed to go forward without being totally accessible. I would suggest to the city of Charlottetown that they ensure that there is a representative from the Canadian Paraplegic Association on their planning board.

I have a suggestion for the Minister of Transportation and Public Works. The wheelchair access to the Coles Building needs work on the bricks leading to the ramp, there is no automatic door opener and for the life of me, I can't figure out why a car is always parked in the no-parking zone at the top of the ramp.

I was lucky to be able to get out of the chair at the end of the day and walk back to Province House. The day has taught me that I need to speak up when I see something that can improve the life of someone with a disability. I would challenge the city of Charlottetown, the province, developers, business leaders and anyone watching today's proceedings to work together to make our city and province the most barrier-free place to live, to work and to play.

Thank you.

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

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

### **Summerside Boys and Girls Club: Mark's Celebrity Golf Classic**

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

It's a pleasure to rise today and recognize the Summerside Boys and Girls Club and the Mark's Celebrity Golf Tournament.

The Summerside Boys and Girls Club offers children and youth in the Summerside area the opportunity to participate in many unique programs which promote social involvement in their community and experience that help them in their own personal growth.

The Boys and Girls Club has had some amazing successes including having surpassed the 90,000 mark in offering free breakfasts served to Summerside children and youth.

This club was also awarded the Mel Campbell award for 2011 for their amazing youth programming, which included such community activities as having safely transported over 600 children to and from school in the Summerside area.

Among the many other tremendous events being held by the Summerside club is their upcoming Mark's Celebrity Golf Tournament, which is sure to be a hit. This will be the tournament's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary starting July 15 and ending July 17.

The tournament will kick off with a celebrity dinner at the Credit Union Place, including a silent and live auction. Some 36 teams of golfers will hit the course to play a round of golf with some great celebrities. New this year at the tournament, we'll see an additional 36 teams also play a round of golf with celebrities.

To wrap up the event the Ellis family band will be taking the stage at the Silver Fox in Summerside.

Some of the confirmed celebrities include former NHL player and Stanley Cup winner Eddie Shack and members of the Canada's gold medal women's hockey team.

I wish the Boys and Girls Club of Summerside great success with their Mark's celebrity golf tournament fundraising event.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Responses to Questions Taken As Notice

### Questions by Members

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

### **Underage drinking at Liberal Party events (further)**

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

A couple of weeks ago we talked about a disturbing incident of sanctioned underage drinking at Liberal Party events. It was broken in the front page of the *Guardian*. In the Question Period that day the tourism minister committed to his department doing some investigation work. The deputy premier, he said in this House: The liquor commission said they'll investigate the situation to see where it goes.

Question to the deputy premier: Will you update the House and all Islanders to the findings in this investigation?

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

**Mr. Webster:** Madam Speaker, the investigation is ongoing and we're not clear yet on the response.

We've certainly had great feedback from the young Liberals that I've met saying that maybe it isn't true, maybe it was this, maybe it was that.

We do expect our young people on Prince Edward Island to respect the laws of the land and act accordingly. Before alcohol can be consumed today it's 19 years of age. We think that's what happened.

Thank you.

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

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

The Liberal Party of PEI is hosting a dinner coming up here. Given the recent events hosted by the Liberal Party, they've been plagued with underage drinking, where the Premier and some of these MLAs have been in attendance. There appears that there's a very serious leadership problem here.

Question to the deputy premier: Will you guarantee the House today that liquor inspectors will be present at the Liberal Party dinner next week to ensure that no sanctioned underage drinking takes place?

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

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

**Mr. Webster:** Madam Speaker, I would strongly support respecting the liquor laws in this province as we go forward.

There are inspectors randomly pop into businesses to check IDs maybe and the age of the patrons in that place. We'll follow the rules of the land and go forward based on that.

Thank you.

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

### Treasury Board loans

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

Can the treasurer tell the House which entities Treasury Board may direct the minister to make loans or advances under Section 28(1) of the *Financial Administration Act*?

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, I'm very happy to answer any questions the leader may have.

I don't know all entities that may be mentioned in the *Financial Administration Act*.

Thank you.

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

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

Section 28(1) of the *Financial Administration Act* reads:

The board may direct the minister to make loans or advances from the operating fund to a municipality on Prince Edward Island, a reporting entity, any educational institute on Prince Edward Island, any authority responsible for the funding of sewage water or waste management system on Prince

Edward Island, any person upon the security of first mortgage of real property in the province, and such other entities as the board may determine.

Question to the treasurer: How many loans has Treasury Board approved to these recipients in the last year?

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, Treasury Board sees about 12 applications every week.

I can't speak to the number of loans that have been put forward, but if the Leader of the Opposition has a question on one of them, I'd certainly be willing to answer anything he'd like to ask.

Thanks.

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

### Tabling of Treasury Board report

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

I have a question about all of them, as a matter of fact.

Yesterday we spoke at length about how the treasurer isn't able to follow his own laws here on Prince Edward Island. He has blatantly disregarded them time and time again. The treasurer continues to show no regards for the laws of Prince Edward Island.

Let's review Section 30(1) of the *Financial Administration Act*, and it reads:

The minister shall, within fifteen sitting days after the beginning of each session of the Legislative Assembly, lay before the Legislative Assembly a report of all loans and advances made under Section 28, of any defaults on investments, loans or advances, and payments made under subsection 32(2) which have occurred since the last report.

Question to the treasurer: Why did you not table this report in the fall of 2012?

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

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

Our staff is among the best in the country. I would have no doubt that if there's anything to report that it would be done and put forward to us to table in the Legislature

Our record stands for itself. This administration has followed all laws of the *Financial Administration Act* and we act on them very acutely.

Thank you very much.

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

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

I want to remind this treasurer that he is not, in fact, above the law, and he has to follow the law just like every single one of us does.

Under Section 30(1) of the *Financial Administration Act* the treasurer is required by law to table a report of all loans and advances and any defaults in investment, loan or advances and on payments.

You do have a report. There's a report, because one of these things must have had happened.

The Legislature's currently in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the 64<sup>th</sup> Assembly, which began on November 13, 2012. The treasurer, under law, was required to table this report on December 6, 2012 and he did not, and he still hasn't.

Question to the treasurer: Will you be tabling this report, as required by law today?

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

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

As I mentioned before, this staff has never let us down before. If there was anything to report under a section of the *Financial Administration Act* they would have put it

forward to us. Really, to call into question the professional integrity of the staff of the Treasury Board is in poor taste.

Thank you.

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

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

I'm not questioning the staff's integrity. I'm questioning the finance minister's integrity, because it's him who thinks he's above the law. For two, three days now we've talked about how he's broken legislation on Prince Edward Island. It's time that he stands up and tables this report. What are you hiding? Why can't Islanders have this report which by law you were supposed to table on December 6 last year? Will you table this report today?

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

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

As I have said here in the Legislature, if the staff of Treasury Board sees anything that is due on a report that is laid out in the *Financial Administration Act*, it'll clearly be here and put before the Legislature.

There's no question that this board is above any type of accusations like this.

Thank you very much.

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

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

It's not an accusation. You didn't table it. It's not an accusation, and by law you have to table it. There are no accusations other than you broke the law.

The *Financial Administration Act* is the backbone of the fiscal framework of our province. It's undemocratic the way this treasurer chooses to pick and choose what parts of it he actually follows. Today the treasurer shows that he continues to have no

regard for laws in this province. He does exactly what he pleases.

Section 30(2) of the same act reads:

The minister shall, concurrently with the tabling of the estimates, lay before the Legislative Assembly an estimate of the loans and advances that he anticipates will be made in the fiscal year under consideration.

Question to the treasurer: Why have you failed to table this document with your estimates in the House?

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

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

Again, if the Leader of the Opposition would like to be more clear in what he's asking for we'll be very happy to answer all questions. If he's considering the loan act, the loan act was tabled in the first week of the Legislature. We defend it on the floor of this Legislature when it is due. Of course, that will be coming up in the next few periods of our session. If there's something else that I'm missing here I'd like the hon. leader to bring it forward.

There is no more professional group in our government, after working with them for six years, than our Treasury Board staff. They are incredibly detail oriented. If there was anything inside the *Financial Administration Act* I can assure Islanders that it would be sitting here on the Table of the Legislature.

Thank you very much.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'm not looking for a report of how much money you're going to borrow. That's the one you table is how much money you're going to borrow. What I want to know is the estimation of loans and advances to the parties that I previously mentioned.

By law, you're required to present that to the House. So I assume you will be tabling that today. Is that true, to the treasurer?

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

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

As the Premier said yesterday in this House, the hon. Leader of the Opposition can stand inside the rail and say whatever he would like, to try to give the perception to the community at large –

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'll say it outside the rail, too.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – that would ever say that this administration would not present all facts and figures that are required under the *Financial Administration Act*.

There is no question, the integrity, the professionalism, the dedication of the staff of our Treasury Board would ensure that if there is something that is to be tabled inside this Legislature it would be here and it would be timely.

Thank you very much.

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

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

There are two very serious cases here that the treasurer has failed to follow the laws here in Prince Edward Island again today, so he has a blatant disregard for the people of Prince Edward Island whom he represents, and who he has an important role as the finance minister of the province.

Question to the treasurer: Will the treasurer answer why he feels he is above the laws which he is sworn to uphold?

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

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

Again, if the hon. leader has something that he would like to question here on the floor, we're here to answer any and all –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct) asked you seven questions on it.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – questions and –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Not one answer. Seven questions, not one answer.

**Speaker:** The minister has the floor.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – provide all of the clarity that is needed, Madam Speaker.

**Leader of the Opposition:** He's worse than you. At least you pretend to answer.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, as I have said here a number of times, if there is anything inside the *Financial Administration Act* that needs to come to the floor of the Legislature, this professional staff that works in Treasury Board would ensure that I would be having it in my hand to table it for all to see –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** Order, please!

**Mr. Currie:** Thanks, I appreciate that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** You're welcome.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – to keep this Legislature –

**Mr. Currie:** I try my best.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – and all of Island residents up to date on all finances with regards to the province.

Thank you very much.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

### Literacy

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

The Prince Edward Island Literacy Alliance provides a valuable service to our students across PEI but needs extra help. In fact, the last few years they've helped educate approximately 700 students.

To the deputy premier: Do you agree that literacy is an essential skill for our students?

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

**Mr. Webster:** Madam Speaker, education is a high priority for this government.

We've taken that approach since 2007. That's why we've started Best Start programs, that's why we put kindergarten in schools, that's why we repaired schools, everything from leaks to bad air. It's absolutely a high priority to take our children and have them and allow them to compete with other areas in other parts of the planet. It's absolutely essential that we have that high quality education system so our kids measure up.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

To the deputy premier. It's great to hear that education is such a priority of your government. I'm just wondering about the literacy initiative for the 700 students. To the deputy premier: Is this a priority as well?

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

**Mr. Webster:** Madam Speaker, education is a high priority.

We know our kids, probably 10 years ago, didn't quite compete. We think we need to be out there and improve the education system. That's why we've built four Holland Colleges. That's why we have a trade school now in Summerside. We need to move our children forward in a productive way, highly educated, so they can meet the needs and demands of the world.

