

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

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|  |      |
|--|------|
| MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (I) .....                       | 1918 |
| STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS .....  | 1921 |
| TIGNISH-PALMER ROAD (Maddie Thibodeau).....                                    | 1921 |
| CHARLOTTETOWN-LEWIS POINT (Food Tax Credit).....                               | 1921 |
| SOURIS-ELMIRA (Living in PEI) .....  | 1922 |
| ORAL QUESTIONS.....  | 1922 |
| LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Storm Emergency Response).....                       | 1922 |
| LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Storm Emergency Response Financial Recourse) .....   | 1923 |
| LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Compensation Fund) .....                             | 1923 |
| LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Deleted Government Email Accounts-further) .....     | 1924 |
| STRATFORD-KINLOCK (Urgent Mental Health Situation Criteria).....               | 1924 |
| STRATFORD-KINLOCK (Health System and Children) .....                           | 1925 |
| STRATFORD-KINLOCK (Specialist Recruitment).....                                | 1926 |
| STRATFORD-KINLOCK (Radiation Safety Regulations).....                          | 1927 |
| STRATFORD-KINLOCK (Deleted Government Email Accounts-further) .....            | 1928 |
| LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Agriculture Diversification) .....                  | 1928 |
| LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Funds for Agronomy Initiative) .....                | 1929 |
| LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Agriculture Sector Spending) .....                  | 1929 |
| WEST ROYALTY-SPRINGVALE (CADC) .....   | 1930 |
| EVANGELINE-MISCOUCHE (Canada 150 Celebrations re: PEI).....                    | 1931 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Robert Ghiz Records Storage) .....                      | 1931 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Records Information Management under Robert Ghiz) ..... | 1932 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Egaming re: Officials).....                             | 1932 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (2007 Government Guidelines re: Email) .....             | 1933 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Records Officer) .....                                  | 1933 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Retention and Deposition Schedules).....                | 1933 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Destruction Order re: Emails).....                      | 1934 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Deleted Government Email Accounts-further) .....        | 1934 |
| MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (II) .....                      | 1935 |
| STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS .....  | 1935 |

|   |      |
|---|------|
| PREMIER (RCMP Dog Unit) .....   | 1935 |
| TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY (Protecting the Public Through Amendments to the Highway Traffic Act) ..... | 1936 |
| COMMUNITIES, LAND AND ENVIRONMENT (New Municipal Government Act).....   | 1938 |
| FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES (Salvation Army Home Heating Program) .....   | 1939 |
| PRESENTING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS.....   | 1941 |
| RUSTICO-EMERALD (PEI Service Animal Protection Law) .....   | 1941 |
| TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....   | 1941 |
| INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS.....   | 1941 |
| BILL 58 – Municipal Government Act .....  | 1941 |
| BILL 59 – An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act (No. 3) .....   | 1941 |
| ORDERS OF THE DAY (GOVERNMENT) .....  | 1942 |
| SECOND READING AND COMMITTEE .....  | 1942 |
| BILL 49 – An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act.....  | 1942 |
| MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (III) .....  | 1950 |
| COMMITTEE .....   | 1951 |
| BILL 52 – An Act to Amend the Off-Highway Vehicle Act.....  | 1951 |
| ADJOURNED.....  | 1962 |

The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests (I)

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Welcome everyone, guests in the gallery and those watching from home or on the Internet.

Welcome the group of students who are here from the University of Prince Edward Island class in Business, Government, and Society and their instructor, Ken Desroches. I know the group has done quite a bit of interviewing of ministers and prepared some reports and seem to be very favourable in how our ministers are getting along.

Thanks on behalf of all members to the diabetes association for their hospitality yesterday, and for the good work that the association and that the community affected by diabetes or prediabetes in this province does, and the education that they offered us yesterday evening.

I had a report as of 11:00 a.m. from emergency measures who are part of my department, and just to briefly say that some of the businesses and residents and even health care facilities in Kings County continue to deal with the aftermath of Sunday's nor'easter. The latest report is that Maritime Electric, depending on what happens with the weather tonight or tomorrow, expects to have full restoration of power by Thursday. But we certainly, as members said yesterday, have those people and all those communities in our thoughts.

I want to extend congratulations to Dylan Menzie on winning the SOCAN No. 1 Song Award for his song "Kenya." The song was also one of the final four in the CBC Radio 2 spotlight search.

Finally, to recognize that this evening Chef Emily Wells, who does a lot of this kind of thing for the community with her own volunteer efforts and leadership, will be hosting a Step Up to the Plate 2016 fundraiser for the PEI Food Exchange at the Charlottetown fire hall.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

It was a beautiful day out, and the drive down this morning, it was a little bit slippery, but I appreciate the snowplows and how active they were out in the area keeping the highways clear.

I'd like to say hello to George Webster who just actually entered into the House there, lucky to say one of my constituents.

Also like to say hello to Ken and the class there from the UPEI Business, Government, and Society class. Great to see you all here today.

Thank you.

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

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to welcome George Webster to the House and the students from the Business, Government, and Society class, and Ken DesRoches.

I'd also like to wish all Islanders, this most Scottish of provinces – if you take into account that Scottishness is represented by the percentage of the population who identify as having Scottish heritage, then PEI is the most Scottish province in Canada – I'd like to wish all Islanders a happy St Andrew's Day.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

I welcome all the students from the University of Prince Edward Island. As an alumni and the former hockey coach of the

program at UPEI, it's great to see UPEI students engaged in the Assembly.

I want to give a shout out to Ken Desroches who is a constituent of mine who lives right in the heart of District 11, an avid follower of the political landscape and a big fan of health care in the province.

I see Craig MacLauchlan over in the corner over there as well, so I want to give a big shout-out to him. He plays with the University of Prince Edward Island and may have some teammates there with him, but a big supporter of UPEI hockey, and very passionate about the program and very passionate about the university overall.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

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

First of all, I want to send greetings out to my constituents in Tyne Valley-Linkletter, and all Islanders who are travelling the roads today to use extra caution. Everybody's out there trying to do the best they can to clear things up.

But this afternoon, too, I want to acknowledge some people that are with us in the gallery and over next door, and they are members of the PEI Snowmobile Association. Dale Hickox is the president, Dhuey Pratt is vice-president, Linda Constable, secretary-treasurer. We have Gary Dunning also who is owner of Toy Master Motor Spots and Red Rock Polaris. Rick Speelman is trail warden. Tom Langille is a trail warden. Tyler Campbell is a board member. We also have with us David MacIntyre and Darlene Maund who are avid snowmobilers, as well as our own Mr. George Webster who served as an MLA here in this Legislature and minister.

Thank you very much.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

**Mr. Palmer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to welcome everyone in the gallery today and those watching from home, and a special thanks to the plow operators. They did a wonderful job. I had a pretty good drive in from Summerside.

I want to make a special hello to Joey Blacquiere in Summerside. He is tuning in today. He is a reporter in Summerside and we had a chance this morning to talk about a really hot topic in Summerside which was: What are the Florida Panthers thinking about? Joey suggested that the NHL's Las Vegas Golden Knights merchandise may soon become a very hot item in Summerside.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to welcome Ken and Eddie and all of the students from UPEI, and George.

I can actually call George Webster's name out in the Legislature for once. We sure miss him around here, but George has got it all figured out. When he has to put the Harley away the snowmobile comes out, so good on you, George, we really miss you.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's a pleasure today to welcome all of those people in District 18 Rustico-Emerald that are watching, especially the children who may be taking a break from their outdoor snow fort building to be riveted to this sitting of the Legislature. I know my seven-year-old will likely want to watch it.

I also wanted to welcome everyone in the gallery, great to see the class here from

UPEI, and Ken Desroches. Hopefully you will be able to enlighten us with your notes on today's sitting and what you found out.

Also, I wanted to say that the snow plow drivers are doing a great job, but on the East end of route 225 – and I know the minister of transportation and I talked about this last year – the plow is just not getting there early enough in the day. I'm getting calls and people in the ditch and things. So if you could get the plow all the way from (Indistinct) all the way out before 7:00 a.m. to the far east end of 225, that would be great.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Ms. Biggar:** What about the other end?

**Mr. Trivers:** That's where they're coming from.

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

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

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

First and foremost, I'd like to extend my condolences to the Gamble family. A resident of mine, a constituent, Debbie Gamble, sadly passed away yesterday after a courageous battle with cancer. Debbie resided at St. John House. I know all of the other residents of St. John House, as well as the many constituents that knew Debbie and enjoyed her incredible sense of humour, will miss her. We just want to ensure that the family and friends know they are in our thoughts and prayers.

I would also like to recognize Ken Desroches. Ken's very young wife was actually my grade 1 teacher back at Sherwood Elementary in the day. It's great to see you and your students here, Ken.

I would also like to recognize Mr. Bobby Gillis here today in the gallery. I can only think that the Toronto Maple Leafs must have won last night because Bobby, aka Maple Leaf Bob, is out of hibernation and is joining us today.

I would just like to, once again, thank all of the great hard-working crews that were on the roads ensuring that Islanders had a safe journey today, and keep up the good work, because it appears that we have a long winter ahead of us.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I would like to welcome everyone back, especially those viewing on EastLink, those with power anyway, from District 1.

The people in the gallery, especially former minister Webster. I didn't know him as George, but I guess George Webster – even though former minister Webster and I had our differences, we always worked together to make our farming community greater and that we did accomplish, the four years I did get to work with former minister Webster.

Coming from a fishing family, former minister Webster did teach me a lot in the farming community as the minister of the day helps me out a lot, too. It's a big portfolio and I did learn a lot from Mr. Webster, and I thank you for that.

In another note, a great duty of kindness today to the town of Souris. We still have Fortune community and surrounding area without power. The town of Souris took the initiative to open up the Eastern Kings Sportsplex for the people with no power since Sunday.

I know the people from Fortune aren't going to get this message from me because they don't have the power. Anybody out there right across Prince Edward Island have family, friends, neighbours, whatever, that live in Fortune community and surrounding area with no power, let them know that the Eastern Kings Sportsplex is open for food, hot drinks, charge your cellphone, fun and games for the kids.

Just a shout-out to the town of Souris and the surrounding area for doing that act of kindness.

Thank you.

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

Statements by Members

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road.

**Maddie Thibodeau**

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

I would like to shine a light on the wonderful work being done by a very motivated and determined young lady in my District of Tignish-Palmer Road. Her name is Maddie Thibodeau. She is the daughter of Joe and Lorraine Thibodeau who live on the Union Road in St. Edward. Maddie is a student at Westisle Composite High School.

Recently, she took an interest in how she could make a difference in Third World countries and, specifically, how she could help out in the area of health. She set her goal on helping out in those countries where malaria is an ongoing concern. She read that mosquito nets can be used to combat the disease and has been fundraising ever since. Her plan is to raise \$2,000 by the time she graduates. This money would provide 200 mosquito nets to families who would not be able to afford them or purchase them.

This enthusiastic young lady is a member of the grade 12 leadership class at her school that has helped to coordinate sports tournaments and organize fundraisers for charities like the Terry Fox Foundation.

Along with organizing sports tournaments, Maddie has participated as an athlete in basketball, rugby, cross-country, volleyball and badminton.

Maddie is a finalist for the Loran Scholarship which is awarded based on character, service, and leadership potential.

I'm sure we can all agree that her ambitious spirit and generous nature is commendable and I look forward to seeing what she accomplishes next.

Thank you.

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

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

**Food Tax Credit**

**Ms. Casey:** Mr. Speaker.

Prince Edward Island – Canada's Food Island.

We pride ourselves as having the best seafood – lobster, mussels, oysters – the best potatoes, livestock and produce in the world. We can buy local and have the potential to work together to ensure all Islanders in need have access to healthy local products.

There are over 3,000 people on Prince Edward Island who use food banks on a monthly basis. Over a third of them are children.

The cost of food is on the rise. It's no secret that access to fresh, nutritional food is important so that those in need can lead healthier, more productive lives.

I would like to thank all farmers and fishers, who generously donate their products to local food banks, and do so at their own expense.

Currently, there is no provincial tax incentive recognizing charitable donations of fresh food to food banks on Prince Edward Island. I believe it's time to create a fresh food tax credit that will allow farmers, fishers, and livestock producers to deduct the value of fresh food donated to local food banks.

This is the best example of a win-win situation. Food bank users will have access to healthy local products which enable them to lead productive lives, and our generous farmers and fishers, with a fresh food tax credit, may increase their donations to the food banks and encourage others to donate, too. This fresh food tax credit will truly show we really are Canada's Food Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

### Living in PEI

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

I don't need that, I'm going to speak from the heart.

The people of Prince Edward Island are exactly why I love Prince Edward Island, why I love to live on Prince Edward Island. It's why I do the job I do, is because of the people of Prince Edward Island.

