

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

Hansard, Published by Order of the Legislature

Second Session of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly

Tuesday, 6 December 2016

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The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests (I)

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

Point of Order

**Mr. MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on  
a point of order.

On Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the Speaker  
made a ruling on a point of order raised by  
the Leader of the Opposition. The ruling had  
to do with the traditions of the House around  
government announcements.

I'll quote directly from the Speaker's ruling:

"Hon. members, yesterday the hon. Leader  
of the Opposition rose on a point of order  
respecting the traditions of the Legislative  
Assembly on government announcements  
made outside of the House when the House  
is in session.

"Hon. members, I wish to remind  
government, as past Speakers have done on  
numerous occasions, of this very well-  
established custom that any major  
government initiatives or announcements are  
to be made in the Legislative Assembly..."  
and to its members.

"All ministers are expected to be mindful of  
this important tradition when the Legislature  
is in session, and must ensure that all major  
government announcements or initiatives are  
made first to this Legislative Assembly..."  
when in session.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today the Minister of  
Economic Development and Tourism made  
an announcement in Summerside this  
morning in violation of the Speaker's ruling  
as noted.

I would ask you that you remind  
government the well-established customs of  
the House must be respected as you outlined  
in your ruling of April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member, and  
hon. member I will certainly take that under  
advisement and I will get back.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

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

Welcome everyone back to the Assembly  
for another week with you, Mr. Speaker, and  
our erstwhile staff in the Assembly, and  
those in the gallery or watching on the  
Internet or from home.

We've got Gary MacDougall in the gallery,  
a long-time contributor through the public  
media, and Harleigh MacLeod and Rick  
Harvey, Wilfred Richard, and of course  
Eddie Lund, who's been here – missed a few  
days since we started, Eddie.

I want to of course mention – and we have  
the roses here to remind us on the floor of  
the Assembly – that a number of us  
participated, as did many others, at a  
memorial service for the victims of violence  
at Memorial Hall today, December 6<sup>th</sup>, being  
the National Day of Remembrance and  
Action on Violence Against Women.

December 6<sup>th</sup> commemorates the  
anniversary of the massacre at École  
Polytechnique in 1989, and sadly 10 Prince  
Edward Island women who've been  
murdered since those events, and of course  
to recognize the organizers and the  
community that comes together to take up  
this remembrance and the action.

I want to congratulate the East Pointers who  
were recognized as the ensemble of the year  
at the Canadian Folk Music Awards on  
Saturday evening in Toronto, and to  
congratulate in particular the band members  
Jake Charron, Koady Chaisson, and Tim  
Chaisson. I'm sure that all Islanders take  
great pride in their achievement and, of  
course, recognize their talent.

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'd like to welcome today in the crowd two of my constituents, Ricky Harvey and Harleigh MacLeod. Actually, Harleigh's daughter is a Page here in the House, and good to see them both here.

I'd like to also say that this weekend the East Prince Quad Trax ATV club held a poker run on Saturday which left O'Shea's, and there was over 38 bikes involved in it, registered, and it was very well organized, I must say. They gave great talks to the members who were riding on being sensitive to the environment and the importance to obey the rules and conditions of the trails.

At the same time I presented a bunch of the handout books that the government came out with to them, which were also passed out to each rider. It was a good event, and the echo that I heard back from them was that they really are sticking to working with farmers and communities on these trails, which was good.

Also on Sunday night, Borden-Carleton had their first official tree-lighting ceremony down at the Marine Rail Park. There was over 150 people from the area turned out, from kids of all ages, and Santa Claus riding on a fire truck. It was truly a great community-support event that they tried. They also used the lighthouse, which was pretty neat, as a screen projection screen, and they had videos of Christmas stuff play on that. It was well received.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I'd like to welcome everybody back to the House for another week. I'd also like to recognize my friend Gary MacDougall, the former editor of the *Guardian* newspaper, who obviously has put his golf clubs away for the year and can't find anything better to do than come in here and spend the afternoon with us.

I would also like to echo what the Premier said about the moving ceremony this afternoon in the Confederation Centre to remember women.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

It's such a great pleasure to rise here and welcome everyone to the gallery.

I'd like to say hello to everyone back in Evangeline-Miscouche. I know the weather's got a little bit colder in the last couple of days, but hopefully that'll turn around and I wish everybody good health.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I very much appreciate the opportunity to rise today in the House and recognize some guests who are in the gallery today. Most of them have already been recognized, but still in all I'd like to, once again, name a few. Of course, Harleigh MacLeod and Rick Harvey are both here. Both of these gentlemen I've done a fair bit of work with over the last number of years. It's great to have them in the House today.

Eddie Lund is back in. Wilfred Richard is in the House today. I missed him last week when he was in. Obviously, I expect Wilf's in Charlottetown today shopping for a Christmas present for his lovely wife, Ann. It's good to see him in today.

As well, Gary MacDougall is in the gallery today, and perhaps we'll see a story show up in Saturday's *Guardian* related to his visit here today. You never know.

I would like to welcome all viewers who may be viewing in from the Sherwood area

today. I know there are many faithful viewers. One in particular is a gentleman by the name of Charlie Currie who found himself in a bit of an emergency state, get to the hospital here a night or two ago. Maybe Charlie might be viewing from the QEH today, and if he is, I wish him a speedy recovery and back to home.

As well, two more things that I'd like to recognize are two birthdays that I attended this weekend. Eighty-year-old Thelma McInnis had a beautiful birthday on Saturday afternoon with a house full of friends and family. It was great to be part of that. I'd also like to draw some attention to a former deputy minister of agriculture with the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island, Andrew Humphrey, who celebrated 90 years' birthday on Saturday as well. Congratulations to both of those.

**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 everybody to the gallery here. Especially, it's great to see Gary here with us today visiting.

I'd also like to compliment the minister of education, and all the department and all the teachers. There's a wonderful PISA announcement this morning that we're really hitting in the correct direction, and kudos to the students, also.

Also to my daughter Tara who had a part in the PISA announcement this morning. She did just great, and of course, there was a proud father there to see her.

I'd also like to remind everybody that the Rotary Radio auction is going tonight on 95.1 CFCY. It's from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. I encourage everybody to get their tickets out there for a wonderful community cause.

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 to rise today and just welcome everybody watching from District 18 Rustico-Emerald.

Also welcome everybody to the gallery here today, including the press. It's always great to see you here.

I just wanted to say that it was another busy weekend in District 18 Rustico-Emerald. Of course, I was at the Watermark Theatre in North Rustico, Friday, an absolutely beautiful ceilidh there.

On Saturday night there was a country Christmas concert at the Central Queens United Church and it raised I believe it was close to \$500 for the Good Samaritan fund and the local Red Cross, which was excellent.

Then, on Sunday night, one of my favourites, it was the Sunday school white gift service at Central Queens United Church. It was all outdoors with live animals and five scenes. They went through it three times and it was just tremendous with lots of great feedback. I just want to give congratulations to the organizers of that event as well as the children.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I just wanted to give a shout-out to the town of Cornwall. They're doing their Christmas tree lighting service tonight. If anybody's listening, bundle up the kids and head out to that.

Also, to my relative Harleigh MacLeod and friend Rick Harvey, Eddie Lund, of course, and Gary MacDougall.

Talking about out shopping for Christmas, perhaps they're here because they don't want to shop for Christmas, Robert. Anyway, a shout-out to them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

It gives me great pleasure to rise today, as well, and welcome all my colleagues back to the Legislature, and to those District 22 residents who are viewing at home on EastLink or online.

I'd also like to give a shout-out and a heartfelt thank you to Andy Lou Somers and the East Prince Women's Information Centre who also put on a very moving and emotional ceremony today in Summerside at the Presbyterian Church for the National Day of Remembrance on Violence Against Women. There wasn't a dry eye in the House. I do thank Andy Lou for each and every year making sure that for over the last 10 years this ceremony does take place in Summerside, as well as in Charlottetown.

I'd also like to give a shout-out to the Kinsman and Kinettes in Summerside who last night held the EastLink Kin Family Christmas Appeal. Myself and the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot were on the anchor desk with Roger O'Hearn. It never ceases to amaze me the generosity of Islanders. The room was full of talent and people dropping off turkeys and dropping off canned goods and dropping off donations, and people performing all night. It was a wonderful way to kick off this Christmas season. We can't do it without organizations like the Kinsman and the Kinettes. I want to thank them very much for all they do for our communities.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I want to welcome everyone back for another week, especially those watching in District 1 from home.

I want to thank not only the town of Souris, but everybody right across Prince Edward

Island, from tip to tip, who showed up on a wet, cold, rainy day to watch the parade. The people in the parade were telling there was just as big a crowd – if not bigger – than any other year. Christmastime people really come together across Prince Edward Island.

I want to thank the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment. I put a written question to him Friday. On my way home I received a call on that question. That's really appreciated. Questions from the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid are starting to work about unanswered questions in the House.

Not only that, I want to thank the minister. This is the minister that came to District 1, put the rubber boots on, came with me and a friend of mine and walked through the woods for a mile. That's the minister that works and gets along and knows how it works. I appreciate what he did for us. We had an environment issue up there and he assured me that that would be taken care of, so I expect next summer that the problem will be fixed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Sounds like a bridge to me.

**Mr. Myers:** Was it a bridge?

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah. It's a bridge.

#### Statements by Ministers

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

**Carolyn Bateman**

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

It is a great honour to rise to recognize the most recent recipient of the highest honour of Prince Edward Island.

Carolyn Bateman received the Order of PEI for her tireless work to improve her community. She is an exceptional leader and advocate for hundreds of Island families.

Carolyn has worked tirelessly to raise awareness and advocate for the treatment

and education of children with autism. She is the co-founder and past-president of the Autism Society of Prince Edward Island. She's also the co-founder for the Stars for Life Foundation and serves as the current president.

Her personal dedication ensues from her own experiences raising a son who was diagnosed with autism in 1986 at the age of four who is now a successful UPEI student. Carolyn knows the struggles and roadblocks that a parent can encounter while seeking the best options for treatment and education for a child with autism.

Carolyn's dedication has also been acknowledged as a Volunteer of the Year, the Rotary's Paul Harris Fellow Award, the Humanitarian Award from the Red Cross, the Diamond Jubilee Medal, and she was the first recipient of the Joan teRaa Memorial Award.

Islanders with autism have benefitted from the dedication and tenacity Carolyn has shown in improving opportunities for their success.

It is a pleasure to congratulate Carolyn Bateman on receiving the Order of Prince Edward Island.

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

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

**Kate Ryan**

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

Last month JAPEI, formerly known as Junior Achievement Prince Edward Island, announced their volunteer of the year. For the 2016-2017 school year the recipient is Kate Ryan who currently lives in the Charlottetown-Brighton area.

This award is presented to the volunteer that has gone above and beyond to make a difference in the lives of youth and the organization of Junior Achievement. Without the assistance of volunteers like Kate, the organization would not have been able to deliver 236 programs to over 4,700 students across Prince Edward Island in 2015 and 2016.

Kate is a marketing coordinator with PEI Credit Unions. Because of her financial background the program she delivered was a great fit. She spent many hours delivering 25 financial literacy presentations in Island high schools which she could not have done without the backing and support of the Credit Union. The Credit Union has a philosophy of giving back to the local community, and obviously so does Kate. She also provided mentoring with the Company Program –A Student Venture in the Charlottetown area.

I am sure we all know someone who has participated in the JA program, and without wonderful volunteers like Kate this program would not have the success that it has obtained over the years. Kate Ryan is well deserving of the recognition she has received as volunteer of the year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mike and Pam James**

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

I'm pleased to recognize two individuals, Mike and Pam James, who purchased Spring Valley Building Centre in 2009.

A few years ago Mike recognized another potential growth opportunity in the town of O'Leary where a local building materials and hardware storeowner was ready for retirement and looking for an entrepreneur to take over the business.

Mike and Pam did just that, and the vision expanded yet again to a second full service location offering the same great selection, service, and knowledgeable staff as the flagship location in Kensington. Today the visions continue to grow with the expansion of Spring Valley Building Centre by over 5,000 square feet, as well as significantly increasing the warehouse space and expanding their staff to almost 40 employees.

Their commitment to providing customers with expert help and service at the highest level has earned them the distinct reputation

for offering the best store experience. They believe that it's their sense of community that keeps their customers coming back.

Spring Valley Building Centre and O'Leary Building Centre are strong supporters of a variety of local charities, organizations, and sports teams including Prince County Hospital Foundation, Camp Triumph, and the Boys and Girls Club, as well as many local sports teams.

Mike and Pam's continued support of their community does not go unnoticed. We are truly appreciative of their leadership and support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Responses to Questions Taken As Notice

Question by Members

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

**Power outage crisis cheques**

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

Last week we talked about EMO legislation and your government's response to the extended power outages in rural PEI. Many have been critical of the Premier's tone deaf response.

Question to the Premier: Why did you give cheques to the community centres on Friday and not to Islanders who lost food and other essentials?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, we chose to address these issues at the level of the community through the organizations or the communities that had warming centres, who know directly where the greatest needs are.

Each of those communities or organizations that had warming centres received a check for \$5,000. I can tell you they seemed to think it was a very generous move on the part of the province, and I'm very confident

that those organizations and communities will know where the greatest needs are.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Myers:** I certainly heard they were laughing at you.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, I heard the opposite.

I don't think the Premier wanted to directly face Islanders, and clearly the criticism bothered the Premier. I know I have heard it, and the latest CRA poll shows that Islanders are losing faith.

Question to the Premier: Do you think that you running the roads and trolling for photo ops are what the people of eastern PEI needed at the time instead of direct help from you?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the people I saw, and I spoke with them directly on Friday afternoon, believed that \$45,000 throughout those communities is exactly an appropriate response on the part of government and allowing the real initiative to be on the part of those organizations and communities that know where the needs are.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, it's right, it's almost about \$2 per person.

Islanders were looking for real help, not political damage control. The latest CRA poll shows that your leadership is out of touch with Islanders' needs.

Question to the Premier: Why would you not directly help rural Island families during this crisis they faced and only play Santa Claus with the community leaders that now have to pick and choose who gets the money?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I have great confidence in the community leaders and the organizations to whom this financial support was made available, and I'm very confident that they know where the greatest needs are.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Myers:** You sure don't, 18% slide in the polls says (Indistinct).

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, no one objects to helping the community warming centres, but those cheques you delivered will not replace the thousands of dollars of food that was lost.

Question to the Premier: Why would you not work directly with Islanders in the affected areas that are in need of financial assistance from this crisis?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, we are working directly with Islanders through the community organizations and through the communities.

I'm very confident that those people and their leadership, and all of the ways in which they know their own communities, is exactly the way to get the help where it's needed the fastest.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Let's face facts. You passed them a cheque and you ran out the door.

Many Islanders also had to shoulder the extra costs of running to the gas station to fill up jerry cans to run generators.

Question to the Premier: Does the Premier have any concept of what no power means for Islanders and what hardship they had to deal with as this holiday season approaches?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

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

I absolutely appreciate what Prince Edward Islanders went through in many communities throughout the eastern part of the province. When you go through you can also see the trees that are down and what the power crews dealt with. We stopped and spoke with them along the way.

**Mr. Myers:** You should have seen it right after afterwards.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, we responded –

**Mr. Myers:** You waited until all the snow melted before you took your chariot out.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – we responded within five days of the event. Those resources are now in the hands of the people who need it most.

**Mr. Myers:** It's like the Hunger Games. The president finally came.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I can tell you from being through those communities on Friday the help was greatly appreciated.

**Mr. LaVie:** Santa Claus is always on time.

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

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

### **Emergency measures legislation update**

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, the act governing EMO has not been updated since 2000.

Since then, Islanders have had to face seven disasters and seven relief claims have been filed with Ottawa.

Question to the Premier: If we are filing disaster relief claims almost every second year, shouldn't we look at updating our emergency measures legislation?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated on Friday, that is indeed part of the work that is being undertaken as part of the climate change strategy that is being actively worked on, and for precisely the reason that the Leader of the Opposition indicates, and the question that was raised on Friday as well.

But let me say that I was in communities on Friday where those communities have generators and having warming centres and have gathering places – Murray Harbour being a good example – that was put in place directly because of the collaboration of the emergency measures officials in the province, and that's been underway for a number of years now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Most of these claims were related to damage from extreme weather caused by climate change: intense storms, heavy rain falls, hurricanes, and storm surges. This greatly concerns me.

Question to the Premier: Does our current emergency measures legislation give communities the tools and the ability to better prepare against these changes we are seeing in climate change?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the number of communities throughout the province – and I know from my own time on our own municipal council, it was one of the initiatives that was taken through a planning exercise, together with emergency measures, to have gathering places for events, whether they might be caused by weather or through other situations, where the community needs to come to a common place.

That work has been underway. I think that's really the key to where the communities are in terms of how they are looking at the situations. Of course, there are communities that are looking at where they might have additional resources – for example, such as

generators – and we're actively prepared to work with those communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

We see the effects in coastal communities all over the Island. Just this week the folks running the West Point lighthouse were sounding the alarm about recent shoreline damage they are experiencing.

Question to the Premier: Will the Premier answer our call for a review and update of our emergency measures legislation immediately?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

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

As I've indicated, and as the questions imply, this issue is of the moment because of climate change and adaptation and the issues around – it might be coastal erosion, it might be other weather events. The one that we had in West Prince, notably in West Prince – we had it throughout the province – in December of 2014 reminds us that we're seeing more extreme weather.

That's exactly the work that is underway through the climate change strategy and that will be presented in very short order, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

### **Community emergency plan funding**

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

I'm starting to get the opinion, or feeling, that our party is the only party that in this House, that's feeling the pressures of climate change.

When EMO spoke to the standing committee one issue was brought up and discussed, it was having communities develop and update their emergency measures plan.

Question to the Premier: Will you commit to ensuring communities can access funding for help to help them ensure their emergency plans are ready for the future?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition indicates this planning is actively underway with the communities on the question of resources.

It's always a matter of where those resources can be found. I think that you'll find as you go in the communities throughout the province that there's a great sense of enterprise and community leadership. That's, in fact, the way these things get done, and in fact, how the response took place last week to the events in eastern Prince Edward Island. It was at the community and in the organizations and we should be proud of it –

**Mr. Myers:** You did nothing. You waited until Friday.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – and we should be proud of it and we supported them, and they appreciated it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Municipality number**

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

The new *Municipal Government Act* is aimed at creating fewer, but much larger, municipalities in the province and reducing the amount of unincorporated land.

This is a question to Minister of Communities, Land and Environment. There are approximately 73 municipalities now. What is your targeted number of municipalities for PEI?

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

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

Of course, as the hon. member is aware, we do currently have a new *Municipal Government Act* on the floor of the House in committee with a lot of broad discussion going on.

The purpose of this act is to modernize the *Municipal Government Act* that we work under now. It's to make communities and municipalities stronger, to broaden their authority, and to work in a better way for the constituents and the people that they represent, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward.

Thank you very much.

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

### **Initiating of a new municipality**

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

Of course, the minister did not answer the question about the number of municipalities that the target is.

The new *Municipal Government Act* gives the minister the power to initiate the proposal for a new municipality.

Question for the minister: Can you give an example of a scenario that would prompt you to make such a proposal?

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

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

Most pieces of legislation contain parts that give the minister a certain authority to do various things.

My authority under the *Municipal Government Act* does come into play at particular times. For instance, if a council for some reason could not come to an agreement on a particular item that they're dealing with at their council table and decide to walk away as a council, I, as a minister,

have to come up to appoint someone to take over that community. Preferably somebody from inside that community that can keep the business of the day going. That would be one case in particular. Another one may be that there's a possibility that all members of council may be in conflict for a particular item that they're dealing with, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Dissolution of a municipality**

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

Again, that really didn't answer the question about why you would initiate a proposal for a new municipality.

This new legislation also gives the minister the power to dissolve a municipality. This is for the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, a question: What scenario would prompt you to dissolve a municipality?

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

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

I've done my best to make it aware to all members of this Legislature that this new act (Indistinct) municipalities, it provides municipalities the ability to strengthen their authority, to broaden the work that they do now. It's about a bottom-up approach of building communities and that will continue.

Municipalities are already choosing to begin discussion to work together to share some of this new authority that they have and they'll continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Restructuring of a municipality**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, the minister would also have the power under this new Legislation to restructure an existing municipality.

A question for the minister: Can you outline to this House why you would need that power?

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

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

I think it's important to note that when we were out doing our consultation meetings with municipalities all across Prince Edward Island and discussing what this new act would look like, it was extremely encouraging for me, as minister, to sit in the room and watch these municipal leaders from all across Prince Edward Island talking in the backseats about having meetings, having open discussion of maybe how their municipalities could look at coming together to either share service or look at a new boundary restructuring.

I think that's very encouraging that Islanders, right now, can see an opportunity for building the communities in a positive way, for strengthening the work they're doing, and continuing on to make it a better place for their residents to live in, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Removal of ministerial powers re: *Municipal Government Act***

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, supposedly we live in a democracy.