Thank you.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

The program I'm referring to is actually a program to help 700 elementary schoolchildren who have difficulty in the area of reading and comprehension, and it's a very valuable program.

Now, this year there has been much confusion around this program and whether or not the summer tutoring program will happen. In fact, when I asked the education minister in the House, he did confirm that government had the \$20,000, their commitment from the past, and he also confirmed that his government was working with the alliance to ensure we'd have a summer program.

My question to the deputy premier: Will there be a summer program for the tutoring program I'm referring to?

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

**Mr. Webster:** Madam Speaker, I would very gladly take that back to the minister of education just to see what the curriculum is and what he plans for this summer.

Certainly, if it's a benefit to our youth, and we can put the program together, and we have the budget to put the program together, then I assume it could probably happen, Madam Speaker, but I will have to get the final answer from the minister of education.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

I'm glad that the deputy premier – it sounds like he's quite supportive, and I know the education minister is. In fact, I know many people in the House, including the member from Charlottetown-Rochford, and myself are very supportive of this program.

In the past the PEI Literacy Alliance, they've put a request in to government through innovation. They needed to hire 23 summer post-secondary education students to help out to deliver this program this year.

My question to the innovation minister: Can you confirm that your department has only approved one position for the 700 students?

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

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

I know that that program is there, and I know that SkillsPEI are looking at all the student programs for the summer. I'm not aware that they've chosen just one, but I will certainly go back to my department and I'll get that information and bring it back to the House.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

To the innovation minister, and actually to government. I think we all agree that this is a priority. Education is the pillar, it's the pillar of economic development, and we need this program now for these students that are struggling.

My question to the innovation minister: When you go back to the department, will you ensure the dollars that are there through SkillsPEI will be available for the post-secondary education tutors?

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

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

I certainly will go back to the department, I'll assure the Member from Morell-Mermaid of that, and that I will find out everything I can and bring that back to the House. I as well strongly support literacy and have for many years. That program is important to the Island. I will do everything available within the guidelines and within what staff have available to ensure that that program continues.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

That is really good news for the students, and also the post-secondary education students that are waiting to hear that government's commitment's there.

If for some reason innovation cannot cover the 22 positions that are required, my question is to the deputy premier: Will you go back – your government is cutting up to 70 teaching positions out of this education system – will you use some of the resources that you're saving to guarantee this program for the 700 students across PEI?

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

**Mr. Webster:** Madam Speaker, I would be glad to take this topic back to the department of education and make an assessment on it at that point in time.

I do want to correct the Member from Morell-Mermaid. In her statement I think she said there were 70 teachers that were going to be moved out of the system. I understand there's 30 through attrition that will be retiring and downsizing that way. We always want to put the correct statement on the floor of the House, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

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

### HST and municipalities

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

Under the HST in other provinces municipalities receive rebates on three-quarters of the tax they pay, but not here on PEI. This treasurer has no problem aligning this province with the Maritime average when it comes to gas hikes and fee increases, but if it means helping an organization he's not interested at all.

Treasurer, why are you burdening Island municipalities as a result of the implementation of your HST?

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

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

This administration –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Sheridan:** This administration will –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** Allow the minister to respond, please.

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

This administration will stand very strong on our record with the administrations of our municipalities from 2007 on. There has not been an administration that has worked more closely with the municipalities of this province, and they would be very clear to make sure that everyone in this province would like to know that.

When we came in to office we fully funded equalization, which meant that these municipalities got an inordinate amount of money as compared to the way they were treated for the previous 11 years. We also eliminated the clawback of the GST that the previous administration had put in place. We also made their payments monthly instead of three times a year.

These three efforts by this administration have made these municipalities very strong. I can't remember the last time that a municipality had to raise their taxes, lay off people, or cease any type of programming inside their municipalities. We have set up a very strong program for their HST reimbursement and, Madam Speaker, they are all very well aware of it.

Thank you very much.

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

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

Currently if municipalities are not increasing their taxes that is because simply they have some compassion for their constituents that live within their municipalities –

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes, yes they do.

**Mr. Aylward:** – unlike this government.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Madam Speaker –

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

**Speaker:** Allow the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock to question.

**Mr. Aylward:** Minister, your scheme to compensate our municipalities with infrastructure funding is cheating our municipalities. The city of Charlottetown, for example, indicates that it will come up about \$400,000 short as a result of your HST. You were cutting them funding last year by 5%.

Minister, you know that our municipalities are not happy with your convoluted scheme. Will you commit today to listening to our municipalities and to treating them similar to other provinces and give them rebates on their HST taxes?

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

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

Very much like every other program that we have with our municipalities, we consult with them fully. We have worked with them on the new municipal act. We've worked with them with the new revenue sharing act. This is unheard of in Canada, the first time in history that a municipality has had any say in what their own municipal act says.

**Leader of the Opposition:** You and your guys didn't make them happy, you said that, you said you wouldn't make them happy.

**Mr. Sheridan:** For two and a half years we've consulted to bring it forward. For two and a half years, Madam Speaker, we have dealt with the municipalities on these two very key pieces of work that will help them perform into the future.

With regard to HST, they will be compensated at least to the level of what the other Maritime Provinces have.

Thank you very much.

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

### **Municipalities and infrastructure funding**

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

This treasurer talks about negotiation, consultation, but when it comes down to it all he does is sends out letters and says: Take it or leave it, take the highway if you don't like it.

Minister, you reduced infrastructure funding by \$5 million and are offering municipalities \$1.8 million to be shared amongst them. Minister, basically you said that they can take it or leave it. Is that what you call negotiation?

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

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

The finance critic has trouble with numbers in totality –

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** – but when we look at –

**Leader of the Opposition:** You're one to talk. (Indistinct) balanced budget (Indistinct).

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, when we take a look at what infrastructure dollars have gone to municipalities over the past five years, it eclipses any numbers –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Get him a calculator, get him a calculator.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – that occurred -

**Speaker:** Order, please!

**Mr. Sheridan:** – that occurred over the past 10 years, doubling the amount of infrastructure money that has gone out to them.

When we talk about –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Ten million dollars a week from the federal government you get.

**Ms. Sherry:** Wow. Wow.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, when we look at the record for the way that we have flowed money to the municipalities, we're looking at increases from 2008 –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct) to answer that question (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** Hon. members, let the minister respond, please.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, when you look at the increases that have taken place since 2008 when we changed the entire structure in which the municipalities received their cash, through infrastructure, through all of the program changes that I just listed off in the first question at this point, the increases are two-fold to these municipalities.

They are very well treated, Madam Speaker, and the way that we are reimbursing the harmonization monies to these municipalities is very good.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Madam Speaker, this minister questions my knowledge of numbers.

I question his knowledge of responsibility. Yes, it's true, municipalities did get a lot of infrastructure money over the last five years, and that is thanks to the federal government and their infrastructure program. It's the federal government that sent this money to Prince Edward Island, not this treasurer.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Ten million dollars a week.

**Mr. Aylward:** Madam Speaker, this treasurer told the House that under his formula that he worked out that it comes to 60% of the HST that is paid out.

He said it is consistent with other provinces. But, the truth is that this is another one of Wes's fables.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay, Madam Speaker, let me rephrase that.

**Speaker:** No. Please retract it.

**Mr. Aylward:** I'll retract that.

**Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Aylward:** That this is just another one of his untrue statements.

Minister, you are about 15% short. Why are you putting Island municipalities at a disadvantage –

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, I'd ask you to also apologize.

**Mr. Sheridan:** – compared to other provinces?

**Speaker:** Order, please!

“Untrue statements” is unparliamentary.

Please rise and apologize, please.

**Mr. Aylward:** Madam Speaker, I retract that statement.

**Speaker:** Thank you.

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

**Speaker:** And apologize to the House, please.

**Mr. Aylward:** And I apologize for stating that this minister is making untrue statements.

**Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Aylward:** Minister, please answer the question.

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, this hon. member has trouble bringing forward questions at the best of times, and at this point I don't think there is a question, but I can point out very clearly that 60% of the harmonization impact is being put back into their coffers 100%.

If they would take the time to go out and ensure what they're talking about is the real scenario they would (Indistinct) –

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** But with this, Madam Speaker, when –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct) what are we saying there?

**An Hon. Member:** Excuse me?

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, so with this the municipalities are not going to be impacted by the implementation of a harmonized sales tax.

They have a very good program put in place, and I am very pleased to continue to work with these municipalities.

Thank you very much.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

### **Shipbuilding contract update**

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

I've noticed in the news this morning that the shipbuilding contracts are starting to be issued by the federal government for the national ship building project. I know that there's an industrial regional benefit package that ensures that provinces in the region benefit from these big contracts, as with the fixed link. When the fixed link was built a lot of the contracts were on Prince Edward Island but a lot of the contracts were also off Prince Edward Island. In fact, seven piers were built in New Brunswick of the 14 or 15 piers that are out there.

My question is to the minister of innovation: Can you give us an update on our Island companies, and are we going to receive

some of these contracts from this shipbuilding contract?

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

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

Since the outset of the announcement of these contracts my department has been working closely with the Irving shipbuilding team in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Premier himself has had direct contact with Jim Irving from Irvings to ensure that our Island businesses and our Island companies were going to be able to participate.

Last spring, a year ago, our department had three sessions that went across Prince Edward Island, and all potential businesses that could obtain contracts were invited to those sessions. What took place at those sessions was that there were several topics that were discussed with our companies to ensure that they were going to be able to compete on a level playing field with the companies from around the Maritimes and certainly across Canada.

One of them was the importance of quality programs and what those businesses need to prepare and implement. The second was the quality sessions from a qualified person from Bombardier to make sure that could happen. Last was they outlined the programs and processes that those companies needed to get involved with those contracts.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** A supplementary question, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

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

The IRB, Industrial Regional Benefits package, is a responsibility of ACOA, the Atlantic Canadian Opportunities Agency. They're to ensure that all provinces receive a fair benefit in this.

Minister, will you ensure that ACOA, will you keep on top of ACOA – because I don't think they did their job on the C-17 contracts – but will you ensure that ACOA makes sure that our Island contractors get their fair share of these contracts?

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

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

Since the time that we had those sessions I have been informed that in excess of 50 Prince Edward Island companies are on the list with Irving so that they can ensure that they will have access to those contracts.

As a matter of fact, on May 15<sup>th</sup>, my department is again going to a suppliers meeting to ensure that the interests of our Island companies are at the forefront.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

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

Before I get into my question I would like to welcome in the gallery one of Charlottetown's most famous citizens, Sibyl Cutcliffe and her husband and her grandson have joined us. I'd like to welcome them to the proceedings.

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

#### **Seniors' subsidized housing wait list**

**Ms. Casey:** Madam Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Community Services and Seniors.

Minister, I represent a large number of seniors in Charlottetown. Could you update the House as to how many seniors are on a wait list for subsidized housing in Charlottetown?

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

**Ms. Docherty:** Madam Speaker, we've had a lot of discussion about affordable housing in this Legislature and, in particular, on seniors.

We've had lots of discussions about the needs of seniors. Currently we have 725 seniors on a wait list across the province, of which 52% of that, or 378, are looking for senior housing in the Charlottetown area.