When people are down-and-out right across Prince Edward Island from Tignish to East Point that's when people pull together. If it's someone that loses a home due to a bad fire, the community comes together. If we lose a family member in a car collision, that's when the people of the community comes together.

The work our Lions clubs do across Prince Edward Island to help people, especially at Christmas time for hungry kids and hungry families. These people volunteer in our food banks to make sure people don't go hungry. That's why I love living on Prince Edward Island.

Most recently our storm of last Sunday, the northeast storm, people without power, communities coming together, people opened up their homes to people with no power for longer periods of time. That's why I love living on Prince Edward Island.

On social media they're thanking the people out there working on the lines. People on social media thanking them for what they do, the conditions they got to work in. That's why I love living on PEI and doing what I do right here in the Legislature to represent those kinds of people.

What I am disappointed in is this Premier in 2014 sent \$1 million into the cities for snowplowing. Mr. Premier, send \$1 million into rural Prince Edward Island and help the people out there that are begging for food, with no heat, with no power.

That's why I love living on Prince Edward Island because these people pull together right across Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

### Questions by Members

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

### Storm emergency response

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

Today's storm, Sunday's storm, knocked out the power to thousands of Islanders. Maritime Electric has warned that these outages will stretch into Thursday or beyond, for many.

Question to the Premier: Can the Premier, who's responsible for EMO, explain government's lack of response in this emergency situation?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the folks at EMO, the team there, have been in touch with first responders and communities throughout Kings County from Sunday and providing regular updates and initiative together with those responders.

I may say, in response to the previous comment, the Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy is indeed responsible for the roads throughout all parts of Kings County and has been on the job.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Thousands are still without power, phone lines are knocked out of service, and lacking access to water. Environment Canada has issued a special weather statement regarding the storm that hit last night and will continue into the weekend.

Question to the Premier: How long does this outage need to occur before you declare an emergency situation?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, there hasn't been an initiative from any of the communities to ask for an emergency situation to date.

The matter is being dealt with by communities, by provincial services, by Maritime Electric, indeed, by power crews from outside of the province who came in to help who've now been pulled back to New Brunswick. We're keeping an active watch on this situation.

As I said, there's been a report from our director of emergency measures as of 11:00 a.m. this morning and we'll continue to monitor the situation and watch it with great concern.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Storm emergency response financial recourse**

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

The communities did step up to the plate and the communities are dealing with it, but your department has failed to. As the power outages stretch to Thursday and perhaps longer, many Islanders are facing extra costs associated with burst pipes and spoiled food.

Question to the Premier: Premier, do Islanders impacted by days without power, experiencing burst pipes and spoiled food, have any financial recourse for these unexpected costs?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, should it rise to the level of an emergency on the order of the washouts that we had in western Prince in 2015 there are indeed programs that we might pursue for that.

The measures that have been taken by communities – as members on both sides, on all sides of this House – have observed is in the tradition and in the great community spirit of Prince Edward Islanders to respond and to support each other. For folks who have damages to their homes there are insurance policies. If there are people who are without insurance and who have damages we may indeed have some programs that we can (Indistinct).

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

### **Compensation fund**

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

I'm glad the Premier (Indistinct) the subject. There's a bill, *An Act to Amend the Premium Tax Act*, currently before this House. This bill will see the government collect up to an extra \$1 million a year in extra taxes from insurance companies.

Question to the Premier: Premier, will you commit today to set aside a significant portion of this money for a compensation fund for affected Islanders from this extended power outage?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, this is something that we may indeed be able to explore together with communities.

It's not the kind of thing – and I don't think that the taxpayers of the province want me to simply, in the course of Question Period, be hatching whole new programs. But if there are people who are in a bad situation and where the province can help, we'll be very happy to look into that and to explore it. I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition raised it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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



I'm glad you went down that road. Because last winter one of the first acts of this Premier was to give an extra \$2 million to the cities of Summerside and Charlottetown for extraordinary winter storm costs. Rural communities got nothing!

Question to the Premier: Why will you not extend the same care and compensate Island families facing extraordinary storm costs for this extended power outage?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, for starters, I didn't say we wouldn't extend support to Island families, I said we'd consider it.

Let me say, just to go back to 2015 – actually it started in the fall of 2014, that winter – it was for the municipalities who pay for the road services in those municipalities. In our case, the Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy looks after those roads and is glad to do so and we're on the job.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I'll clarify something. Other communities in this province have to pay for snowplow removal themselves. Okay? Remember that, Mr. Premier.

#### **Deleted government email accounts (further)**

Question to the Premier: Whose emails did you delete?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** No one, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Urgent mental health situation criteria**

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

Question to the minister of health: Minister, please describe to this House what criteria would define someone as having an urgent mental health situation?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, we always try to focus on the issues around most in need, most urgent, and I would put it in the hands of professionals that would make that determination.

It would not be me as minister that would determine the severity and acuity of a particular health issue.

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

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

The legislative committee on health was told the average wait time to be getting psychiatry services through the province's community mental health programs is 75 days and that's for adults whose cases are considered urgent.

Again to the minister. That's shocking. What is your plan to deal with this critical lack of services?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, we readily acknowledge that we have challenges in trying to deliver good mental health services in this province.

That's why we've just recently released a new mental health and addictions strategy in this province so we can make sure that we're providing the services that Islanders require, and in as urgent a fashion as possible, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I'd like to remind the minister it took four long years for them to actually come up with the strategy, to actually put something to paper.

We're talking about urgent cases here. Seventy-five days is a very long time. Who's looking after these individuals for the 75 days? Are they being looked after at home, in hospitals? Where, Mr. Minister?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, when an individual has a particular health issue or challenge, whatever, we encourage those people to, once again, deal with their family practitioner.

If it's a case of an emergency or whatnot then it's to go to the emergency room at our facilities across the province. We have QEH, KCMH, PCH, and Western Hospital, and they will deal with the situations accordingly. If it is an extreme urgent situation Islanders will get access to health care services, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

The average wait time for youth who are having urgent mental health issues is 50 days.

Again to the minister: How can that be acceptable to you?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, we are always doing our very best to make sure we provide as immediate service as we possibly can.

When it comes to the issues of wait times, there's a whole myriad of issues that are out there as far as where the wait times may be a little longer than we work on. In our department we are doing our very best to make sure that we have the resources and staff complements to deliver those services

to Islanders in as prudent and as expedient a fashion as possible, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Again to the minister. Island children are still waiting up to three years for psychiatric services, including psycho-educational assessments. Again, I want to remind this minister this is when your government has found \$65 million for a three-minute highway, but when it comes to the health of our children and our families dollars are suddenly tight.

Again to the minister: Why are people with mental health issues not a priority for your government?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member, and this House, that any individual with a health affliction, mental health issues, is a high priority to this government.

That's why we've done significant improvements in our wait times. We are dealing with youth that (Indistinct) dealt with, we're trying to make sure that they have better gains with as early interventions as we possibly can. We've invested over \$750,000 on the most pressing wait times for children.

Those wait times, I might add, at one time were up to two years. We've got them down now to seven and eight months for children with complex needs.

We'll continue to make sure that we reduce those wait times as soon as possible, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Health system and children

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

The minister can get up and quote all the stats he wants, but we know on this side from talking to families, to talking to professionals in the industry, that children are still waiting up to three years for a psycho-educational assessment.

Again to the minister. I recently had a call from a family whose eight-year-old son had been experiencing severe behavioural issues. In fact, this child had to be restrained by first responders for his own protection and taken to the QEH. Upon arrival at the QEH he was admitted for a three-day period. A five-minute telephone referral with the IWK was conducted and resulted in a drug protocol being established. Eventually, a local psychiatrist saw this child and came up with a totally different diagnosis.

The mother was so concerned that upon her child being released from hospital she drove directly to the IWK ER, and within three hours was seen by a specialist, and this action resulted in yet another different but accurate diagnosis.

Again to the minister: Please explain to this mother why your health system is failing to meet the health needs of Islanders.

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure this House that we have some very competent and professional staff here on Prince Edward Island, but there are situations – sometimes a situation might change in an individual's case in a diagnosis.

We do have doctors that refer for confirming a diagnosis to deal with a particular issue that that individual might have.

I'll readily acknowledge when I say that we used to have wait times of two years and we got it down to seven and eight months. We want to do better, but there are significant challenges that we have in not only making sure we attract and retain staff here – some professionals are a challenge to recruit just because of the specialties that are in place.

We're doing our very best, Mr. Speaker, to make sure we deliver good, competent services to Islanders.

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

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

I'm sure if the minister of education would get up he could quote as well that the wait times for these children that are being diagnosed or waiting to be diagnosed with potentially a learning disability or a mental health issue is far too long.

Again, this mother has an eight-year-old child that she's been trying to get an accurate diagnose for for an extended period of time now. I spoke to her extensively. She is not blaming the medical professionals that she's interacted with here on Prince Edward Island, but what she is extremely concerned with is at no time was there access here on Prince Edward Island to a child psychiatrist. She had to travel on her own accord to the IWK for that service –

**Speaker:** Do you have a question, hon. member?

### **Specialist recruitment**

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

Again, to the minister. You can find \$65 million for a highway, but yet you cannot do anything about recruiting the required specialists here on Prince Edward Island. Minister, what are you going to do about this?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, once again, in our department of health care we have a significant budget.

We continue to increase that budget on an annual basis. We've been very fortunate that our Premier and our government has seen a great emphasis on health care in this province.

Once again, when we deal with children, those are our future and we want to do our very best for them. We've implemented a number of programs. We're doing some research currently with UPEI to try to deal with providing – identify specific issues and

how we can better serve children with complex needs, and we'll continue to invest in those types of initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

### Radiation safety regulations

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

To the same minister. The *Public Health Act* is in place to protect Islanders. How and why was the decision made to revoke the radiation safety regulations back on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, once again the safety of our staff is paramount, and when it came to some issues we make sure that our staff are providing those services in a safe manner, and we'll continue to see that happen, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

The minister can stand and say that the health and safety of his staff is paramount, but the revocation of these regulations back on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 essentially eliminates inspection of radiation equipment here on Prince Edward Island.

Minister, how can you say eliminating inspection services of this equipment is showing your concern for the health and wellness of our health care employees?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, when those acts and regulations changed we still make sure that this equipment is safe and operational, and we will be making sure of that as we move forward.

I can assure that any time that there is concerns of a particular piece of equipment we'll be monitoring that and making sure that equipment is operational as soon as possible, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Again to the same minister: What experts did you consult when you decided to eliminate the inspection of this equipment?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, to be more specific I'll have to get that question answered by my department and I'll get back to the hon. member as soon as possible.

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

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

I've been hearing from medical professionals and they are extremely concerned with the elimination of these inspections. Not only just in our hospital facilities, but also in the dental offices as well. They're concerned not only for their health, but the health of their patients. With the elimination of these inspections there are no safeguards in place.

Minister, again, why was this eliminated? Is this just another mean-spirited cut-and-slash by your government?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, just because there isn't a general inspection done doesn't mean that it can't be done by the equipment owners.

If there are private dental operators out there that operate those types of equipment they have every right to install or develop their own inspections.

But I can assure the hon. member that we have consulted with the Workers

Compensation Board before we did this to ensure that, once again, staff are in a safe and operating fashion when they're operating this equipment, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

With that, I'm assuming that the minister is now telling us that our radiation technologists in our health care facilities and our dentists in our dental practices across Prince Edward Island, they're now responsible for taking on the expertise to inspect this equipment.

Is that what you're saying, minister?

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, there are, once again, many operators that use these types of equipment.

Like the hon. member had mentioned, many are in the private sector. It's up to the private sector to make sure that those pieces of equipment are operating safely. Once again, no difference than we are at Health PEI.

Once again, we will make sure that equipment is operational and up to the proper standards of safety as it pertains to our workers and those that are using those pieces of equipment.

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

#### **Deleted government email accounts (further)**

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

Question to the Premier: Whose emails were deleted?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

As I've answered numerous times before the –

**Mr. Aylward:** (Indistinct). It's a simple question. Whose emails were deleted?

**Mr. Currie:** As I've answered numerous times on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, I have taken that information under advisement. I will bring that information back. Looking forward to respond –

**Mr. Trivers:** One or two names –

**Mr. Currie:** – to the work of the Auditor General to make sure that our government lays out a plan and modernizes record information management, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

**Speaker:** Before I go to the hon. Leader of the Third Party for a question, I'm going to give way to the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale for recognition of guests.

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

I'd like to recognize Daniel Roode, a good constituent, and I guess a Newfoundlander who's over here looking after our Prince Edward Islanders. He does a great job with Salvation Army and is a great Rotarian and a great community man. I'd like to recognize him, and shout-out to Gordon MacInnis there, too.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

#### **Agriculture diversification**

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Agricultural biodiversity is essential to the future of farming as it maintains healthy soil, water conservation, soil fertility and biota, pollination, and it provides species with the ability to adapt to the changing environment by increasing their resistance to

disease and their tolerance to the increasing extreme temperatures of climate change.