Islanders deserve to have their elected MLAs debate major changes to our Island life here on the floor of the Legislature. Changes like minister-driven proposals for new, restructured, and dissolved municipalities.

A question for the minister: Minister, will you support amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* removing ministerial powers to unilaterally create, restructure, and dissolve municipalities?

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

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

My duty as minister in regards to this new act is to ensure that it's well addressed, it meets the needs of communities all across Prince Edward Island. I have indicated on

numerous occasions to municipality leaders all across PEI that I will assist with them with many different supports that are required, including templates and discussions if they're looking at restructuring or getting larger or getting bigger. Or, in fact, if they think they're not big enough to do the business.

We will talk with them, we will sit with them, and we will help them in any way, shape and form that gets them to the level where they need to be.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Legislative debate on futures of municipalities**

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

A question to the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, will you commit to bringing all future requests to create, restructure, or dissolve municipalities to the floor of this Legislature for debate?

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

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question.

It may be a little late, as the hon. member know, that there's currently a great discussion going on in the east end of Prince Edward Island with seven existing municipalities that are in a strong level of –

**Mr. Trivers:** It's never too later. Bring it to the floor.

**Mr. Mitchell:** – discussion and they –

**Mr. Myers:** (Indistinct) legislators (Indistinct).

**Mr. Mitchell:** – see positive results and are going out into, in that case, in an unincorporated community area and embracing those folks and having a couple of representatives come to their table.

It's a very positive set of meetings that are going on down there, and, Mr. Speaker, I

can guarantee there will be a great outcome down there in the very near future.

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

### **Protection of unincorporated areas**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to amalgamation and annexation there is nothing in this new legislation that dictates how unincorporated areas are to be engaged in that process.

Question for the minister: Minister, why aren't you protecting the right of people in unincorporated areas to have a voice in the amalgamation and annexation process?

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

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

I'd like to go back and reference the seven municipalities that are working very effectively as we speak. They have embraced these unincorporated communities in their area. They have representation on their board. What they have suggested to me as minister and to me as a member of government is: Government, stay out of this, let us carry on, let us have our meetings, let us have our discussions. And it's working really well.

I think that is a very important lesson for myself to learn as minister. Be at the table when I'm asked to be there, but give them the time to do their work that they need to do on their own.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

That's all fine and dandy for people who are agreeable to the process, but we need representation for the people that actually need to have a voice if they're opposed to the process.

This government has no job creation strategy, no rural development strategy, no rural road strategy, no infrastructure

strategy, no land use strategy – in short no plan, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Municipal responsibilities**

**Mr. Trivers:** Question for the minister: Minister, is it your intention to download all of your government's responsibilities onto municipalities?

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

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

What I'd like to do is reference comments quoted in all local media from the president of the federation of municipalities that it is time for this act to be modernized, to be brought up to today's standards. They're working under the 1940s on some of the items that are involved in there.

The federation of municipalities are very excited to see this come to the floor. This is an important piece of work with several stakeholders including municipal leaders, committee of mayors, the federation of municipalities, and staff from CLE. It's a very modernized type of legislation and the president of the federation of municipalities is very glad to see it come.

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

### **Land use policies**

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

The Thompson report on land and local governance was released in 2010 and made several important recommendations. This government has had the power to bring in land use policies for six years now and has made very little progress.

In the new legislation, one of the mandatory requirements for municipalities is an official plan and bylaws, so this is a question for the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment. Minister, your government already has the power to bring in land use policies to ensure our land is properly managed. Why are you shirking your responsibility?

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

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

Our department is responsible for land use planning in unincorporated areas of Prince Edward Island today. I want to assure every member of this House and Islanders that we do a good job of it, we do a great job of it, with the tools that we have in place.

But municipalities that exist today have a much better method of doing things. They have their own planners, they have their own vision for their communities, and I think there's an opportunity for other areas of the Island to look at this, and in some cases to share that with existing municipalities and then strengthen their own communities in a very positive way, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

### **Promotion of cycling**

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

Regular physical exercise such as actively commuting to work promotes a healthy community by enhancing overall health, mood, and longevity, by improving environmental wellness, and by developing a culture of social activity, all of which helps decrease government health costs, not to mention the contribution that such activities make to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

Question to the Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy: Could you describe what actions are being taken to promote cycling in Prince Edward Island?

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

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

That's a great question. We have had the opportunity to meet on a regular basis with Cycling PEI and have great discussions with them in identifying routes. We have, to date, paved and widened shoulders in over 30

kilometres across Prince Edward Island, just recently down in Hunter River and up in Alberton, Seven Mile Road, from Pooles Corner to Dingwells Mills, and as part of our construction across the North River Causeway. Within our plans for the Trans-Canada Highway extension we have already added widened bike lanes at the present time.

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

### Separated bicycle lanes

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

One of the most hazardous lengths in the cycling network of Prince Edward Island is the Hillsborough Bridge which, without bike lanes, is dangerous not only to cyclists but to pedestrians and motorists also. Although progress has been made by Charlottetown, Stratford, and Cornwall independently on expanding bike lanes and trails, an obvious weakness still lies in the connections between those.

A question to the minister: Will government rectify this danger and add separated bike lanes to the Hillsborough Bridge and the entire North River Causeway?

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

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

As noted, more active opportunities are useful to be in place, and I again want to bring attention to the trails that we have developed within Bonshaw park. That's 25 kilometres which are accessible to biking as well.

**Mr. Aylward:** Bonshaw is a long way from Stratford.

**Ms. Biggar:** But in regard to the Hillsborough Bridge –

**Mr. Myers:** Not if you're driving the Premier's chariot.

**Ms. Biggar:** – the other thing that needs to be addressed there is the approaches to the Hillsborough Bridge. It would be useful to have some further discussion with the city of

Charlottetown in regard to the approaches to the bridge.

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

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

Later today I'll be tabling a petition from Josh Underhay on improving cycle infrastructure on Prince Edward Island.

This government has put a high priority on spending –

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

### Societal benefits re: cycling and Cornwall bypass

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** As if on cue. This government has put a higher priority on spending \$65 million on the Cornwall bypass than it has spending a small amount on cycling infrastructure. This is a curious decision given the many societal benefits that active transportation create, notably for health, transportation, tourism, and of course, our environment.

Can the minister explain how societal benefits factor into the decision-making process and somehow make the Cornwall bypass a higher priority than active transportation?

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

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

Actually, the share of the provincial government with the Trans-Canada Highway extension is approximately \$35 million, not \$65 million.

But as part of that project, that actually increases safe passage for those who are biking. It takes a large portion of traffic away from the Cornwall area, but in addition to that we are again concentrating on installing bike lanes as part of that new Trans-Canada Highway extension which will take travellers right across North River bridge into the city.

We will continue to work with the city of Charlottetown on addressing the concerns

and the approaches on the Hillsborough Bridge. We had a great conversation with Mr. Underhay just recently, and we'll continue to meet with Cycling PEI and thank them for their advice.

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

### Police review update

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

My question is to the Premier. In the spring the Department of Justice and Public Safety announced a long-overdue police review involving community consultation that would be complemented by input from the provincial government, elected officials, police leaders, and operational personnel. The consultation was to focus on community safety needs and policing services.

Would the Premier provide the House with information on what stage this report is at?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question to the member.

The policing review started in the early spring. As the hon. member noted, it's been forty years since we've had a review of policing in the province.

We engaged the well-reputed consulting firm of Perivale and Taylor. They've been in the province – were here very shortly after the mandate, for example, of the federation of municipalities. They met with over 150 key stakeholders and policing partners. That work led to a preliminary report in July. There were some further questions raised, and they were asked to conduct some further work, and it's expected that that will be completed shortly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Dumville:** To the Premier: Premier, when would this report be released to the public?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, it'd be my hope to be in a position to present that work through a ministerial statement to the House in the coming weeks, and to share it with the key stakeholders and municipal partners, and to then proceed to implement that work once it has been shared first with the Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Repatriation of former Islanders

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

My question is for the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning. Repatriation of former Islanders is an important component of growing our population and economy.

Minister, could you inform the House as to the efforts your department has undertaken to repatriate former Islanders?

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

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

As everyone in this House knows, the repatriation and retention of Islanders is a major component of the population strategy. The department is working (Indistinct) universities and colleges and seeing where the graduates are located through Canada. But we're also attending events in Calgary. I was at one about a month ago where former Islanders have a dinner each year to get together and talk about – plus they raise money to send people to the University of Prince Edward Island.

There's a lot of smart Islanders out there across this great country and across North America and we are working on bringing as many back as possible because they have lot of talents, they have a lot of investment to bring to Prince Edward Island. We're working extremely hard in identifying them, emailing them, writing them, and inviting them back.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, your first supplementary question.

**Mr. Palmer:** It is likely that the repatriation of Islanders is more likely to be successful if it is done in concert with business recruitment. Does your department have any cooperation agreements with Island businesses aimed at the repatriation of former Islanders?

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

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

That's a great question. We are working with our business community. We're working with EDT. As we know, Islanders are growing older, the baby boom is aging out, and there's a lot of Islanders here that own good prosperous businesses, and they want to transition into new owners. We are working in that area to identify businesses that want to pass them on, not to their family in most cases, but to other Islanders. We're working through the Connectors Program and programs like that to ensure that Islanders have the first opportunities to come back to Prince Edward Island and take over a lot of these successful businesses.

One of them I may mention is Allan machinery. We visited out there. It's a very successful story. We also were at one this morning.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Billing of government (further)**

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

On Friday the Premier and I spoke about emails relating to the government's egaming scandal. The Premier accused me of sifting through the entrails of a vexatious lawsuit.

Question to the Premier: Are you saying that the emails that I talked about Friday are fake?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not.

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

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

Are you saying that the information that I talked about Friday is false?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not.

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

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

Question to the Premier: Are you saying that these people weren't working for the government or on government business in these emails?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, what I am saying and what we've said in the course of last week, and what we came to with the presentation of the multi-year strategy for official records or government records and the approach to emails, is that we are dealing here with thousands of public servants whose email accounts have been removed upon the completion of their government work and that is in the course of good government, proper business practice.

That's where we are as a government is endeavouring to produce good government and to approach emails and other records on a proper basis.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Myers:** On Friday we talked about the emails that could constitute fraud if the Attorney General would actually do something with them. He confirms today that the emails weren't fake, he confirms today that the information was not false, and

he confirms today that the people who were in the emails were working for government. I think he's got another step to take.

### **Billing of government and IT contract**

In 2012, in the Auditor General report, she talked about contract management in the tourism department, and one was an IT contract that was \$50,000. The work was invoiced on the same day that the contract was signed, on the same day that the cheque was actually cut.

Question to the Premier: Would this be the same contract that was talked about in those emails that I brought to the House on Friday?

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

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

The member, what he's referring to is the Auditor General's report that we all received this spring. We're going through the Auditor General's report very methodically. The Auditor General pointed out areas where improvements could be made, where policies could be changed, where legislation could be changed so that there would be clear set rules when it comes to records.

We've gone through that, and the majority of the recommendations have been met, and we'll continue to work through that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

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

The Auditor General's report I was talking about was 2012. You talked about contract management in 2012. It's not about the current one. Nobody's working on anything, you've completely ignored it, and you've spent this whole session of the Legislature trying to run and hide from all this stuff, so much so that a fifth of the total voters of Prince Edward Island today told you exactly what they thought.

Question to the Premier: Can you confirm that the contract flagged in section 4.31 of

the 2012 auditor's report was the contract that funneled payments through the government to Simplex through a local third party contractor of government?

**Mr. Trivers:** Stop covering it up. Stop covering it up.

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

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

Whether it's the Auditor General's report of 2012 or whether it's the report that she just came out with, the Auditor General did make a recommendation with respect to policy on contract and Treasury Board – I think what she said that Treasury Board take action to enforce compliance with its policies because the policy is there.

In compliance with the Auditor General's recommendation on that, the Treasury Board is currently monitoring each and every one of its submissions that it receives, and that recommendation has been met and completed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

It seems funny that the Minister of Finance is the one answering this question, but it was his deputy that we're talking about when he was the minister of innovation. It was his deputy from then that he's sticking up for. Boy, did she ever hang you out to dry, you and many others that came before you.

### **Simplex travel**

Question to the Premier: Did government staff ever travel to Europe to meet with Simplex over their loyalty card program?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I'll have to take that under advisement, Mr. Speaker.

I wasn't Premier at the time, but we'll see if we can get an answer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

It's Tuesday. I feel a little bad for you, you got hammered in the polls this morning, I'll answer it for you. Yes, you did.

In 2011 the staff of the tourism department travelled to London, England to meet with Simplex about the loyalty card program. The tourism department official who travelled to London to meet with Simplex was the same official whose email I was talking about who coordinated this payment through another vendor.

Question to the Premier: Does it trouble you that the tentacles of the egaming scandal and cover-up keep extending deeper and deeper into your out-of-touch government?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, our government received the Auditor General's report on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October.

We asked the Auditor General to look into this nine days after coming to government. We have acted on all 15 recommendations. Our commitment is to take the advice of the Auditor General and to put this province on a strong footing going forward with the best possible government that Islanders and Island taxpayers deserve.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Islanders have said to this government exactly how upset they are with them. One-fifth of the total voters told you today that they wouldn't vote for you in the next election. One-fifth of a drop from what you actually had, so 18% of your total vote.

For nine straight days we've asked. We've gotten no answer at all. You're elbows deep into this cover-up now.

**Deleted government email accounts (further)**

Question to the Premier: Whose emails were deleted?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I think it's very clear to Islanders what the choices are that are being presented by the questions from the other side and the responses from this side, and that is that the opposition is going backwards and we're going forwards.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Question again to the Premier. You seem to like to play games with this. Over here, this is the start of the fourth week of the Legislative Assembly and we've asked questions about numerous things. We've gotten next to no answers. A handful of ministers will sometimes try to answer questions. You make no attempt at all. You like to play games. You like to pretend like you're above the rest of here. You like to pretend that you're better than Robert Ghiz.

Robert Ghiz answered questions in here. You're not even close to what Robert Ghiz was in here.

Question again: Whose emails were deleted?

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

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

It has been shared on the floor of this Assembly numerous times that the Auditor General made some very clear directions. As the minister responsible for records information management all across government I take that responsibility very seriously.

Last week my staff presented to the Assembly, and to Islanders, a three-year plan to modernize records information management. I'm very pleased to say that currently there are assessments being done on government departments to look at

policies and procedures (Indistinct) bringing in legislation in the spring for stronger compliance and higher levels of accountability.

We're hiring full-time staff to support government departments to make sure that records information management is done, and that we continue to modernize records information management.

All government staff will be required to take records management training to ensure compliance. Sufficient capacity will be required to provide safe and secure storage to maintain government records.

**Mr. Aylward:** Imagine what would happen if you just followed the rules.

**Mr. Currie:** Mr. Speaker –

**Mr. Aylward:** Follow the rules, that's all we ask.

**Mr. Currie:** – we're very pleased at the response, and the timely response, and the seriousness that we're taking the work of the Auditor General. Thank you.

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

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

I know how frustrated Islanders are with this government. The poll today should be a great indicator to you that you should be answering this question a little more forthwith. You should be taking this seriously. You shouldn't be getting up reading from a book. Shameful, shameful. You should be embarrassed –

**Mr. Aylward:** What about openness and transparency?

**Mr. Myers:** – you should be embarrassed for hiding this.

Question to the Premier: Why is it more important for you to protect Robert Ghiz and Wes Sheridan than it is to be straight with Islanders?

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, as we've said at numerous junctures in the course of the questions that have been answered, always seeming to look for somebody to throw under the bus, or somebody to oust from their job, or somebody to condemn.

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct) we just want some answers.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** We have taken the report of the Auditor General and the advice of the Auditor General, together with our commitment to openness and transparency and good government, and, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what we're doing together with the support and the leadership and the initiative of a professional public service.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### Statements by Ministers

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

#### **Queen's Counsel Appointments**

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

Two distinguished Prince Edward Island lawyers have earned the prestigious Queen's Counsel designation for 2016.

I am pleased to announce that Catherine Chaisson and Lisa Louise Goulden have been selected as the 2016 appointments to the rank of Queen's Counsel. This honour represents the top recognition in the field of law, and we are fortunate to have these two individuals working and living in our Island community.

Catherine Chaisson was raised in Emyvale, Prince Edward Island. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1986 from UPEI and her Law Degree from Dalhousie in 1992. Cathy was admitted to the bar of Prince Edward Island in 1993. She has been practising law in Charlottetown at Legal Aid in various capacities for many years.

Lisa Louise Goulden was born in Moncton and spent most of her childhood in St. Eleanors, PEI. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1989 from UPEI. She then obtained her Bachelor of Law degree from

Dalhousie University in 1992. Upon graduation, Lisa completed her articling in London, Ontario, and was called to the bar of Ontario in 1994. She returned to PEI, working with Bernard McCabe & Associates until 2001, and then she joined the Crown Attorney's Office.

Lawyers who receive the Queen's Counsel designation are selected by a committee of their peers for their outstanding career achievements and their contributions to the community. I might say that in the case of these two new Queen's Counsel nominees, they have made outstanding contributions to their community in the widest sense.

Presented annually, the designation goes back to 16<sup>th</sup> century England when one or two senior barristers of the High Court were entrusted with providing the Crown with legal counsel.

I recognize the work of these two individuals and thank them for their valuable contributions to the justice system and to our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

The Queen's Counsel, and that award is definitely prestigious and it is a great honour for these two ladies to achieve that.

Ms. Chaisson's reputation, of course, precedes her. I have heard great things about her. Lisa Goulden I have known for a number of years when she first came here and when I was in policing back in Borden and she was in Summerside. Ms. Goulden also worked for me in an application to IRAC once and made it successful.

I have the highest respect for the Queen's Counsel and the honour that it bestows upon it.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to pass on my congratulations to Catherine Chaisson and Lisa Louise Goulden for their contribution not only to the legal community here but also to their contributions – all Islanders, of course, have a responsibility to contribute to their communities, and it's lovely to see people in professions like the legal profession, like lawyers, doing this and being recognized for that.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### Nautican

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

Earlier today I had the distinct pleasure of attending an event to mark the opening of a new advanced marine manufacturing facility in Slemmon Park.

There we announced a partnership between Nautican Research and Development, Babcock Canada, and the province that will see an additional 21 new jobs to the Summerside area over the next three years.

Nautican is owned by a former Islander and Montague resident, Elizabeth Reynolds Boyd. Her company makes high efficiency, cutting edge propulsion units for marine vessels.

Ms. Boyd is a proud Islander, and she's always looking at ways to give back to her home province. But beyond that, she sees the tremendous opportunity for the advanced marine technology sector here on the Island.

It's fantastic to have an Islander like Ms. Boyd support our province and create more opportunities for Islanders.

Brandon Laporte, for instance, has been hired as a welder in this new space. Brandon is from PEI but he has been working out

west for many years. He was on PEI when he was hired and now he doesn't need to head back out west.

Last year we announced our intention to develop a marine technology hub here on Prince Edward Island and things are starting to take off. We have supports in place and we have anchor companies like Aspin Kemp who are making our province a very attractive location for companies in this industry.

But as Ms. Boyd suggested in her remarks today, our most attractive quality is our hardworking, innovative and resilient people.

Islanders have a strong work ethic. We are doers and dreamers.

Our province's small size allows us to be more connected and collaborative. We have a strong core of expertise in the marine technology field and we know how to make things happen.

The addition of these jobs will provide an economic boost in East Prince. It will increase our exports and help reduce our trade imbalance.

We look forward to a long and prosperous partnership with Nautican and Babcock and we commend them for choosing our province as the location for this facility.

Thank you.

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

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

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

Any time there's a ministerial announcement that is bringing jobs to PEI it's a great announcement. Summerside, especially, over the last few years – I know Summerside has struggled on getting business and growth in there, so it is a great opportunity and I'm sure they are quite excited for that, which is great.

Another thing also, any time we can keep people from working out west and coming back home to their families – so it's great to

hear about the young welder that gets to stay home. Hopefully this is a start of many more jobs in Slemon Park. It's a good start. I urge the minister to keep pushing, and especially bringing jobs to Summerside. Over the last few years we have seen a lot of major companies go into Summerside and seem to lose out and head to Charlottetown. I know it was quite frustrating for a lot of people in Summerside.

It's a great news announcement for Summerside and hopefully there is more to come.

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, welcome this announcement. Being an island, of course, we have an intimate relationship with the water around us. This latest announcement is sort of a tip of the hat to the glory days of shipbuilding here in Prince Edward Island in the mid-1800s when we were a booming economy back then.

It is so nice to see that that's coming around full circle again and we now have opportunities to be world leaders again in the marine field, and particularly – a couple of things about this I am really pleased about. One is that it's not in Charlottetown, and that diversification of our economy, not only in the type of things we do but in the location that we do them, is healthy for our Island. Also the fact that this is a green technology. It's about extremely efficient propulsion systems.