**Speaker:** Supplementary question, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

**Ms. Casey:** Minister, due to the large number, 378 on the waiting list in Charlottetown, is your department planning any new units for Charlottetown?

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

**Ms. Docherty:** Madam Speaker, during my estimates I believe I was asked by the opposition a very similar question.

At that time I indicated that in our current fiscal year we are doing rent supplements in the area as opposed to actually building any units. However, we were very pleased to hear in the federal government's budget announcement that they will be continuing with their affordable housing agreement. We don't have all of the criteria yet on the use of those funds, but for the current year I can state that there will be no new buildings. But the affordable housing supplements that we're going to be using at this point in time will not be intended for seniors.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** A second supplementary, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

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

Minister, last session we spoke about the application and screening process for seniors who apply for housing. Could you update the House as to the progress on the revision of the screening and application process?

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

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

The process in which we analyze, or sorry, evaluate a senior's need has always felt to me to be a little bit subjective. I believe when I responded to the hon. member's question last year I did indicate that we needed to look at it in order that seniors can have a better understanding and a comfort level with the whole process.

To answer her question about the update, we have been a paper-based system and we are

now in the process of computerizing it through our ISM or Integrated System Management program. In the course of doing that we are revising the application itself.

There is 75%, I guess you could say, of the evaluation, is fairly straightforward because it's based on assets, income, costs. But in regards to what the hon. member has asked, we are making progress and we hope before the year is over that we will actually have everything in place.

Thank you very much.

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

### HST and municipalities (further)

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

Prince Edward Islanders didn't quite know what they got themselves into when they elected this government, but unfortunately they are quickly finding out.

To the treasurer. Minister, you indicated in the Legislature yesterday that there is a cap on your formula. Why, minister, are you downloading the cause of your HST on to our Island municipalities?

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

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

My pleasure to stand and answer any questions in the House with regard to municipalities or anything else that we would have with regard to how cash flows.

But I'm befuddled to try to figure out why this hon. member would stand in the House, who represents all taxpayers, to talk about a few municipalities. My role is to ensure that all taxpayers are treated fairly and equitably, not just those that are represented by municipalities that occupy 10% of our population.

What we're here for as a government, representing every corner of this province, is to ensure that we treat every taxpayer fairly

and equally and that's exactly what we have done. Do we have a great rapport with the municipalities and are they treated fairly and equitably? We sure have. Madam Speaker, we have a great track record with these municipalities and will continue to work well with them in the future.

Thank you.

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

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

As the official opposition finance critic, I can assure you that I am representing all Islanders, and municipalities are part of the Island the last time I checked. If the minister had that much concern for municipalities and looking out for the best interests you think he would have at least had the decency to show up at their AGM this past Monday.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** To the minister. Minister, if a municipality purchased an essential service such as a new fire truck, will the HST be rebated back to the municipality or will it be included as part of that municipality's cap?

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

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

The municipalities are being very well taken care of with regard to harmonized sales tax implementation. Just as we have done with every other sector of this province as we came forward. Harmonization of sales tax on Prince Edward Island is going to be an incredible growth time for this period. This is exactly what we needed to level the playing field for all provinces.

When you bring forward a consumption tax like harmonizing of the sales tax, it's important to protect a few individuals and a few different entities. That's what we've done. We've spent much time looking through all jurisdictions to ensure that we were being fair and equitable to all.

So to those low- and modest-income Islanders we have put the three pillars in place to ensure that they were going to be in good shape. With municipalities we have put in place a program that will very much replace their needed funds.

Thank you very much.

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

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

I'd just like to remind this minister, if he was truly being fair to all Islanders with the implementation of this HST, he would have also exempted electricity, which all Islanders know that he did not.

Minister, as the days go by Islanders are beginning to realize how big of a tax grab this HST really is, and that was confirmed by your own Premier. You know this is going to hurt Island municipalities and I'm sure that is why you refused to go to the meeting and sent the minister of fisheries instead.

Minister, our Island municipalities deserve real discussion, not your heavy-handed my way or the highway approach. Will you commit today to sitting down with the municipalities and renegotiating this agreement?

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

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

Just to clarify the record for all Islanders and

–

**Leader of the Opposition:** It's not your job to make them happy, we heard it already.

**Ms. Sherry:** Wow.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Just to clarify the record –

**Leader of the Opposition:** You said it twice.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Just to clarify the record, Madam Speaker –

**Leader of the Opposition:** It's in Hansard.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, to clarify the record here for this House and for all Islanders, for the meeting on Monday, for some –

**Leader of the Opposition:** (Indistinct) get you a copy of the Hansard.

**Speaker:** Order, please!

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, I was in Ottawa talking to the Canadian Labour Congress with regard to the Canada Pension Plan on Monday.

All of the participants knew exactly where I was because I made personal phone calls to them to ensure they knew where my allegiance lies with regard to municipalities.

We have worked very closely. I've had this part of the portfolio for over four years and I'm very proud of the rapport that we have with them. We have treated this very fairly from the time that you took care of them and the time that I assumed that part of the portfolio. With it all, they've been treated fairly and equitably through it all.

With the harmonization of the sales tax we want to ensure the municipalities were treated in a fair and equitable manner. They have been and they will have a program in place, and they will recoup the dollars that is fair and equitable to them.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** Final question, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

### Education investment

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

Minister, you Premier has told Islanders over and over again that the key to a bright future for PEI is through investing in education. Minister, your cutbacks, your HST, your increases in taxes and fees, are hurting our education system and will mean higher tuition fees for Island students.

Is this how your government invests in education?

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

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

The goal of this administration is to be clear and transparent and to be fair and equitable to all. That's why we table all reports that are asked for out of the *Financial Administration Act*.

The ones that the hon. Leader of the Opposition asked for, that were tabled in the fall, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November of 2012, and again in this sitting on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013, stating all forms of the *Financial Administration Act* that the hon. leader was speaking about earlier.

Every question that he had were all sitting here, Madam Speaker –

**Leader of the Opposition:** You couldn't answer the question (Indistinct). You couldn't answer (Indistinct).

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

**Speaker:** Order, please!

Allow the minister to respond, please.

**Mr. Sheridan:** This talks to the clarity, transparency of this administration, and all –

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Oh, you're transparent. You're transparent.

**Mr. Sheridan:** As I said, Madam Speaker, the professional integrity of all inside this administration, whether elected or those professionals inside our bureaucracy, speaks volumes in the way that we do business.

All of it is here with regard to the harmonization of sales tax. What it's going to mean is a win-win-win out into the future. Will provide a great growing opportunity for all here on Prince Edward Island, most importantly our students.

Thank you very much.

**Speaker:** End of Question Period.

Statements by Ministers

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

**Funding Announcement**

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

I will be excusing myself from today's House session early to attend an exciting announcement regarding funding for a company in rural western Prince Edward Island.

The company that we will be assisting with funding has demonstrated a successful business model to employ people in rural Prince Edward Island providing year-round skill building positions.

Today's announcement is a great example of matching labour programs with business needs to further accelerate job growth.

I welcome all members of the House to join myself, Mr. Mike Gillis, director of ITAP and the CEO of IO Solutions, Elie Chebli, at the Bloomfield Business Park for today's announcement at 1:30 p.m.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

**National Mental Health Week**

**Mr. Currie:** Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize National Mental Health Week which is May 6-12 of this year.

Mental health is an important component of an individual's overall health. Like eating right and exercising, it requires a bit of personal effort every day. We all face stresses and demands in our day to day lives, but it's how we cope with them that is important.

The province understands that some issues require more serious methods. Together with Health PEI we've created an Integrated Mental Health and Addictions structure that incorporates acute care with community mental health and addictions to allow a

seamless continuum of care for patients, clients and their families.

Improving access to mental health and addiction services is one of the government's major health priorities, as demonstrated in the most recent Speech From the Throne.

This past November we commissioned a comprehensive view of our province's mental health and addictions services. The findings of that report will be used to improve access to timely, coordinated government and community-based services.

As well, we have placed an importance on strengthening the mental health of Islanders by making it a key pillar of our provincial wellness strategy.

We look forward to the release of both these reports in the near future.

Government is not alone in our work to improve mental health education, programming and awareness. We rely on local associations to help highlight the importance of these issues.

Today in the gallery I'm honoured to have Reid Burke and his staff from across the province with us today, and thank them for their commitment and the work they do every day in communities across Prince Edward Island.

The Canadian Mental Health Association has been a vocal ambassador for programming and services related to mental health. We thank them for being with us today and for their work with individuals and families who are facing these health issues across our province. The work is certainly important and extremely valued.

On behalf of everyone in the Legislative Assembly, we'd like to thank you for your dedication and commitment for that.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** Responding to the minister's statement, the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

First, to the minister, it's really positive the work that government has started to do in the area of addictions and mental health. The long-term strategy, it was a much needed review. We look forward to the release of the report and also the implementations.

Also to the Canadian Mental Health Association Prince Edward Island division that's here with us today, the work that they do is really valuable as well. Often on the floor of this House we've tried to put attention on the needs of youth, especially adolescent youth, also the needs of people in our community. Sometimes we forget that when first responders, like fire departments, are at accidents, when people in the police force have to deal with tragedy on a daily basis, how that can impact on peoples' mental health.

The work is invaluable. It's great to have Reid Burke and his staff here in the gallery today. We look forward to help bring awareness during Mental Health Week.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General.

### **It's Your Job Video Contest Winners**

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

Before I start my statement, I would, too, like to rise and welcome all of my former colleagues from Canadian Mental Health Association. I would be remiss if I didn't stand here and recognize them. I know that they are extremely dedicated to the cause of mental health. I know it's a very busy time for all of you with Mental Health Week approaching. Just to let you know that a part of my heart remains with all of you and I know that the work that you do is very valuable, and probably even more so now than I did when I was working in it. It's great to see you all here.

Also, before I start my statement, I would also like to recognize Clare Waddell and Barbara Groome Wynne from the Workers Compensation Board who are joining us in the public gallery this morning.

Madam Speaker, for many young Islanders the high school years are a young person's first experience with paid work.

Part-time jobs and summer work give many teens their first experience with the responsibilities and rewards of the workplace.

They are also the perfect place for young people to develop great attitudes about working responsibility and working safely.

This year my department and the Workers Compensation Board took part in the national It's Your Job video contest which encourages young people to think about workplace issues by preparing short videos on the topic of workplace safety and workers' rights.

This contest drew entrants from across Prince Edward Island. But the video that most impressed our judges was one prepared by two students at Colonel Gray High School. Dane Cutcliffe and Alexander MacKay put together a video that shows a number of their friends talking about safety and observing proper safety procedures in their workplaces.

I understand, and I do see Dane Cutcliffe and his grandparents Sybil and Jack Cutcliffe. They've been able to join us here today. I would like to personally, and have you join me, in congratulating him on the work he and Alexander put together.

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

**Ms. Sherry:** The video, which can be found on YouTube under the title Youth Workplace Safety: It's Your Responsibility, is both informative and very well done. I'd encourage everyone to have a look at it.

The next step for these two videographers is the It's Your Job National Fan Favourite contest, which happens next week during North American Occupational Safety and Health week.