Question to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries: What is government doing to help diversify agriculture on Prince Edward Island and how is that process working so far?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

I would like to say agriculture is changing on a daily basis. It really is. Our farmers are on top of this on a day-to-day basis.

We practice the four Rs of fertilizer application: the right time, the right fertilizer, the right place, and the right quantity. This is what we need to do. Our soil is the basis of everything we grow. We have to look after our soil and treat it right, and our farmers certainly are doing that.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Third Party, your first supplementary.

#### **Funds for agronomy initiative**

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The agronomy enhancement program, which was initiated in June of this year, is a collaboration between PEI's processing growers, Cavendish Farms, and the government. Its focus is on developing more research funding for the potato processing sector to increase marketable yields while producing environmentally sustainable potato crops.

A question to the minister: How much is the province paying for the new enhanced agronomy initiative, including the project leader position at the potato board?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

We do support the potato board in many ways. If they have grants that we can help them out, if there's dollars we can put into certain programs that will help the industry through the Growing Forward 2 Program. In any ways that we can we work with all of our commodities to make sure that they improve, they grow, and they continue to drive the economy of this province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Third Party, second supplementary.

#### **Agriculture sector spending**

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was hoping for a dollar amount and I hope the minister will get back to me with that.

Supporting Island agriculture is important to rural vitality on Prince Edward Island and it's essential to farmers. I think the minister would also agree that diversity in agriculture makes for a stronger agricultural sector.

A question to the minister: How much does government spend on supports, direct and indirect, for the potato sector, and how much does it spend, in comparison to the potato sector, in all other agricultural sectors?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

Some of those numbers I certainly can bring back to the Leader of the Third Party.

But when we talk about diversity just to look back over the last couple of years in our new Future Farmer Program where last year we had 55 new entrants. Forty-one of those had no agricultural experience before. But they came to PEI, they liked what they saw, and they got into small business, small farms or whatever and carried forward.

This year we have 30 members now in the Future Farmer Program. This is where our future is. We're driving our economy forward, our young people, our new people want to be involved in this. One of the new

farmers was, actually, a 74-year-old gentleman who wanted to get involved.

We help each and every one of those to get started, to do a business plan, whatever it might be, and where we can fund them we certainly will. But this is what we need in our fisheries and our agriculture to drive the provincial economy, and we will be right there with them.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### CADC

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

The province has recently announced it's taken steps to take over the Charlottetown Area Development Corporation.

I'd like a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism: What will replace CADC?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CADC was developed a long time ago, approximately thirty some years, 1974. It was developed for infrastructure and business development. It was basically set up for Charlottetown and Stratford, and as we heard in this House most recently, we always hear the comments about rural development.

I think this is a real opportunity for this government and PEI as a whole to put together something relevant that's going to be from East Point to West Point and everything in between to develop economic prosperity.

We will be starting consultations with communities over the next few months and working closely with different entities, such as the Souris Harbour Authority, and people and organizations like that to put together a plan that will help create economic development.

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

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

Is this going to result in job growth and economic activity in downtown Charlottetown?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

**Mr. MacDonald:** I certainly hope it does. That's our full intention, Mr. Speaker, is to create more economic wealth right across Prince Edward Island.

With technology the way it is today and innovation, and the small businesses that we're seeing popping up in rural PEI, we can't put boundaries on economic development anymore. I think it's very important to recognize the fact that technology and innovation is spreading across the Island.

By limiting it ourselves to the two main centres, whether it be Summerside, Charlottetown, Stratford, I think is a detriment. We have to move outside those boundaries, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's what our intent is.

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

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

The CADC, they have rental units in downtown Charlottetown. Will those rental units be honoured going forward, minister?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

**Mr. MacDonald:** At the present time, Mr. Speaker, there's no planned changes for the rental units.

They are a very important strategic asset to where their locations are and the people that live in them. They're viable economic spin-off, obviously, for a central area of Charlottetown and Stratford and Summerside.

We'll be looking at all of our assets and trying to define what's the best use for any

of our assets or any of our infrastructure going forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

### **Canada 150 celebrations re: PEI**

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

My question is for the Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Following on the heels of Prince Edward Island's very successful 2014 celebrations, Canada will be celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2017. The federal government is the lead jurisdiction in planning of this anniversary and earlier this week the Confederation Centre announced plans for Canada 150.

Minister, could you please tell this House: Has the federal government had any discussions with the province in respect for other celebrations here on Prince Edward Island?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

It's a great question from the Member from Evangeline-Miscouche. He is correct. In 2014 we had a province-led initiative of the celebration of this country, and in April of 2015 the federal government announced over \$200 million for the celebration and the recognition of the Birthplace of Canada. As all Members of the Legislative Assembly, we're well aware of our role as a province in the creation of this great country that we live in.

We're very engaged, and I've been very clear with the federal government that we will and want to be very much a part of that conversation, with support from the federal government, not only in Charlottetown, Mr. Speaker, but in communities all across Prince Edward Island.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. LaVie:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Currie:** Yes, all across, everywhere.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche, your first supplementary.

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

Supplementary to the same minister. The minister indicated that they would certainly be looking to entertain any projects. Do you have any of your own that you'd like to bring forward to this anniversary, Mr. Minister?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

We do have an interdepartmental committee that is working very closely – will be working with Heritage Canada and Canada 150 who will be leading and creating an inventory of the projects, and we are currently working with organizations. Submissions are coming forward.

I'm very optimistic and very excited that communities all across Prince Edward Island will be part of the celebration and the investment to celebrate our place in the Birthplace of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

### **Robert Ghiz records storage**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question to the Premier: Where are the records from the premier's office of Robert Ghiz currently stored?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** They're with the public archives, Mr. Speaker.

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



**Records information management under Robert Ghiz**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you.

I'm assuming it includes the bunch of emails that we're looking for.

Question again to the Premier: Who was responsible for records management in the premier's office under Robert Ghiz?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, we had a very diligent person responsible for records and correspondence who continued to serve into my time as Premier, who served the province for the better part of 30 years, and I'm very proud of the good work that she did.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The *Archives and Records Act* sets out a public records committee that has to approve records management practices and record deletions.

Question again to the Premier: Will you confirm that Melissa MacEachern and Doug Clow were serving on this committee at the time of the egaming scandal?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

As I've shared in the House, I've taken questions under advisement. I've asked today, again, that I would like to have that information, to bring that information forward in respect to the questions that I've taken under advisement.

I'm very pleased with the update I received this morning in response to the recommendations from the Auditor General's report. As the minister who's been at these tables for almost 10 years, I take the recommendations and the work and have

great respect for the office of the Auditor General. We will look forward to bringing forward a record information management strategy for the next five years to modernize electronic health records and policies and procedures into the future.

Thank you.

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

**Egaming re: officials**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately the Auditor General's office is one of the very few offices of the government that's actually still respected and that's because of you guys and some of the things that you've pulled on Islanders over the years.

It was Melissa MacEachern and Doug Clow both sat on this committee, so I'll answer the question. It was: Yes. I'll go back to the Premier again.

Premier: Will you agree with the Auditor General and myself that these senior officials were also at the heart of the ongoing egaming scandal and cover-up?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

I do want to add that we will be bringing forward – and I've had numerous conversations and questions in the Assembly, and have committed to taking the information and questions under advisement.

I'm very pleased that I'm getting briefings this morning on the strategy, and I must say that email protocols have been upgraded. The new email protocols were introduced in July of 2016 to ensure compliance with the act, and coming this spring, as the minister responsible for records information management, I take that responsibility very seriously as we provide oversight for all record management and policies and procedures all across government and government departments, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's great to hear from the minister of education on this file. I wish that the Premier would stop shirking his responsibility to his portfolio, which is the Premier of Prince Edward Island, which is the top of all of this, and it's where all of the trouble started with this file, and it's where all the trouble continues to be, and it's your hiding from it.

### **2007 government guidelines re: email**

The minister is right, but there was also a document that outlined how to handle emails in 2007, and you remember it very well.

Question to the Premier: Are you familiar with the government guidelines that have been in place since 2007 with reference to government emails?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

What I do know is the path forward in respect to the recommendations. I'm very pleased at having the responsibility to modernize record information management as the minister responsible for the provincial archives and record responsibilities.

As I indicated, we're currently doing assessments. Those assessments will be – (Indistinct) to myself as the minister that I will be tabling in this Assembly to make sure that all government departments are meeting their responsibilities and compliances, to make sure that the policies and protocols are being held, and we'll be taking that work very seriously, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These guidelines state that email records must be scheduled and retained for the appropriate period of time.

Question to the Premier: How long were these senior officials' emails supposed to be kept for?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, on the question that the hon. member asked about my familiarity with the regime for looking after official records, within the first week or 10 days of becoming Premier I had a meeting with the public archivist, Jill MacMicken-Wilson, who is responsible for that area, and was given a complete briefing on the regime and the protocols regarding official records, and a very competent staff that works with me to ensure that in the Premier's office those records are well looked after.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Records officer**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question again to the Premier: Why is there no records officer listed in your office?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I'll look into that and come back to the House.

I assume that had to do with the retirement mid-summer of the person who has done that job for the better part of three decades, but I can assure you that someone has the active responsibility for that on a daily basis.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Retention and deposition schedules**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This government's guidelines, the ones that they came up with themselves, point out that

the *Archives and Records Act* states that government records cannot be destroyed or permanently removed from government custody without the development of records retention and deposition schedules.

Question to the Premier: How many records retention and deposition schedules have been approved by the Premier's office since 2008?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I'll have to get back to the House and I'll be glad to do so, take that under advisement, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Destruction order re: emails**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These guidelines also say that absence of these schedules, a one-time destruction order, approved in writing by the public records committee, is needed to approve the destruction of government records.

Question again to the Premier: Will you table the destruction order for the deleted emails that are referenced in the Auditor General's report?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I'll have to see if there is such a record in the first place and I'll get back to the House on that, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Deleted government email accounts (further)**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier would save himself an awful lot of time and effort on this egaming file if he would stop trying to, number one, cover it up, and number two, pretend like he doesn't know things except for when he wants to pretend like he knows things.

You know for a fact that there's not. Will you tell this House today, once and for all, whose email accounts were deleted?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

I did indicate to the member, once again, from Georgetown-St. Peters, that I've asked staff to bring that information forward and once I receive that I'll bring that forward.

I just want to let the Assembly know that we have a strategy that's in place. I'm looking forward to bringing that strategy forward. I have the responsibility under the legislation which falls inside the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture to provide oversight and make sure that the compliance and the training and the assessments of proper modern record management is in place. I take that responsibility very seriously as the minister and I'll continue to work at implementing that strategy to the best of my capabilities.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question to the Premier. You don't have to tell us who, but can you tell this House: Do you know whose emails were deleted?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for public archives and records has indicated on a number of days now that this matter would be looked into, taken under advisement, and bring this back to the House.

The question is: Do I know? There's a minister responsible who has said he would take that under advisement and bring it back. I take the minister at his word, and I, like other members of the House, look forward to that answer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier of Prince Edward Island is making a mockery of this House. He's making a mockery of this House by not answering the simplest of question. The question I asked was whether or not he knew. I didn't ask him to tell the House, I didn't ask for a song-and-dance, I didn't ask for him to tell me the education minister was going to bring it back on some phantom date. I asked him if he knew who it was.

Mr. Premier, will you stop making a mockery of this House today and answer a simple question: Do you know whose email accounts were deleted?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I'd have to say the member opposite makes a mockery of Question Period when he's gotten an answer on numerous occasions that the minister will bring back the answer.

The minister will bring back an answer that I expect will be very complicated. And no, I don't know the answer to the question.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### Matters of Privilege and Recognition of Guests (II)

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you very much for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker.

I'd just like to recognize a very distinguished visitor here in the gallery today, Ms. Hannah MacLellan. Hannah, as everybody will recall, was our 2011 Easter Seals Ambassador.

For those of you who do not know, she is a rapidly developing aquatic athlete here on Prince Edward Island. It's a pleasure to welcome you here today, Hannah, as well as your mother, Stephanie.

Thank you very much.

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

#### Statements by Ministers

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

#### **RCMP Dog Unit**

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about building strong communities and sustained prosperity for Islanders, we need to first ensure that our communities are safe. It is only through safe community that our citizens, our schools, and our businesses can thrive.

The RCMP has a key part in maintaining effective and efficient policing services throughout Prince Edward Island. It is law enforcement like the RCMP who are on the frontlines of maintaining public safety throughout our province.

Because of the important role of law enforcement in our province, I was pleased to learn that the Island's RCMP force has just increased by two officers and six legs. Let me explain.