So, again, a lot of lovely things about this announcement and I welcome it greatly.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**PISA Results**

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

This morning I joined students, teachers, and partners at the Charlottetown Rural to announce the latest PISA results.

PISA is rigorous assessment of science, reading, and math taken every three years by 15-year-olds in 72 OECD countries. Experts consider PISA to be one of the best indicators of student success and effectiveness of an education system because it tests cumulative knowledge in essential areas near the end of the compulsory education.

I'm pleased to report that the progress of Island students was remarkable in all three domains. PEI moved up considerably in the Canadian standings. We showed the largest improvement in the country in science, reading, and math. We were the only province in Canada to show statistically significant improvement and we had the highest equity in all three domains, making us the Canadian leader in producing equitable education outcomes.

Andreas Shleicher of the OECD summarized PEI's performance best when he said:

PEI still has work to do to reach the performance of Alberta or British Columbia, two of the world's most advanced education systems. But it is advancing fast. In science, PEI's 15-year-old students now compare with their peers in Korea and New Zealand, and clearly outperform students in the majority of OECD countries. In math and reading, PEI has been the fastest advancing Canadian province and, for the first time, students read at the Canadian average, which in turn is the benchmark for much of the advanced world. This shows that it pays off to collaborate with teachers to raise standards, target gaps in learning and bring precision to instruction.

Island students made us very proud today. They are proving that even though we are a small province, we can prepare our students to meet whatever challenges lie ahead for them in their futures.

We also continue to show how we as Islanders are good at working together to do great things. These results are also a reason

to celebrate our teachers. The results we got today did not happen overnight or even since PISA 2012. It happened over several years through the combined work of teachers and staff that took the results of all our assessments and worked collaboratively to raise standards, improve instruction, and close learning gaps.

I ask members to join me in recognizing the success of our students and the amazing work of our teachers.

With your indulgence, I would like to acknowledge the students that have joined us today. I had the chance to meet and talk to them this morning. They are from Charlottetown Rural. These are grade 12 students who participated and are leading the country in the three domains: Bret Cheverie, Parker Day, Annika Landry, Allie Muise, Jason Poley, Owen Ready, Kami Chaisson, and Malek Wolters.

Congratulations to you all.

Thank you.

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

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

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

It's one of those days for me when I feel like this government really doesn't get it. I feel like there's teachers out there that are openly saying that they're now teaching to the PISA test. You're not even letting your teachers teach anymore and you're in here congratulating them and you've got the handcuffs on them.

It's not something you should be congratulating yourselves for. This is the second time I've heard this minister say excellence since he's been minister of education, the second time. It should be a daily word in his vocabulary. It should be the word he gets up and says every single day. It should be the focus of the system.

We have some great and smart students in our system on Prince Edward Island. There's no question about it. There's a lot of students who need more help than they're getting from this government and the report

itself lays that out, that you have a long way to go.

While you're busy patting yourself on the back in here, I think you need to keep those words in your head: excellence, and a long way to go. Because you do have a long way to go to attain excellence here on Prince Edward Island.

There's absolutely no reason that a system with 19,000 students in it couldn't be better than Alberta and British Columbia – like that. There's no question about it, that our system can't be better. We have a lot of work to do according to the report in your own words. Excellence will be important, and it's going to be important for the future here on Prince Edward Island.

Also, reports of taking students out of the classroom so that they didn't write the test – these are things that you would expect to happen in other places, but –

**Mr. LaVie:** Oh, now the truth, here's the truth.

**Mr. Myers:** This is what I hear. I don't know. This is what I hear.

I think that you have a long way to go, and I think nine months of this year you've spent trying to close schools on Prince Edward Island rather than actually focus on the part of the system that is the most important, which is the students and excellence on Prince Edward Island.

I'm going to renew a call that I've made to you numerous times over the past year or so. You need to focus on excellence, focus on the students, and leave this trying to be the butcher of rural Prince Edward Island to someone else somewhere down the road.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Sometimes, I have to admit, I find it difficult to know how to respond to a minister's statement, and this is one of those times. Part of me wants to join in with the minister

of early learning and education and celebrate the improvements in PISA scores that he's just announced.

But there's also another part of me, a larger and I think more persuasive part of me, that's sort of hesitant to do that. It's not that I want to instinctively find fault with government. I mean, I hope I've demonstrated that when I admire or support something government is doing I will say so, and when I feel that they've done something wrong I'm not frightened to lay into them either.

But I think this is more complicated for me, because by the narrow measure of achievement, which is what the PISA scores represent, it does appear that PEI has improved. But learning, I don't think, is always something that you can measure in a test and put a number to.

Instinctively, I hate it when we look at education as a competition, whether that's between Islanders, children on PEI competing against other Island children, or children in other provinces, as we've talked about, or indeed children around the world competing against children in other countries. Education is not the Olympics. That's not what education should be.

Those of us who have more than one child, who are blessed with having more than one child, will know that all children are different. My children are different in their abilities. They're different in their talents, they're different in their learning skills, and they're different in every possible way.

Yet we don't have an education system that responds to that, those individual, unique needs of our children, and as long as we grade our children like eggs or potatoes, then we're only looking at certain characteristics and we're not recognizing the unique genius that resides in every child.

There's one thing I'd like to say before I sit down, and the minister himself said this, that success doesn't happen overnight. This is the result of years and years of work. I wonder whether the improvement in PISA scores that we're seeing today are the results of the changes that have been made 12 or 15 years ago in the system which this

government is now so hastily dismantling. I think that's a question that we need to ask.

While I welcome this news – I absolutely do welcome this news – as the minister said this morning, there's still much work to do.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women**

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

With your indulgence, before I begin my statement, I would like to recognize some members in the gallery from the Advisory Council for the Status of Women, and that's: Mari Basiletti, the chairperson who's from Canoe Cove; Yvonne Deagle, vice-chairperson from Miminegash; Melissa Mullen, treasurer from Lewes; Diana Lariviere – I always get my tongue around that wrong, excuse me Diana – from Argyle Shore; Debbie Langston from Blooming Point; Lana Paul, Melville; and staff members Becky Tramley, Michelle Jay, and Jane Ledwell.

Members, I draw your attention to the roses at the centre of our Legislature for your reflection while I give my statement today.

Every year in December we pause to remember the fourteen women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal who were killed by a man who hated them as women who were studying in a field that had traditionally been considered a male profession.

Today, we also remember women from Prince Edward Island murdered since 1989 by men who knew them.

Memorial services are being held across the province today to mark this sad anniversary.

I would like to draw your attention to two particular events that took place in Charlottetown and Summerside today.

In Charlottetown, the annual service was held at the Confederation Centre Memorial Hall at noon. Candles were lit in commemoration of the 14 women who were murdered in Montreal in 1989, and the 10 Island women who have died at the hands of violent men since that year.

Speakers and performers shared their perspectives on the theme of believing survivors. We mourn women's lives that have ended by violence. We listen, we believe, and we act to end violence against women and children everywhere. The service had a Mi'kmaq welcome by Elder Judy Clark, and the guest speaker was Dima Mreesh from Syria, who has recently moved to Prince Edward Island from that war-torn country. There was a very moving performance, as well, by Kinley reflecting on her experience.

In Summerside, the service took place at noon at the Summerside Presbyterian Church with the guest speaker being the hon. Tina Mundy.

Today it is important to reflect on that terrible violence against women in our own province and throughout Canada, but we must also commit to take action to stop violence against women, to provide the opportunity for everyone to speak out against all forms of violence against women, and take on a moment to recognize the impact of violence on individuals, families, and our communities.

In 1991, December 6<sup>th</sup> was declared as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. In remembrance, Mr. Speaker, I would first like to read the names of those 14 women, with your indulgence –

**Speaker:** Go ahead (Indistinct) minister.

**Ms. Biggar:** – and then ask for a moment of silence. I realize I'm going over my time, but –

**Speaker:** This is a special occasion.

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

I would like to read the names of those 14 women who have lost their lives on this day in 1989 because they wanted to study:

Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte, Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz.

Now, hon. members, I again direct you to the roses that are placed in the middle of the House, and they, again, are a memory of those women and the women on Prince Edward Island who were killed. If I could ask you to stand for a moment of silence.

Thank you.

[There was a moment of silence]

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

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

First of all I'd like to echo the comments made by the hon. minister. To be able to go over to the ceremony today, the service of remembrance and memorial, was very touching for all of us, I think. I recognize the women in the gallery joining us today who all participated in that service, reflect on the roses. It's quite a special occasion when we're able to bring something into the Legislative Assembly and how it represents the 14 women who were murdered in Montreal and also the 10 Island women who we've lost.

It's really hard to believe it's been 27 years since that massacre happened. Although it seems like yesterday, we do have still a lot of work to do as far as violence against women. I'd like each member in the gallery to reflect on that today. We need to recommit ourselves to solutions to prevent future acts of violence. We mourn today with the families of those 14 young women who lost their lives in Montreal and we also mourn with the family and friends of the Island women who've lost their lives.

I want to say how touching the performance by Kinley Dowling was today. Her song, *Microphone*, that she has written is about her own, I guess, experience with violence. I also want to mention Dylan Menzie who accompanied her today and how supportive he was. It was very touching. Kinley is a

strong young woman who I've known since she was a little girl, and I really commend her for speaking out and writing that song.

I just am honoured to rise today and recognize the day and the women who we lost back 27 years ago.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Thank you for the moving statement, minister.

I also want to recognize the women who are with us in the Legislature today. It really was an honour to be at the ceremony today. It was painful, it was beautiful, it was hopeful, all at the same time. It was a very special event. It was an event to memorialize the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. We can't just will this into existence. It's something that requires action from each of us every day.

The last candle that was lit was for peace on earth. We've had some dreamy musicians and some beauty pageant hopefuls talk about peace on earth, but it's something that we can all contribute to every day. In fact, I believe we have a responsibility to do that in everything we do to all people all the time. That's how we will create peace on earth.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

#### Presenting and Receiving Petitions

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

May I take just one minute to recognize somebody before I present the petition?

**Speaker:** Yes, you may.

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

Mr. Josh Underhay joined us while I was making the statement earlier. Josh has been the main moving force behind this petition, so I want to recognize Josh. Looks like you cycled here today. You did.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition from residents of Prince Edward Island and others concerning cycle paths in this province, and I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, that the petition be now received and do lie on the Table.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Mr. Speaker, this petition states:

1) Cycling across the Hillsborough Bridge and North River Causeway is dangerous, particularly when merging and turning. Ridership would increase if people felt safer on these high-traffic stretches of highway.

2) If more people were able to commute by bicycle, the busier routes around Charlottetown would have less traffic congestion.

3) Being more physically active would benefit the health and well-being of Islanders. With separated cycle paths, we would see a more active population, reducing healthcare costs.

4) One car produces 10,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions per year. We must do more to curb our greenhouse gas emissions. Even if only some drivers were able to bike for only half the year, we would still see a significant mitigation of our contribution to climate change.

5) Every year, the average Island household spends \$12,000 on their vehicles. Millions of dollars flow out of PEI's economy to car companies and oil companies off-Island. By cycling more and driving less, we would instead keep more money in our local economy.

Whereas great progress has already been done by the Town of Stratford, the City of Charlottetown, Cycling PEI, and the Confederation Trail in many regards. The

three municipalities have worked together to develop the Regional Active Transportation Plan in 2012. Credit is due for the vision and hard work that has already been done.

There are 316 signatures on this petition. It prays for the Legislative Assembly to urge government to:

1) Establish separate cycling paths along the Hillsborough Bridge and the entire length of the North River Causeway; and

2) Expand the network of cycling paths to fully implement the 2012 Regional Active Transportation Plan.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Tabling of Documents

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

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

Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table written questions for the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

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

Reports by Committees

Introduction of Government Bills

Government Motions

#### Orders of the Day (Government)

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

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Premier, that the 25<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 25, *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act (No. 2)*, Bill No. 56, ordered for second reading.

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

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Premier, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act (No. 2)*, Bill No. 56, read a second time.

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

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Premier, 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 call on the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road to come and Chair the bill.

**Chair (Perry):** 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 Employment Standards Act (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

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

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Chair, may I have the permission to invite a stranger to the floor, please? –

**Chair:** Would you please state your name and your position?

**Adam Peters Manager:** Adam Peters, manager of Consumer, Labour and Financial Services.

**Chair:** Thank you.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Chair, the purpose of this amendment, this Bill No. 2, is straightforward.

In Prince Edward Island currently the inspector of labour standards may order pay recoverable to an employee up to a cap, or to a limit, of \$5,000. Prince Edward Island is

currently the only province in Canada that has such a limit on the pay that an inspector may order to an employee.

This amendment will remove that limit and place Prince Edward Island's legislation in line with similar employment standards, provisions of other Canadian jurisdictions.

There is also a transitional clause that makes it clear, it's subsection (5), that this change will affect applications or matters currently in the system –

**Adam Peters Manager:** (Indistinct).

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Any complaints that come in after the provision comes into force.

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

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Let's wait until you get down to – when you actually start reading there, Chair, the 4(a), and I will wait for my question until then.

**Chair:** Okay, I didn't get – the committee didn't say that they wanted to read clause by clause.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Read it line by line, clause by clause.

**Chair:** 1. (1) Subsections 30(4) and (5) of the *Employment Standards Act*, R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. E-6.2, are repealed and the following substituted:

(4) Where, on inquiry, an inspector determines that an employer has contravened a provision of this Act within the preceding twelve months, the inspector shall notify the employer of any determination made under subsection (1) or (2) and may, by order in writing, direct the employer to

(a) do any act that, in the opinion of the inspector, constitutes full compliance with this Act;

(b) rectify –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Question.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair, I have to wonder about that.

That gives an awful lot of power to an inspector, that he can do any act that in the opinion of the inspector constitutes full compliance with the act. There is no limit on what he could do.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** That's not a major change from the law as it currently reads. The employment standards board has that power. I mean, it really is to order the employer to live up to the act and this extends that power to the inspector.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair, I would like to bring a motion on the floor that:

we add the word into section 4(a) that: do any reasonable act that – so I would like to add a motion, amendment, that the word “reasonable” be placed in there before the word “act”.

**Chair:** Now there is a motion on the floor in section (4) to add the word “reasonable” before the word “act”. Is there any discussion on this?

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I just wanted to – obviously we're not looking for an inspector to do something that is unreasonable.

What you have in these situations is an employer and an employee – where the employee comes forward and makes a complaint that the employer has not lived up to the employer's obligations under the act. As legislation reads, it is that the inspector has the power to direct the employer to comply with the act.

By bringing in the question of reasonable, then it implies that as a matter of course there's going to be an appeal or further challenge which in that case would be to the employment standards board.

I guess I would be concerned that it's going to make this more burdensome, ultimately, for the worker who –

**Leader of the Opposition:** I think it would more protect the worker, Premier. I think it

would more protect the worker and it would protect –

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** – the inspector. It has to be a reasonable justification for any inspector or any police officer or anything to do anything. This would sort of protect him, the worker, and I would say the employee. Otherwise he could just do whatever he wanted. I'm not saying that he would, but he could.

**Chair:** Premier, is there anything else you want to add?

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Really, the point about the reason – and I appreciate what the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting – these decisions have to fall within certain grounds or within certain standards and criteria. It's really the words at the end of this clause that would constitute full compliance with the act.

The reason will be that the employer has not complied with the act, and the act is very specific about the obligations of the employer, so it's not like this is granting some wide discretion to the inspector. There are certain –

**Leader of the Opposition:** I think the wording implies that, though.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** In effect, the inspector is bound to act within this law and so if the person hasn't been paid for a vacation or if the person hasn't been paid the minimum wage or if there hasn't been vacation pay, or for that matter perhaps the person hasn't been paid at all, those are the types of things that are very specific in terms of the requirements or the stipulations of the *Employment Standards Act* and it would be according to those standards that the inspector would have this authority, which is why it says – if you read the opening words of (4) where it says: “...an inspector determines that an employer as contravened a provision of this Act”.

That takes you back to the protection and stipulations of the act, so there's not really any room there for the inspector to be unreasonable.

**Leader of the Opposition:** But if you – Chair?

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** If you do any act that an opinion of the inspector constitutes full compliance – so what happens – and maybe the gentleman at the table can allude to this – if the employer and the employee come to an agreement that may differ from full compliance, but it's agreeable to both parties?

Like, I don't see why 'do any reasonable act' would offer any big change when you look at the wording.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** If I may?

**Chair:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** In the situation that you have described, should it be the case that the employer and the employee have come to terms, then the complaint would be withdrawn by the employee. The wording that is here in the amendment, that is to say in 4(a), is identical to the current wording of the legislation.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Can you show me –

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thanks, Chair.

Can you show me any province in the country that has the exact same wording as what you're recommending?

**Premier MacLauchlan:** We don't have that at hand, but what we're doing here is actually catching up with the rest of the country in terms of that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I understand trying to catch up there, Premier, and Chair.

I almost have to wonder why the wording of it is, if we're not going out there on an extra limb – like, I just take offence, I'll be honest with you. I take offence to the opinion that can do any act that – depending on the inspector constitutes full compliance. I don't see why it would be unreasonable to have in there: do any reasonable act.

At the end of the day, if the inspector wanted to make (Indistinct), well, you've got to do that and jump over the moon at the same time.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Should it be that the inspector orders something that is, I'll say, arguably not aimed at achieving full compliance with the act, there is an ability for either party to appeal the inspector's decision to the employment standards branch.

**Leader of the Opposition:** How does that process work?

**Premier MacLauchlan:** The employment standards branch is a standing group of I believe it's seven members, and they appoint a panel to deal with appeals that come from either an employee or the employer.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who sits on the board?

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I can give their names. I don't have it immediately at hand.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I think it's not asking too much that we insert the word. My assurances aren't being put to rest here. I don't see why we could not have the word, "reasonable", put in there.

I think it's just a check and a balance and it might clarify the wording of it: do any reasonable act that, in the opinion of the inspector, constitutes full compliance. We're not changing anything else in the paragraph, anything else in that whole clause. Just adding the one word, reasonable.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct) real consultation, though, changing that word (Indistinct).

**Leader of the Opposition:** In 25 years of law experience I don't see – and maybe our Brighton lawyer can say something about it, but I don't think reasonable would change anything to it.

**Ms. Biggar:** That's just my question (Indistinct) legal (Indistinct).

**Chair:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I think maybe what we need to do – if this is something that the Leader of the Opposition wants to take to a vote on the amendment. I'd prefer to consult the comparison with other legislative provisions and just to be sure that this would not be, I'll say, bringing in a standard that goes beyond how this is dealt with in other jurisdictions. I think that would be –

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

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

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

Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having under consideration a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act (No. 2)*, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Premier, that the 28<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 28, *An Act to Repeal the Store Hours Act*, Bill No. 55, ordered for second reading.

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

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Premier, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Repeal the Store Hours Act*, Bill No. 55, read a second time.

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

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Premier, 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 call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton to come and chair this bill.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker –

**Mr. Aylward:** Perhaps we could just do an overview (Indistinct) clause by clause.

**Chair:** Go ahead, hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Chair, the *Stores Hours Act* has been on the books for a while.

It became obsolete when the *Retail Business Holidays Act* was enacted in 1992, but the *Store Hours Act* was never repealed. It's nonetheless inoperative because it was really superseded by the *Retail Business Holidays Act*.

When the work was being done on the *Municipal Government Act* it came to light that the *Store Hours Act* is, well, inoperative, it's still on the books, and that it appears, or could be taken to enable municipalities to act in contravention of the *Retail Business Holidays Act*. It was with that recognition that Legislative Counsel has recognized that their advice on the best course of action would be to repeal the *Store Hours Act*.

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

**Premier MacLauchlan:** I move the title.

**Chair:** *An Act to Repeal the Store Hours Act*.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** 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.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair and the Chair report the bill agreed to without 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 *An Act to Repeal the Store Hours Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has gone through the said bill and has agreed to same without amendment. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Finance, that the 1<sup>st</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk:** Order No. 1, Consideration of the Estimates, in Committee.

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

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the grant of supply to Her Majesty.

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

I will now call on the hon. Deputy Speaker to come and Chair the Committee of the Whole House.

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

Hon. members, we are on page nine of the Capital Budget. I'll direct you to the section for Bus Replacement that has been read, and we've had lengthy discussion on that section.

Minister, would you like to take somebody on the floor?

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, I'd like to bring a stranger on the floor, Madam Chair.

**Chair:** Permission to bring a stranger on the floor? Granted.

Good afternoon.

**Jim Miles Executive Director:** Good afternoon.

**Chair:** Could you introduce yourself and your title for the record, please?

**Jim Miles Executive Director:** Jim Miles, executive director of fiscal management.

**Chair:** Minister, you had a statement to make?

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, Madam Chair.