All Islanders can help Dane and Alex spread their important safety message by signing into YouTube under the It's Your Job contest site and liking their video. Voting for the contest runs from May 5 to May 12. To do so, sign in to YouTube on the It's Your

Job contest page and like the Prince Edward Island video Youth Workplace Safety: It's Your Responsibility.

I want to congratulate Dane and Alexander, and to thank all the young Islanders who took the time to express themselves and to think about the importance of worker safety and workplace rights.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** Thank you, minister.

Responding to the statement, the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

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

I'd like to congratulate Dane and Alexander, too, for their great video and for the youth workplace safety.

We talked in the House about occupational health and safety on the job sites. It's a great way to start – at our youth. If we educate our youth on job safety it'll continue on into the future for them.

It's great to see our youth working. It does give them great skills. It gives them great patience. It allows them to pick up the skills that they need when they are done of their education and get into the workforce, Madam Speaker.

Again, I'd like to thank Alex and Dane for their great work.

Thank you.

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

### Love Our Lobster

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

I'm pleased to report to the House that my department is launching its annual Love our Lobster campaign today. May and June have been declared Love Our Lobster months.

Love Our Lobster will celebrate the high quality of Prince Edward Island lobsters, which are the best in the world. The campaign encourages Islanders to buy

lobster and support those working in the lobster fishery. Also support the processors, retailers, sellers and other sectors of the industry.

We are working with Island radio stations Ocean 100 and Hot 105.5 and 21 retailers who are running contests and promotions for May and June. The grand prize includes 50 pounds of lobster to be served at a dinner for 20 people catered by the Culinary Institute of Canada. There will be numerous other prizes as well.

Participating retailers will each draw for a feed of lobster to be given away during the last week of June. We want to make lobster an important part of all our celebrations with family and friends.

By the way, I have purchased 20 pounds of lobsters for celebrating with my daughter-in-law and my son and their family this Sunday. I'm getting them local from – one of the MLAs is cooking them for me. He's getting them from the fishers.

The lobster fishery is a key contributor to our economy and is the economic driver in many rural communities.

Last year more than 27 million pounds of lobster were landed with a spin-off value of more than \$250 million dollars to the economy of Prince Edward Island.

The Love Our Lobster campaign reflects the government's commitment to a strong lobster fishery, today and into the future. I encourage Islanders to buy lobster during the season and support our local industries. It's great to work together for the benefit of the industry and all of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** Thank you, minister.

Responding to the statement, the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

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

As I was driving in this morning I did hear about the Love Our Lobster on the radio. Our fishers, they've got some challenges ahead of them with the high fuel costs and high bait costs and the low price in fish.

I do encourage everybody to Love Our Lobster and eat as much lobster as you can so these fishers can sell their fish and keep our economy strong on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

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

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

Madam Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table the Province of Nova Scotia's sustainable procurement policy that I spoke about during the budget estimates – it has the Nova Scotia preference outlined – and I move, seconded by the Honourable Opposition House Leader, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, by Command of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, I beg leave to table for a second time documents associated with the *Financial Administration Act* requirements for the fall sitting 2012 and the spring sitting 2013 covering credit accommodation, loans and advances, reports on defaults, investments, loans and advances – very much what the opposition leader was looking for earlier, they were on time, and, of course, with the professional integrity of my staff – and I move, seconded by the Honourable hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and Deputy Premier, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table for a second time.

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

Any further documents?

Reports by Committees

Introduction of Government Bills

Government Motions

Orders of the Day (Government)

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the 15<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** We'll go back, hon. minister.

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

We are going to move to order of the day No. 25, first.

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

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** (Indistinct) income tax act.

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct). Twenty-four.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Twenty-four?

**Clerk:** Order No. 24, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, Bill No. 47, ordered for second reading.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Sorry for that confusion, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, Bill No. 47, read a second time.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Sherwood to Chair the Committee of the Whole.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** (Indistinct) a summary?

**Chair:** A summary?

**Mr. Sheridan:** Great. I have Nigel Burns here with me, the director of economics in our department, and I'd like to bring on the floor with us in case of any questions.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Mr. Burns.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Just while we're waiting for Mr. Burns to join us here on the floor, Mr. Chair, I –

**Chair:** You can begin your overall –

**Mr. Sheridan:** Okay.

What this is, this change to the amendments on the *Income Tax Act*, is to allow us to move forward with the increase on the small business taxes which was put forward in the budget. As well, when you do that we want to ensure that the integrity of the system is kept intact, so there's a change to the

dividend tax credit on the personal side that will also see that increase so that that impact is not double-taxed. In other words, so that the higher corporate tax rate would also allow for the higher dividend tax credit. The third piece of this is just the harmony and integration of the federal and provincial personal and corporate tax rates so when – this is just a small housekeeping item, just changing of words that the federal government has already made to these taxes and both our personal and corporate tax rates, rules, refunds, and benefits. We just start changing our wording to reflect those changes federally.

**Chair:** Any questions, hon. members?

No questions.  
Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Sheridan:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Sheridan:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and that the Chair report the bill agreed to without amendment.

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Just clarifying, just to ensure that we don't do the same again. Thank you very much.

I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the 15<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Mr. Sheridan:** We're going to make it the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you very much.

**Speaker:** Thank you, minister.

**Clerk:** Order No. 14, *An Act to Amend the Emergency 911 Act*, Bill No. 36, in committee.

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

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

I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point to chair the Committee of the Whole.

**Chair (Casey):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Emergency 911 Act*.

Hon. members, we've read to section 1 but nothing has carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** Permission to bring on my staff, Aaron Campbell.

**Chair:** Could you state your name and position for the Hansard?

**Aaron Campbell Director:** Aaron Campbell, Manager of Office of Public Safety.

**Chair:** Thank you.

All right, members, we've read to the end of section 1, and that section hasn't been carried.

**Some Hon. Members:** Carried.

**Chair:** Would you like to carry that section before we continue on?

Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, you had some comments?

**Mr. Perry:** Sure. I have a question here for the minister.

Section 3, it talks about replacing some provisions in respect to naming private roadways and assigning civic addresses, but explain the civic addresses part and the enforcement of that. Can you tell us a little more about that? How this bill will change? Does that mean that people who don't have their civic addresses displayed properly, that they will be asked to do so, given a warning, and then if they don't follow through there'll be a penalty?

**Ms. Sherry:** Yes, there will be, and I didn't bring my fee list with me. Do you have it?

Yes, they do, they will be given a warning, that they need to make sure that their sign is displayed and if they don't follow through with that then they will be fined.

**Mr. Perry:** Now again, if they're not properly displayed – they could be displayed but not properly displayed – there is a warning given prior to any charges?

**Ms. Sherry:** Yeah. There would be an order by the minister to ensure that it's fixed, and if it wasn't followed through on then there would be a fine.

**Mr. Perry:** Is there anything existing now where your department would go and ask people to display or to change the location of the signs?

**Ms. Sherry:** Hon. member, this is probably something that goes on on a continuous basis. Maybe signs get knocked down or they haven't been erected in the proper way, or they're not visible, trees grow over them. I think that, from a public safety perspective, the staff would be watching this at all times to ensure that they're visible.

**Mr. Perry:** This is just tightening it up, is it?

**Ms. Sherry:** It's basically just doing exactly that.

**Mr. Perry:** Okay.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

**Ms. Crane:** Just one.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

**Ms. Crane:** Perhaps Aaron would like to tell us, in this amendment, what makes it different than the original bill?

**Aaron Campbell Director:** Thank you.

This amendment provides an opportunity for instances where civic addresses are not properly displayed or easily identified by emergency responders who are contacting our office to inform us of such case. It provides an opportunity to issue a formal order to the property owner with information on how to display the sign, provide an opportunity for a period of compliance, where necessary, assistance in posting of the appropriate signs, and in the case where non-compliance occurs, the availability under summary offence for peace officers to issue summary offence tickets in those matters.

**Ms. Crane:** Okay. Thank you.

I have no further questions.

**Chair:** Thank you.

The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** What about pocket dialing? Recently we heard about pocket dialing, and starting to maybe tighten up on those also, so what does this –

**Ms. Sherry:** Do you want to know about the fees?

**Mr. Perry:** I want to know a little bit about the proposed structure of 911 pocket dialing.

**Ms. Sherry:** Basically, you as an individual cannot pre-program 911 into your phone. Moving forward, if that happens and it's proven that, you would be fined for that activity.

**Mr. Perry:** What responsibility now will the phone companies have with this to prevent this?

**Ms. Sherry:** Basically anybody who sells phones, for example. It is no longer acceptable for a company to sell a phone that has a preprogrammed 911 number in it. It would be up to the person who was selling to ensure that –

**Mr. Perry:** Feature is not (Indistinct).

**Ms. Sherry:** That's right.

**Mr. Perry:** What about alarm systems? Like a lot of the alarm systems that are installed, whether it's in a business or a personal residence, sometimes they have already wired in it 911, you know, so if their smoke detector goes off.

**Ms. Sherry:** Basically that will not any longer be acceptable. If I have a security system in from my home through a company and I have an emergency or my alarm goes off, the company that I have that service with needs to make the first response and then they will determine whether it will be 911 that will be called, whether it was ambulance, fire or any other emergency service, police for example.

**Mr. Perry:** So if by chance one of these alarms that's automatically programmed in, then who would be charged, the individual or the business that sold them the system?

**Ms. Sherry:** In the case of the 911 ringing in, the company who provides the service has to phone the first responder, not as a 911 call but a seven digit call.

**Mr. Perry:** But there are some systems that I'm aware of that this system automatically dials 911.

**Ms. Sherry:** Basically anybody who's in that circumstance, at the present time they'll have to rectify that.

**Mr. Perry:** It's their own responsibility for (Indistinct). Okay.

**Ms. Sherry:** That's right.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Emergency 911 Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to without amendment.

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

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having had under consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Emergency 911 Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same without amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the 20<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 20, *An Act to Amend the Judicature Act (No. 2)*, Bill No. 46, ordered for second reading.

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

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Judicature Act (No. 2)*, Bill No. 46, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale to chair the Committee of the Whole House.

**Chair (Dumville):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Judicature Act (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

Could the minister have permission to bring her aid to the table?

**Ms. Crane:** Chair, she doesn't need permission. (Indistinct) change.

**Ms. Sherry:** It's just to clarify – it was the one that we had brought forward earlier and it's just to provide more clarity, it's very clear.

**Chair:** Shall the bill carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Judicature Act (No. 2).*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *Act to Amend the Judicature Act (No. 2)*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same without amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the 22<sup>nd</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 22, *An Act to Amend the Public Trustee Act*, Bill No. 48, ordered for second reading.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment,

Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Public Trustee Act*, Bill No. 48, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from Tracadie-Hillsborough Park to chair the Committee of the Whole House

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

**Ms. Crane:** (Indistinct). One quick question, though. In the case of property, if the person that's under the public trustee dies, why did you chose the five-year period if nobody claims the property? Then it becomes part of government basically. Wouldn't it make more sense that it was seven years?

**Chair:** Minister, do you want to bring on your assistant?

**Ms. Sherry:** I will bring on Mark Gallant, my director.

**Chair:** Permission to bring on Mark Gallant?

**Some Hon. Members:** Granted.

**Chair:** Granted.

**Ms. Crane:** It's just in your explanation notes on section 7 there. I'm just curious

why you chose five years and not seven. Most people, to keep it consistent with their income tax and other kinds of things, are given that window of seven years. What made you choose five?