Constable Kristian Thomsen and his canine partner Fleck, whom we've heard outside a few minutes ago, have joined the RCMP dog team in Prince Edward Island. Their skills will be an important addition to the current RCMP dog team, currently comprising Corporal Marc Périard and his partner Dutch.

Constable Thomsen and Fleck have transferred to Prince Edward Island from British Columbia. Both Fleck and Dutch are trained to search for missing persons and to track suspects, but Fleck brings an additional expertise to the Island: bomb and explosive detection. Dutch, who has been working for the people of Prince Edward Island for four years, has expertise in drug detection.

RCMP police dogs are typically purebred German shepherds in perfect physical condition. They must have particular personality traits which make them suitable for police work: an even temperament, a hunting instinct, and a sound character.

When you combine the canine partner with their handler, the result is a world-class police team.

The RCMP dog service also works in collaboration and partnership with the municipal police forces to ensure all of Prince Edward Island benefits from this specialized police service.

I hope the members of this Assembly and all Islanders will welcome Fleck and Constable Thomsen to the Island as important members of our police services.

And I'm (Indistinct) look around to see if any of our folks are currently in the gallery but I – it was my – they may be next door, so let me indicate that we've got – oh, there we go, Marc.

We've got Corporal Marc Périard, Superintendent Mac Richards, Staff Sgt. Kevin Baillie – I don't see Kevin – and Constable Kristian Thomsen. I'd invite all members to join me in welcoming Fleck and Constable Thomsen.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I've had the pleasure of working with dog handlers and dogs since back in 1985 when I had my first experience. It was in Halifax.

The canine units are an unbelievable resource for the communities and the people at large, and they're a great resource by people. As the Premier went and alluded to, they can be trained in a lot of different areas, from bomb disposal to search and rescue techniques and drug recognition and stuff like that, which is great. They're also used in our airports to improve the level of safety.

I think this is a great addition to the assets of the Island and I wish them all the best.

Thank you.

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

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

We all know there can be a great beauty in the bond between humans and animals, in this case a dog. Constable Thomsen and Fleck - . Const. Thomsen was quoted in the paper the other day as saying that: We're more than a working team, he's my buddy, and that they had been through a lot together. You can't but help be moved by the instinctive kindness and forgiveness that dogs offer us.

Of course, Fleck has some special abilities, to sniff out drugs, but many other dogs can do – we were at a diabetic event last evening, the Premier mentioned in his opening remarks, and there are dogs that can sense when somebody is going into diabetic shock, diabetic coma.

That sort of sensitivity to other humans is just – they can tell when we're having a rough day, too. I know when I go home my dogs will come and comfort me, and that's a beautiful thing. We teach dogs things, and whether they be old dogs with new tricks or whatever, but I think there is much that we can learn from dogs, becoming more empathetic, compassionate people.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

### **Protecting the Public Through Amendments to the Highway Traffic Act**

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

The safety of the travelling public is a top priority for our government. My department works to make sure our roads are designed well and maintained safely, that our licensing requirements promote responsible and safe driving, and that we cooperate with police to make sure traffic laws are enforced on Prince Edward Island.

My department wishes to reemphasize our government's commitment to a road safety

strategy we have called “The Road to Zero,” a strategy that aims for zero collisions, zero collisions with injuries, zero impaired drivers, and zero fatalities.

Today I plan to begin a detailed reading of a number of pieces of legislation bringing crucial changes to the *Highway Traffic Act*. Some are what you might call housekeeping. Others are compliance issues. But there are a number of measures that are quite significant.

Our measures deal with accessible parking, so this measure is timely given that we just observed Accessible Parking Day. We propose to strengthen penalties for unauthorized use of accessible spaces and to make changes that reflect the language used by people who use these spaces. I want to thank Hannah MacLellan for her consultation on this upcoming bill, and I’ll talk more about that later.

Additionally, there will be an amendment to give authority to create bicycle regulations in an effort to modernize the rules and standards for the usage of bicycles on our Island roadways.

Another amendment will prohibit the use of engine brakes in vehicles within speed zones 60 kilometres per hour and less, and at specific times of days when posted on a sign.

Also included are measures against impaired driving.

In addition to our current motor vehicle impoundment rules, we propose to add a vehicle impoundment authority for short-term roadside driver license suspensions, and 30-day vehicle impoundments for first and second offences. We will increase the minimum mandatory ignition interlock term for those convicted of a second impaired driving offence. We will amend the zero blood alcohol tolerance so that no blood alcohol will be tolerated in drivers younger than 22 years of age, and allow short-term roadside driver license suspensions to be added to a driver’s abstract.

Our province is a national leader in the fight against impaired driving, and we will continue to adapt and upgrade our

legislation to combat this very serious problem.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Thank you, minister, for this update. Highway safety is very important on the Island. The amount of impaired driving that we do see is terrible for the population and for the size. I applaud the efforts of all police departments on the Island, including the RCMP, in the work that they do to keep our roads safe, and also the work that highway safety division themselves do to make sure our roads are safe.

That also brings in, in fact, the highway department in the maintaining the roads and the improvements they are making. I know in the village of Bedeque they just did a major upgrade there. Highway 10 and Highway 1A, which was the scene of many fatality accidents over the years, and now hopefully this has been corrected. They realigned the highway and they put in a T intersection, improved the lighting, improved the sight. I applaud the minister with working with me on that issue. It was a great thing.

I must say that these are ambitious goals, and we must make sure that our police departments on the Island have the resources needed to fulfill these goals and to help with them.

One thing I would like to see is the government reinstate the RCMP traffic section that used to be in play but no longer is. Maybe the minister and the department of justice, the Premier, can work together to reinstate the funding for that section.

Thank you.

**Ms. Biggar:** That’s a federal (Indistinct).

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** No, it’s not.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I welcome the announcement from the minister. I think there are many ways in which we can make our roads safer and, of course, we all have an individual responsibility to do that. But government also has a responsibility to make sure that the fines and the rules are sufficiently strong that we can dissuade this sort of thing from happening.

I noted the other day in a tweet from a *Guardian* reporter, Ryan Ross, when he was down at the provincial court here, that on the docket on November 28<sup>th</sup> were 14 impaired driving charges. Obviously the message is not getting through, so I support what the minister is doing. I also support the initiatives in terms of accessible parking and I look forward to debating this in the House later today.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

### New Municipal Government Act

**Mr. Mitchell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today our government is introducing new legislation that will modernize local governance.

Prince Edward Island's new *Municipal Government Act* will raise the standards of service delivery, administration, and financial accountability. It will provide municipalities with greater authority, flexibility, and discretion.

Upon becoming minister in June 2015 I was mandated to conduct consultations on a new *Municipal Government Act* and bring forward legislation that increased accountability, accessibility, transparency, responsiveness, and efficiency.

I believe my department, in collaboration with the Federation of PEI Municipalities,

and all Island municipalities, has achieved that goal with this new legislation.

This legislation has been anticipated by municipal governments for many years, so I want to thank all municipal leaders and members, and all Islanders who participated in the consultation process, for helping us reach the stage we are at today.

This new act will replace three existing pieces of legislation: the *Municipalities Act*, the *Charlottetown and Area Municipalities Act*, and the *City of Summerside Act*.

Key areas of change relate to: new structure and service requirements; how elections are held; council composition and conduct; administrative expectations; bylaw enforcement; bylaw jurisdiction; powers of the minister responsible and; financial matters.

This effort shows how our Island, despite its small size, can come together and accomplish big things.

I look forward to the upcoming debate on the new *Municipal Government Act* here in the Legislative Assembly in the coming days.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wanted to congratulate the minister because I know that he and his staff have been working on this bill for quite a while, and I know it's a bill that's hotly anticipated, especially by the federation of municipalities who have given a lot of input to this bill. The federation of municipalities has raised a number of concerns with this bill and I know the minister and his department have been working to address those concerns.

I know originally the federation of municipalities said they would like to put this bill off until the spring so there was more time to go through the bill, make sure that all of their concerns were addressed.

Recently, just this Monday in fact, the federation has given the go-ahead to the department to move forward with the bill during this sitting of the legislative session even though all of their concerns are not addressed yet, but with the understanding that those concerns will be addressed in the future.

I know that this is a complicated piece of legislation, very comprehensive. I believe the document is on the order of 130 or 150 pages or something around there so I do appreciate the amount of work that goes into it. I also understand the complexities because of the variety of municipalities that exist across province. I wanted to mention specifically the resort municipality which is located in the Cavendish area in my district. I know that they have a unique way that they operate, and I wanted to thank the minister for ensuring they can continue to act the way they have for the last 25 years or so with this new legislation. It's a big concern of theirs.

I know that there have been consultations for this *Municipal Government Act* and I appreciate that. I do think that the vast majority of the requirements have come from the federation of municipalities, and rightly so, because it is the municipalities themselves that live and breathe the legislation that is being introduced. But I think when I look at this bill, when it comes to the floor very soon, it will be through the lens of the Islander who is going to perhaps not live in a municipality, might be in an unincorporated area, or an Islander who does live in a municipality and what it means to them as a person as opposed to the people – the councillors as well as the people who are administering municipal municipalities.

I look forward to thoroughly reviewing this bill when it comes to the floor and making sure that it's good for all Islanders when it does.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, want to commend the minister and his staff on the amount of work that has gone into reaching this point. I know years of effort and thousands of hours of toil have done this. In my own district I have tried to be proactive in anticipating this bill by meeting with all of the municipal governments in District 17 and also providing an opportunity, as the hon. member just stated, for those Islanders who do not live in a municipality to try and figure out how this is going to impact their lives.

I think this is a courageous endeavor. I understand this is a political minefield. However, if this is done properly, and by properly I mean if there has been real consultation – and in this case I actually think the level of consultation was excellent; obviously we're not finished yet – and those people who do not live in municipalities have not had an opportunity yet to participate in this, but if there was proper consultation, if there's a reasonable timeframe between the bill being activated and municipalities being able to adapt to that, and also if, particularly, there are adequate supports offered to municipalities as they plan their transition from today to complying with act – if all of those things are in place then I think this can be a success.

I know there are people out there who are fearful and suspicious of what is going on here, and I don't anticipate a clean road from here to the end, but I think there is much to like here for rural Prince Edward Island, if this is done properly. I think devolving decision making to the most local level is a great thing, and I think we can retain the character of our communities and build stronger municipalities with this act.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Family and Human Services.

**Salvation Army Home Heating Program**

**Ms. Mundy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



Our government is providing support to Islanders who need it the most when they need it most.

Since coming to office we have increased the personal comfort allowance, reduced the cost of drugs through the new generic drug programs, and increased financial help to seniors and low-income Islanders through home repair programs, just to name a few initiatives.

I am pleased to announce that again this year government will provide an additional \$15,000 to the Salvation Army Home Heating Program for the 2017 heating season, in addition to our yearly contribution of \$121,200.

This is an excellent program that provides support to Islanders who are in urgent need of home heating fuel. The program is delivered by the Salvation Army to families across the Island, and applicants are assessed to identify those most in need.

This program was created in 2008 in response to escalating costs of energy prices. Since then, government has provided more than \$1.2 million to this program and has helped an average of 343 households per year.

I would like to thank the Salvation Army in Charlottetown and Summerside for delivering this valuable program and ensuring that those most in need can stay warm during the cold winter months.

And I commend the PEI Petroleum Marketers Association which has donated home heating oil since this program began eight years ago. Members of the PEI Petroleum Marketers Association and associated companies have again made a contribution of 8,000 litres of heating oil to the heating oil assistance program for 2017. This is the ninth year in a row that the association and members have made this contribution to this valuable program.

I would also like to recognize and welcome someone who has already been welcomed in the House today, Major Roode from the Salvation Army, and Walt MacDonald from the PEI Petroleum Marketers Association, who are both here in the House today. We

very much appreciate and value our partnerships.

The program will begin in the New Year.

Islanders can contact the Salvation Army at any time after the busy Christmas season for more information on how to apply.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Ms. Compton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's wonderful news to hear that we're increasing this program to, I believe now, \$136,000. I would like to point out to the minister that we started the program at \$200,000 in 2008 and I don't feel that the need has lessened any for Islanders. I might say that's it's timely, and maybe ironic, that you announce this today when there are so many Islanders huddled in their homes wanting heat at all, but without electricity, do not have it.

I do commend the minister on the announcement. I have some concerns that we are already well into winter and the program is at least five weeks away and there are a number of Islanders who are in need right now.

I'd also like to make a statement to the minister that I hope that those Islanders that are on social assistance, that you are looking after them as well, because I know they are disqualified from this program.

There is a demand out there, we see it over and over again. I just have to make the case that funding has lessened and the criteria has tightened so fewer Islanders are really able to access this. But I do thank the minister and I applaud government for contributing to this program, but I feel that we could do more.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you very much.

Of course, we always welcome more money for the neediest of our neighbours here on Prince Edward Island.