Last time we were sitting here there was a number of questions asked and I would like to provide the answers to those questions before proceeding, if everybody's agreeable.

**Chair:** Great, carry on minister. Thank you.

**Mr. Roach:** Okay, one of the questions was how many children were allowed to sit in a seat. Primarily, buses are built for three passengers per seat. The standard is 70 passengers per bus: 11 rows of two seats holding three passengers each plus one row of two seats holding two passengers.

We confirmed with the Public Schools Branch that they felt that were no buses that were overcapacity at this time. However, anyone with a concern or a complaint should contact the transportation section of the Public Schools Branch to discuss the specific situation.

The next question was: Is there a policy regarding where a bus is parked at night? Buses are parked at locations that are deemed safe by our transportation services section, and in reasonably close proximity to the route they service. The drivers would primarily park their buses at one of the bus depots, their own home, or at an alternate location approved by transportation services.

Efforts are made to locate parking locations that are within eight kilometres of the starting location of the route to minimize the volume of dead kilometres travelled each day.

Another question was: How many cameras are on buses? At current time, there are 11 exterior bus cameras across PEI. The cameras are not portable between buses. However, the Public Schools Branch does move the buses and will move the buses with exterior cameras to problem routes with high incidents of pass-bys if required. There just needs to be a request made.

How much are the cameras? The unofficial quotes received range from \$2,500 to \$7,500 depending on features and quality of the camera. In order to provide sufficient evidence in court, the camera needs to provide: evidence that the yellow lights were activated within appropriate length of time; the stop arm and red lights were on when the driver passed; a clear view of the license plate; and the time and location of the incident. That would normally be determined within the camera that would have a GPS system.

Even if the camera provides all the criteria in the picture, this in itself is insufficient to prosecute. The testimony of witnesses, for example the bus driver, is also required.

They say that, basically, a dash cam camera cannot fulfill all those requirements that would provide evidence suitable for court.

When do we expect all buses to have cameras? There is no plan to install exterior cameras on all buses at this time. No jurisdiction across Canada has cameras on all buses.

Transportation services at Public Schools Branch continues to forward all reports from

drivers of the illegal passing of buses to the appropriate policing agency.

Also, the 10 buses purchased this year will include a second stop arm near the rear of the bus to try and increase visibility and reduce pass-by incidents. This approach is preventative versus cameras which is a monitoring tool.

Another question was: Do we undercoat buses annually? No. Off-the-shelf undercoating products cannot be applied to buses during the warranty period of five years. The manufacturer applies undercoating at the plant, and an application of another product on top of theirs voids the warranty due to concerns of how an off-the-shelf product may react with their own product.

Additionally, another province tested off-the-shelf undercoating over the life of a bus for one year of bus purchases. They undercoated half the buses annually after the warranty period expired. The analysis found that there were no significant differences in corrosion and repair costs between undercoated buses and the buses with no additional undercoating applied.

Next question was EDU buses, education buses versus public transit. The current public transit system does not have the infrastructure in place to support the 17,000-plus students who ride the bus to PEI schools every day. The public transit system is not in every community in PEI and does not have stops in every neighbourhood. Pickup locations are less than a kilometre from the student's house. Even in Toronto the school district buses young children up to grade 5. Afterwards they are required to use public transit. There are concerns about putting young students, as young as four years old in kindergarten, on buses with the general public.

Madam Chair, that's the responses I have for those.

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

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

I was just wondering if the minister of transportation had the information that I had requested as well.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I do, Madam Chair.

I just thought perhaps when we come to my section, since it's under the – it's not really under department of education that that particular hydrogen bus demonstration project took place, but I can –

**Mr. Aylward:** Yeah, that's fine.

**Chair:** Okay, that's great, minister, when you come to the floor, if you could bring it (Indistinct).

**Ms. Biggar:** Yeah. When we come to that section of the Capital Budget I'd be happy to –

**Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Aylward:** Yeah, I can wait until the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Chair:** Thank you.

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay, the 24<sup>th</sup> is good with me.

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

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

Just for the record, the suggestion is to take school buses and adjust them as needed to make them also public transit as opposed to taking public transit and making them school buses. Just wanted to put that for the record, because then of course all of the school buses do cover vast majority of the Island, and you could still set buses aside for the younger students as needed.

Thank you, Chair.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** How many buses do we have on PEI?

**Jim Miles Executive Director:** Two hundred eighty-six.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Two eighty-six (Indistinct) could we –

**Mr. Roach:** Two eighty-six.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thanks, Chair.

Can we come back? I'd like to know what the occupancy rate of each bus is across Prince Edward Island. How many buses do you got? Two hundred eighty-six buses? I'd like to know how many children are on each bus travelling on a daily basis. Can we come back with that information?

**Mr. Roach:** Each one individually?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes.

**Mr. Roach:** We'll forward that question to the department of education.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Every bus.

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

I had some questions back. The minister of education was going to take me some answers back as it applied to records management facility. Now I know that you're leasing it, but he had promised to take a bunch of stuff back. I was just wondering if he has that today.

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

**Mr. Currie:** Could the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters repeat the question, please?

**Chair:** Could you repeat the question, hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters?

**Mr. Myers:** For sure. Back a number of days ago while we were on this section, under museum and heritage sites, we talked about the records management storage facility that you're going to have, and you said it was in Slemon Park. Then I had asked additional questions and you said you would come back with the information on the plan fit up, the timeline.

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

**Mr. Currie:** I'll send a note. Hopefully I'll have it tomorrow.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** I'm fine, Madam Chair.

**Chair:** Shall the section carry?

**Some Hon. Members:** Carried.

**Chair:** Sorry, you weren't on my list.

The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

A while back I had asked about all the capital improvements to the schools in District 7. I just want to know if we're going to get that information back before we carry the page.

**Mr. Roach:** Was it Morell?

**Mr. MacEwen:** It was Morell Consolidated, Mount Stewart Consolidated, Morell High School, and Donagh Regional.

**Mr. Roach:** Do you mean what has been spent on them?

**Mr. MacEwen:** Yeah, I think my question was – I'm not sure if it was five years or 10 years.

**Mr. Roach:** Yes it was, that's right. Between 2007-2008 and 2015-2016: 29,629 at Donagh; 1,309,297 at Morell Consolidated; 144,212 at Morell senior; and 6,172 at Mount Stewart Consolidated.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Major investments in those schools.

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

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

Minister, could you just provide that in a document for me, and a description? I know that the one for Morell Consolidated was a mould issue, that type of thing. Just with a

one-line description and the total investment.

**Mr. Roach:** I'll get back to the appropriate department and request that they outline what was spent in each one of those dollars for each one of those schools.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Thank you, minister, I really appreciate it.

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

Total Capital Expenditure-Education, Early Learning and Culture: 13,250,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Hon. members, we're on page 11.

Capital Expenditure

Family and Human Services

Capital Improvements

“Appropriations provided for Capital improvements for infrastructure.” Housing Unit Renovations: 685,000. Residential Services Renovations: 65,000. Total Capital Improvements: 750,000.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, and the Leader of the Third Party.

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

I just wondered if you could break down both the housing unit renovations and the residential services renovations into their details. If you'd prefer to provide that as a document that would be fine, but if you need to read it out orally I'm okay with that too.

**Mr. Roach:** I can tell you just generally where it's being spent and I can give you the numbers, say for last year, which would give you an indication. But it's spent on roofs, cupboards, generators, damp proofing, walkways, replacing heating mains, steps, patios, wood trim, boiler rooms, parking lot, and a lot of it is roofing.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** I was wondering if there are any plans to build more housing units, in particular?

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

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

Currently, believe it or not, the province is the PEI's largest landlord when it comes to seniors and family housing. Although there haven't been a lot of new investments in the last few years, we are hopeful that with the National Housing Strategy and the lining it up with our provincial housing strategy that there will be some partnerships between the federal government and ourselves and we're hopeful that there will be some new units. Hopeful. Nothing committed to yet.

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

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

I just wanted to bring this up as a fairly urgent issue. My understanding is there is around 550 people that are on the waiting list for some sort of housing, whether that could be provided privately through rent subsidies or whether that's provided by the province.

I'm not sure what those people are doing in the meantime, and that's my concern. If we have to wait for the National Housing Strategy, those 550 people, are they going to be left homeless?

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

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

Currently, no one is homeless. The people that are on the waiting list are on the waitlist to get into low income housing, is what it is.

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

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

I have a constituent who is in a situation where she's in a two-bedroom apartment she is paying for herself, but her partner passed away and along with his income, and now

she can no longer afford it. She's waiting on the waitlist but potentially by the end of this month, if she's not placed, I don't know where she'll go.

The second part of the problem, of course, is she may be forced to leave the community she's lived all of her life and that's a second problem.

I was wondering if you don't mind (Indistinct) answering those concerns.

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

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

As life's situations do change we always advise clients to come in and get reassessed because our placements are all based on needs. As their situation changes so does their needs change. If, for example, she's now a sole income earner, her income will be lower than what it was previously, so it might bump her up on the list. I would greatly advise you to advise her to contact our department and have a reassessment.

**Mr. Trivers:** She's on the list.

**Ms. Mundy:** But she was on the list before, you said?

**Mr. Trivers:** No, she wasn't on the list.

**Ms. Mundy:** Oh, she wasn't, okay.

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

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

The two things are I just want to make sure that people don't fall through the cracks, especially when you have a person who is adamant that they want to stay in a particular community, but you know there are no private dwellings available at a price that a rent subsidy would cover and there's no provincial. Are you saying in that case you would definitely find them somewhere in the province?

**Ms. Mundy:** I'm not saying (Indistinct) depend on how they score. It would depend on their level of need. If they are number one on the list and something becomes

available in Summerside, then yes, we would place her in Summerside. If the unit came available in her community and she was number one on the list, then she would be placed in her home community.

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, I'm going to give you this question, then I'm going to go to somebody else and then I'll come back to you if you have more.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you.

There are 550 people on the list across the Island. If a new person comes on the list presumably they're going to come on at the bottom, sort of first in, first out, but it is based on points and needs as well on top of that.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** It's only based on points and needs as well on top of that.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Sorry. You could have been on the list for 10 years and never, ever qualify because your needs assessment is not high enough. Somebody who has high needs could come on tomorrow and they could be bumped right to the top of the list.

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

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

I think I heard you say, minister, that the National Housing Strategy, we don't know yet what kind of money we can expect to be transferred here. Okay, so there might be other things that your department could do to encourage – particularly for me, aging in place is such an important thing for healthy communities. I think maintaining seniors in our communities is critical, particularly in rural parts of the province.

I'm wondering if your department has – and obviously the capital expenditures here are in housing unit renovations, as you pointed out. But has the government ever considered removing the HST on home renovations in

order for, particularly, low-income seniors so that they can indeed age at home?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** I think I would have to refer that back to the Minister of Finance.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct) Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** No, that hasn't been considered.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** It hasn't?

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair. I think there would be many benefits to that. I think we would increase employment. Many contractors who used to be out west and now have no employment there and are back on the Island. I think there are many people with the skills required to do that sort of work. I think it would for sure reduce long-term costs for the seniors as their homes are improved, windows replaced with high efficiency windows, and doors and insulation, and all the pretty simple and not terribly expensive things that you can do.

Again, the fact that they – just the humanity of it – that they can stay in their communities, often where their extended family will live. I would like to suggest that that's something government might look at, exempting the HST on home renovations for low-income seniors, in particular, so they can age in place.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Yeah, currently government has made many investments to several of the home repair programs that help support not only just seniors but homeowners, low-income homeowners, to remain in their home.

For example, the Seniors Home Repair Program. There has been over \$3 million invested and over 2,800 seniors have benefited since the program's inception in 2007. That's been approximately an \$8 million investment to the Island economy as

well. Our Seniors Safe @ Home Program – we have contributed in the last two years about \$625,000 and supported over 300 seniors to stay in their home as well.

Our PEI Home Repair Program, we have invested \$1.3 million per year and we help an average of 240 homeowners. Some of those are seniors. Some of them are single-family dwellings, some of them are family dwellings. The total of investment has been approximately \$4.7 million since 2013 and we have helped approximately 600 homeowners.

We also have rent supplements. We increased those last year. We increased those by 75 last year, so currently we have about 257 rent supplements and that is what we do, we become the tenant and we enter into a partnership with private landlords so we can move somebody into – since we don't have any available units, we can move them into privately-owned units.

We also have invested in about 350 affordable housing units through partnerships with private developers. That has been approximately a \$14.8 million investment, and that's on top of our – we have 1,117 rent-geared to income seniors homes as well as 479 family units.

We have been making, on our own, considerable investments to home repair programs for that intent exactly, to keep seniors and families in their home.

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

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

I have had many people in my district who have applied for the home renovation or home repair program, but their income was just too high. We're not talking about high incomes here, we're talking about people with very modest incomes. I'm wondering, well, if they didn't qualify for that program one thing that might encourage them to do the renovations would be if we reduced HST.

It's lovely these programs are there and I appreciate what you have done, but the cutoffs are so low that a lot of people who would really benefit from the work that they require to have done are not able to do that.

Thank you.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** There is really no cutoff. It's just – we tend to – the money is exhausted before it, but although we've seen some increases this year – we've gone up from I think we were at about 22 last year and I think we're up to about 28 this year. Every year we help more and more Islanders and we're able to get that threshold up a little bit higher.

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

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

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

Minister, why do I see nothing here in this for the future?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** We have 750,000 budgeted for next year.

**Leader of the Opposition:** How much?

**Ms. Mundy:** 750,000 budgeted for 2017-2018.

**Leader of the Opposition:** It doesn't seem like there's very much there. Like, to me, it doesn't seem like we're preparing for the future of senior citizens.

**Chair:** Hon. Leader of the Opposition, if I could direct you to page 3 of the Capital Budget, it sets out a five-year capital plan so you can see under Family and Human Services – you can go out there.

**Leader of the Opposition:** But to me, Chair, that's just renovations.

It doesn't say anything for the future development of more seniors housing in PEI. To me this seems like it's just a Band-Aid solution of just keep on repairing what we've got, but no look for the future. Does the province have a plan or do you have a goal of expanding senior citizen housing?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** That's exactly what the provincial housing strategy will be looking at, hon. member. A part of my mandate letter is to review the public and social housing and ensure that it is meeting the needs of Islanders that it is intended to, not only now, but into the future as well.

We are in the early stages of a provincial housing strategy, however, we have been focusing a lot of our efforts on the National Housing Strategy to make sure that it's going to be flexible enough to meet Islanders' needs as well.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'm going to make a point here. We were awful fast to find \$65 million for Cornwall, but we can only look at doing renovations and Band-Aid solutions for the future for seniors. I think there is something wrong with that.

The one question I do have – and I'm glad to see you are finally getting the tenders out for Kinkora and the seniors building is going to be torn down. Is there any chance that we can see an expansion of senior care housing in the Borden-Kinkora district into the future?

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

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

Again, that will come back to what comes out of the recommendations that come out of the housing strategy. I have made myself very available and I have met with local seniors groups in your area, with yourself there, and I have put – actually, we have even had our staff contact people in the area to try and see if there's a need. I think you yourself put out some waitlist applications, as did the seniors group, and we only got two back so –

**Leader of the Opposition:** I got 35 (Indistinct).

**Ms. Mundy:** Right. They need to get on – as an MLA, I think you should be encouraging them to get themselves

assessed and get them on a waitlist. Because when we go out with the public housing strategy we're going to need to know where the need is.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** So it is possibly something for the future?

**Ms. Mundy:** Anything is possible, hon. member.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Actually, when developing the framework wording it was – one of the clauses, it was talking about that any new buildings should be close proximity to public transit. It was me, it was Prince Edward Island, that said that would take our whole rural areas out of any kind of consideration so we asked to have that wording eliminated.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Final question.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Final question (Indistinct) triggered me on something.

To the minister of transportation. They are tearing down the seniors building in the centre building. It is going out to tender. I think it's going to be done by February. With that, the constituents that live there in those two seniors buildings asked if there could be a driveway put between the two so that they can help them assist them to unload groceries and stuff into the units because they have to walk now so far.

Can we get some kind of – when they do that, tearing that building down, can we put some kind of crushed asphalt driveway or something in there to assist these people for the winter?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's the first that I've heard of it. Who did they ask?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Actually, I went and I sent a request to the minister –

**Ms. Biggar:** Could you have them send – not you –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah.

**Ms. Biggar:** – you have them –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah.

**Ms. Biggar:** – send an official request to my department or to Minister Mundy's department and they will forward it to us, and we will take that under advisement. We're always willing to work with individuals.

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

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

Minister of Family and Human Services, something came into my head here in a sec. The 1.3 million in home repairs, you said the funds were exhausted, so was that total 1.3 million spent?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Yes, 1.3. When and if, we don't – how should I say this? We don't say we're going to service 600 people and then cut it off. If we can service 601, we'll serve 601. As long as the money is there we're going to spend it, yes.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Minister, you're saying that 1.3 million dollars has all been spent?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** I have to get back to you on that. I'm not quite sure of the status of all the applications as of yet. I think there are still some coming in and some still waiting on approvals.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Switching around here a bit. The government housing units now, are there any inspections done on these homes?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Yes, actually, staff takes great pride in their work, yes.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Chair.

When I was coming in this afternoon there was a lady out on the front steps that lives in a unit in (Indistinct) Court. She was out here doing a silent protest because she's saying there's mould in her building and nothing's been done.

Do you know anything about that, minister?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Thank you, hon. member. No, I do not. If any resident out there – they should contact our department, and we can follow-up.

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

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

I did mention that to her, and she politely told me that she's been calling the department numerous times and it has yet to have been rectified. I was wondering if you could possibly check into that for that lady, minister.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** If you can forward me that information, hon. member, I will check into that, most definitely, yes.

**Mr. MacKay:** That's great, thank you.

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

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

I know the hon. member beside me from Rustico-Emerald had already asked about the breakdown and the Minister of Finance had mentioned a lot of it has to do with

roofing repairs and replacements and things like that.

I wonder: Could we get an actual breakdown, a handout – it doesn't have to be today, you can bring it back tomorrow or the next day – of all these projects and the monetary value targeted towards these projects and the various locations they're in?

**Ms. Mundy:** I can do that. Sure.

**Mr. Aylward:** Whichever minister that can provide it would be great.

**Mr. Roach:** She just answered.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** I can do that. I thought I might have had something here that I could have read it to you, but if you would rather it in a handout I can do that, as well.

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

I would appreciate a handout. That would be great.

**Ms. Mundy:** Yeah.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you, Chair. Also, I'm just curious as to whether or not any of these unit renovations or residential services renovations would be targeted towards any of the QCRS buildings. I know it's a separate identity from your department, but QCRS receives a considerable grant to operate and to provide the services that they do. I'm just wondering if they also receive funds to do renovations and upkeep on their buildings.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Currently, no, they don't.

We fund them as an NGO. They are a separate entity from us. We don't do their maintenance. They're responsible for their own maintenance. They hire their own staff. They are their own NGO. We finance them. We fund them as an NGO.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thanks, Chair.

With regards to that, I wonder if the minister could advise me what the annual grant would be for that NGO.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** That's a great question, and I don't have that right off the top of my head, but I can get it back to you.

**Mr. Aylward:** Thanks, Chair.

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

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

I just wanted to follow-up. If you're one of those 550 people on the waitlist and you're not qualifying for the points system for housing, where do you live? Presumably you can't afford housing yourself, that's why you're on the list. I'm just trying to figure out how that works.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Actually, there are people on that list who are on there because they're planning well into their future.

Again, it's always based on need. We need to help those who are most in need, and those are the ones who have to be served first.

There are many private landlords out there. There are apartment buildings all over Prince Edward Island. I would encourage your client or your constituent to reach out to any of the private landlords who are out there.

Again, at any time, if her situation changes, and she finds herself – her health is failing more, or her income level changes, to get another re-assessment. It can always bump her up on the list.

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

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

One last comment on that. I don't want to have to wait until my constituent goes broke before they're able to qualify either. They could run out of money trying to live where they're currently living, and then when they're broke they'll finally be able to get help. That's all I'll say there.

My question has to do with, because we're looking at the Capital Budget, of course, I know the practice is when you're doing rent subsidies, very often it's actually the province that signs the lease with the private landlord. The common practice is no damage deposit is given to them, but I know of at least one case, so far, in my experience where there's a clean-up required at the property after the tenant has moved out.

I was wondering if any of this money in Capital Budget has been set aside to do improvement to those private buildings where the tenants have damaged them in some way.

I know the lease agreement typically says it has to be given back in the same state except for normal wear and tear.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** If something like that were to happen, then that would come out of the operations budget.

**Mr. Trivers:** The operations budget.

**Mr. Roach:** Yeah. You can't always plan for when people are going to move out or if there's damage. That would come out the operations budget.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you.