**Mark Gallant Public Trustee:** We chose five years – five years was the number that was used in the old provision, so we just carried over the five years on that basis.

**Ms. Crane:** The only other question I have is in section 1 of the act where you're speaking about out-of-province physicians. How often would that happen?

**Mark Gallant Public Trustee:** It happens on occasion where there is a trauma incident, as an example where someone is flown to Halifax and they're not capable of making decisions on their own because of their medical condition. What you run into is you have a situation where you have doctors who are quite capable of making a finding of incapacity, but they're not physicians within the province of PEI.

As a result, they're not able to – or they can fill out certificates, but the court has difficulty in accepting the certificates based on the language as it presently exists in the legislation.

**Ms. Crane:** I'm fine, then, I can pass the bill unless anybody else has any questions.

**Chair:** Thank you, hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Any further questions?

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Public Trustee Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** Mister Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to without amendment.

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the 23<sup>rd</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 23, *An Act to Repeal the Lightning Rod Act*, Bill No. 45, ordered for second reading.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Repeal the Lightning Rod Act*, Bill No. 45, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment,

Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

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

**Mr. Brown:** Yes. This is quite a shock.

**Chair:** 1. The *Lightning Rod Act* R.S. P.E.I. 1988, Cap. L-12, is repealed.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I have an amendment to the bill.

I move that Bill 45 be amended by the addition of the following after Section (1):

This act come into force on a date that may be fixed by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor in council.

**Chair:** Any discussion on the amendment?

**An Hon. Member:** No.

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

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Repeal the Lightning Rod Act*.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to with amendment.

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

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to Repeal the Lightning Rod Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same with amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the 26<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 26, *An Act to Amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act*, Bill No. 29, ordered for second reading.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act*, Bill No. 29, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and Attorney General, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

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

**Chair (Mitchell):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

**Leader of the Opposition:** I have a question.

**Chair:** A general overview and then maybe some questions? Minister, you –

**Ms. Sherry:** Basically, what we're doing is expanding the time limit for commencing a prosecution for a violation under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* from six months to two years, so it's an 18 month – and basically we're doing that because sometimes there could be complex testing or things of that nature that need to be done, and six months may not be ample time.

We wanted to allow all kinds of time to be able to do the necessary testing to ensure, again, that we can follow through.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Chair:** (Indistinct) opposition –

**Leader of the Opposition:** No, that's good.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira, question?

**Mr. LaVie:** From six months to two years, why such a difference, like?

**Ms. Sherry:** That's sort of an easy and complex response all at the same time.

Basically, sometimes there has to be very detailed testing. There may have to be samples sent away for extreme long-term

testing and it's not enough time, it's very specialized work and we want to –

**Mr. LaVie:** No, I understand that. I understand that –

**Ms. Sherry:** – and we want to ensure that –

**Mr. LaVie:** From six months to two years, like, it's quite a difference.

**Ms. Sherry:** Yeah, yeah.

**Mr. LaVie:** Would a year not be enough?

**Ms. Sherry:** It depends.

Again, it goes back to making sure that we have ample time to ensure anything that may need to be done to bring somebody who perhaps is not acting in the best interest of their workers. We want to have ample time to be able to get all of the information and evidence, for the lack of a better word, to come forward.

I mean, it is a long period of time, but you'd be amazed sometimes at the length of time some of this very intricate sample testing has to be done.

**Mr. LaVie:** Oh, no.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock with a question.

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

I think it's a great move, first of all, thank you. I'm curious if you have any stats that relate to how many offences may have gone under the wire by it only being six months for however long it was?

**Ms. Sherry:** I certainly don't have any stats with me right here, but I could ask permission to bring Bill Reid on, who's occupational health. He might be able to answer some more detailed (Indistinct).

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay, permission to bring on Mr. Reid?

**Ms. Sherry:** Permission to bring Mr. Reid on the floor?

**Chair:** Mr. Reid?

**Mr. Aylward:** (Indistinct).

**Chair:** I believe I'm supposed to have you say your name for the Hansard.

**Bill Reid Director:** My name is Bill Reid.

**Chair:** Question from the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

**Mr. Aylward:** Yeah, I guess, thank you, Chair.

Mr. Reid, again, I repeat that I think it's a very good tactical move that we're extending the period that you can investigate and get evidence on a possible infraction.

I'm just wondering. Have there been a lot of incidences or recorded incidences that have gone under the wire because we only had that six-month window before?

**Bill Reid Director:** There's been one incident in the past couple of years where we actually didn't find out about a potential offence. There hasn't been charges, but by the time we found out several months had passed already. When we started our investigation we basically ran out of time to complete the investigation, so there was only one time that – there has been another, you know complex cases where we had to get manufacturers involved, we had to get expert witnesses around, and we were just pushing on the time limit of six months.

Presently six other jurisdictions in Canada have the two-year, including our neighbours in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and there's four others that have the one-year, and a couple of them are looking at going to two years now just because of the complexity of some of the cases.

**Mr. Aylward:** That was going to be my next question, if there was one specific case, and I don't want to talk about the case, whatever it may be, because I know we can't. But I applaud you for this, thank you.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

**An Hon. Member:** No.

**Chair:** Shall the bill carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Ms. Sherry:** Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to without amendment.

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

**Mr. Sheridan:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 6<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 6, *An Act to Amend the Ambulance Services Act*, Bill No. 33, ordered for second reading.

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

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Ambulance Services Act*, Bill No. 33, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors to chair the Committee of the Whole.

**Chair (Greenan):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Ambulance Services Act*.

**Mr. Currie:** May I ask for permission to bring someone on?

**Chair:** Yes, hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

**Mr. Currie:** I'd like to ask permission to bring on Nicola Hewitt, our legislative specialist from the Department of Health and Wellness.

**Chair:** Permission to –

**Some Hon. Members:** Sure.

**Chair:** Please join us, Nicola.

**Mr. Currie:** I'll give you a – if I could start while Nicola's getting – yeah, she's here.

**Chair:** She didn't hear us.

Nicola? Would you join us, please?

**Mr. Currie:** While she's getting organized coming – this – *An Act to Amend the Ambulance Services Act* – the amendment corrects oversights in the unproclaimed ambulance act.

The amendment adds a provision requiring an operator to provide a copy of a patient call report on request to a person or body responsible for regulating emergency medical technicians or conducting an investigation or hearing of a disciplinary matter, if the operator has the patient call report.

The amendment also makes consequential amendments on the coming into force of the *Emergency Medical Technicians Act*.

**Chair:** Any questions?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** The reporting part of this – can you explain the provision requiring an operator to provide a copy of the patient report with no request – what we're trying to accomplish there?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Currently, under the *Public Health Act*, there are provisions. Public health is in part one, part two deals with ambulances and EMTs, and right now that's all governed by the Emergency Medical Services Board, okay?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Right.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** So if something happens during an ambulance trip, there's a – every ambulance trip has a patient call report, and if there is an event that happens then this board sees this document, okay? For example, if there's negligence or oversight on behalf of an EMT, then the board knows what's gone on.

Right now that board regulates the practice of EMT medicine. But with the new *Public Health Act*, the new ambulance act and the new EMT act, that board that regulates the practice of emergency medical technicians is no longer tied in any way to the provision of ambulance services. Okay? So if there is a discipline issue that comes before the EMT – that the regulator for the EMTs, the only way to get access to what actually happened in the ambulance is for them to request a copy of the report. That's all it's doing. It's just providing the regulator with information.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So is this just a paper report?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Yes, it is.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So there's not going to be any tracking of these incidents?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Well, I mean, there's always – whenever there's a patient report under the new legislation, the minister has a copy of the patient call report – well, Health PEI has a copy of it and so does the operator. But the regulator of the EMTs is a stand-alone body that isn't automatically entitled to a report. If there is a disciplinary action of an EMT or investigation, then under this amendment they can request a copy of the report.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. But, if there's an incident that happens with a patient in an ambulance, that person is under your care, right?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Under whose care?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yours, Health PEI's.

**Mr. Currie:** Island EMS.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Under Island EMS.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So, they're not – so when do they become a part of your –

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** When they drop them off at the door.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So you're not responsible for them when they're in the ambulance?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** I'm not – I guess I'm not sure what you mean about responsible for them.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Well, are you responsible for them? I mean, I can't get any clearer than responsible.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Island EMS is contracted to provide emergency health care.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I understand that.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** They hire emergency medical technicians to provide that –

**Leader of the Opposition:** And I also understand that.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Okay. Once they come to the hospital door, then care of them turns over to us.

**Leader of the Opposition:** They're not your responsibility prior to being dropped off at the door?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** They're not in our care. I mean, we're responsible – overall, the minister is responsible for the provision of ambulance services on the Island, yes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes, okay, thank you.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Okay, sorry.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So you are responsible for them? So if there's an incident to a patient while they're in an ambulance, how is that report kept for statistical reason?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Right now the operator of the ambulance – well, Health PEI gets a copy as is required, Health PEI gets a copy of the report, and the operator keeps a copy of the report. How Health PEI compiles statistics based on those reports? I have no information on that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** You don't know if they're compiling that into their incident reporting system or not?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** I have no idea what Health PEI does with that information.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Do you?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** I really don't.

**Mr. Currie:** I can bring that information back.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, because they do have an incident reporting system, right? If you fell out of your bed and you're in the hospital, it gets reported in the system –

**Mr. Currie:** There's policy and process in place there –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Well, it's not only that, you use it for statistics, so if you have, you know, if there's many incidents attached to a bed or many incidents attached to a person that's on shift or whatever, then it gives you some latitude to figure out that maybe there's something going on, right?

So, it's protection for yourself –

**Mr. Currie:** You're right, you're correct. All that information is gathered for data on readmissions, length of stays, expected length of stays.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Right.

**Mr. Currie:** There's a constant analysis of why – the issue in our two larger hospitals is average length of stay compared to expected length of stay in respect to national averages. There are criteria how long somebody should be in the hospital. So, you want to be in a facility for a period of time and then you want to be out of the facility, so all of that data is collected, you're correct.

**Leader of the Opposition:** But, on the – you have a completely separate system that tracks just incidences. If I was leaving the QEH and slipped on the ice and fell down and hurt myself, that would be an incident under your system, correct? You would gather –

**Mr. Currie:** Once they – obviously yeah –

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'd need a treatment, not (Indistinct).

**Mr. Currie:** Yeah, 911 was called and somebody comes to the scene where the individual's laying down and –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, so if there was wrong medications given in a room and it was caught – it, by your own policies,

needs to be reported, right? It's tracked in this system.

I guess all I'm really wondering is: Will you be doing the same thing with your incidences in the ambulances? Two reasons: one, it's important to track that anyway; second is that you're going to increase the volume of people who are riding around in ambulances with your new health care on wheels.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Again, all this amendment's about is making sure that the regulator has access to information in order to regulate the practice of paramedicine. That's all this is about.

**Leader of the Opposition:** There's a report, because it talks about the report. I'm just wondering what happens with the report.

You have said that the volume of people travelling will be increasing, right? The volume of people who will be travelling in ambulances?