I agree with the hon. member that there are other things that we can and should be doing. All of these home renovation repair programs which are out there have incredibly low thresholds for eligibility, and I hear every winter from constituents of District 17 who are in desperate need who just do not qualify because they are above that threshold. I think we need to expand those programs.

I also think that the Salvation Army program, wonderful though it is, and the Home Repair Programs, wonderful though they are, are really only a transitional patchwork suite of supports that we need to get us to something where poverty is eradicated here on Prince Edward Island.

I think the minister knows where I'm going with this, that we need to have a basic universal income here. I know the minister is in conversation with her federal counterparts and I hope that you continue to promote Prince Edward Island as the perfect place for a pilot for exactly that program.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

#### Presenting and Receiving Petitions

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table a petition for more and better legislation regarding service animals and their owners, handlers, identification, protection and registration, which of course given the visitors today is very appropriate and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Kensington-Malpeque, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

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

#### Tabling of Documents

**Speaker:** Hon. members, pursuant to Section 46 of the *Legislative Assembly Act*, I wish to advise that I have received the 2016 Report of the Indemnities & Allowance Commission. I move that the report of the commission be received and do lie on the Table.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Reports by Committees

#### Introduction of Government Bills

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intitled *Municipal Government Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, that the same be now received and read a first time.

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

**Clerk:** *Municipal Government Act*, Bill No. 58, read a first time.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, this new legislation will replace three existing pieces of municipal legislation, allowing us to implement a modern and progressive framework for municipal governments in our province.

The act will establish consistent rules and procedures for all municipalities and will provide new tools to promote good governance as well as accessibility, accountability, and transparency.

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act (No. 3)* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Alberton-Roseville, that the same be now received and read a first time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Health Services Payment Act (No. 3)*, Bill No. 59, read a first time.

**Speaker:** Hon. minister, an explanation.

**Mr. Henderson:** Mr. Speaker, in consultation with the PEI Medical Society, this bill allows the Executive Council to put regulations in place that would require participating physicians to apply to the minister for approval to change their practice or include any geographical location changes in their services that they provide.

#### Government Motions

##### Orders of the Day (Government)

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, if I could for a moment just do a quick introduction.

Because we have coming before us right now a very special bill. I'd like to introduce the sponsor of that bill, Hannah MacLellan, who came to me as her MLA to see if we could get some legislation in this province changed. She's with her mom, Stephanie Drake. Very seldom do we have young people, high school people, a young lady who was the Easter Seals Ambassador for 2011, a world-class athlete, that has an issue she wants to get dealt with.

She brought it forward, and I was very pleased to forward her on to Graham Miner over here from Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy to deal with that, to get the bill together, and now we're bringing it to the floor. I think the minister is going to invite her to join us on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, 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 Highway Traffic Act*, Bill No. 49, ordered for second reading.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act*, Bill No. 49, read a second time.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, 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 will now ask the hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville, would you please come and Chair this bill.

**Chair (Murphy):** 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 Highway Traffic Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

**Mr. Trivers:** Yes, Please. Yes.

**Ms. Biggar:** Mr. Chair, could I have permission to bring two strangers on the floor, please?

**Some Hon. Members:** Yes.

**Ms. Biggar:** I'd like to bring Graham Miner from highway safety, and I'd like to bring Hannah MacLellan, our former Easter Seals ambassador, who has lobbied for this bill.

I would like to call it Hannah's Bill, but it's called Bill No. 49. I'll be pleased to have her come.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Why don't we move that we change the name?

**Ms. Biggar:** Maybe we could have –

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Maybe we could have a motion to that effect.

**An Hon. Member:** I'll make the amendment.

**An Hon. Member:** I'll second.

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay, there we go.

**Chair:** Hannah, would you mind speaking into the mic, please? Just state your name for the record.

**Hannah MacLellan:** Hannah MacLellan.

**Graham Miner Director:** Graham Miner, highway safety.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I would like to make the motion, before we get into the bill, to rename this bill Hannah's Bill.

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

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, hon. members.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, you may proceed to move the bill.

**Ms. Biggar:** Actually, hon. members, this is a bill, in discussion with Hannah, bringing it forward, it changed wording of the parking spaces.

The former wording has been referred to as disabled parking and for persons with disabilities. Hannah has asked to change it to "designated accessible parking space" and to persons with mobility impairments.

Would you like to say anything about that, Hannah?

**Hannah MacLellan:** No.

**Ms. Biggar:** It's in recognition of the work that Hannah has done to raise awareness for persons with mobility impairments.

We also are going to increase the fees under this bill. That is, you are parking in those authorized spots and you are parked there without proper identification, we are increasing the parking fines from \$100 to \$200.

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

**Chair:** An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act

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

1. Section 206.1 of the *Highway Traffic Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. H- 5, is repealed and the following substituted:

206.1 (1) In this section, "designated accessible parking space" means a parking space that is designated by

(a) a sign bearing a symbol or words approved by the Minister; or

(b) a blue-painted area that may bear a symbol or words approved by the Minister,

and that is set aside for use by motor vehicles used by or for the transportation of persons with mobility impairments.

(2) No person shall stop, stand or park a vehicle on a highway in a designated accessible parking space unless the vehicle prominently displays a valid permit or license plate that includes a symbol or words approved by the Minister to identify the vehicle as being used by or for the transportation of a person with a mobility impairment.

2. The Schedule to the Act is amended by the repeal of the entry relating to section 206.1 and the substitution of the following:

206.1(2) Parking in a designated accessible parking space without displaying approved symbol or words on valid permit or license plate.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Obviously, I agree that this bill is a fantastic move.

How do we ensure that there's more diligence on the enforcement side? How do we ensure that police forces or bylaw enforcement – it depends on where you are – that this is really cracked down on more heavily? Because I think we all see it happen.

**Graham Miner Director:** I can tell you we're going to, through the publicity of what's occurring here – we have met with the Chiefs of Police Association to seek their support of this amendment.

We'll send out bulletins and further information to all the enforcement agencies about this amendment. The fine amounts, how the summary offence ticket part works. Also, conversations with the city with regards to the municipal bylaws, as well.

Also, a little more work with the PEI Council of People with Disabilities, as well, just to make businesses and other agencies aware that they can pick up appropriate signs for their business or their location at no charge, as well.

**Ms. Biggar:** I do know that the council of disabilities, this is a major – the permits that they provide to persons with impairment is a big source of their income for that particular organization, so in consultation with them we will certainly work in consult with them as well.

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to commend the minister and I want to commend you for bringing the bill forward. It's a great effort and a great amount of work done in it.

I see it each and every day in my district. I have a lot of disabled spots in the downtown area. It's disappointing when you see people

in those spots. I hope that this bill goes a long way in avoiding it.

I also want to recognize Marcia Carroll with the PEI Council of People with Disabilities. I know they do a tremendous job in issuing these permits. Marcia, keep up with the great work that you do.

One question: Will this apply to parking lots at the malls and things like that?

**Ms. Biggar:** That's a good question, hon. member.

That is certainly an issue, I know, with persons with mobility problems. I'll let Graham explain a little bit further on that.

**Graham Miner Director:** The answer to that is yes, if it's being enforced by a peace officer or a police officer who has authority under the *Highway Traffic Act*. Because parking lots are also designated part of the highway.

Originally this was introduced under the *Highway Traffic Act* a number of years ago to allow this type of enforcement to exist outside of municipalities where there weren't bylaws, and unincorporated areas, no bylaw enforcement officers. The police could be involved in doing this type of enforcement. Yes, it can be.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Great.

Thank you, Madam Minister.

**Ms. Biggar:** You're welcome.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

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

Thank you, Hannah, for coming today and bringing this bill. It's certainly great and I commend you on the great work for doing this.

Minister, a question was brought to me a couple of weeks ago and I didn't know the answer: Is there wheelchair accessibility in schools, school parking lots?

**Ms. Biggar:** I believe so (Indistinct). It's something we can certainly review, hon.

member, just to be – I'm sure there is, but I stand to be corrected, and I will certainly inquire. It is a good question, and it would be important.

I know I've had requests for some accessible parking spots at some of the churches in the area, so it's something that I think we are becoming more aware of as a community, that it is important that we designate spaces for people with mobility problems and that we need to not only enforce that more but to be more aware of the need for that.

**Mr. MacKay:** Thank you, minister. I didn't know the answer whether they were, and the lady I was talking to said that she had a rough time with the plebiscite vote, she couldn't find a parking spot at the school that was designated wheelchair accessible.

If the schools aren't designated, it could be something that we could look into to make sure all schools have accessibility.

**Ms. Biggar:** I will make that commitment to work through my department with the department of education and public schools to ensure that that is in fact happening.

Hannah, are you aware of any spaces that might be at any schools? Would you like to comment on that? No? Okay. I'm assuming you think that we should have them.

**Hannah MacLellan:** Yeah.

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay.

**Mr. MacKay:** Thank you, minister.

Thank you, Chair.

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

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

Minister, I believe this is under your discretion, but picking up on what the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters said in regards to enforcement, would you consider where we – outside of Charlottetown, Kensington, and Summerside, we have the RCMP. Would you consider increasing the authority of the highway traffic, or the highway safety patrols in that, or do they enforce disabled parking? Maybe that's

something we should look at, that when they're out doing their patrols they could enforce disabled parking.

**Ms. Biggar:** Are you aware of that (Indistinct)?

**Graham Miner Director:** We can do it.

**Ms. Biggar:** We can do that, yes, and we will give that authority if in consultation with the police force association that if they want – we would grant that permission if they so deem that they wish to also be involved in enforcing that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I think that would be a great move, minister. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Biggar:** I absolutely agree.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

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

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

Workforce and Advanced Learning answered my questions about private parking lots, but I will go probably: How many tickets were passed out in the last year for people illegally parking?

**Ms. Biggar:** We'd have to probably bring that back to you, hon. member, and I can table it during committee of the whole at some point. I can get that information. I believe I can get that information.

**Graham Miner Director:** Yes, I know roughly there's not a large number. I could be fairly close, but –

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

This question might have been answered, but it's hard to hear back here in the far corner: When these people are charged and fined, where do the funds go?

**Ms. Biggar:** Goes into general revenue.

**Graham Miner Director:** Yeah, same as any other department.

**Ms. Biggar:** Same as any other ticket that is levied, hon. member, it goes into general revenue.

**Mr. LaVie:** Is there any chance, now that you're upping the rates, that some of this can go back into the council of disability?

**Ms. Biggar:** It is very hard, I think, hon. member to designate certain fines towards specific areas. But I think we are committed to ensuring that we raise awareness through a lot of our programs that we do, and this – the fines that go towards that awareness programs actually through general revenue coming back through departments. I will help that as well.

**Chair:** One more.

**Mr. LaVie:** One more? Thank you, Chair.

We could give to the council of the disabled, and they know better where to fit it, whether it would go into public awareness, maybe someone who needs a wheelchair ramp, and they know best where it's needed.

As you increase this fine, could we make sure that some of this goes back into the council of the disabled?

**Ms. Biggar:** I think that would be something I'd have to take under advisement, hon. member, because I think it involves more than just my department being able to make changes in that regard. We'll take it (Indistinct) back and get some more information.

**Mr. LaVie:** Okay, I think –

**Chair:** Hon. member, if you have more questions we'll come back to you. We have a list (Indistinct).

**Mr. LaVie:** Just a statement. I want to thank you for what you're doing. I've seen this happen, this boost of parking happening in parking lots, so Hannah, I want to – I appreciate very much for you taking this forward, and (Indistinct) appreciate the government for taking the initiative to up the fine on this issue. Thanks.

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

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

I'd like to go on record publicly to thank Hannah for this bill. It's a wonderful bill.

Hannah, you were a great Rotary ambassador. You were one of our better ambassadors. I was there to see that, so thank you very much for being our ambassador and all the hard work you did that year.

I do have a couple of enforcement questions. The hon. member in front of me here asked the questions in regards to shopping centres, because that's where a lot of traffic – do shopping centres actually have access to a bona fide police agency? Like, if police agencies act on priorities, I'm just wondering, do they have a live link to police agencies to prevent or to ensure enforcement?

**Graham Miner Director:** Not our department.

**Ms. Biggar:** That would be under the department of justice, I believe, hon. member.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay, thank you.

The other question. In administering enforcement, if, say, a non-disadvantaged driver was taking somebody to the mall, could they park there and help that person in, or do they drop them off and have to park in regular parking and then come back just so the space wouldn't be used up unnecessarily?

**Ms. Biggar:** It's my understanding, hon. member, that if there is an individual who has a parking permit issued to them that it is transferrable with them from vehicle to vehicle. As long as they're with that vehicle, whichever vehicle they're in would be able to use that designated parking space.

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you, minister. I thought that was the case because I had a situation where I used to take my mother around, and thank you.

And thank you, Hannah.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

I want to also offer my congratulations to the minister and Hannah for bringing this bill forward.