**Ms. Mundy:** We work with each independent landlord individually on situations like that to help resolve the issue.

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

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

I had a question about your seniors' housing. I guess it stems from the recent power

outages that we had down east. What is your policy on generators in the seniors' units?

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

**Ms. Mundy:** I'm not quite sure what you mean by what's our policy on generators. Are they allowed to have generators? Is that what you're asking me?

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

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

Some of the buildings have generators. Some of them are really old. What I had heard during the power outages is that some of them were so old that they were only allowed to turn them on for half an hour at a stretch, and that the residents were cold.

I guess: What is the maintenance strategy for the generators to help ensure that they – you know, that they're new and that they're operational and that they're in good working condition? When they're there, is it the policy that they run steady, or is it something that you would only have for a half an hour at a time?

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** When it comes to generators they are a part of this budget. As I noted just last year, there were several generators that were replaced. It's something that maintenance would look at. Generators are replaced as maintenance comes forward with major issues.

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

**Mr. Myers:** I guess my question is: What's the policy on it?

If there was one, and they were in your district of Montague, where they weren't allowed to turn them on, they gave them a half an hour a day with them on, which left them cold the rest of the time. Seniors were sitting in their cars with their cars running trying to get warm because it was too cold in their building. That's the concern. Is there a policy that can keep that from happening?

We didn't expect it, but all the experts are saying expect catastrophic events, so we need to expect, with an ageing population – my question has more to do with what are we doing to ensure that there's a schedule where they're always up to date so that they can be used, is more what my question was.

**Ms. Mundy:** That is –

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

**Ms. Mundy:** That is a great question, and I'll get back to you on that, if that's okay. If you don't mind, I'll share that information as well that – because I'm not aware that we were told that they could only run it for a half an hour, so you have information that that is what they were told. I'll take that back and talk to staff about it and we'll get back to you on that, okay?

**Mr. Myers:** Okay, appreciate it. Thank you.

**Ms. Mundy:** Yeah, sure.

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

Total Capital Expenditure – Family and Human Services: 750,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Members, we're at the top of page 13.

Capital Expenditure

Finance

Equipment. "Appropriations provided for information technology optimization and system upgrades." Technology Asset Management: 1,300,000. Corporate System Upgrades: 5,964,500. Capital Installations: 150,000. Total Equipment: 7,414,500.

Shall the section carry?

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

**Mr. MacKay:** My question, I guess: What equipment would be involved in this department? When you're talking system upgrade and capital installations, just a (Indistinct).

**Mr. Roach:** Sure. A lot of that would be just the standard equipment that you would have in every office, all new laptops, all that sort of thing. For example, the first one there, the \$1.3 million for technology asset management, that would be the regular replacement of desk computers that have seen the best of their life, and they would be on a maintenance schedule.

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

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

Capital Improvements. "Appropriations provided for Capital improvements." Facility Improvements: 200,000. Total Capital Improvements: 200,000.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

I'm just wondering if there's anything specific that's been identified for the facility improvements.

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, that would be the server at Pooles Corner to support the Kings County hospital, and a new air-conditioning unit for Burns Avenue.

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

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

What's the dollar figure that's going towards the Kings County hospital?

**Mr. Roach:** Sixty-five thousand.

**Mr. Aylward:** And sorry, again, that's –

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Sorry Chair, thank you, Chair.

That's, did you say, for air-conditioning?

**Mr. Roach:** No, that's for the new 40-kilowatt generator that will be needed for (Indistinct).

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thanks, Chair.

I know there's been talk previously about the future replacement of the Kings County hospital, and I think it's a solid idea. I've talked to health care professionals down there, too, that think the way to go would be to tie it into the new manor when and if it's eventually built. Has there been any consideration to that at all or any investigation or looking into that possibility?

**Mr. Roach:** Sure, I've –

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Yes. Over, I guess it's about 18 months ago, I had the minister of health, we did a walk through the Kings County Memorial Hospital. At that time we looked at all the facilities throughout the building. I had requested that we do an assessment of the status of the hospital in terms of structure and also, coming from Health PEI, also an assessment of the facilities or what's provided there and what could be provided there.

I was advised that an assessment would be done in terms of structure to determine: Is the hospital in a good enough state that you could expand on it or does it have to be torn down and be completely rebuilt?

As I understand it, that's in the queue to be done, and as well to look at the services that are provided by Kings County Memorial Hospital. Not only what's being provided, but what could be placed there, I suppose, to take some of the time away from, possibly, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, where services could be shared that are only literally from that hospital, 25, 30 minutes down the road.

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

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

I was just wondering if the minister thinks it would be a good idea to look at locating the manor adjacent to the Kings County Memorial Hospital to, if nothing else, improve efficiencies with regards to the catering side, like, the food and beverage and shared services. I know the health budget – and I realize you're not the health minister – but certainly the health budget is

the largest budget line item for the province, and any efficiencies that we could make I think would go a long way.

I guess, Chair, I'm just wondering what the minister's thoughts would be on trying to accomplish something like that.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Thank you, and I think when there is a local committee formed from the area that were tasked with going out and looking at potential sites and reviewing with staff, I know that they did look at some provincial property next to the hospital. Unfortunately a lot of that property there is swamp-type property, and the cost of bringing that property up to standard where it could be used, I'm told, is pretty expensive.

**An Hon. Member:** The hospital is 50 years old.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** That's good for me right now, Chair.

**Chair:** Okay, great. Shall the section carry?

Oh, sorry.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, and then the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

Is there the money allotted in the equipment budget here to account for the new system that the education minister is bringing in to store emails?

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, at the current time there's \$390,000 that are allotted for that.

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

**Mr. Myers:** What would that work entail?

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Alfresco licensing, support staff, storage, and a new server.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you. Could you explain what Alfresco is?

**Mr. Roach:** No, I couldn't. I'm not an IT guy at all. I expect you would probably know that better than I would.

**Mr. Myers:** Yeah, it's a –

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

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

It's a document management system. I'm wondering how you plan to alleviate your email problem with Alfresco.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** You don't know?

**Jim Miles Executive Director:** There's two other parts of the finance Capital Budget that have been increased to help with that. One part is on the server optimization, that piece, and then the other part is on the network quality of service piece.

But most of the improvements through Gmail and stuff like that will be coming from training the IM coordinators and getting that information out to the various departments.

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

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

Is the idea that every employee of government will have an Alfresco account on a server run parallel with your website and that, rather than deleting emails, they'll drag and drop them into an Alfresco folder?

**Jim Miles Executive Director:** I don't know the answer to that. We'll have to get that for you.

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

**Mr. Myers:** I guess I'll ask more questions along that line so that I'll get them all kind of out.

I'm wondering how you would handle an employee who left, who would have their account disabled, but under the records and archiving act can't be deleted for a year. Would that whole directory of emails be dragged and dropped into Alfresco by someone else or would it be the requirement of an employee before they left? What would happen if they were terminated, not by their choice, by the employer's choice?

**Mr. Roach:** My understanding is that if some were to make a decision that they're going to leave government that their entire system would go to a HR manager.

If there were items in there when the person was about to leave, they would go over the various files. Anything that was attached to a file would then be printed off and would go to that file. The remainder of the documentation, the decision would be made by the HR to move them over where they would sit for the year.

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

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

Have you talked to the privacy commissioner about this?

**Mr. Roach:** That's what happens currently.

**Mr. Myers:** Right.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Is this an approved process by the privacy commissioner?

**Mr. Roach:** I don't have the answer to that other than that process that's there has been in place for many years.

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

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

Yeah, and I guess it's not about how we got here, it's where we are.

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, I agree.

**Mr. Myers:** It's a matter of – you're bringing in Alfresco. You're telling me that a HR manager, when somebody leaves, will now have the responsibility to deal with – if they want to print off your emails they can, if they want to print off attachments, they can. If they decide to drag and drop and save it in Alfresco, they can.

But no one has talked to the privacy commissioner to see if she thinks that anyone's privacy would be breached during that process?

**Mr. Roach:** No. What I explained to you was the process as it stands today. I believe the Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture has stated that whole system is under review, that they have a kind of a template going forward on how they're going to address that.

For myself, I haven't seen that particular plan yet. The system I have described was the one that's currently being used. I expect there would be changed in that going forward, but I don't have those changes. I think it's ongoing.

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

**Mr. Myers:** I think the education minister –

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

**Mr. Currie:** We've had lots of discussions. I know the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters has an IT background, so a lot of the questions he's asking me he already knows.

We've been very clear. I mean, you know, I've been around this government for 10 years and I've seen 10 Auditor General's reports. I don't think I've seen a response to an Auditor General report as effective and as efficient as the one we just saw.

I know the Minister of Finance has oversight on all of government's responsibilities, and I as the minister have records information management. I have the provincial archives records office.

We take the recommendations very seriously that we've received from the Auditor General. As we're speaking there are assessments being done on all government departments to make sure that there's compliance, to make sure there's consistent follow-up.

The challenge that we identified – in fairness to the staff that work in government departments, there needed to be a focus and a level of resources and support to do the work. The legislation that will brought in, in the spring, we will staffing up. There is infrastructure regarding lease investments in storage capacity. We're basically modernizing. Most importantly, we're bringing consistencies all across government.

I'm quite pleased, as minister responsible, that my staff is showing tremendous leadership in this area. We're responding effectively, we're responding efficiently. We're making investments, and compliance around protocols. I'm very pleased with that. We'll continue to monitor that.

The other thing that I'm really supportive of is that the report that will done annually will be tabled here in the Legislative Assembly for another level of accountability to make sure government departments are complying and respecting this debate and these discussions here in the Assembly.

Once again, it's about open and transparent government.

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

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

I'm looking at the hospital equipment line, and then if you look into the five-year capital plan –

**Chair:** Sorry, hon. Leader of the Third Party, we're on page 13, under finance.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I apologize. I will hold my question until next – my apologies.

**Chair:** No worries.

**Ms. Biggar:** Carry the section.

**Mr. Myers:** Question.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you.

Maybe the minister had a quite a long soliloquy and didn't say a whole lot other than we've always had rules. Government has always had rules. You guys didn't follow them. That's why you're making more rules. You're burdening yourself with more and more rules because you can't follow rules, which seems silly to create more rules that you, in turn, can't follow.

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

**Mr. Myers:** I do have a million questions on this.

My question to the minister of education – maybe he can answer it – is: Have you talked to the privacy commissioner about bringing in a document management system that you're going to require people to save their emails?

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

**Mr. Currie:** I can follow-up with my staff. I'm going out and saying that those conversations have been happening. There's a pretty substantial investment that will be required to continue to grow and expand document management. That will take resources. I can follow-up specifically and find out if there has been a current conversation about that.

Currently, electronic records are held for 12 months, then they're overwritten, which is a process that's been in place now for a long time. There have been over 2,500 accounts that has occurred and happened to. I'm more than willing to take that question back and get specifics and update.

**Ms. Biggar:** Carry the section.

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

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

I think before you – you're in a rush because the Premier got criticized, and this is how he

operates. As soon as he gets criticized he starts making decisions, like jumping in his chariot and going down east and delivering cheques like he was Santa Claus on Friday.

Those types of decisions are decisions he seems to continually make, instead of methodically thinking out what his next step would be. A very reactive government.

My question is, before you get too far down this road – and I realize that it's important that you set deadlines for yourself and stuff – I really think you should talk to the privacy commissioner to make sure that you're not breaching somebody's privacy by trying to fix a problem where people weren't following rules, which was the only problem, right?

Can you bring back to the House a report from the privacy commissioner that says: This is an okay way to deal with this problem and protect the privacy of individuals?

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

**Mr. Currie:** I will follow-up with my staff who oversee provincial archives records because, of course, they are very much part of this conversation. I know they're very pleased with the Auditor General's recommendations. I know that they're very pleased with being able to have a renewed focus in how we manage records, both paper records and electronic records.

I will bring the information back to get an update on the conversations they're having. I've got great confidence in Jill MacMicken-Wilson. She's a very conscientious professional who does really good work in that whole area of her responsibilities.

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

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

Could I just get that, the breakdown of each component in this email thing and its cost? There's the Alfresco licence –

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, I can give you the breakdown right here.

**Mr. Myers:** Okay. I can't see that from here, though.

**Mr. Roach:** Alfresco licensing: 40,000.

**Mr. Myers:** Forty-thousand, okay.

**Mr. Roach:** Sports staff: 70,000. Storage: 250,000. Server: 30,200.

**Mr. Myers:** What was the storage again, 250?

**Mr. Roach:** Two hundred and fifty thousand.

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

**Mr. Myers:** What do you mean when you say storage?

**Mr. Roach:** That's the electronic piece for the storage, but that has no effect on the cost of paper storages, the electronic storage.

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

**Mr. Myers:** I'm not quite sure I know what electronic storage is. I don't, because he said server is 30,000. What's the difference between that and electronic storage?

**Mr. Roach:** I'll come back to you with that.

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Would it be fair to say that you're looking at a 400,000 cost?

**Mr. Roach:** Yeah, that's fair.

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

**Mr. Myers:** That 70,000 in support, is that going to be ongoing figures, or is that a one-time figure?

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** It will be ongoing.

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

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

We have a 400,000 spend this year plus 70,000 a year afterwards and this is all because somebody didn't fall rules that were already in place. We have rules that said we can't delete emails, somebody didn't follow them, so the way to deal with that is to spend 400,000 plus 70,000 a year. Would that be correct?

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Thank you.

I believe, as the Auditor General pointed out, even the system itself and the rules that were around that – as I explained earlier, if a person were to decide they were going to leave government today, the way the rules are today they would sit down with the human services or human resource officer, would go over all of their files. Any files that were determined that were required to be kept for a file, that would be printed off and attached to a hard file. Any other records that were determined that did not need to be required to be kept they would be downloaded where they would sit for a year.

What this is trying to do is to ensure, along with the other recommendations that the Auditor General made, that there is going to be a service in there that will ensure that emails are kept that need to be kept.

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

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

This fall I signed what would be my letter of resignation to your department, so you'd be aware of that. At what point will somebody from Carol Mayne's shop contact me to go through my emails and what's pertinent to ITSS?

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** It's my understanding that somebody from HR would contact you to go

through your emails, and I'll ensure that you're contacted.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you. It would be fair. I've been gone for there for five years but no one has ever reached out to me to ask what I had –

**Mr. Currie:** (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Shall the section carry?

**Mr. Myers:** No, I still have questions.

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

**Mr. Myers:** I just want to clarify something because I'm confused. This is a 400,000 solution to one of the things that was in the auditor's report.

But you guys did have a record management policy because I tabled it here in the Legislature last week. That policy said: had to keep it for one year, if you were going to delete it prior to that it had to come with a destruction order. There was a three-person committee that had to meet to make that order. I'm not sure that there weren't any rules, I think that they were just blatantly disregarded. Would that be an appropriate way to put it?

**Mr. Roach:** Madam Chair, this section really is specific to the equipment that the finance department is out to purchase.

That's what these dollars are for. I think we've already gone through this section –

**An Hon. Member:** Call the hour.

**Mr. Myers:** We would have carried it.

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

**Chair:** Carry the section?

**Mr. Myers:** Yes.

**Chair:** Carry the section?

Total Capital Expenditure – Finance:  
7,614,500.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

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

**Mr. Aylward:** (Indistinct) called the hour, you can't go back.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** But they already said call the hour. We've tried to extend the hour before and everybody said no, you can't (Indistinct).

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having under consideration the grant of capital supply to Her Majesty, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

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

**The Legislature recessed until 7:00 p.m.**

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests (II)

**Speaker:** Now, before we begin this evening, I'd like to give way to the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira for recognition of guests.

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

I'd like to say hello to someone in the audience, the most important person here tonight, and that would be my daughter Natasha. Natasha works at –

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

**Mr. LaVie:** She's an RCW here for the province and does a (Indistinct) job of what she does.

Also while I'm on my feet I'd like to say a big happy birthday. This guy feeds us every day, afternoon and evening. His name is Elke Wolters. He's 50 years old today. I just – I can't imagine what it's going to be like to be 50 years old. But, our lunch man – what?

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. LaVie:** Our lunch man turns 50 years old today. If anybody goes out for lunch this evening, give him a big thank you for what he does here for us the in the Legislature, because he's the one that feeds us, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

Motions Other Than Government

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

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

Opposition would now like to call Motion 72 to the floor.

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

The hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, you were speaking to the motion the last time we broke, so continue along speaking to the motion.

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

It is a pleasure once again to rise to continue debate on this very important motion that was brought to the floor of Legislature last week.

As I referenced in my initial comments, as a representative of an area with three schools in it – I have the elementary, the middle school or the junior high, and then the senior high – all three schools are wonderful schools. I talk to parents on a daily and weekly basis who have nothing but great praise for those schools, the teachers in

those schools, and the programs that are delivered within those schools as well.

But as I alluded to in my earlier comments, there are issues, both at our elementary school, the Sherwood school, and at the intermediate school of Stonepark. The issues that arise at Sherwood school are an overcrowding issue plus an age issue. The school is, I'm guessing, around the 60-year-old mark. I just know that because of a relative that went to grade 1, there and that was not yesterday. The school is starting to show its age. I had a tour not all that long ago with the principal of the school who showed me some deficiencies within that school that should be addressed and fixed in order to provide a better environment for the students in that area.

Fast-forward over a couple of streets to Stonepark school, and obviously there are students there that are using a former computer lab with no windows as a classroom, and thus are having some breathing issues or that type of thing. The students are not feeling well.

These are issues that are real within the confines of my district. There certainly are issues that I've been addressing ministers of education in the past and the current minister of education to help address those needs. As I said, I speak to parents in my area on a continuous basis about their needs or what they feel would make a better school environment for their children, and rightly so. I have to agree with them in those areas.

I think, from time to time, to take a look at the situations or make these assessments is a very important thing to do. I know, I think as representatives, as elected officials, it's our duty to do that. It's our duty to listen to the parents that have these concerns and see if we can provide a better place for their children to be day after day, and a better place to learn.

I won't take up too much more time with it. I feel that these assessments are important. I feel that they need to be done on a regular, routine.

With that I will sit and allow others to speak to the motion as well.

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

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to stand up here and speak on this motion tonight.

I'm very proud of the community that I represent. I'm very proud of the schools, and within that school, the staff, the administration, the teachers, and the Home and Schools that are associated with each school and all of West Prince as a whole.

During this process for review they stood united in a partnership and presented well. They passionately spoke on the schools, and how important their individual schools were to the communities that they live in.

I've mentioned many times in this House that I'm very proud of where I come from and the people that I represent. I take this job very seriously, and I'll stand up for my constituents and be their voice, and proudly be their voice.

Looking through this motion, it does have some recommendations that I like such as concentrating on economic development for areas with low enrollment by bringing in new business and increasing the population. As a government we are doing that. I understand there is more work to do, but we do recognize it and we are doing something about it.

Something else in the motion that I like is: to provide supports and incentives for the utilization of the unused space for various activities, new businesses, health and wellness, etc. within the schools.

That's something that interests me. I think in some of our smaller community schools we look at some of the hub schools that happen in other provinces and they can be successful and they can be very beneficial to the communities that they're in. I'm all for that.

This motion calls for the elimination of a five-year required reviewed of the process for schools. I believe that the review and, in particular, a scheduled review, can be beneficial to the education system. In fact, the principals of the Westisle Family of

Schools agree with that. They think that it will actually benefit the Westisle Family of Schools.

With that being said, I do like some of the recommendations, however, I cannot support the title of this motion.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I'm happy to speak to this motion. Our children are our most valuable resource and we need to make sure that they have the opportunity to thrive through their educational career.

We need to continue to ensure we have a handle on our education system and manage the assets. It is important to keep an eye on this so we can address any concerns before they become a problem. This is just good management.

I would suggest a five-year review is not enough. This should be a three-year review. We need to ensure our kids are receiving all of the advantages they can get. A formal review every three years would offer us rich data and will ensure we get this right.

I would suggest we learn from the past reviews and implement a score card to be used as a template for future reviews.

It is important to identify incremental changes in the schools to ensure we have the best environment for our kids.

This is a very important piece of management data that we need to examine. We need to be able to see the data so that we can make the appropriate recommendations to give our young folks all the advantages we can.

We know the capital budgeting process is demanding. If we are doing our jobs we should be looking ahead all the time and making sure we are responding to the needs of our young folks. The world is changing

quickly and we need to give our kids every advantage.

A formal process of review will ensure important data is reviewed and a rolling forecast is made so we can evaluate past estimates and improve our future estimates. This will ensure strong data.

I also suggest a three-year review should also extend to the French Language School Board. We have 56 schools in the English language branch and another six schools in the French language branch, a total of almost 20,000 students. These folks are our future and we need to give them every opportunity.

Our kids need every opportunity to thrive. We need to make sure they have that opportunity. We also need this data as we look for economic development opportunities. Our small class size and excellent teachers are terrific assets. If we have a dedicated review process every three years this data will be top of mind and current.