**Mr. Currie:** I've said that. Is that question for me?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, for transfers and whatnot.

**Mr. Currie:** In the last number of years we've seen increases alone because of the aging population. The interprovincial transfers are up and the out-of-province transfers are up. That's just a reflection of the overall health and the population requiring services or displacement from facility to facility to province to province.

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

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

Just a couple of questions on this. How would this apply, if at all, to air-lifting patients off-Island for emergencies?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** This record?

**Mr. Aylward:** Yeah.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** This record is only what happens in an

ambulance. That's all this record deals with. If an ambulance is taking somebody from the QEH to the airport so they can be medevaced, that will be the length of that record.

**Mr. Aylward:** So, air-lifting, helicopter's not referred to as an air ambulance in any way, shape or form?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** No, this is ground ambulance.

**Mr. Aylward:** All right. Would it have any jurisdiction or any bearing at all on first responders such as firefighters or police officers?

Let's say, for example, God forbid, there's an incident at the Charlottetown airport where there's an aircraft that skids off the runway and there are several hundred people on it, or a hundred people on it, and we have several transfers off-Island at the time. We're very short on EMTs or ambulances itself. All of a sudden first responders, such as firefighters and their vehicles, or police officers, have to transport patients to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or perhaps even the PCH. Would there be any bearing on them to have to have a report completed?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** This only applies to licensed emergency medical technicians, period. That's all it deals with because they are the only regulated entity with respect to that provision service.

**Mr. Aylward:** If there was such an incident happen at the Charlottetown Airport, are the only individuals who can transport a patient strictly an EMT?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** No, there is an exception in the act under emergency type situations. There's a person providing assistance as defined in the *Volunteers Liability Act*. There's a person performing an emergency service during a state of emergency. So the act wouldn't apply to them. In those types of instances, this act does not apply to that.

**Mr. Aylward:** There's nothing, then, to record what actually took place from when the first responder, the police officer, took patient from point A to point B.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Not under this legislation.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay, thank you.

**Chair:** Question, the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Mr. LaVie:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition asked a couple of my questions there.

Prior to this amendment, what did you do?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Currently, the way it sits is the emergency medical services board is still the regulator for EMTs and ambulance services. They already have the information. Now, under the new regime, we need to get the information to them. That's all this is doing because that board is the regulator for the EMTs. It's the discipline body for the EMTs. Right now, because they regulate ambulance services and EMTs, they already have access to it. Once everything is split apart, then they wouldn't have access. That's what we're doing.

**Mr. LaVie:** Okay.

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

**Mr. Currie:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Ambulance Services Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to*

*Amend the Ambulance Services Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same without amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 8<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 8, *An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act*, Bill No. 28, ordered for second reading.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act*, Bill No. 28, read a second time.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

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

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

I call upon the hon. Member from Tracadie-Hillsborough Park to Chair the Committee of the Whole.

**Chair (Watts):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act*. Is it the pleasure

of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

**Mr. Currie:** I'll give the overview, and I'll ask permission for Nichola Hewitt to come back on, please.

**Chair:** Granted.

**Mr. Currie:** While she's coming on, this bill amends the definition of practice of pharmacy to include adoption of prescriptions. Currently 1% of all prescriptions filled on PEI contain an error in dosage, formulation, regime or duration which requires pharmacists to contact the prescriber or send the patient back to the prescriber for clarification. With these amendments government believes that valuable resources will be better utilized while concurrently providing better health care to Islanders. In addition to the foregoing, the amendments repeal the definition and role of the certified pharmaceutical clerk as clerks no longer exist as professional category. This bill also increases the penalties for contravening the act or regulations from a maximum fine limit of \$500 to a maximum fine limit of \$10,000 or to a term of imprisonment of not more than six months or to both.

Permission to bring Roy Cairns on the floor as well.

**Chair:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition, question?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes, thank you, Chair.

Is this giving pharmacists more duties or ability to do more things?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** There is a slight expansion to their scope of practice, yes. Do you want the Coles Notes version?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, please.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Okay, sure.

Right now about 1% of all scripts written on this Island, there's an error. It's mostly an administrative error. For example, sometimes there's a prescription for tablets

when it should be syrup if it was a child or for a dosage size that's actually not manufactured.

The pharmacists pick this up. At that point in time they have two choices: they either send the patient back to the physician or they try and get a hold of the physician. What this legislation will allow them to do, and it's very narrow in scope, is allow them to change dosage, formula, so either pill or syrup type of thing, and the duration of the prescription.

This isn't anything novel in our jurisdiction. In fact, this is permitted in every province right now except Manitoba and PEI. It's pending in Manitoba. This is as of October 2012. It might actually be in place in Manitoba by now. It's currently not permissible in the three territories. Again, that's as of October last year.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. I don't –

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** This will correct administrative errors in the scripts.

**Leader of the Opposition:** It really doesn't seem like it's that out of the ordinary. It's probably a good practice.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Absolutely. We'll be following through in the regulations, and there will be a requirement in the regulations – they're not actually changing the prescription. You're still going to get what your doctor prescribed. It's just fixing the administrative errors.

What will happen is the pharmacist will be required to report back to the physician that the script has been changed slightly, adapted –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** – and (Indistinct).

**Leader of the Opposition:** This doesn't cover the pharmacists who are looking to be able to renew prescriptions. I know there's kind of a movement out there that you may be able to take some of the strain off of the

wait time to see your doctor for minor things like that.

**Mr. Currie:** Yeah. What we're doing, we're currently in discussions right now with the pharmacists' association to expand its scope. Last year when we drew back the rebates on generics from patent, and those rebates were going back to the pharmacists, we took those back inside government to reinvest in the formulary. So what we're currently working on is an agreement with the pharmacists as we sort of realign the drug formulary (Indistinct) ways that we can have our pharmacists continue to provide expanded services.

**An Hon. Member:** Is it (Indistinct)?

**Mr. Currie:** Yeah.

**Chair:** Any more questions?

**Mr. LaVie:** Just one question.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Mr. LaVie:** I just noticed here on 31, it's – has there ever has been any offence – it says here, an offence and a liability on a summary conviction “to a fine not exceeding \$10,000...” Was there ever?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Not so far. The reason we put that in and elevated the rate of the level of the fine is simply because we're giving pharmacists a little more latitude, so we want to be sure that they're exercising it prudently. I will tell you that we have been consulting with both the pharmacy board and the pharmacy association. We also consulted with the college of physicians and surgeons and the medical society on this, and there were no objections raised.

**Mr. LaVie:** Ten thousand, you don't want to make too many mistakes.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Sorry?

**Mr. LaVie:** No, no. (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Okay?

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

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

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

(Indistinct) if Mr. Cairns, would you have any stats on – I know we've talked about how prescriptions are tracked, as in if the incorrect dosage is prescribed or something like that, but on the other side, if the pharmacist is reading a handwritten description from a physician, do we have stats on how often those might be mis-prescribed, or mis-prescribed because of the handwriting?

**Roy Cairns Consultant:** Because of the handwriting, illegible handwriting? There are statistics that are out there. Nothing that I'm aware of that's recent, and I wouldn't have the numbers off the top of my head. We could look into it. There's nothing on PEI, though, if you're talking PEI stats –

**Mr. Aylward:** Yes.

**Roy Cairns Consultant:** We don't have anything on PEI at this point.

**Mr. Aylward:** What about actually – we hear occasionally of individuals going to a pharmacy to get a prescription filled, but then the pharmacist will realize that it's fraudulent, that somebody had visited a physician's office, saw the scrip pad there, ripped a couple of pages off and scribbled them out. Do we have any information as far as the frequency of that or –

**Roy Cairns Consultant:** That is tracked through the pharmacy board, so the legislative or regulatory body, pharmacy body, self-regulating body, that sort of information is fed through their office and communicated in a timely manner.

On an individual case by case basis, when that information comes up, there's a fan out to notify all the pharmacies in the province of a particular case that may be occurring for follow up in case that person shows up in their pharmacy, and then that information would be tracked.

**Mr. Aylward:** All right. Is there any special training given as far as – we've heard stories recently about, let's say a senior goes to the doctor and receives a prescription, goes

down. I mean, I've had it happen myself, where I'll get a new prescription and the pharmacist will actually come over to the pick-up counter and start describing what it is and so and so forth. But we've heard recently stories about where a senior will come in and get a prescription. The pharmacist will come over and start explaining to that individual what the drug is, what the side effects might be, whether to take it with food or liquid or what time of day. Unfortunately, there are some individuals that do hang about or lurk in the wings to listen to what's being prescribed, go out to the parking lot and actually offer money for that prescription. Is there any direction or any training or information being provided to the pharmacist so that they're all aware that this happens so that they can better protect the information?

**Roy Cairns Consultant:** It is a concern. First of all, the reason that occurs is pharmacists are obligated, when a new prescription is prescribed and then dispensed by the pharmacy, to provide a certain amount of counselling information. Patient counselling areas, private, semi-private patient counselling areas, are something that's been strongly recommended in the past. It's becoming more of an issue now for a number of reasons, including somebody's expanded scope of practice services, like the medication reviews that have just been implemented, so that more confidential, formal communication, if you will, between patient and pharmacist is going to occur.

Now, actually, there are some standards that are being dealt with at a national level. Our regulatory body is – we're waiting to hear back from them as far as standards with regard to confidentiality and as far as having a private space to communicate with customers.

As far as training, there is training throughout pharmacy, throughout formal pharmacy education, and there is some ongoing continuing education that occurs. This is always common as part of any discussion around confidentiality in the pharmacy: how you communicate with people and encouraging pharmacies to have confidential areas or private areas where they can communicate with the customer.

Pharmacies, depending on the makeup in the pharmacy, some have private rooms, some have done other things within the pharmacy trying to separate other customers from people they're patient counselling. But again, there'll be some more formal structure as we move forward.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay. It's good to hear that some of that is taking place, because I mean, just the pharmacy that I go to occasionally, I see the business level is steadily increasing. Over the last number of years it seems it's busier and busier all the time, so there's more people around and certainly the confidentially issue would be great to have sort of a semi-private or private area you described.

**Roy Cairns Consultant:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Any further questions on the bill?

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 15<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 15, *An Act to Amend the Public Health Act*, Bill No. 37, ordered for second reading.

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

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Public Health Act*, Bill No. 37, read a second time.

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

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

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

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

I call upon the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point to chair the Committee of the Whole.

**Mr. Currie:** (Indistinct) Nichola Hewitt back on, please.

I'll give an overview –

**Chair (Casey):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Public Health Act*. Is it the

pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Chair:** Minister, would you like to invite somebody on and then make a general statement to this?

**Mr. Currie:** Yes, I'd like to invite Nicola Hewitt on, and while she's coming on, if I could read an overview.

**Chair:** Great.

Permission to bring Nicola on and Joe Bradley?

**Some Hon. Members:** Granted.

**Chair:** Thank you.

For the record, could you please introduce yourselves?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Nichola Hewitt.

**Joe Bradley Manager:** Joe Bradley.

**Chair:** Thank you.

Minister, would you care to make a statement?