The terminology that we use, the words that we use, are indeed important, and unfortunately sometimes habits die hard. Already in this House we've heard a couple of members who haven't yet adapted to the new terminology of accessible parking spots, but I think the more that we strive to be an inclusive society here – it's so easy to be, without thinking, disrespectful or judgmental in the words we use without even recognizing that we're doing that.

So I very much appreciate what you've done here, Hannah, and I congratulate you wholeheartedly.

Thank you.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

I want to thank the members in my former life. Before I became elected I was an education assistant working with individuals in the school system with various mobility issues, so this is also near and dear to me from that perspective as well.

I want to thank Hannah, and I want to thank the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries for lobbying me as well.

Go ahead.

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

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

I'd certainly like to commend Hannah on bringing this issue forward and making her voice be heard.

I'd also like to congratulate and thank the members in this House for amending this bill so that moving forward it will be known as *Hannah's Bill*. I think that's a tribute to your work and dedication on this, and it just shows your commitment to making our Island better for everyone.

My particular question that I have – or I guess it's more of a concern. We have

accessible parking spaces or spots, whatever way you want to refer to them as. I have a friend who drives a van, it's a side-loading, Tony Dolan, actually. His biggest issue quite often, when he gets to an accessible parking space and he exits his vehicle and goes in to do his shopping, when he comes back out quite often there's a vehicle parked too close to his van so that he can't activate the door and the ramp so that he can get back in.

Going back to what the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira was suggesting, I think we do need to concentrate a much greater effort on education, but not only education for drivers. I'll be honest, it's been a couple of years since I looked at my driver's permit book when I took that exam. I would have to go back and look to see how much information there is in that.

**Mr. Myers:** Printed on a slate.

**Mr. Aylward:** Yeah, okay, it was printed on a slate.

**Mr. Trivers:** It was a steam car.

**Mr. Aylward:** Exactly. I think if there was a greater emphasis on education – and I just have to look at one of the parking lots in Stratford at one of our corporate locations. It just amazes me quite often where there's about three or four spaces lined up in front of the liquor store at Sobeys, and I couldn't tell you how many times I see somebody pull into one of those accessible parking spots, run in, grab a box of beer or whatever they're getting, and run back out. I'm just standing there and I'm befuddled as to why they would even think that that's acceptable. I can't comprehend it.

I think there definitely needs to be a greater focus on education.

One thing I would like to do while I have the floor is I'd like to really thank the commissioners here in downtown Charlottetown for the work that they do. Because I know the number of years that I worked at Confederation Centre, and the accessible parking spaces around the building, and they would come around and they would do their duty. They would ticket those individuals. I saw time and time again, while they were writing out that ticket for a violation of somebody without any mobility



issues parked in one of those accessible parking spaces, I saw the abuse and I saw the vulgarities that were thrown towards these individuals that were doing their jobs.

I would just like to publicly state I salute them for doing their job and to standing up and doing a great job at that.

I guess, in closing, I just want to, again, congratulate Hannah for the great work that you've done on this. I'd like to thank your local MLA for helping with this and bringing it forward, and of course, the department of transportation.

Thank you very much.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, members.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

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

Of course, I want to echo everyone's sentiments and saying thank you for bringing this bill forward. It's excellent. Thank you.

My question has to do with: How did you decide on increasing the fine to \$200? Parking in a designated accessible parking space is such a flagrant and unnecessary violation, right? Why just \$200, why not \$250? Why not \$300? Why not \$500? How did you decide on that?

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll have Graham Miner to answer that because he's with highway safety.

**Graham Miner Director:** It was rather simple. We just simply doubled it, and the maximum is \$500. Additionally, there are also three demerit points with this fine, as well. It's a minimum \$200, a maximum \$500, and it carries three demerit points as well.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay.

**Graham Miner Director:** It is significant.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you.

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay, great.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Family and Human Services.

**Ms. Mundy:** Thank you, Chair.

I just wanted to say congratulations to both the minister and Hannah for bringing this bill forward.

I also wanted to mention the great work that Hannah has done in representing my department, Family and Human Services this past November at the accessible Canada national youth forum in Toronto, I think it was. She was one of 150 young people who gathered under Minister Qualtrough and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to talk about what it's like to move forward with a more accessible country.

I congratulate her for representing my department. She did a wonderful job. I met her in the airport coming back. I was on my back from Ottawa for housing meetings. She flashed me a selfie that she had taken with Prime Minister Trudeau, so she was pretty happy.

Congratulations, Hannah, you do amazing work and you represented my department very well.

Thank you.

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

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

**Ms. Biggar:** I just would like to add in regard to the increase in the fine that it is something that the council of disabled also lobbied for.

I want to thank them for their advocacy as well on behalf of this bill, and on behalf of the work that they do, and thank them for their collaboration.

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

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

**Mr. J. Brown:** I was just wondering, minister, if you could explain for people how the demerit point system works with cars that would be parked in the parking

spot. In particular, I guess, what would be important in that question would be if, say, a young driver borrowed their parents' car and went and parked in the parking spot, obviously the parents could be very sensitive to that kind of thing, but it's the young driver that has to learn the lesson. How do we ensure that takes place?

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll take it, and I stand to be corrected, too, on it.

When a young driver gets their licence initially they start at zero points. They would lose their licence if they were parked. Even if they had a graduated licence they would lose that licence right off the bat. It would be a hard lesson to learn even if it is their parents' car. The car is registered for them to drive, but I'll let Graham explain a little bit further on that.

**Graham Miner Director:** For the demerit points it's when a ticket is written to a driver. So there's demerit points. If the ticket – it's like a bylaw ticket to a registered owner. There aren't any demerit points because you don't have the driver identified. But if you're writing a summary offence ticket under the *Highway Traffic Act* and you're serving it directly to the driver, who is the offender, that's where the demerit points come in.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Okay, yeah. I'd just state, minister, that was exactly what I was wondering about.

The whole thing being, obviously, if you're the parent of that child, it may be easier for you to take the fine and three demerit points, and not say it was my child that had the car that day because you presumably have 12, or hopefully, and money, whereas the child might not. That's what I was worried about, and thanks for answering that question.

**Ms. Biggar:** That's the case sometimes. You might identify somebody speeding, or in cases where people go through the school bus red lights. We can't always identify the driver –

**Mr. J. Brown:** Yeah.

**Ms. Biggar:** – we might get the licence plate, so we can issue a ticket to the licenced

owner of that vehicle, which would kind of do the same thing, okay?

**Chair:** The Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

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

I just wanted to commend you, Hannah. In my previous life I had the opportunity to build a program right here on PEI, and we utilized it across Atlantic Canada, called Access Advisory. It was basically dealing with people with all different types of disabilities, including seniors.

I do want to say this is a great step, but I will continue to advocate for further promotion of accessibility right across Prince Edward Island. I think it's important and we're only one accident away from having a disability, and you got to remember that when you're dealing with these situations. I've worked very closely with Marcia Carroll in developing our program and we've actually moved it the Caribbean.

It's very interesting, Hannah, and I give you all the credit in the world, and you just keep telling people that you want more, and don't stop until you get it.

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

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

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

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

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act.*

**Ms. Biggar:** 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. Biggar:** 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.

Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having had under consideration a bill to be intitled *Hannah's Bill*, 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.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests (III)

**Speaker:** Hon. members, before we carry on I just want to call on the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness for recognition of guests.

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

I want to acknowledge one of the fine gentlemen in the area that I represent. He has a business of Dennis Motors. Brian Dennis is here in the gallery. Dennis Motors is probably one of the premier Yamaha dealerships in the province, and they deal with outboard motors, snowmobiles, motorcycles, and just about anything else that moves and he can sell. I want to welcome him to the gallery here on behalf of the riding of O'Leary-Inverness.

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

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

**Ms. Compton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last week I stood and recognized the great support we had in the Charlottetown Police Services through Ashley MacIntyre. I just want to say that today her duties have increased greatly because her father has joined us in the gallery. David MacIntyre is here and I would just like to welcome him.

Thank you very much.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

Could I recognize some guests as well?

**Speaker:** Yes, go ahead, hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** I want to recognize – we have a lot of snowmobilers here. I'm going to get some of them. I know Dhuey Pratt is the vice-president of the association. Rick Speelman, who is actually from my riding, Martin Hilchey, Dave MacIntyre was already introduced. Actually, Dave's father and Ashley's grandfather sat in this House as an MLA back in the 1970s I believe. Dale Hickox, who is the president of the association and does a lot of work for the association, and of course George Webster sat in the Legislature as well.

This next bill is pertained to that so –

**Speaker:** Hon. minister, before you do that there are a couple of other members that would like to have recognition of guests.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Okay.

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

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

I'm glad that the minister named everybody over there in the snowmobile association, but I would like to recognize Gary Dunning. I think he is in my district. He moves around so much I'm not sure. I think the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism may have stolen him from me, but it's good to recognize Gary here today, and who knows, maybe I'll get a good deal on a Harley.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

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

I will be going on the floor momentarily with the bill, the *Off-Highway Vehicle Act*, but earlier today I recognized the members of the association. However, since then, too, I noticed that Brian Dennis from Eglarville, who is one of my constituents and who owns Dennis Motors Yamaha, is in the gallery here today and is a dealer of snowmobiles, so I'm glad to have him here to support the bill.

Thank you.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, that the 17<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 17, *An Act to Amend the Off-Highway Vehicle Act*, Bill No. 52, in Committee.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, 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.

The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

**Chair (Palmer):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intituled *Off-Highway Vehicle Act*.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

We were having discussion the other day. Could I ask permission to bring a stranger to the floor?

**An Hon. Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Aylward:** Certainly.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you. I'll just wait until Mr. Miner gets here.

**Chair:** Could you identify yourself, please?

**Graham Miner Acting Director:** Graham Miner, director of highway safety.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I know we had some discussions the other day as part of the bill, but before we do go back to line by line I would like to talk a little bit further about our active living on Prince Edward Island of which the snowmobile association certainly attributes to that.

Before I start my – I have a little bit of a statement. I would like again to recognize those who are here supporting this bill, and that is: Dale Hickox, the president of the PEI Snowmobile Association, Dhuey Pratt, the vice-president, Linda Constable, secretary-treasurer, Gary Dunning, owner of Toy Master Motor Sports and Red Rock Polaris, Rick Speelman, a PEI Snowmobile Association trail warden program, Tom Langille, PEI Snowmobile Association trail warden, Tyler Campbell, snowmobile association board member. We have David MacIntyre who is an avid snowmobiler, Darlene Maund, again an avid snowmobiler, George Webster, a very avid snowmobiler, and again, Brian Dennis from Dennis Motors Yamaha dealer.

I may have missed someone but I want to thank everyone for coming here today.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Mr. Chair and members, on Prince Edward Island we are fortunate to have incredible opportunities for active living, be it hiking and biking, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing in the winter months.

We are a small province with many trail networks and active living opportunities, and I am pleased to say that the province is either directly involved or involved in a strong supportive manner in the development and maintenance of these important opportunities.

Bonshaw Hills Provincial Park. As many Islanders are aware, government, with the assistance of a talented committee comprised primarily of NGO representatives, have been busy creating an extended park in the picturesque hills of Bonshaw and Strathgartney. This park, that is now substantially complete and scheduled to have an official opening early next

summer, totals more than 600 acres of beautiful land.

Through government's work with Island Nature Trust, Cycling PEI, Island Trails, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and other specialist stakeholders, a four-season trail system that will include more than 25 kilometres of trail along the beautiful Bonshaw River will be built, while at the same time the environmentally important features and ecology of the area preserved.

To date, 20 kilometres of trail have been built and these trails are already receiving extensive use by the public. The trails are used by families and individuals for hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. There are no motorized vehicles of any type permitted on those trails, and we must say that the ATV and snowmobile enthusiasts have been very respectful of the fact they are not permitted on these trails. I commend those organizations.

Government has also sponsored the construction of a natural playground at the Bonshaw Park. This playground is already being enjoyed by families for fresh air and outdoor family activity. The playground, like the trail system, is a huge success and speaks volumes about our government's efforts and commitments for active living opportunities.

The land in this park is designated as protected under the *Natural Areas Protection Act*, and it is impossible to place a dollar value on protecting such environmentally and socially valuable land for the use and enjoyment of the public for perpetuity.

Other active living opportunities. I want to reiterate that government understands Islanders' desire for active living opportunities and the associated benefits to physical and mental health, and we take those benefits very seriously. To that end, I would like to mention government's efforts and assistance with the Brookvale Ski and Trail Park, as well as our support and cooperative work with Cycling PEI and Island Trails PEI.

At Brookvale there are almost 30 kilometres of groomed cross-country ski and snowshoe

trails that are 100% government funded. As well, there is also a downhill ski park which is, again, 100% government funded. Island Trails PEI has six trail systems spread across PEI that they advertise and maintain for public enjoyment. These trails total more than 50 kilometres in length and are multi-use trails – hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. Again, I am pleased to say that our government provides financial support to Island Trails PEI.