Our province is dynamic and we need to leverage all the assets so we can grow. We are all here to make our province better. The more data we have the better decisions we can make. This rolling review every three years will ensure all children will be provided every opportunity. The three-year review will identify shortcomings and opportunities and help with planning for future years, from both a capital and operational budgeting perspective. Let's make sure our students have access to the course loads that will help them succeed in the future.

I would prefer a three-year review and will vote against this motion. We need to ensure we are reviewing all the data.

Thank you.

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

**Speaker:** Any other members who would like to speak to this motion?

If not, we'll revert back to the mover of the motion to close debate on the motion.

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

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

I know we had a lot of debate on this motion, and it's great to hear the voices of everyone, and it's great to hear the perspective from different places.

When we talked about the five-year review process, I know the member from Alberton said: We need it because how else would you know what was going on? I think that's where poor management practices come in. I think that's a Liberal trademark is poor management practices.

I know that when I had opened this motion a week ago I had talked about there's two issues. It's great actually to see Phillip Brown in here, the smartest of the Brown family, and he's in the audience. He's well aware of the issues of Charlottetown which are much different than the issues that are in rural Prince Edward Island. I do support that there needs to be significant changes in the city schools because they're overcrowded. I think that government has an obligation to deal with the problems that are happening in the more heavily populated urban areas.

The rural areas, as I've said before, I don't really know that we have a problem, I certainly don't feel like we have a problem, if you look at the test results that government posts. There's certainly no issues as far as what our accomplishments are.

If you talk to Bob Andrews that's not a part of the review because Bob Andrews doesn't think that's important. Results of the testing isn't important to Bob Andrews. There's also the testing or the results of student assessment for the results of graduates, and what they go on to do is probably the only thing that matters. Government is blind to this. Government is blind to this because government is cash-strapped. Liberals don't look kindly to rural Prince Edward Island. They haven't for 100 years. It's quite evident. Every time you come to power you try to chip away a little bit more. We're resilient out there.

There's a couple of things and then we'll get on with this vote. This is the thing that is

really striking and I think it's the thing that I most clearly see now this fall than I've ever seen before. I went to the meetings, I heard what parents had to say, community organizations, they're well prepared, they knew their points. They had some great talking points and they're being recorded and they're going to go to somebody.

But here's the problem. You guys took it onto yourselves to have a plebiscite and it didn't matter. I can't imagine why gyms full of people coming to speak their point will have anymore relevance in your decision making than a vote would.

The 18% that you dropped in the polls today, slid in the polls, fell in the polls –

**Mr. LaVie:** Biggest in history.

**Mr. Myers:** The biggest drop in CRA history – the biggest drop of any single government in Prince Edward Island's history. The biggest drop in the history of Prince Edward Island, 18%, and I have to wonder if you don't understand that you're so far away from where the mindset of the people is that you are out of touch.

This school review process that we're going through, I called it a sham before and I stand by those words. It's something that I don't know why you took the schools that were outside of the Charlottetown area and dragged them along with it. There is a problem in Charlottetown, your overcrowded schools. You have schools that are way overcrowded. You need to fix that problem.

The second part of education is the rural schools that there is no problem with. I've heard this argument and I'm here to refute it tonight, that if you close rural schools that it would somehow make the city schools better, that it would somehow make the city schools have more resources, have more room. How? Have you followed what this bunch has done in the last 10 years?

This has been a problem in Charlottetown for the whole time that this bunch has been elected and they have chosen to do nothing about it. Do you think for a second if they came into my district and closed my schools that they are going to come in with the golden key and say: Fix it? That's going

right into general revenue. That's savings. That is being spent nowhere. I can guarantee you that those resources would be moved nowhere.

This is the government who cut teachers in their first budget after the election. Their first budget after the election, cut teachers.

**Mr. LaVie:** That was you.

**Mr. Myers:** No, it wasn't him.

**Mr. LaVie:** It was you.

**Mr. Myers:** He would have, though, because he would have just done what he was told because it was coming from the big bench over there, right from the chariot itself.

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct) doing good with PISA.

**Mr. Myers:** I, like many Islanders, am frustrated. I'm frustrated with this government. I'm frustrated that no one's voice matters but those 18 voices. Coincidentally, the 18 elected members equals the 18 points that you dropped in the poll. There is some considerable foreshadowing there for you. If you can't see it, I will explain it to you some other time.

I am frustrated like all Islanders because I believe that you don't listen and I believe that this process that you're going through, you have tried to – I know what you did in my area. I saw it. You tried to pit community against community but you know what? We outsmarted you. We didn't fight. We all came to the table and talked about the great things in our community and the great things of our schools. You thought we were going to fight. Boy, we were way ahead of you there.

You know what? Rural Prince Edward Island is coming together in spite of Liberalism, in spite of your plan to shut us down we are coming together. Read Facebook. Even Liberals aren't saying good things about you anymore. That's got to scare you.

I have people who I don't even dream would vote for me who I know aren't voting for

you next time. I don't know who they're voting for. They may not vote, but I'm telling you they're not voting for you fellows. That should worry you.

What do you stand for? You don't stand for anything anymore. What's your brand? Is it a big, long slide down to the bottom? That's where you're going, to the bottom.

You have to start listening to Islanders. Over here we listen to Islanders. I feel bad for the member from Summerside. He came in here. He is new and he is working hard probably to get himself reelected. He might be here alone. He might be the only opposition member next time. Smart, working hard, and bringing his issues forward. He asked questions two or three times a week. Talk to him. I don't know if you guys have caucus. Talk to him. He seems very connected to what's going on on the ground. He hasn't gotten the Liberal disease of forget about the people who put me here yet. You should talk to him because he could probably give you some good advice. It's all about being connected to the ground.

I know when the Premier came out last week – I was so tired Friday night from answering the phones and people laughing at the Premier driving out delivering cheques it wasn't even funny. That's how disconnected he is. He thought that people somehow needed a fire department to get \$5,000. Why people crying that they lost their Christmas dinner.

**Ms. Biggar:** What does this have to do with the motion?

**Mr. Myers:** I don't know, are you the Speaker? Would you like to direct the Speaker how to do his job?

**Ms. Biggar:** You yell across the floor all the time at me, why can't I yell at you?

**Mr. Myers:** That is a good point, I'll give you that.

Anyway, I'm going to finish up. I look forward to the vote on this. I don't think we have a whole lot of people on our side. I'm going to frame the vote as this: we're going to call for a standing vote for this motion. If you stand for us, you stand for rural schools, rural Prince Edward Island, doing what's

right, and grassroots Islanders. If you don't, you stand for Liberalism.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The recorded division is requested.

Sergeant-at-Arms, ring the bell.

[The bells was rung]

**Mr. J. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, government members are ready for the vote.

**Speaker:** Thank you, Government Whip.

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

**Mr. LaVie:** Mr. Speaker, opposition's ready for the vote.

**Speaker:** Thank you, Opposition Whip.

All those voting against the motion, please stand.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Shame, shame!

**Clerk Assistant (Doiron):** 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. Member from West Royalty-Springvale, the hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville, the hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, the hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, and the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

**Speaker:** All those supporting the motion, please stand.

**Clerk Assistant:** The hon. Leader of the Third Party, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the hon. Opposition House Leader, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, the hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River, the hon. Member from

Georgetown-St. Peters, and the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Speaker:** The motion is defeated.

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

**Mr. MacKay:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker/

Opposition would now like to call Motion No. 61 to the floor.

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

**Clerk:** Motion No. 61.

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River, the following motion:

**WHEREAS** today's students are now accessing various forms of credit cards, bank accounts, online banking and debit cards;

**AND WHEREAS** many students lack the financial literacy to understand the terminology in their financial dealings in terms of loans, weekly pay checks, bills and budgets;

**AND WHEREAS** students face financial challenges upon their entry into college/university relating to household budgets, bill payments and savings;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that this Legislative Assembly encourage government to ensure that Island students are given access to courses that teach financial terminology and budgeting as it impacts on day-to-day living in today's complex society.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests (III)

**Speaker:** Before we start with the hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque, I want to give way to the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald for recognition of guests.

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

Thanks for letting me recognize an important guest we have in our gallery here

tonight. I wanted to recognize Kent MacLean. He's an Island entrepreneur and an old friend of mine. It's great to see him here tonight partaking of this sitting of the Legislature. I'm sure he'll have some great advice for everyone when we leave.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I'd like to recognize an old friend, fellow choir member. We started together, I don't even know how many years back, but we're singing together in a Christmas cantata. Connie Eagan is joining us in the gallery tonight. I just wanted to recognize Connie.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier for recognition of guests.

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

We're on a roll with recognition. I want to recognize four members of the North Shore Community Council who are in the gallery: Gordon Ellis, who is the chairperson, Gerard Watts, Connie Eagan, and Kent MacLean, who are all doing good work out in the North Shore community and helping to continue to build that community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I know there's has been quite a few members just stand to recognize some guests and some friends. I don't know how long you can be friends when you keep calling them old, but I'd like to recognize one of my young constituents, a great young man. Mr. Adam Ross has joined us here in the gallery this evening.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to bring forward this motion on behalf of one of my constituents who raised the concern with me about the need for financial education for Islander students.

I would like to read a portion of an email that she sent to me:

I truly believe that if we start teaching personal finances in elementary school, not only the concept of finances, but the real truth and heart behind how to handle your money, there's no telling what a generation and the generations after that can and would accomplish.

I also love that the motion promotes the education of adults as well, and for the teachers who will be teaching our children. I think it's very important that the teachers are given the freedom to be able to teach how their particular class will be able to learn these lessons with the guidelines of the curriculum that teach knowledge, art, generosity, logic, financial knowledge to all ages of children, youth, and adults as well.

I can't tell you how many adults are sinking on PEI. I just honestly can't. The numbers are so high. Almost everyone I meet is struggling. I believe we owe it to our children and ourselves to finally teach not just how to get a good education so you can make good money, but to give our children the true knowledge and facts about decisions on how to look after the money they make.

They need to realize you can be absolutely broke even if you make a lot of money if you're not careful.

I look forward, with great relish, to what these kids would accomplish. How many lives can be saved, and made better, and how many wonderful solutions to problems can be found that our current generation and previous have caused.

Throughout my travels across the province I have chatted with many youth in both

informal and formal settings. Often the topic turns to education, and students are not shy about making suggestions as to what they feel would improve the education system in our province.

One of the most mentioned suggestions that I ever see from the youth is their desire to learn more about the financial world, which is increasingly becoming the topic of world events. Today's youth are working, some are saving, and many are worried about how they are going to finance their university education. Others have access to credit cards and finding that the ease of spending is catching up with them in a hurry.

Students want some guidance and they want to know how to budget or how they can access funding for education at cheaper interest rates or through various government programs. Sometimes, however, the complicated language involved in terminology is not familiar to them. Some find themselves in financial realms that are not serving their best interest.

As one young woman put it: I always want to save, but I have no idea of what an RRSP is or why EI and CPP comes off my paycheque. Another said she would really love to learn about how to make a budget and hopefully how to ensure that she lives within her means. Another young working woman fresh out of university confessed: I don't even know how to do my own income taxes. I'm sure there are many adults who are in the same boat.

As one Ontario student put in an article relating to the subject, some of the issues he wanted to know more about: what are the pros and cons of owning a credit card, do I need one, how can I use it wisely, what are the types of bank accounts I can have, what are the differences between them, what is the process I use to apply for a student loan, what are my obligations once I have this loan, what are interest rates, what is a budget, what are mutual funds, what are the elements of a tax return, when do I need to file one, what is a credit score, does this apply to me as a student?

These are some of the issues that I believe need to be addressed in a financial education program for our students. I believe that with new technology and the ease of access to

credit and loans that all of us, including our children, need to be financially educated.

UK and Australia already teach personal finance at every grade level, include the material or standardized test, and require students to make a stand-alone personal finance class before graduation. In the United States the President's Council on Financial Capability recommended in January 2013 that states incorporate personal finance into the Common Core Standards for English and math.

An Ipsos Reid Research poll released in May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 showed that seven in 10, 72%, of Canadians did not feel confident that their math and money management skills would help them plan for a secure financial future. Higher literacy and numeracy levels affect social, economic, and physical well-being and opportunities for social and family interaction.

According to this research financial literacy is an essential skill in today's labour markets that dictate that individuals have a high level of financial literacy. If left unchecked, the low numeracy skills in Canada could affect Canada's ability to compete in the global economy.

New payment products such as prepaid debit cards, gift cards, and mobile payments make the financial landscape even more complex for today's teens.

I think people mistake the teaching of financial literacy with a particular event when it's really about teaching habits of thought, says Nan Morrison, president and CEO of the Council for Economic Education. Opening a bank account is a one-time event. We're trying to teach kid's skills and tools they can apply to any decision they may face going forward.

Our high school students may not be earning a lot of money, but I am sure they could use the skills to help them use their hard-earned dollars more wisely.

I am sure that many of us wish we had learned about ensuring that we had money put away for fixed expenses, savings, fun money, emergencies, and life events. I know many people who are in their 50s who are just now beginning to think about their

retirement income. I know that many of us today feel that credit is just too easily obtained and, often, pushed on individuals and particularly to college students during their first week of school.

I also think that our students can play a larger role in our political system by better understanding the budgetary processes of their governments. It's important that they understand deficits and surpluses and amortization today, but with the advances in technology they will be required to adapt to a changing economic scenario that utilizes new forms of technology on the financial stage.

Our world is changing very quickly and we all need to be able to function in this new world.

I believe we can ensure a much healthier future for our children if we start them early in the process of financial education.

We realize that there will be major changes in that terminology and challenges to keeping up, but to serve our children into the future we must put the systems in place that will help with that progression. We cannot be left behind.

I look forward to your support for our motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I am pleased today to rise and second our opposition motion which is urging our government to bring forth personal finance education curriculum into our Island classrooms.

This is not a new concept and is one that is being explored by many provinces across our country. Some areas have already adopted programs aimed at improving the financial literacy of their students. The need for instruction was recognized several years ago with the Task Force on Financial Literacy that was commissioned by the

federal government in 2009 and which has since reported to the minister of finance.

It states in its executive summary that:

Financial literacy is critical to the prosperity and well-being of Canadians. It is more than a nice-to-have skill. It is a necessity in today's world and, moving forward, should be treated as such by policy-makers, educators, employers, and other stakeholders across the country. The time for action is now.

Its definition of financial literacy is: having the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make responsible financial decisions. The result of their work culminated with a proposed National Strategy on Financial Literacy.

The task force emphasizes that financial literacy requires lifelong learning at home, at school, at work, and in the community. They stress that Canadians need financial information and advice that is relevant, understandable, and engaging. The report calls for the federal government to be the leader in providing this information, and that governments and financial service providers have a responsibility to ensure that their communications meet these criteria.

There is no doubt in my mind that our children, their children, and our country will benefit from a better personal understanding of day-to-day financial transactions that involve making responsible and knowledgeable decisions regarding our finances. I believe it is time we stopped our reliance on others to inform us and began to step up to the plate and be accountable for our decisions. I believe if we all become financially literate many of the social problems and worry associated with poor financial decisions will be eliminated, and that our society as a whole will improve.

To further prove the need for financial curriculum in our schools, I would like to refer to an article that appeared in the *Guardian* this week. The column was written by Blake Doyle in his small business column. It states:

"It's always surprising what resonates. I ran into a senior statesman this past week who suggested his favourite Business Edge

article was on financial literacy from several years back.

"The context of the article revolved around failing our future generations by not providing basic financial literacy in the education system. Basic life skills on reconciling a bank statement or paying Visa balances on time are not core curriculum. Certainly banks are not incented to offer this guidance, so our youth are making uninformed and often costly financial errors.

"Far worse, we have an entire generation uninitiated to interest rates of more than five per cent. Thus ensuring personal financial trauma as interest rates begin their gradual march upwards.

"If we were to educate our youth on financial literacy today, then we would need to reconsider our terminology. As with all industries, the financial world is undergoing a rapid and profound change.

"The financial economy of the future may not be based on traditional financial institutions managing infrastructure to move money around the planet. We will not have legions of people and computers coding and processing orders for money movement. The future will be based on light-speed digital transfers processed in an Internet cloud.

"I started working with rudimentary e-commerce technologies back in 1998. Transaction options were cumbersome, expensive and restrictive. Flash forward to 2008 and the introduction of the first successful digital currency Bitcoin, a virtual crypto currency that allowed people across the globe to conduct transactions on a common global platform, regardless of local currency fluctuations and monetary policy.

"Advance to 2016, we now have a robust technology framework accepted by institutions, business and government with the potential to disintermediate established institutions tasked with governing our transactional commerce for the last hundred years.

"In this new environment transactions are recorded and stored across networks in giant interlinked, time-stamped databases. Currency moves seamlessly and instantly;

these relations are referred to as a 'blockchains.'

"Financial literacy has moved beyond debits and credits on a bank statement and simply monitoring your deposits and withdrawals. Enhanced financial literacy includes understanding how and why money moves. Conducting commerce through private chains of connected data that moves and is authenticated in milliseconds.

"The Royal Mint will be transacting bullion, underpinned by \$1 billion in gold reserves, through blockchain starting next year. Blockchain transactions are legitimate, mainstream and here today. So how are our entrepreneurs adapting to this time series of recorded transactions? Are our brightest informed enough to lead in this emerging financial space? Are we providing full spectrum financial literacy to our youth and future financial stewards?"

"Can we be architects and active participants of the blockchain revolution or will we be tethered to a financial chain-gang with neither understanding nor control of our financial futures?"

I must admit that given Mr. Blake Doyle's information I, too, may very well need to be reeducated to ensure that I will be able to ensure financial stability into the future. It is a new world out there.

Our children and their future generations, keeping up skills that will help them to exist in it is going to be a challenge. I believe that there is a great need to make sure our children can cope, that they can enter the world's workforce with the knowledge that will make them competitive and secure financially.

Obviously our school system, our teachers, are going to have to adapt. As parents and legislators we will need to accept that the old ways just don't work in today's age of rapidly expanding technology.

When I think back to my parents and my in-laws – who believed you didn't borrow money for anything, you didn't get a house, you didn't get a car, you didn't get anything unless you could pay for it – we move ahead to my children's generation who can sit down at the computer and spend money as

long as they have a credit card at just the click of a button. We do have to look at how we educate our children on ensuring they look after their financial security in the future.

I hope that today you will take that step to realize that the needs of our children in our education system are not the same as you and I required. We have gone way beyond that. We need to catch up with the rest of the world, and we need to do so rapidly or we will be left behind. We need to ensure that our children are given the tools that they need to pay their bills, to budget, to live within their means, and also save and plan for the future.

I look forward to your support of this motion.

Thank you, 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'm going to stand to speak to this motion that the Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Educators recognize the importance of gaining financial literacy beginning at an early age. There is a great deal of work underway in our system to help students understand financial terminology and gain financial management skills.

Financial literacy is a result of foundational knowledge and skills that students gain over a period of time. For this reason we begin teaching it in the kindergarten and throughout the school years. In K-5, elementary social studies introduce the concept of wants and needs and help students think about making good choices in managing their money. Students learn how goods and services are exchanged, how people make decisions as consumers, and how we learn a living here in our province.

By grade 6 students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of economic activities, analyze the effects of the

distribution of wealth around the world. By grade 7 students are expected to investigate how various economic systems empower and disempower people, trends that could impact the future of economic empowerment. By grade 8 students are expected to analyze the impact of technology and social economic conditions on prosperities and lifestyles, analyze how globalization has affected Canada. Students are expected to explain the role that basic economic principles play in daily life, evaluate the importance of economics in entrepreneurship, analyze local, regional, and global economic patterns related to issues here in Atlantic Canada.

In our health curriculum – reinforces money management by grade 6. Having students discuss and define a personal budget, survey and graph their peers' spending habits, invite a local banker to learn the benefits of saving. The grade 7 curriculum adds to this information with an examination of the role earnings and costs play in career choices. By grade 8 students are adding their choice of personal career goals and considering the cost of their choices. Students by grade 9 refine their personal goals, calculate the cost of post-secondary education, and consider the saving options.

The 401A career explorations and opportunities class is a required course now. Twenty-five per cent of the course is devoted to financial education. It was offered first in 2008 as an elective and became a graduation requirement for students in grade 10 in the 2015-2016 school year.

By embedding financial education in the context of a career exploration, for the first time all high school students have an in-depth look at personal finances as they begin to plan for their future.

All five weeks are devoted to achieving specific curriculum outcomes which include: demonstrating knowledge and skills associated with saving, investing, and banking; interpret concepts associated with personal income and taxes; explain the role and the importance of credit debt and insurance on personal finance; develop a financial plan that supports the attainment of education and career goals.

At completion students will be able to: describe a variety of banking services offered by financial institutions; explain the difference between saving and investing; explain strategies to boost savings; avoid impulse purchases; avoid unnecessary buying habits; comparison shopping; pay yourself first, invest your savings; interpret information about investment alternatives – examples such as, stocks, mutual funds, GICs, and saving accounts; explain the purpose of investment accounts, RRSPs, TFSAs, and RESPs; determine how compound interest impacts the value of investments over time using online tools. Also, describing strategies for keeping financial information secure and preventing theft and fraud.