**Mr. Currie:** Sure.

This amendment addresses omissions in the unproclaimed *Public Health Act* which was passed by the House last session. These omissions are: prohibition on the sale of food in an eating establishment unless the food is from an inspected source; a requirement that milk processing plants create and maintain records and other information which are to be submitted to the minister as required by the regulations; a requirement that the owner of a tanning facility maintain records of prescriptions for tanning by persons under the age of 18 years; and the regulation making authority necessary to give effect to these amendments.

**Chair:** Any questions?

The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

**Ms. Crane:** Minister, you talked about tanning bed legislation in the past. Is this firming up the regulations for that?

**Mr. Currie:** Pardon?

**Ms. Crane:** Is this firming up the under-18 regulations for tanning?

**Chair:** Hon. member, we couldn't hear you, could you speak up please?

**Ms. Crane:** Sure. For tanning beds for under 18, is this the actual regulations in firming that up?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** No.

**Ms. Crane:** Well, what is it on the tanning bed part?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** What this is doing is requiring – there is an exemption under the act that allows minors with a prescription from a prescriber to use tanning beds. There may be (Indistinct).

**Ms. Crane:** Like if they have psoriasis or whatever. Okay.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** That type of stuff. What this does is it requires records to be kept if that in fact is going to be done.

**Ms. Crane:** Okay. The next question I have: Did the minister say this act has not been proclaimed yet?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** That's correct.

**Ms. Crane:** When are you proclaiming the act?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** We're hoping possibly July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Ms. Crane:** July 1<sup>st</sup>, okay, thank you.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** We're hoping.

**Ms. Crane:** I'm fine.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** In Section 1(2)(b) the regulations of – well, I guess it's all of (2): "...no person shall prepare, sell or offer for sale food, including ready-to-eat food, in an eating establishment..." That applies to arenas and such that have banquets or they serve food for hosting a hockey team.

**Mr. Currie:** Joe, want to speak to that, please?

**Joe Bradley Manager:** Yes. The legislation requires that any food that is for sale to the public must be from a licensed establishment. This change will require licensed establishments to acquire the food that they serve to the public from a government inspected source. This has been identified as an oversight in our existing legislation and it's currently provisioned in virtually every province in Canada.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** Thank you.

To be exempted by regulations, what would be exempt?

**Joe Bradley Manager:** For instance, Souris Wildlife Federation for different years have offered a wild game dinner. Obviously certain game that might be offered on the menu for that dinner would not be permitted into a licensed facility for processing. An exemption could be granted with the knowledge of the patrons of that meal that they were consuming food from an uninspected source.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** Let's ask a question regarding - you said for sale. What about if the food was prepared not for resale, if it was hosting - you were hosting an event and it was just a table there for guests?

**Joe Bradley Manager:** Typically our policy is that the food must be for sale. If something is hospitality type of thing, no, we would not be (Indistinct).

**Mr. Perry:** So there's no regulations about hospitality?

**Joe Bradley Manager:** No.

**Mr. Perry:** Great, thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Mr. LaVie:** Thanks, Madam Chair.

So the food is cooked and prepared at the facility. Can it leave the facility?

**Joe Bradley Manager:** If the operator is licensed as a catering operation and transports the food in a safe manner, yes, they can be moved from the facility.

**Mr. LaVie:** Okay, thanks.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Public Health Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 17<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 17, *Regulated Health Professions Act*, Bill No. 42, ordered for second reading.

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

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *Regulated Health Professions Act*, Bill No. 42, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Health and Wellness, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

Call upon the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale to chair the Committee of the Whole House.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Ms. Crane:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Currie:** We'll ask for permission for Nicola Hewitt to come on the floor, please.

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

**Mr. Currie:** Just an overview.

A high volume of health professionals have been looking to bring this professions act forward. Pleased to be able to do that.

Basically the act provides a consistent licensing complaint and (Indistinct) process applicable to all designated health care professionals like LPNs, naturopathic doctors. The act also provides criteria for regulation including a formal application and assessment process with respect to the request for regulation. Currently unregulated health professionals will now be in a position to apply for regulation knowing the process and criteria that must be met in order to become regulated. In addition, health care professions that are currently regulated under stand-alone legislation can apply for regulation under this act. One of the primary objectives of this act is to ensure that the public is protected by requiring health care professionals to maintain a minimal level of competency.

It's umbrella legislation. This has been asked by the department now for a number of years so we're very pleased to be bringing it forward.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Nicola Hewitt for the Hansard.

**Chair:** Any questions?

**Mr. Perry:** I'll have a question.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** You said this is more of a protection. What's in place now?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Currently we have 14 – there are 16 health professions that are regulated in this province under 14 acts. Do you want the Coles Notes version of this as well?

**Mr. Perry:** Sure.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Right now BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland all have a form of – we call it umbrella legislation.

What it is is all the health professions under that have consistent rules about processes for licensing, for discipline, for complaints and all that. Everybody is on the same playing field, so it doesn't matter – for example, in these provinces – whether you're an EMT or an X-ray tech. You go through the same process for licensing, you go through the same process if there's a complaint against you.

Everybody knows what's going on, number one. But also, if legislative changes need to be made, for example when labour mobility came down, we'd have to amend 14 different acts because we had 14 acts. That consumes a great amount of time both on our end but also at a legislative end.

The other thing that this act does is it allows for an application process for currently unregulated professions. We have a number of them in the province, probably 15 or more professions, that want to be regulated. Up until today, still in place, it's a very vague process. It's not a legislative process, it's one that was passed by Executive Council I'm going to say, 20-odd years ago. It just sort of varies, you know, it's just not easily discernible.

This puts in a formal process. This is what you do, this is the criteria you consider. It just sort of lays everything out there and people know what has to be met and what's expected of them.

We've had a lot of professions ask – and the other thing is a lot of the existing health legislation is very dated, and it's very cumbersome sometimes, for some of the smaller professions to, for example, have both an association and a regulatory body. It's difficult for them to staff it. This is a much more streamlined process, and we've had several existing professions already indicate to us that they want to come in under this more streamlined process.

**Chair:** Okay?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Yeah.

**Chair:** The Chair recognizes the hon. Member from Tracadie-Hillsborough Park.

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

Just a comment. This is a good bill. It's long overdue and I'm glad to see it come into being.

Thank you.

**Chair:** The Chair recognizes the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

**Mr. Brown:** Yeah, I echo the same sentiments as the speaker before me.

Will this make it easier for – like, we hear a lot of discussions about nurses can't go across the provincial borders and doctors can't, and there's all these regulatory things, and it seems to be holding up a lot of transferring back and forth of people. Will this help that kind of situation? Because you know there's –

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Well –

**Mr. Brown:** We can't be tied up in regulations and rules on getting a doctor or a nurse here to Prince Edward Island.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Yeah. This act itself doesn't address labour mobility. But what will be is each health profession that will be regulated under this act will have its own set of regulations. In those regulations we'll sort of come up with a – I hate to use the term – but sort of like a template, so in each one we'll deal with these various things, and yes, labour mobility will be in there.

**Mr. Brown:** Good.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** But it will be in the regulations, not in the act.

**Chair:** The Chair recognizes the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** I'm assuming there was consultation does with all of the professions and the associations? They're all on board?

**Mr. Currie:** (Indistinct) a lot of conversations.

**Mr. Perry:** Okay.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** We had probably, I'm going to guess, in the area of about 45 submissions on this. Consultations started last August and I guess the last submission we got was probably November, and they've been actively following up with us: Where is it?

So –

**Mr. Perry:** Have they seen this?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** We circulated a version of this. It was a slightly earlier version and what we did do with some of the input that came in, we did incorporate some of the input into the final draft.

**Mr. Perry:** Okay, great, thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, did you have a question?

**Mr. Aylward:** Yes, I did, thank you, Chair.

Out of curiosity, the health professions act, will this cover then, too, I believe, professions that are currently outside of the act such as naturopaths and individuals such as that?

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** It opens the way for them to apply for regulation.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay. So –

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** It opens it to any health profession that wants to apply for regulation. They will turn to that and, yeah –

**Mr. Aylward:** So, has there been a lot of discussion with individuals that work in that profession as far as moving forward with this?

**Mr. Currie:** Yeah.

**Mr. Aylward:** There has? Okay.

Thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Mr. LaVie:** Not a question, just a comment.

This act has been a long time in the making. It's a good act and I commend you for all the hard work you've done on this, and I look forward to carrying it.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Thank you.

**Mr. Currie:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Any other members wishing to speak?

**Ms. Crane:** Carried.

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

**Mr. Currie:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *Regulated Health Professions Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 7<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 7, *An Act to Amend the Emergency Medical Technicians Act*, Bill No. 32, ordered for second reading.

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

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Emergency Medical Technicians Act*, Bill No. 32, read a second time.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

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

**Chair (Mitchell):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Emergency Medical Technicians Act*.

**Mr. Currie:** I, move that section one of the bill be amended:

(a) by renumbering clause (a) as clause (a)(i), and

(b) by the addition of the following immediately before clause (a)(1):

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

(e) the Emergency Medical Technology means: the practice of providing emergency medical care and other health services in accordance with the scope of practice and standards of practice established by the act and the regulations.

**Chair:** Is the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

We have an amendment on the floor.

Discussion on the amendment?

**Ms. Crane:** Just a comment.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

**Ms. Crane:** I'm just curious why it was necessary. Was it an oversight that brought the amendment to the floor when the bill was just (Indistinct)?

**Mr. Currie:** Yes, that's correct, yeah.

**Ms. Crane:** Okay.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

**Ms. Crane:** No.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** Carry the amendment or the –

**Chair:** The amendment.

**Mr. Perry:** Okay.

**Chair:** No further questions on the amendment?

Shall the amendment carry? Carried.

Is it the pleasure now that the bill be read clause by clause?

**An Hon. Member:** No.

**Chair:** Okay.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Question.

The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** This whole act seems to be mostly formalizing, like, the board structure for emergency services in our province. Is that right?

**Mr. Currie:** I'll ask permission to bring the legislative specialist on the floor, Nicola Hewitt, please?

**Ms. Crane:** Granted.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:**  
Nicola Hewitt.

**Mr. Currie:** I'll give an overview of the –

**Mr. Perry:** Oh, sure.

**Mr. Currie:** This amendment addresses an issue raised by the draft Auditor General's report, namely, composition of the emergency medical services board, the body responsible for the regulation of the EMT profession.

This amendment also adds definitions and repeals and replaces transitional provisions respecting board members appointed under the former act and persons holding an EMT license under the former act.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** Have you taken into consideration the Auditor General's report? She had kind of criticized the way that the EMS board is constructed and that it might have potential for a conflict of interest.

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:**  
That's why we've put in this amendment.

**Mr. Currie:** Yeah, (Indistinct).

**Mr. Perry:** So this is exactly –

**Nicola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** The problem was there were two representatives from Island EMS on the board, so they were the employer and they were also the regulator. We've removed Island EMS from the board. We've added one extra licensed EMT to the board, and we've added one additional public representative to the board, and that was all there was, yeah.

**An Hon. Member:** Carried.

**Chair:** No further questions?

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

Shall the bill as amended carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Emergency Medical Technicians Act.*

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows:

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** Mr. Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and that the Chair report the bill agreed to with amendment.