Confederation Trail. We can't forget that government owns and maintains the Confederation Trail. The wonderful trail extends from one end of the province to the other and is enjoyed by hikers, walkers, runners, and bikers in the spring, summer, and fall. In the winter months the PEI Snowmobile Association grooms the trail and the trail is enjoyed by the association's members. The spinoffs from that are phenomenal. We recently signed a new contract with the PEI Snowmobile Association for 10 years. It had previously been for 20 years. I want to commend them for the work they do on those trails and on our seasonal roads that they have been using for the last number of years. That is primarily what the bill that we are doing today will address as well.

Government recently amended the agreement so that the use of the trail only starts when there is ample snow available and ends when the snow is gone. That was a new part of our new agreement. This effectively ensures that non-motorized users like walkers and bikers have sole use of the Confederation Trail for as long as possible until snow arrives. It just has today.

My department has an ongoing initiative as well to expand active transportation opportunities across the province. We work with Cycling PEI to identify priority road corridors that would benefit most from the addition of additional paved shoulders, for example, to enable to improve cycling and pedestrian traffic.

As well, our larger road construction projects such as our ongoing work along the Trans-Canada Highway from Maypoint roundabout through North River, provide for active transportation opportunities for bicycles and foot traffic.

On a related vein, our department works cooperatively with watershed groups on projects that result in outdoor active living opportunities. For example, trails have been created by watershed groups at pond locations where government has supported fish habitat improvement projects.

In regard to close seasonal roads, legislative amendments to the *Off-Highway Vehicle Act* will simply allow, as in this case with this act, for the continuation of the historical use of closed seasonal roads. Snowmobiles have historically used closed seasonal roads that are snow-covered, as have non-motorized users such as snowshoers, cross-country skiers, and hikers. This will not change with this act.

The closed seasonal roads will remain, as always has been the case, not exclusive to any user. Hikers, walkers, snowshoers, skiers, will still be allowed to use these roads as always, as will snowmobiles as well.

Other provinces across the country have similar multi-use trails for these winter activities. An added benefit of our closed seasonal roads is their width. They are much wider than the trails in most other provinces and thus are quite compatible to multi-uses.

In summary, Islanders have access to enjoy incredible opportunities for year-round active living. I am proud of the manner and extent that our government has either directly or indirectly provided for these opportunities, and I encourage anyone wishing to use our trails across the province to contact either my department or department of tourism to get a list of what trails are available.

I want to also acknowledge the work, again, that the snowmobile association do do in grooming the trails and the roads that they use as well. That grooming on those seasonal roads also makes it much easier for those that are hikers or snowshoers or skiers to also use. That grooming is done not at government expense but at the expense of the snowmobile association.

I'm ready to answer any other questions, Mr. Chair, about the bill.

**Chair:** Thank you, minister.

We'll continue with questions.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

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

As I said when you brought the bill to the floor last time, thank you for this legislation to clarify, especially in the case of closed scenic heritage roads, what the rules are regarding snowmobiles and snow vehicles in general.

I did have some questions that some constituents brought forward to me. There are constituents who are avid snowmobilers and they want to say thank you and they plan to use those roads, it's a great thing.

I also have constituents who are avid snowshoers and cross-country skiers and hikers on, especially, the scenic heritage roads. They had some concerns and I just wanted to raise those and get some answers.

Their primary concern – and you alluded to this last time when it was on the floor – was: Is it safe for snowmobilers and skiers/snowshoers/hikers to use the scenic heritage roads at the same time?

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, hon. member.

As I noted in my comments, especially with seasonal roads and the heritage roads, there is ample width in those particular areas to safely use, and they have used for the last 40 years in congruency, those roads. I would say it is as safe as any of us that go walking at any time of day to be able to use those together.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

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

One concern they did raise with me as compared to the two different types of use of the roads, they were worried about the potential noise that snowmobiles can cause. I know one constituent had talked about – in around Oyster Bed Bridge area is where they live – sometimes it can be late at night when snowmobiles come by.

First of all, I just wanted you to comment on whether that's something you considered

when you put the legislation in place, the level of noise, potentially, for snowmobiles. Also, whether you considered if there's any restrictions on times of day when those sorts of vehicles could use the roads.

**Ms. Biggar:** First of all, thank you.

There are regulations that we consulted with in the snowmobile association in regards to speeds on trails near within – was it 100?

**Graham Miner Director:** A hundred metres.

**Ms. Biggar:** A hundred metres of a residence, that they are to not be at any maximum speed any higher than 40 kilometres.

In regard to the heritage roads and the seasonal roads, we don't plow those in the winter so primarily there are not very many year-round residents live on those roads. Technically, if they're on that particular area, it's highly unlikely that anyone is living on that road.

But if they are on the trail, we have had discussions with residents that live near the Confederation Trail – which is not really what we're talking about in this bill – but we are working together with them and they have agreed that they will be placing signs in regard to speed limit. They work closely with the members of their association to make sure that their members who pay a fee to register to go on that trail adhere to the trail. That's why we have the trail warden program, and they work in enforcing those regulations that they have.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you. Another question, Chair?

**Chair:** I'll go here (Indistinct).

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you. I have no problem with the bill. I think it's good, I think there's an industry that's based on snowmobilers that is important in the off-season in Prince Edward Island.

The question I have has more to do with summertime use of the same roads. In my

area, quite a bit of Prince Edward Island, I would call them dirt roads, they stretch everywhere. I know once I get through the other side of Stratford I can pretty well jump on one and crisscross dirt roads all the way to Cardigan.

I'm wondering: Is there ever any thought of making those roads multiuse roads so that ATV users could be on them in the summer?

They're on them anyways because I see them all the time, and I don't think it's a big deal because I think it's a good use of those roads. I think it would draw in a whole other level of people who have machines like that, not just locals but people that would come from other provinces to tour Prince Edward Island back roads.

You can literally go anywhere, and I'm sure the member from Souris' been through almost about all of them –

**Mr. R. Brown:** He'd know them.

**Mr. Myers:** He'd know them all, and they really are everywhere, and I know –

**Mr. LaVie:** I made them.

**Mr. Myers:** – when you're out my way everyone knows if you're on one, then you just slow down when you meet a dirt bike or whatever. I don't think it's that big of a deal.

I think that there would be a great use of those roads and it would grow an industry, and I think it would attract people in from other places to come and tour PEI that way.

**Ms. Biggar:** I would like to, I guess, in answer to that distinguish between the snowmobile or this particular off-highway snow vehicle being on seasonal roads. They are covered with snow –

**Mr. Myers:** I agree.

**Ms. Biggar:** So therefore they don't do the similar damage in spring. For instance, if you're having other vehicles, off-highway vehicles other than snowmobiles, on those particular seasonal roads it does add certainly to the maintenance cost of those roads, and that is a concern.

We had considerable damage to the Confederation Trail by particular off-highway vehicles that are not supposed to be on the Confederation Trail, and it has added a lot of cost to the expense of maintaining the trail in the summertime and repairing that damage, so that is a concern.

We certainly have had discussions with the ATV association on how we can effectively find ways to have opportunities for them to use trails, but in looking at allowing that particular vehicle on seasonal roads, again it is an issue and something that we will continue to have great discussion.

The ATV association are doing great work, working with their members as well, so we will continue to have discussion with them.

**Mr. Myers:** Chair?

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you. I do recognize the difference between what's going on here and what I'm asking for, and I fully support the roads are closed, they're covered with snow. It's a good use for them. No issues with that.

But, I do think – I don't – like, in my neck of the woods you guys didn't even scrape some of the roads this summer so they're already beat up anyways. Before long the only rigs that'll be able to drive on them are the ATVs. Maybe they'll groom them for you, who knows?

I think you have a real opportunity here that's kind of multifaceted. It's an opportunity for tourism and it's an opportunity for finance (Indistinct) I don't own one because I couldn't put the gas in it, but I know my friends that have them, they burn through the gas. They go everywhere with them.

Somebody's making money when people are out ATVing, so it looks like they're having fun. I think it's an opportunity that really should be discussed at some level here on PEI.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, hon. member, and we are having those discussions and working with the organization.

There are a number of particular things that we are working on with them and that is certainly one of them, and how we address some of the issues that we are having with unlicensed ATV vehicles.

I know our farming community use those vehicles for their specific use, and that is not an issue. The real issue that has been a challenge in regard to those particular off-highway vehicles is the damage that they do crossing agricultural fields and a number of other particular areas.

It is something, though, that we are discussing with them.

**Mr. Myers:** Okay, thanks.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the consultation process because I know minister, you certainly consulted with the snowmobile association as you obviously should have done.

I'm wondering whether you consulted with any individual Islanders or groups, perhaps, who may have expressed concern about what this bill will allow to happen.

**Ms. Biggar:** This bill actually allows something that has been happening to legally happen, first of all, just for clarification.

We have had discussion with a number of people that raised concerns, and certainly have met with a number of individuals. I know Graham has been – and our department have met with a number of different people, so I'll let Graham explain a little bit further on the process that we did use.

**Graham Miner Director:** As the minister indicated, we were looking at clarification. In fact, one of the individuals who had a number of concerns really spearheaded this review, sending information into the department about the usage of closed seasonal roads which caused a lot of review.



It became a subject certainly new to me and we started doing a lot of history, looking at this, going back at existing legislation, how these roads were being used. It almost seemed like it was almost a common law approach that it had been going for so long there were assumptions on both sides of this issue as to what was the proper use or not use.

Looking at it, the first thing we did in conversations I've had with different people was to clarify as to whether the *Highway Traffic Act* and the *Off-Highway Vehicle Act* apply on a closed seasonal road or a closed scenic heritage road, and in fact, yes, it does. Because the word "closed" almost gives people an image of barricades on a road when in actual fact all "closed" means is that a road is not being maintained.

If we didn't have any snow this winter, people with their cars would continue to drive through a closed seasonal road, but if they happen to get bogged down or stuck in a snow drift, well, that's not the department's fault.

It's been an ongoing back and forth conversation with different people, from what I can see, for quite a few years. Now it's at the point of the clarification for this act is to state that closed seasonal road is also inclusive of the "closed scenic heritage" road. The term closed seasonal road dates back many years before the other term came out, so it encompassed all those roads, and then those got designated, I believe, in 2005 under that.

This amendment identifies that, and then there's the section of the *Off-Highway Vehicle Act* that then allows for regulations only for snowmobiles to be allowed as motorized vehicles on the closed seasonal roads which includes these roads.

I've been reviewing a lot of this to see different correspondence that has gone on over the years. There have been, for our department, from what I can see, a lot of back and forth. Regulations have not gone through, yet. This is just the act being amended to use those three words.

**Ms. Biggar:** Just for further clarification, back in 1995 when the act was put forward

there was no specific category designating heritage roads. Those came in in 2005.

As Graham said, this has been a historical use of these roads. With some of the questions that arose we felt it was important to review that and to address that so there is clarity on both sides that, yes, a scenic heritage road is still a public use road. We wanted to make sure we clarified that.

Question?

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

My question was not so – and I think I'm fairly aware of the history of how these roads have been used and designated and the sort of unofficial access people have had to these roads for a very long time.

It was more the most recent consultation with Islanders on this. I've been contacted by two separate individuals who were quite surprised when they found out this bill was coming forward having been, as you have explained, sort of fairly active participants in this file for a long time, and were unaware that the bill was coming forward.

I'm just wondering how that happened.

**Ms. Biggar:** Again, as a result of inquiries and getting back and forth to people. Our department undertook a review of that legislation. I think that was a request by one of the individuals to have clarity on whether or not it was, indeed, legal. That is what has generated this.

I know in response to that inquiry, specific, this is what we have thought would be the best way to answer that question. That's why we went forward with the bill.

I believe the individual was aware. They were in consultation with our environmental section that oversees the trails and those particular roads. There have been conversations with individuals who had inquiries and concerns.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

Another gentleman I spoke with this morning presented to a standing committee, it was either earlier this year or it could have been late last year, on damage done to his blueberry farm by snowmobilers who had accessed his private property in order to get from one trail to another.

The concern he expressed to me on the phone this morning was that in opening up these access – and again, I understand they're being used anyway – but in sanctioning that, that in some ways the department may be making it easier for snowmobilers to gain access to private land and potentially cause damage to private property, in particular, farmland.

Do you have any response to his concern?

**Ms. Biggar:** I think the scenic roads often interconnect with Confederation Trail, so in most instances I will have to say that snowmobilers that are licensed through the snowmobile association do not go across other people's field.

We do have some concerns, at different times, that arise, that are special cases. But I think by having this issue clarified that it does provide a route that people know that they can go.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

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

Just curious. The relationship with the snowmobile association – I'm not sure if they're listening or not, Chair.