This new course is a major step in ensuring all students leave public schooling with a fundamental financial education. We're going to continue to work on curriculum that ties into these skills that can give all our students equitable access to make sure that they have the skills required for good fiscal money management.

When the other compulsory and optional courses such as math, economics or business are added to this program, Island students have many good opportunities to develop financial literacy.

I'm very confident in the work that is being done in our system to help students gain financial literacy. In the latest PISA assessment PEI was one of the seven provinces that chose to add a one-hour financial literacy assessment. These results will be available in 2017. We look forward to these results and to using the information to build on the good work that is being done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to support the motion by the Member from Kensington-Malpeque this evening.

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

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

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

I think it's a great resolution that's here today. First of all, I want to recognize my brother, Philip, Prince Street school, a great school.

**Mr. Myers:** The smart Brown.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Yeah. How many students there, Philip? Lots, 42. No, more than 42, 242. He does a great job at Prince Street. There's a lot of immigration students there on Prince Street. I'd say it's one of the best schools in the Charlottetown area. It's crowded, but it's well – great teachers working there.

Warren Buffet used to –

**Ms. Biggar:** Philip Brown to Warren Buffet.

**Mr. R. Brown:** I'm going from Philip Brown to Warren Buffet, not the same –

**Ms. Biggar:** In the same sentence.

**Mr. R. Brown:** You know, Mr. Speaker, he had a paper route and he knew accounting really early in his life.

I'll be supporting the motion and I'll be short, because I just want to get up and recognize one person: Leo Broderick taught me in grade 10 debits and credits. That put me on my career to a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting and computer science, and I owe it all to Leo Broderick for his great efforts in teaching me debits and credits in grade 10.

Definitely I will be supporting the resolution because look at the product of a great accounting course in grade 10, and I just have to look at myself.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I do want to rise in support of this motion. I think financial literacy is a cornerstone of life success, really. I mean, in this world, when it comes right down to it, from a very early age people have to learn how to

manage their finances, and if you don't you can end up in a pile of trouble.

When I say young age, really for some people it can start in their late tweens and early teens as they go to get out to get jobs. You see it all too often on Prince Edward Island. They need to go get a job to actually support their family.

The other thing, I think probably the key thing, in financial literacy is understanding what debt is all about. This is something that really troubles me. What we see in both our federal and provincial governments is this incredibly bad management of our debt. We see deficit budgets year over year, and now we have a debt in the billions of dollars for 145,000 people.

That's why if you go to [bradtrivers.com](http://bradtrivers.com) –

**Mr. R. Brown:** Shameless.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** I know that the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning has been there before, and the minister of transportation as well. I've got a couple of I guess you'd call them calculators on there, and what they do is they're clocks, really. They're digital clocks, and they'll show you a real time accumulation of the interest, for example, that we're paying on our debt. We're in the order of \$350,000 a year just in interest on our debt.

It makes me question, sometimes, whether the financial literacy of the government was actually taught to them, and maybe that's where we should start is we should bring in somebody to teach the government financial literacy so they understand how much of our hard-earned taxpayer dollars are being spent.

It's incredible. The third-largest line item in our Budget is paying interest on our debt. This is why, since our governments are not being good examples to our children, we need to have this in our schools. It's so fundamental.

Also my website, I should just mention this, you should check out the –

**Mr. R. Brown:** (Indistinct) pictures of you, of course.

**Mr. Trivers:** No, you should check out the digital clock. It's amazing how much they try and downplay: Oh well, we just increased the HST by 1%. It's small, 1% (Indistinct), only 1%.

But when you go and look at that, already since October 1<sup>st</sup> when that has been put in place, over \$5 million has gone into the government's coffers just from raising that HST 1%, and we all know who that impacts the most, and that's the people who have the lowest incomes because as a percentage of their income it's much higher.

That's another reason we need financial literacy in our electorate. We need financial literacy for all Islanders so they can vote for governments that are going to look after their best financial interests and they're going to recognize those governments. I will submit that perhaps this government is not the best representative of the financial interests of Islanders so there we go.

**Mr. J. Brown:** (Indistinct) millions in Newfoundland.

**Mr. Trivers:** Last time I checked, we were on Prince Edward Island and we've had a Liberal government that has tripled the debt.

I also wanted to mention a couple of influential books and people that I've had that have influenced my financial literacy. One big, key thing is knowing the difference between what is an asset and what is a liability. There is an author who wrote a book called *Rich Dad Poor Dad* – Robert Kiyosaki is his name – and he illustrates that very well. It's a great book. I'd recommend it for all of the government MLAs to read. It's called *Rich Dad Poor Dad* by Robert Kiyosaki.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Assets – I should put a link to that book on my website. That's a fantastic idea.

Really, an asset is only an asset if it's actually earning money, in the definition of Robert Kiyosaki. A liability is anything that's costing you money. Contrary to popular belief a car and a house are both liabilities, not assets, and I wanted to make that point.

Finally, there's another website that I would love everybody to go and check out, and this is a website that's a personal finance website, and it really talks about the concept of frugality and how that can lead you to wealth. This is my old buddy, Mr. Money Mustache. He and I lived together back when I worked in Ottawa. Mr. Money Mustache – it would be really great if everyone in this Chamber grew a money moustache because I know we would be managing our money well.

I'll leave it there, but let me say, unequivocally, financial literacy is one of the most important things we can teach our children in today's world, and I wholeheartedly support this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Speaker:** We do have another member who would like to speak to this motion, so let's have a little order now. Let's have a little order for the next speaker.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

I remember hearing as a – well, you know, a young adult, I suppose – that if you're not confused about money, then you haven't thought about it enough because money is confusing. It's incredibly confusing. It's a medium of exchange. It's a store of wealth. It's a unit of value. It plays so many different roles, and I think it's quite understandable that, as adults, most of us don't really manage our wealth terribly well.

But the question for me here is: Should schools be tasked with teaching personal responsibility and self-discipline, which is really what we're talking about here? Mismanagement of money is a symptom of a lack of self-discipline and that can show itself in many ways. A lack of self-discipline, you can get yourself in trouble with law and order, with drugs, with not doing well at school, or with not managing your money well.

To me, that's the critical question here. Should schools be tasked with teaching kids personal responsibility and self-discipline? And you know, they do an awful lot. I had a great discussion between sessions with the Pages downstairs on what schools could and should do, and I know we want to get to vote on this, so I'd love to talk more on this because it's a real pet subject of mine that I think is enormously important.

But I think if we just teach kids how to look after their finances in a vacuum of not explaining to them that really, if you get in trouble, it's because you're not behaving in a responsible manner, then we're not doing a good job.

For me, the way to really teach kids proper values of self-respect and self-discipline and personal responsibility is through the arts. I think if we were to teach kids music and drama from a young age where they have to know what they're doing, they have to be really good at what they are doing, but they also have to be aware of everybody else around them, that sort of learning can be of infinite value to children.

I'm going to sit down now because I know we want to get to a vote on this, and I'm going to support this motion absolutely. But I do recognize that we have to get away from this teaching to subjects to teaching to topic, to understanding how things fit together. In a drama class I used to teach a final thought. Not only would the kids learn their lines and get on stage and play their part, we would also talk about: How are we going to advertise this show? How are we going to get people in the seats? How much is it costing us to do this? How much do we have to charge for a ticket in order to cover our expenses?

That was a part of the learning that we did in drama class and that's the sort of thing you can do when you teach a topic, rather than teaching to subject.

I support this motion.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I'll be brief as well. I just wanted to note, an organization I was formally involved with 21 Inc., there was a member of that organization named Steven Jackson that did a community project on essentially this kind of subject matter. The lead-in for him was – he's a contractor, he has a business where he employs people here and in Nova Scotia. He's just a young guy too. He found that he ran into fairly significant problems in his first few years of operation where he'd get new guys trained. It'd take him probably six months to get them trained, and by the time he got them trained they'd be out of money or in debt and having to head out west to make some, quote unquote, real money, and then they'd go out west and they'd make some money out there and they'd be looking at coming back and he'd be just getting his other fellows up and going.

He found it to be very detrimental to developing a consistent work force for himself and took it upon himself to try and push this project along to develop some practical curriculum for students at the high school level.

Just wanted to mention that. I think it's a great idea, it's something that we all need to have a little bit of an awareness of, for sure, and probably a lot more than we currently do, particularly as teenagers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to stand and support this motion. I think it's a great motion. We can't begin any too soon. I was very fortunate to grow up in a family – my father was an entrepreneur. There are highs and lows to being an entrepreneur. Sometimes the business is going well and sometimes the business is not going so well, but it's all part of life.

The other side of it was it gives you an awful lot of freedom. Not to quote Kevin O'Leary, but if you manage your own affairs, whether it's through a business or

what you're trying to do in life, the thing I remember is my father risked a lot and he worked hard, but if there was something very important during the day or a fair or something that we had to go to as a family, we always could go. We didn't have to check in and see if your employer could let you go for that day or not. It gave you a great sense of freedom.

From a confidence point of view, I think that I got a great deal of confidence from my dad and like to adventure out later on in life and to be in business. I think it's so important that if we give our young people – the fact that you get it in the home – and people do well in school when they're encouraged by their parents. My dad was always saying: You're going to get a grade 12 education if it kills you. I knew I was going to get a grade 12 education, but I think dad should of – he was somebody – his father, my grandfather, he was fairly well-to-do and he didn't really believe in an education. He always had to work in the lobster factory or the farm or something. Because he had to do that he really appreciated an education.

The only mistake he made with me possibly was the fact that he should have insisted I go to college, and he set my benchmark a little too low at grade 12. But it all worked out very well. I got away and was lucky enough to – like everybody else, employment was good in the baby boomers. We had a wonderful time growing up because it was a lot easier to get a job than the young people of today.

The young people of today, they're facing so many challenges in terms of employment. A lot of our employment today is not long-term employment with a firm where there are benefits down the road for you, there's a lot of short-term employment. In our day you could pick a profession and you could stay in it for life. Today you might be doing five or six different things throughout your life to get through this life.

Not only from an educational point of view of having this in our schools, but entrepreneurship and doing your finances, it's such a basic thing. We always say that: He's not book learned but he's street learned. This is just being learned, and it's such a basic thing to understand the principles of finances and looking out for

yourself. I believe that with this in the schools – a lot of times sometimes some of us come from isolated areas as we tried it, and sometimes you don't see all the opportunities maybe you'd see in a bigger centre. You wouldn't see in a bigger centre. This will give confidence. This will give people confidence, it will build for these young people.

I think it's fantastic this is in our school system (Indistinct) and I thank you for bringing this motion forward.

I support it wholeheartedly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** Are there any other members who would like to speak to the motion?

If not, I'll call on the mover of the motion to close debate on the motion.

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

On behalf of myself and the young lady constituent of mine, thanks for everybody to consider this motion. She'll certainly be a happy lady after tonight.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** Are you ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Question!

**Speaker:** All those voting in favour of the motion signify by saying "aye."

**Some Hon. Members:** Aye!

**Speaker:** All those voting against the motion, signify by saying by saying "nay."

Motion is carried and it is unanimous.

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

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

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

**Speaker:** You call the motion, hon. member.

**Mr. J. Brown:** All right, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not sure what order of the day it is, to be honest, but I call Motion No. 85 for consideration, seconded by the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

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

**Clerk:** Motion No. 85.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, the following Motion:

**WHEREAS** the idea of Canada was born at the Charlottetown Conference of 1864;

**AND WHEREAS** the “Confederation Birthplace Act” was passed by this Legislative Assembly in 1992 (repealed by 2002, c.23, s.1);

**AND WHEREAS** former Member of Parliament George Proud unsuccessfully sought to have a Private Member’s bill entitled “Commemoration of the Birthplace of Confederation Act” passed by the House of Commons;

**AND WHEREAS** by Proclamation of the Prime Minister of Canada, on September 1, 1996, the role of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, as the birthplace of Confederation was recognized and affirmed as an integral part of our Canadian heritage;

**AND WHEREAS** the “Birthplace of Confederation Act” was passed by this Legislative Assembly in 2014;

**AND WHEREAS** Bill C-253 entitled “Recognition of Charlottetown as the Birthplace of Confederation Act” was introduced, in the Spring of 2016, as a Private Members bill by Malpeque Member of Parliament Wayne Easter in the House of Commons;

**AND WHEREAS** this Assembly supports the letter and spirit of Bill C-253;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that this Assembly urge the passage of Bill C-253 by the House of Commons;

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Motion be forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Caucus House Leaders in the House of Commons and all Prince Edward Island Members of Parliament and Senators.

**Speaker:** The mover of the motion to speak to the motion, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

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

We’ll be brief in the hopes of getting off for 8:30.

This motion would not be new material to most members in this Legislature. It is the result of some great work having been done by a number of folks that go before us, not the least of which is Philip Brown who is here in the gallery this evening. This has been something that Philip has championed, it’s been something that’s been championed by the former members of this House, by former Members of Parliament for Canada, and it’s something that there is existing legislation in respect of here on Prince Edward Island. I’ll give a little more detail about what’s gone on federally.

It’s not news to anybody here, anyway, that Charlottetown was the spot where the original conversations that formed this great nation took place, and in fact they took place right next door at Province House, and at Government House, over the course of nine days back in 1864.

What is interesting – and I’m not sure how many people would be aware of this most of the time – is that originally the British monarchy and the British government were attempting to have the Maritime Provinces unite in the hopes that they could become more of an independent entity and less kind of required of support from the Crown being abroad. It’s an interesting issue, and we grapple with the same kinds of issues on a provincial level here today in this House.

We know that the conference took place over six or seven days. Many of the different aspects of what’s now our Constitution were

outlined just next door and at Government House. Later the final touches were put to things in Quebec City.

Fast forward to today's date – or not to today's date, but the recent past, I guess. John Eldon Green, a member of this Assembly in the late 1980s, undertook a study setting out measures to celebrate and commemorate Charlottetown as the Birthplace of Canada. Following that, in 1991 the Confederation Birthplace Commission was appointed by then-Premier Joe Ghiz to develop a plan to recognize and develop the birthplace theme. The commission included 12 members of the community representing various heritage and cultural communities of interest. The commission submitted its report, *Powerful Memories, Powerful Dreams*, in the fall of 1991 to this Legislature.

In the spring of 1992 the *Confederation Birthplace Act* was passed by the PEI Legislative Assembly. The act was largely operational in nature. Following a brief preamble about the commission, the act established an administrative entity called the Charlottetown Birthplace Implementation Board to implement the report. The act also set out the powers of the board and set a reporting deadline of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1992. The board's work in turn led to the establishment of the PEI Capital Commission and various other initiatives such as Confederation Landing Park. The act being rapidly obsolete after those initiatives were completed was repealed in 2002.

In 1995, our Charlottetown MP – or I think it was called Hillsborough at that point in time –

**Mr. R. Brown:** George Proud.

**Mr. J. Brown:** – George Proud, that's right, sought to have a private member's bill passed in Parliament called Commemoration of the *Birthplace of Confederation Act*. The bill was very brief, consisting of powers and duties of the minister of heritage to commemorate the birthplace. It had no preamble and did not ultimately succeed.

However, in 1996, then-Prime Minister Chretien signed a proclamation entitled, *Regarding the Birthplace of Confederation*.

A copy of this document can be found at Charlottetown City Hall for any of those that are interested.

Having recently gone through the sesquicentennial anniversary of the Charlottetown Conference, the interest in having Charlottetown recognized as the Birthplace of Confederation has been greatly revived. I think we've all seen from the 2014 year what that kind of a celebration can do for a small place like Prince Edward Island, and what lasting effect it can have as we go forward, particularly when you kind of have the heft of the federal government behind you doing it.

I'd note that on a recent trip that we were together on to Quebec City the efforts that they make to commemorate their involvement in Confederation are significant there. I'd say probably more significant than what we do, significantly aided by the federal government as well. It would be great to see as much of our history commemorated as we possibly can here in Charlottetown.

Following that in, I believe it was in 2014, a further motion was passed by this Assembly and an act was eventually passed entitled *An Act to celebrate in 2014, the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Charlottetown Conference of 1864 and Prince Edward Island's unique role as the Birthplace of Confederation*.

We have all of that history, and I guess I would add to that that the city of Charlottetown also passed a resolution on August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the substance of which was quite similar to what we've discussed here. The intent with all of this is, again, to promote our heritage, to promote the role that we have played in Confederation and to be proud of that, not just here in Charlottetown, but also on a national and an international stage.

As is indicated in the motion, a private member's bill has been introduced by MP Wayne Easter in the spring of 2016. It's gone through first reading and it's currently sitting there. As many private members' bills do, it's slowly working its way through. The important deadline for this to happen by is rapidly approaching as well, I would say being July 1<sup>st</sup> of next year. The meeting took

place September 1<sup>st</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> of 1864. There would be some significance around that.

It's important – I feel it is – that we urge this bill along. The operative clauses of the motion that I have put together read: Therefore be it resolved that this Assembly urge the passage of Bill C-253 by the House of Commons;

Therefore be it further resolved that this Motion be forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Caucus House Leaders in the House of Commons and all Prince Edward Island Members of Parliament and Senators.

With that, I move this motion, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

Thank you very much for your time.

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

**Speaker:** The seconder of the motion to speak to the motion, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

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

Could I please have the podium?

I am so pleased to stand and second this motion, recognition of Charlottetown as the *Birthplace of Confederation Act*. We, in Charlottetown, have the pleasure to live and breathe our birthplace history. Each day we are witnesses to history, and for those of us fortunate enough to have sat in Province House, the very building where the Fathers of Confederation held their original meeting, we can feel the history that surrounded us in that magnificent building.

The Confederation Chamber which has played host to visiting dignitaries and swearing-in ceremonies for members was the location of the meetings of the Fathers of Confederation. In fact, the table and chairs in the Confederation Chamber were all originals to that meeting.

Another example of our history in Province House are the floors. The floors in Province House are well worn by those who have come before us. Think about that. Those who had the idea of forming this great

country were in the same building that we were in, so that is really part of history here in Charlottetown.

We all know the story of Ms. Preedy, the housekeeper, who had an apartment in the basement of Province House. From the video from Parks Canada that I'm sure most of us have all seen, I'm sure they've all heard Ms. Preedy running up the stairs screaming at Mr. Pope: They're here, they're here. Yes, she was referring to the Fathers from Upper Canada who had arrived by steamship at the wharf from (Indistinct) and walked up Great George Street to Province House for the meetings.

Many Islanders, visitors, and Charlottetonians walk the path every day of the Fathers of Confederation of Great George Street. In fact, Charlottetown Confederation Centre of the Arts was opened 1964 on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a memorial to the Fathers of Confederation, and we know that in Memorial Hall at the Confederation Centre of the Arts, carved in stone, are the names of the Fathers of Confederation.

Charlottetown has a rich heritage, and at this time I would like to congratulate the city and its planning and heritage board for their insistence and tenacity in preserving our built heritage. I had the pleasure as a two-term city councillor to chair the planning and heritage board and I know the effort that goes into preserving our built heritage. I would be remiss if I didn't thank Catherine Hennessey for her dedication to preserving our heritage. I know it wasn't easy for her, and Catherine, if you're watching, I want to thank you. We appreciate your tenacity. We owe you a huge debt of gratitude for your vision to preserve this beautiful, historic city.

Many visitors to Charlottetown are amazed with the sensitive preservation of our built heritage. They enjoy the walking tours around the city. Two thousand and seventeen is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the greatest country in the world and it all happened right here in historical Charlottetown. I could think of no better birthday present to our city than to recognize Charlottetown as the birthplace of the nation.

I am pleased to second this motion to support having Bill C-253 passed in the House of Commons recognizing Charlottetown as the Birthplace of Confederation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

It's great to rise on this motion. It's a very important motion and make no mistake, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, is the birthplace of Confederation.

In 1864 there was a meeting being held here in the old building and it was a pleasure to be sitting in the old building, to just feel the inspiration and the debates that would have gone on in that place during that time. But the foundation of Canada was built at that meeting. I know they went off to Quebec and spent a bunch of days there and came up with 92 resolutions or so and the formation – the details were worked out, but the genesis of Confederation was here. We should be really proud of it and we should be recognized for it in Prince Edward Island.

I know everyone in this room heard it before and I'll say it again, Canada is a great country because our southern neighbours at that time were settling their differences on the battlefield in the Civil War, one of the worst civil wars. Many millions of people died in the United States settling their differences. Canadians settled their differences in their legislatures around a table, and that's why we are recognized around the world as a democracy to be looked at. We instituted a great way parliament runs, the Westminster model, it's an extremely good model. It keeps the government quite accountable and it keeps people very informed of what their government is doing, unlike some other government systems.