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

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Emergency Medical Technicians Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same with amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 21<sup>st</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 21, *An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act*, Bill No. 51, ordered for second reading.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act*, Bill No. 51, read a second time.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I call upon the hon. Member from Summerside-St. Eleanors to Chair the Committee of the Whole.

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

Mr. Minister, an overview.

**Mr. Currie:** *An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act*. This amendment clarifies the appointment process for the Physician Resource Planning Committee. This amendment also clarifies the role and responsibilities of the health services

payment committee to the minister and to Health PEI.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Mr. Perry:** So, basically the government appoints all of those members on the board?

**Mr. Currie:** I'll ask permission for Nichola Hewitt to come on.

**Chair:** Okay.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Nichola Hewitt.

**Mr. Perry:** How many members are on that board or will be on that board?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Currently there are eight, and there will be eight when the amendment has passed. Do you want the Coles Notes version again?

**Mr. Perry:** Please.

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** Right now there are four members who are nominated by the medical society, two by the department, and two by a corporate entity that was set up by Health PEI that is now defunct.

What we're doing is amending it so that the four remain from the medical society, the two remain from the department, and the other two positions are appointed by the board of directors of Health PEI.

**Mr. Perry:** The ones who are nominated by the medical society are the four – they give four names. Those are the four names that are chosen? They're not going to say: We won't accept these?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** They're nominated. They're all physicians.

**Chair:** Any further questions?

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act*.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Currie:** I move the enacting clause.

**Chair:** Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island as follows.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

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

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

The hon. Minister of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, that the 28<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 28, *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act*, Bill No. 54, ordered for second reading.

**Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

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

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

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

**Clerk:** *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act*, Bill No. 54, read a second time.

**Speaker:** Minister.

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

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

I'll call upon the hon. Member from Tracadie-Hillsborough Park to Chair the Committee.

**Chair (Watts):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Can we start with an overview?

**Mr. Currie:** I'll ask permission to bring on Nichola Hewitt and Roy Cairns from my department, please.

The *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act*: This act allows the minister to collect, use and disclose information with respect to the prescribing and dispensing of monitored drugs through the CIS system. This act allows the minister to communicate relevant information to regulatory bodies such as the college of physicians and law enforcement agencies.

The purpose of this act is to promote appropriate prescribing and dispensing practices for narcotics and other controlled substances, to identify and reduce the abuse, misuse and diversion of these drugs and to reduce the risk of addiction and death from the abuse and misuse of these drugs.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Can I ask a question before we start reading?

**Chair:** Question before we start reading?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just off the top here.

**Chair:** Go ahead, hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** It's very important that we start moving forward on the drug problem that we have on Prince Edward Island. Nobody is going to dispute that at all. Thoughts around are that you may have really rushed to get this out, so you can save face from your health care on wheels, which is fine.

Question: Who did you consult in the preparation of this bill?

**Mr. Currie:** Just in respect – the reason why there was – the Legislative Assembly is open. This was a piece of the mental health and addictions (Indistinct). I felt as minister that it would be appropriate to bring this act forward this sitting so we can start working towards it, as opposed to waiting until next fall to implement it. It's just a timing issue.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who did you consult with?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** There have been consultations with the pharmacy and with, I believe, the medical society.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who from pharmacy? All pharmacists? Has it been an open forum?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** No, with the pharmacy association. All pharmacists on the Island are represented by that association. I believe the – I think it was the deputy who met with the medical society. All physicians of the Island are members of the medical society. Currently it's only physicians who are able to prescribe narcotics on Prince Edward Island.

**Leader of the Opposition:** How much consultation was done with the pharmacies, then?

**Nichola Hewitt Legislative Specialist:** There wasn't a lot, because, again, it's not – the purpose of this act is to allow information gathering. All the pharmacy is required to do is to retain records of certain things. They've already been doing that. They are required to do that under their own legislation.

We advised that we were proceeding with this act and what the purpose of it was. It was just to enable, to collect, use and dispose data. They had no objections to it at all.

**Mr. Currie:** I guess – just to make a couple of comments – in respect to the conversations around with addictions, we all have a constant level of communication with individuals or families that we represent in this assembly. That's very consistent.

We basically, after looking at the information in the DIS system – and I've met with municipal and provincial law enforcement on this issue numerous times in respect to the discussion about where are these opioids coming from.

There's a discussion between the level of prescription medications that are currently available in our communities and also there's a level of pain killers, opioids, coming in from out of province. Law enforcement would support that.

Then in conversations with the senior leadership with addictions and mental health, they who treat and work with individuals with addictions on an ongoing basis have really identified their concern with what they're seeing at Mount Herbert in respect to the increase – not only the increase on individuals – youth coming in to Mount Herbert for treatment for narcotics addictions, but also what they're seeing.

If you look at the data for the DIS there is a correlation there between the increase in addiction and the increase in volume of the growth. I think it's like 17.8% in the province.

That's sort of just to give you some respect to the conversations that we've been having.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. So from the medical society, what kind of consultations happened with the medical society? Because it affects them more directly.

**Mr. Currie:** Those conversations were had by the deputy.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, and what kind of conversation?

**Mr. Currie:** The conversations – I’m not really sure on the questioning. Are you concerned with this act coming forward?

**Leader of the Opposition:** No. What I’m concerned was is that you rushed and you’re only talking a swipe at the problem and not addressing the problem head on. I don’t think you knew about the problem until we starting pushing you on the problem this spring. I think it suddenly became an awareness thing for you.

I commend you for taking steps towards it, don’t get me wrong, but I want to make sure that we’re making the right steps too. It’s important that I question you on who you consulted because that’s part of your job, right?

**Mr. Currie:** As I indicated, (Indistinct) part of my job, the most important consultations I have is with the families, particularly the parents, struggling with addictions. That’s my priority when it comes to (Indistinct).

**Leader of the Opposition:** How does this help them?

**Mr. Currie:** How does it help them? This is about access. There are two issues we’re seeing. In consultation with the frontline workers at Mount Herbert and the leadership, they really highlighted their concern in what they’re seeing coming through the door. These conversations are leading to a – you know, I’m asking questions on municipal and provincial enforcement about: Are we seeing prescription medications, are we seeing a higher volume of prescription medications, are these narcotics coming in over from out-of-province?

Then all of a sudden you go back to the DIS system and you start to dig in to say: Let’s take a look at the five most common opioids or narcotics that are being prescribed. As I indicated, we’ve seen a severe spike in the number of opioids that are on the streets. I mean, it’s pretty substantial. It’s been all over the media.

From a consultation perspective, basically the whole purpose of this act gives us the ability to communicate relevant information to regulatory bodies and law enforcement agencies. If we identify a pharmacist or a

physician who is overprescribing, we’ll be able to use that information. Now this act allows us to go in to have those conversations.

The regulatory bodies – for example, the college of physicians oversees the licensing responsibilities of physicians. We’ll be working closely. They have a responsibility here in respect to licensing. But now I as the minister have the opportunity to bring the information forward via the DIS system.

I think that it’s a good step forward. I don’t think it’s going to completely solve the issue, but I think it allows government to be more engaged and provide the relevant information particularly to the licensing bodies on this issue.

As I say, as you said, it’s a step forward.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I agree it’s a step. I hope that there’s more steps to follow.

**Mr. Currie:** In fairness, this is not – there’s a clinical use for opioids in our health community. There are Islanders that are struggling and suffering with pain and pain management, and I appreciate that.

But what this does is this creates an awareness and it just allows us to really put tighter surveillance and monitoring in place to ask questions. If we continue to see the rise of opioids – so that’s basically the whole purpose. I feel there has to be some level of surveillance and control in light of what we’re seeing. I mean, there’s no secret that we’re seeing a huge rise in treatment needs, and plus the fact that you look over at the data and the data’s – there’s a direct correlation with the increase in treatment and the increase of the number of pills that are being prescribed. Some of these medications are being accessed, too, maybe by an individual or a family member or a friend of a family member.

I’m not sure how they – but we’re seeing a high rise and high volume.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

Back to the consulting now. I realize that the issue of addiction support and the youth addiction problem is very important, and I think it's something that we've been pushing to have kind of looked at. Back to the consultation part. When you consulted with the medical society, did they give you any indication why they thought that the opioid prescriptions had risen? Did they have any explanation as to why that may have happened?

**Mr. Currie:** I can get some more detailed information from my deputy. I tasked him with the responsibility to have conversations with the medical society.

he medical society doesn't have the ability, number one, nor do they have the data to go in to identify any of their own physicians that are over-prescribing or may be over-prescribing. From a clinical perspective, pain killers and opioids are used for a range of different reasons.

The concern I have is: Why is there such a large rise in five years by 17.8% in this province? That's a concern.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, and it's a concern of mine, too, it's a very big concern.

But I would think at the point that you went out to consult with the medical society, somebody somewhere must have said: Okay, hold it now, before you go any further we're going to get you some information and we're going to tell you why we think this is happening. Or did they wash their hands of it and say: You're right, all of our doctors are over-prescribing, go get them?

**Mr. Currie:** No, no. Basically we have technology with the drug information system and talking with the senior leadership with addictions at Mount Herbert, talking to law enforcement, talking to parents who brought this issue to my attention, and the Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park has been working very closely with myself. He has some real serious concerns. We've met numerous times to talk about what he's hearing and what he's seen.

I think that this is a very positive step forward. I mean, the medical society may have a position moving forward, but now we

have the evidence and the data to back up our concerns because we have the numbers. We can identify which physician is prescribing and which pharmacies are dispensing. We can go right into the system now and identify, and we'll be monitoring that, and we'll be – now I have the ability to bring information forward to the college or to ask questions around: We're seeing patterns here by a small group of physicians.

I'm not assuming that's – but now we have the ability to bring that information forward to continue to address what I see is a concerning trend here in the province.

**Leader of the Opposition:** But the – okay, so the opioids –

**Mr. Currie:** Just so I clarify -

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah.

**Mr. Currie:** This falls in line with narcotic safety and awareness legislation all across the country.

Provinces are moving to better access and provide information to whether it be the college of physicians in their jurisdictions –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Well, I think they have better access to these drugs, I think that's the issue, that there is better access. The issue is there's better access because you have a 17.8% rise in the opiates –

**Mr. Currie:** Yeah but the question is why, though?

**Leader of the Opposition:** – but you also have a 46.8% rise in stimulants.

**Mr. Currie:** But the question is why, though?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, but that's what I asked you. When you sent your deputy out to talk to the medical society, did he come back and tell you anything?

**Mr. Currie:** I was very – this is a very concerning problem and –

**Leader of the Opposition:** I agree 100% so when you –

**Mr. Currie:** – as far as conversations –

**Leader of the Opposition:** – start that conversation, did somebody not say: Okay, this is why it's happening. Because if you talk to the doctors at all, surely they're going to halfway defend themselves and say – or are they going to say: No, no, we're just writing prescriptions like crazy. Or are they going to come back to you and say: No, well, it's because of this or it's because of this, because of this. They must have had some defense as to why it was happening.

**Ms. Sherry:** Call the hour.

**Chair:** The hour has been called.

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

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

Madam Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having under consideration a bill to be intitled *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Government House Leader.

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

I, move, seconded by the Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, this House adjourn until Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.

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

Have a wonderful weekend, everyone.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 2:00 p.m.