**Ms. Biggar:** I'm listening.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay. The Snowmobile Association and the province for the Confederation Trail, I understand that's a lease agreement. Is that right?

**Ms. Biggar:** Yes.

**Mr. Trivers:** I'm just curious: What is the amount of that lease and when was it renewed?

**Ms. Biggar:** The lease was a 20-year lease to the snowmobile association. We just recently renewed it. I would have to get the

exact date, but it's probably within the last month. We renewed it for a 10-year period and added, again, a couple of different sections to it that they would be taking that responsibility on about the speed near people's residences. It was for a dollar.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

**Mr. Trivers:** That was my next question. It's for a dollar. Okay, just curious.

**Ms. Biggar:** I should add it doesn't just cost the snowmobile association a dollar. It costs them, in that they are the ones who buy the machinery to groom the trail, they are the ones who enforce the trail through their trail wardens. We do not pay the trail wardens.

They also, as part of their organization, I think it's \$160 million spin-off and I could be – the economic spin-off for the activities that occur.

They do incur a lot of expense to groom the trails. Yes, they get it for a dollar, but they incur an annual expense of keeping those trails up.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

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

As the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, the snowmobiling industry, recreational vehicle industry, is a significant industry and it contributed to our economy.

I have got to give kudos to the organization because I think with every organization comes growing pains. I think they're doing a very good job of enforcement. They're doing a very good job of working with government and communities across the Island to satisfy all the requirements.

I think part of this is going to be a lot of questions asked. Utilizing this legislation, I think, we all know that it happens already, but being able to utilize it, I think, will likely eliminate some of those sledders from going onto the blueberry field and give them more trails.

The snowmobiling industry continues to grow and it will continue to grow. It's big business off PEI. I think we're losing out by not being a part of that big business. Everybody knows friends, relatives, who own snowmobiles and how much money they cost, and how much money buying gas. I know, was it last year?, I believe, that they had the national convention here at Northwinds motel, and it was the first time I think in a long time, maybe even in Atlantic Canada, or Prince Edward Island, that is was ever here, and the revenue that was generated by that.

Coming to that, Atlantic Evaluation Group Inc. is in the process of doing an economic impact analysis. I'd be looking forward as an economic development minister to see the results of that.

Most recently, the tourism industry has done a five-year strategy. Within that strategy they talk about our off-season. I can tell you that this is very important to our off-season.

We have a great organization backing this and I think – in fact, I was just told the other day, and I could be wrong – but I think there's the first snowmobiler guided tours being offered this winter of on Prince Edward Island. I think we're moving in the right direction.

Of course, there are going to be concerns because there's always a bad apple in every barrel. I don't think we can stop progress based on a bad apple. We have to continue, and kudos to the minister and kudos to the snowmobile association for being organized.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, minister.

That's part of the reason in my opening statement I wanted to highlight the availability of trails that are not accessible to motorized vehicles, that we actually have access to Islanders for.

If they are not sure where they can go skiing, if they are concerned about being on a scenic road, I would encourage those people to access the trails that are there free

for use, and would provide them with a list of where those trails are.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

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

I, too, would like to lend kudos to the minister and to the snowmobile association for the wonderful work they're doing.

I apologize in this question but I had to step out for a minute. Is the lease started now for this winter season? What are the dates for that? Could you share that with us or has it already been shared?

**Ms. Biggar:** The actual date on it goes from November 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, but again, we have it open-ended. We left that open-ended so that if there was no snow until the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, as was the case, anyone that is wishing to access the trail in the late fall, if there's no snow it's open to them, same as in the spring. If we get an early spring and there's no snow where the snowmobile association are using it, that is something that will be available to the general public for hiking or biking.

**Mr. Gallant:** Minister, we have snow now, so if from now on until March, if this snow stays, the only people allowed on the trail are snowmobilers? Are we allowed to walk or ski or (Indistinct) trails?

**Ms. Biggar:** Again, I think it would be fair to say that if the trails are not groomed by the snowmobile association they are not really accessible for walkers, but they are there at their own risk when they decide to go on the trail in the winter, walking. They are there at their own risk. But it is meant to be exclusive use for snowmobiles but they can't police a person walking on the trail, but I would advise people to be aware of that fact.

**Mr. Gallant:** Thank you, minister.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

**Mr. Gallant:** Minister, the minister of tourism had some very positive comments and it's great, the economic spinoff from the

snowmobile association, and I thank them for all the good things they do.

I want to shift gears now to the ATV association.

**Ms. Biggar:** Sure you do.

**Mr. Gallant:** Has there ever been any discussion or thought of speaking with the federal government and maybe using some infrastructure money to accommodate the ATVers with a trail that could run, maybe, parallel to the Confederation Trail or somewhere? There seems to be more and more of these machines being purchased and they don't have a lot of places to go. Would that be something that maybe your department could look at in the future?

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, member.

The criteria under the infrastructure funding that we receive from the federal government is very specific. It is not eligibility for building trails. I don't think there is anywhere in the country where any of the infrastructure money under the new Build Canada or the Small Community Funds are eligible to do anything like that.

I do want to commend the Evangeline area and the Tignish area. They have great trail systems built already and we, again, as I had said, are continuing discussions with those groups. We assist those groups themselves to help them do their trails. I just approved a number of culverts to give to one of the ATV clubs in West Prince to help them build some more trails. We do support them in that way to help them out with some of those types of services so that when they, the ATV association themselves, take on a project to build trails, if there's a crossing that they need assistance with putting a culvert, we work in partnership with them to make sure that they adhere to the environmental requirements and we provide those products to them free of charge.

**Mr. Gallant:** Thank you, minister.

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Thank you, Chair.

I just wanted to mention I was actually up in Yellowknife this summer for a Public Accounts conference. In at least the city of Yellowknife, and I'm not sure where else in the Northwest Territories, you're actually able to drive what I'm going to call ATVs and XTVs in the downtown core in Yellowknife. I'm not exactly sure how the licensing system works, but there are some that are licensed and they have the ability to go in there at all times, and there are some that aren't licensed which have an ability to go to certain spots at certain times.

Anyway, I just figured I would mention that. Probably Mr. Miner is aware of that and perhaps you are as well, minister, but I figured I would mention it just to kind of show what other jurisdictions do.

I would note that when I was there I visited with a good buddy who is a Crown attorney in Yellowknife. It took me aback a little bit to see the ATVs going down the street, quite frankly. He indicated that, when in fact one day I walked out of the building that we had our meeting in and there was a police car out in front of the building, in fact I think it was a police station, and a couple of ATVs went rolling by and that took me quite aback.

But anyway, I'll just say he is a Crown attorney, and I didn't go into too much detail with him on it. He had indicated that it actually – their system works quite well up there for the volume of traffic that they had.

It's funny. I just figured I'd mention that.

**Ms. Biggar:** I am aware of that, and that a number of other provinces have allowed that. I am aware of that. Thank you.

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

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

I support this. I think that the joint trails are great for rural areas, and I think that they can work in conjunction with each other.

The question I have is – nobody's asked as a question – but: How many kilometres of roads are we talking about across the Island that this actually takes into place?

**Ms. Biggar:** I'd have to go back. I'm sorry, hon. member. Like, the roads that we close in the winter? I'd have to get that, and I'll take it back and table it and have my highway maintenance give me a list of what roads are – the number of kilometres of roads that we do not plow in the winter. I'll bring that back.

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

With that, then, maybe it might be a good idea for the department to list these roads in the newspapers or in the public, I mean social media or whatever, to let the people of PEI know what roads are now included.

Thank you.

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll take that under advisement. Thank you.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

By the way, personally I don't think there's anything inherently problematic with sharing trails. I just wanted to say that for the record. I think that snowmobilers and snowshoers and cross-country skiers can coexist on these trails, and I am aware of the actual benefits that snowmobilers may bring in grooming such trails so that they're easier to use.

I just want to make clear that the criticisms that I may have inferred in my questions –

**Ms. Biggar:** Yeah, no, that's fine.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I do not necessarily, do not have a problem.

I would like, though, to talk about the complexity of enforcement for ATVs on Prince Edward Island, and snowmobiles as well. I've had several people in my district, farmers in particular but also private landowners who may not be farmers, but who are just driven crazy by people not respecting the laws. That's sort of facilitated by the fact that it's so difficult to enforce this, the access to this, and they're gone immediately.

What, if anything, is the department doing to try and improve enforcement mechanisms for when people do violate the traffic act?

**Graham Miner Director:** (Indistinct).

**Ms. Biggar:** When they're on the trails, hon. member, they are enforced by the trail wardens. Anything off the trails is under the jurisdiction of department of justice, not my department.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Could you sort of suggest maybe what you would like to see done or if you think it's an issue at all?

**Ms. Biggar:** If it's an issue that people are raising, it's something that we can have a discussion on as to how that can be enforced.

The police forces across Prince Edward Island do the best, I'm sure, that they can. If they see an individual in a field and they're in their car on the highway, it's kind of hard for them to get out of their car and go and enforce it –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Exactly my point.

**Ms. Biggar:** We don't have the police force driving around the Island roads in the winter on a snowmobile to catch another snowmobile. Realistically it is hard to enforce those individuals that decide that they're either not going to buy their pass for the trail and use it in that way.

But by and large the number of – how many registered individuals do we have with snowmobilers on PEI?

**Graham Miner Director:** I think it would be approximately 1,800 to 2,000.

**Ms. Biggar:** Yeah, about 2,000 individuals are already registered under the snowmobile association. They are doing great strides in the work that they are doing to encourage people to be registered. If an individual does see somebody that is registered – they have a plate on their machine – they can report it if it's a farmer and they have a camera near their property that registers that particular license plate. All they need to do is report it. The registered owner of that vehicle would get a fine at least for being unauthorized on

that property. That's all I can suggest at this time.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

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

A couple of quick comments. I want to acknowledge the minister and her department for bringing this forward. Vice-chair of communities, priorities and planning. Very familiar with this change and its request. I just want to acknowledge all of the members of the snowmobile association who are in the gallery and just want to say that we're extremely fortunate here on Prince Edward Island to have such a committed dedicated group. During the last 10 years I've got a lot more depth and capacity about the role and been educated on what the snowmobile association is all about.

Very impressed with the openness and the partnership by the association to continue to not only support your association, but to be respectful of all groups across the Province of Prince Edward Island. Keep up the great work, and I am fully supportive of this bill, and look forward to building a stronger relationship with the association moving forward.

Thank you.

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

**An Hon. Member:** Carry the bill.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Just one quick thing. I just want to recognize the members again. With regards to the farm families, I mean, we have Dale Hickox here who is the president of the provincial and the national association, and George Webster who is a past-president of the association, both well-known farmers. The organization puts a lot of money and dollars into the whole association. I think there's something like 2,600 snowmobile families across the province. They have a 50-year history. It accounts for 160 direct and indirect jobs for

the industry. Actually, across Canada, I think it was 2015, this is an \$8 billion industry which means an awful lot to our province.

I just want to congratulate them on that. The farming community, I think, are very pleased with this organization, the way they are organized and responsible for the land.

I agree, let's carry the bill.

**Some Hon. Members:** Carry the bill.

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

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

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

I had a few things I wanted to discuss today, and I know in interest of time and we do want to carry this bill – the only comment I'd like to make is with regards to some statements that were made here today with regards to individuals that are the bad apples out there.

We only have to look at any organization, any demographic. There's always going to be some of those out there that are going to make it difficult for the rest.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Aylward:** No, but there were other comments, minister.

All we have to do is just look at the own bubble that we reside in here in politics and think about some of the things that happened over the last number of years. I guess I'd suggest that that's why people currently are looking at politicians with a sour note because, well, maybe there was some bad apples.

Chair, I wholeheartedly support this bill and I look forward to carrying it.

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

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

**Chair:** *An Act to Amend the Off-Highway Vehicle Act.*

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

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

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

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you, members.

**Chair:** Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having had under consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Off-Highway Vehicle 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.

**An Hon. Member:** Standing vote.

**Speaker:** Hon. members, a recorded division has been requested.

Sergeant-at-Arms, ring the bell.

[The bells were rung]

**Mr. MacEwen:** Mr. Speaker, opposition's ready for the vote.

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

**Mr. J. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. members are ready for the vote.

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

All those voting against the bill, please stand.

All those voting in favour of the bill, please stand.

**Clerk:** The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, the hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy,

the hon. Premier, the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, the hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture, the hon. Minister of Family and Human Services, the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale, the hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville, the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, the hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, the hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, the hon. Leader of the Third Party, the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton, the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid, the hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River, the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, and the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

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

**Speaker:** Hon. members, the bill is carried and it is unanimous.

**Ms. Biggar:** Call the hour.

**Speaker:** The hour has been called.

The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

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

I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that this House adjourn until Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.

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

Enjoy your evening.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 2:00 p.m.