I will be supporting the motion. I want to thank the member from Brighton for bringing it forward and the Charlottetown councillor there, he has been working on this for many years. It may even go back to

George Proud's time he has been working on it. So I'm pretty proud that he is pushing it and pushing it hard because he is right. This is a great city, this is a great province, and we have a great country, and we should be all really proud of it. Islanders should be really proud of the accomplishments that were done here in Prince Edward Island and I can't wait to get back to the old building because it's really inspirational to work in there, and I will be supporting it.

Thank you, sir, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I'll add my voice briefly to those supporting this motion and those recognizing and encouraging the efforts of our MP Wayne Easter and carrying this forward – George Proud before him – and to recognize Prince Edward Island and Charlottetown as the place where Canada began.

I think it's very important that we remind Canadians of that, and that Province House right next door to us be considered and increasingly recognized as emblematic of what Canada stands for, and what was achieved in the 1860s to put this country on the path that on its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary they could say they built it better than they knew, and now on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary to look back and recognize what was accomplished starting out in 1864 here, and what continues to be one of the greatest and most successful federations and democracies and really great countries of the world.

I'm happy to support this and thank the mover and seconder for bringing it forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

It is my pleasure to close debate on this motion and to thank those members that have spoken to it, and again to thank Phillip

Brown for helping me along with it and for

—

**An Hon. Member:** From Charlottetown.

**Mr. J. Brown:** — bringing the — yeah, Phillip Brown from Charlottetown — for bringing this forward through the course of time.

Of course, I should have mentioned, too, the role that the city of Charlottetown, and in particular Catherine Hennessey, has played in this over time has been great as well.

With that, I'm pleased to conclude debate on this and I call for a vote on it.

**Speaker:** Are we ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Speaker:** All those voting in favour of the motion signify by saying "aye."

**Some Hon. Members:** Aye!

**Speaker:** All those not supporting the motion signify by saying nay.

The motion is carried and it is unanimous.

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

**Mr. R. Brown:** Point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. R. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, this is a great motion.

I would recommend that maybe the Speaker of the House and the leaders of the three parties sign it and (Indistinct) goes off to Ottawa as a resolution of a consensus and working together in Prince Edward Island.

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

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

I would like to call Motion No. 83 on universal basic income.

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

**Clerk Assistant (E. Doiron):** Motion No. 83.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, the following motion:

**WHEREAS** implementing a universal basic income in Prince Edward Island would significantly reduce or potentially eliminate poverty in the province;

**AND WHEREAS** a universal basic income would likely have many other positive effects, including local economic growth, supporting entrepreneurship, reducing administrative complexity and costs, improving working conditions, reducing crime, improving health, and helping to build vibrant rural communities;

**AND WHEREAS** all four Prince Edward Island political parties have indicated their support for exploring a universal basic income;

**AND WHEREAS** the federal government has indicated an interest in exploring a universal basic income;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Legislative Assembly urge government to pursue a partnership with the federal government for the establishment of a universal basic income pilot project in Prince Edward Island;

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Government shall provide an update on the progress of this initiative in every session of this assembly.

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

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

Before I get going, I just want to recognize Ann Wheatley who is in the House tonight and who has worked for decades on poverty issues in Prince Edward Island.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** This motion encourages the government to work on creating a universal basic income pilot project on Prince Edward Island, and I want to acknowledge the minister who's not actually here, unfortunately, of Family and Human Services and her willingness to promote –

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Can't say that.

**Speaker:** Yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Oh, okay, I will not acknowledge the minister.

**Speaker:** Okay, no. Hon. member –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Anyway, there was a willingness – I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker?

**Speaker:** Hon. members, I will use my position to decide whether – okay?

Hon. member, you don't refer to people who are not here. Go ahead.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** My apologies, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to acknowledge the willingness of this government to promote the idea in the previous discussions that I have had with members on this topic, and with this motion it is my hope that the Legislature will provide a stronger mandate for the minister to pursue a basic income pilot project.

In the last provincial election all four parties agreed that a universal basic income is a policy worth exploring, and economists from all sides of the political spectrum, including the Premier's Board of Economic Advisors, are open to this idea. The federal government has also indicated a willingness to explore such programs.

That sort of common agreement is not terribly – it doesn't happen very often in Prince Edward Island and Canadian politics, so I'm hoping and I'm expecting that this motion will attract wide support in the House.

Should government proceed with a basic income pilot project, it would not be the first to do so. The first in Canada was forty years ago in Dauphin, Manitoba. The provinces of Quebec and Ontario are currently in the process of creating their own initiatives.

We would not be entering this blind. There is previous research and analysis to inform our efforts and willing partners in governments, NGOs, and academia with whom to collaborate and learn.

Furthermore, PEI's small size and clear boundaries provide an ideal scale for pilot projects exploring social issues and policy impacts at both the provincial and the community levels.

There is a long list of potential benefits that could come from universal basic income: first and foremost, reducing and hopefully entirely eliminating poverty; improving health and mental health outcomes by addressing the social determinants of health; increasing educational attainment; reducing food insecurity; improving working conditions and reducing income insecurity; reducing crime and the associated social and economic costs; stimulating economic development by boosting the purchasing power of those most in need in our society; increasing demand for local products and, in doing so, lowering greenhouse gas emissions; consolidating multiple social programs; reducing bureaucracy and red tape and the stigma involved in accessing those programs and improving accessibility; reducing the cost of administering multiple government social programs; and allowing people to better take control of their lives and freeing them to be more productive members of a society economically, socially, politically, artistically, and in many other manners.

Elimination of poverty would have some very obvious and immediate benefits, but a universal basic income would also have some more subtle and yet, in my mind, more exciting possible benefits. A universal basic income could enable the greatest unleashing of human potential ever seen. Throughout most of human history right up to the present the ability to innovate in business, science, the arts, and society and politics has been largely the preserve of those who either had independent means of

their own or else through the great chance found support from wealthy patrons.

However, it is not the case that people of independent means are inherently more creative or innovative or better leaders than others. These traits are widely distributed throughout society. But without economic security these human resources too often get unrealized.

The knowledge that you could take risks by starting a new business, for example, by building a prototype for a new invention, or taking the time to write what could be the next great Prince Edward Island novel, and yet be assured of the dignity and security of a roof over your head and food in your belly while you're doing that, even if your venture fails, would quickly multiply the most valuable resource that we have: human capital.

Another way to look at it is that when we consider economics we tend to talk about resources being put to their highest and best use. Capital should be invested where it will obtain the highest returns. On a piece of real estate, for example, in a busy downtown core is not the right place to build a two-bedroom bungalow.

However, outside the realm of overpaid CEOs and professional athletes, there's been very little discussion about human beings put to their highest and best use. True, there has been an emphasis in education as a means of ensuring that the workforce has the skills that are in demand by certain employers, but we have not been very preoccupied with the question of whether the person, for example, working on the shop floor might better contribute as the founder of his own business, or whether the single mother living in poverty with her children and trying to make ends meet at a couple of minimum wage jobs might be the next J.K. Rowling, or whether the young man who seems to drift between short-term jobs and unemployment, never really finding his niche, might be carrying solutions to some of the most pressing problems of our time in his thoughts and dreams. A basic income would allow us and them a chance to find this out.

Furthermore, the Canadian labour market is changing. Jobs are increasingly part-time

and precarious. New digital technologies are replacing work through automation and algorithmic programming. Companies are more readily able to outsource employment globally, increasing competition for work and limiting opportunities for even the most highly skilled Island workers.

While I firmly believe that a universal basic income would have a strong and widespread positive impact, I also acknowledge that it's not going to solve all of our problems. The common concerns presented against a basic universal income are about its overall cost, and also that it might provide a disincentive for people to work.

This is exactly why we need a pilot project so we can evaluate whether the benefits outweigh the costs. I would caution, however, that in doing so we must ensure that we consider the long-term benefits and costs as well as the short-term ones.

We must also ensure that we can properly measure and evaluate the impacts of such a project. Ideally, we would do this by adopting a holistic set of well-being indicators, such as the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, something that this House would be aware I have encouraged in the House.

With this motion, I want to provide further encouragement to the minister and her government, and maybe perhaps a little extra push to get this project moving so that we can offer better help to the most vulnerable Islanders.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. R. Brown:** Where's the seconder? Who's the seconder? Me? (Indistinct) ready to go.

Is there a seconder?

**Mr. Perry:** (Indistinct).

**Speaker:** (Indistinct) he's not speaking to it.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Okay, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to this motion tonight. I want to also recognize Ann Wheatley and Leo Cheverie. I've known Ann for many years and I've known Leo for many years too, and I must say that they do a fantastic job on putting forward the concerns of the underprivileged, and your work goes a long way. We are listening, and hopefully someday it'll all work out.

Our government is always open to partnerships with the federal government to improve the financial well-being of residents of our province. Any pilot project in the area of universal basic income would require an active and a committed federal government. We'll be watching to see what is happening with the basic income pilot in Ontario. I understand that Hugh Segal has done quite a report on it, and Hugh Segal was the Senator who did quite a bit of work in the Senate over the basic income, and he's a quite great supporter of it.

Our government is providing support to Islanders who need it most. Some of the recent initiatives include the new programs, such as the generic drug and catastrophic drug programs, changes to the income act to assist about 12,000 low-income Islanders, increases to the support to the Island breakfast program, an additional \$15,000 investment into the Salvation Army heating program for the 2017 heating season on top of our earlier commitments of \$121,000, increased financial help to seniors and low-income Islanders for home repairs, increased food rates and personal food allowances.

The government is in the third year of a five-year plan to increase food rates which is an investment of \$2.8 million to help Island families. We are committed to developing a multi-year program to look at ways to work together to reduce food insecurity and poverty in our province.

A working group was structured to collect and examine information to get the picture of poverty on Prince Edward Island. The next step will be to establish a group to lead the development of this strategy.

My department is working with the department of family services to help Islanders to move into the workforce and to become more self-reliant. One of the things

that I firmly believe in is that a job is the best social policy that, I think, a province can do or a government can do to help its citizens. A job not only gives the person or the family income, it gives self-respect, it gives a purpose, and it's so gratifying to the person who needs it. They know that they're contributing to society and their efforts are helping society and helping each others. It's a great program. We work with the department in seeing to put people to work who are on social assistance.

We had another excellent program this summer that I'm really proud of. We took children of parents who are on social assistance and offered them employment in order to help the whole family work together in seeing what they can do together. I can say it has been a very successful program from the feedback we're getting back from the families. Again, if you can work with the family as a whole and make sure that you're doing every effort society is doing to help them reduce their needs on the system, it's great.

I will be supporting the resolution, we think it's a great resolution, but I must say that it's important that we reduce poverty. It's important that we make sure that each and every Islander has as much opportunity as possible in order to contribute to this society.

I've been around a long time and I know there are a lot of people who put people down that could be on social assistance of not wanting to work. I can tell you in my 20 years here and 14 years, or bunch of years, at the city, I have never seen anyone who didn't want to work. If given an opportunity, they took the opportunity. You hear all these right-wingers who talk about they don't want to work, they don't want to do this, it's absolutely wrong. Ann could testify to this, that given the opportunity they'll take the opportunity.

Earlier on there was a great program where the federal government came in with the additional money for the underprivileged. While in opposition we had fought extremely hard – the province of the day clawed back, all provinces clawed back, that extra money that was given to people who were on social assistance to assist them. We fought, in opposition, extremely hard to

reduce that. It was a clawback that should have never happened. The federal government came along with some money. The provinces, at the time, said this is a cash – we could take it off their social assistance and put it into other programs. I think that was the wrong way to do things.

I want to commend the federal government this time around for the increase into the child benefit. That's a lot of money that's going into children and helping children. Some people may disagree with me, but it's going a long way to take children out of poverty. I also want to thank the federal government in terms of its efforts with the seniors, the new \$900 increase to the guaranteed income supplement. I think that's major.

I think the guaranteed income, we could start with a pilot project, but if we're going to look at it, I would like to see it work in terms of – there's a working group between 60 and 65 right now. When you get to 65 you get the Old Age Security and the guaranteed income supplement. There are a lot of people who are trapped between 60-65 and a lot of these people – we'll be voting on it, don't worry – are women.

We come from a generation where a lot of women, at that time in their lives, stayed at home and raised families. Their husbands either died at this time – and between 60-65 there's a major issue right there. If we're going to do anything that's where I would start.

Secondly, I would start, then, with anyone who has been deemed as disabled. According to Canada pension, I think that once you're deemed as disabled there should be a guaranteed income right away. If we're going to phase it in, I think we may have – there are a lot of issues around being universal right away, but I think if we – these are my suggestions and that's all – I think we've always gotten bogged down into the little details of the universal benefit. I think if we start in a certain area and show that it works in this group, I think society and Canada can move a long way in helping people in this area.

I'll be wrapping up. Thank you very much to the Leader of the Third Party. Great job. I know we've had some rough times over the

last couple of weeks, but you're doing a great job on this one.

Thank you very much.

**An Hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

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

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

I wanted to rise and speak in support of this motion as well. Often when we talk about universal income, I think that people don't associate that sort of a policy or a program with conservative values. I think that's an incorrect assumption.

Especially sitting over here as a Progressive Conservative, I think it's very much in line with our values. I won't go through the nine values we have listed in our PC constitution –

**Mr. Myers:** Go through five of them.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Just go to [bradtrivers.com](http://bradtrivers.com) (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** I'm being serious here –

**Mr. Currie:** Leadership hashtag (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** – but I remember in the last general election our leader was at a debate, and the question came up, and he said that: We would definitely be in favour, as Progressive Conservatives, of a pilot program for universal basic income.

At first I even, in my own mind, was a little taken aback, but I have to say I agree with this motion 100%. In the second clause of whereas it talks about the positive effects, and the big one is reducing administrative complexity and costs. I commend the Leader of the Third Party for bringing this forward.

I did want to say, I think the biggest trick, or the key to making a universal basic income program, is the level at which the basic income is set, because it has to be enough so that people are not living in poverty, but it can't take away the incentive to go out and work. That is, indeed, I believe the challenge.

I will support this motion and, again, I commend the Leader of the Third Party for bringing this forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I, too, support this motion contrary to what the Workforce and Advanced Learning minister thinks of us conservatives. We are quite progressive in our views. It's for a lot of reasons that I do support this. I, like many of you, get to see the poverty that is throughout Prince Edward Island every day.

There would have been a time in my life, probably, where I would have been more against this than I am today. I've certainly seen a lot in this job, and it has opened my eyes to the need that's out there.

I like the idea of a pilot program because it allows us to kind of run tweaks and have corrections. The thing that would worry me is how much government would design it versus having the people who actually understand design it. As Ricky Gervais says: A camel is a horse designed by government. I think that's a fair assessment to the way I view government these days.

I would love to see the proper people who have the most insight into the issues of poverty and people who are struggling in Prince Edward Island design the system. I think that it's an important issue.

I have heard the member from Charlottetown, the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, talk about this before. I know it's something that he has brought up in this Legislature several times. I know he is supportive of it. It's probably the first time I've ever spoken either for or against it. It's the first time I've ever had the opportunity. I don't know how I would have spoken before now but I definitely know where I stand on it today.

It was talked about at the federal level. I was disappointed that none of our MPs seemed to be interested in talking about it. There is a

great opportunity. I hear the MP for Charlottetown was complaining that he was too busy signing passports and this is a real – this is one of the real issues on Prince Edward Island and I think it's something that he could have better spent his time at.

It's something that we're going to need federal engagement on if it's actually going to happen. It's going to be a good opportunity for this government to show the pull that they have in Ottawa to make this happen. I would stop short of suggesting that it goes to committee for further study because I know what you guys do to committees. It's the death of any great idea on Prince Edward Island. It gets sent to committee to die so I wouldn't even suggest it does that.

I support this motion. I think it needs to have some sort of action. I'm not going to recommend any because I would hate to see it go to committee and die, and I really don't want to see it designed by government because I think that it would just be one more thing that they could ruin.

But I do think there's an opportunity for good people who understand to come up with a good program that we could all support and, collectively, together as a House, support to go to Ottawa to ask for them to look at this as a pilot project for all of Canada. I have always said that Prince Edward Island is the perfect sized market to pilot anything. If you have a national product of any kind, Prince Edward Island would be an ideal market for it because it has a great cross-section of urban-rural. It has all of the different socioeconomic standings. I think it's the perfect cross-section for a representation of all of Canada.

This would be a great place to pilot a project like that. We could show all of Canada whether or not it's something that we would be able to take to the national stage or what tweaks needed to be done to make it happen.

With that, I do support this motion.

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

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

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

This is a good motion and I support it wholeheartedly. I think we can never underestimate the level of poverty that's out there and the hard times that families are having. I think any program like this where we can try to better the lives of Islanders and their families and continue that onto the national stage is an asset to us and I think it makes us realize more how important our job is in this House, to work on behalf of all Islanders, and especially people that need our help the most.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I'll be brief. I just wanted to say, in addition to what a lot of members have said here, that there is another important aspect of this kind of a program that really should be focused on and that is – if you want to use Maslow's hierarchy of needs, self-actualization. In other words, people that are taken out of poverty or given a means by which they can survive and really thrive in life tend to move on to do great things and to focus on the things that they want to do.

Going back centuries, this is how great advances were made in civilization, where we had wealthy people that would keep the musicians or the scientists or whatever of the day in food and clothes and whatever else within their homesteads and would kind of use smaller incubators to help to move them along and to take their ideas and move them forward.

I think the same would happen. I think we'd very quickly see, if we had a basic income guarantee or a negative income tax or whatever, that people would do great things if they weren't kind of forced to toil away to make a wage every day and they could do the things that they want.

I support this, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

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

**Speaker:** Are there any other members who would like to speak to this motion?

The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

I will be supporting the motion. I would like to see what this is all about, to tell you the honest truth, I really would. First off, when you start a pilot you often wonder what is the cost and the cost, I hope, will be positive down the road for everyone.

The base salary that we talked about, what is that? Because when you're setting budgets and things like that we have to know what the dollars and cents behind this are. Who really qualifies for this? If I was a grain farmer and I had a complete crop failure, do I qualify at that time and how do I cover off there? The length of the pilot, how long is the pilot going to run? Does it only qualify for 60-65? Who do we start there?

There's a lot of details to a pilot and sometimes, it's often said, there is no such things such as a pilot. Once you start it it just continues and continues and goes. But there has to be some parameters set in this, I think, before we'd even take it to the feds. But I don't know. We don't want to take it to a committee, that's fine. Sometimes committees can destroy it too.

I like the concept. I'm very questionable of what the parameters are, what the cost will be to government, provincially and federally. The benefit may outweigh all the costs, and if that's the case, that's fine and dandy. I would like to see some of the parameters, some of the details on that. But I certainly will support it if we can get to more discussion on it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** Is there any other member who would like to speak to the motion?

If not, I will call on the mover of the motion to close debate on the motion.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

I want to thank all the members who spoke to the motion and for your apparent support, and also your sensitivity to the vulnerable people in our community. For me, that's really what this is about, it's about our community. Personally, I find it difficult to be comfortable and happy and content if I know that my neighbours are not. Providing every Islander with the opportunity to live in decency and with all of the human needs that we have, basic human needs that we have, is truly important to me.

Members have talked about the many benefits of a basic universal income from just the fact that it's the decent thing to do, it's a humanitarian thing to do. The personal health for those people who are struggling economically, how it would improve that. Also, to our collective societal health, the fact that we will have better social, economic and collective health outcomes if we were to do this.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton talked about unleashing the human potential if people are no longer forced – if they are freed from the burden of poverty. I have a couple of quotes here, I have a minute or so to do this, from people who – I think this gives us sort of a personal face to what we're talking about here.

This is from a lady: I've always done two or three jobs so I wouldn't have to be on income support. Then last year I got quite sick physically, emotionally, everything just fell apart and I went from having the bare necessities of life that I needed to live off to what I had to live off in a month what I used to make in a week. I don't understand how other people in PEI are living this way, it's hard. I learned very quickly how to be resourceful, but it's still upsetting to see so much poverty on what I call the working poor. On this Island it's heartbreaking, it really is.

But one final one: Anytime an unexpected expense comes up I'm in a panic. If I need special medicine for something, whatever, cold medicine or whatever, if something goes wrong with my car and I just have

more expenses than I should have, I panic. Maybe if I had a job or if I had a kitty or backup money, but I don't have that, it's a constant stress because you're always going: The next break, where is the next cheque coming from? Am I going to be able to buy my groceries next week?

This is a real problem on Prince Edward Island, we all know that.

I thank members for their support and I now close debate.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** Are you ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Question!

**Speaker:** All those supporting the motion, signify by saying "aye."

**Some Hon. Members:** Aye!

**Speaker:** All those voting against the motion, signify by saying "nay."

Motion is carried and it is unanimous.

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

**An Hon. Member:** 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-Brighton, that this House adjourn until Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.

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

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 2:00 p.m.