

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

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Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests

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

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

It is another lovely day in paradise here in PEI.

I want to welcome everyone to the gallery. I see Orville Willis is here, and Joe McKenna, Robert Palmer, and some of the members of the Associate Families which Minister Mundy will be addressing later on and recognizing for sure.

I want to put a shout-out of course to District 5 and all the great members out there, wishing them all a great day as well.

I know in Ottawa there is a big conference going on for the next two days. They're going to be dealing with climate change and with health care. We want to wish all the best to whoever may be there at that meeting, and come back with great results for us.

I noticed on the desk the Celebrate Holiday Recipe Guide that was tabled yesterday. Everyone has a copy of that, so no excuses over the holiday season not to go out and buy local.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Welcome everybody in the gallery today, and everybody watching on EastLink and everybody in District 19.

I was very pleased to attend Kinkora High School this morning. I was invited into Mrs. Norah Pendergast's class for the morning. They're involved in a new computer

technology called Google Classroom Platform. I was impressed by it. It allows them to literally go paperless, basically, in the classroom. They get all their assignments online and they can upload their assignments. As they work on homework they can store it within the platform. It was quite breathtaking to see it, actually. There were 14 students in that class. I think it goes to how important our rural schools are and what they are offering on such a hands-on basis.

Also, they had Ms. Janet Surette who is an EA, and it was pretty interesting to interact with the kids and the students and see what they are actually doing.

Thank you.

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

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

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

First of all I want to welcome the west here. They're great strong representation in our gallery and great workers in the area.

I also want to send greetings out to my constituents from Tyne Valley-Linkletter, especially to my mother Pauline Dymant who is at Stewart Memorial Manor. She watches and critiques everything that is going on around here, so I always get a report back on what she thinks of who is doing what. I want to send greetings out to her and all the residents at Stewart Memorial Manor today.

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 want to rise today and welcome in the gallery Joe McKenna, of course, but long-time friends Darren Tawil, Cody, Tanisha and Amber from North River. I think everybody will remember Sam's store at one time. Welcome.

Also, Laura MacPherson, new rec director in Cornwall that we repatriated from Liverpool, Nova Scotia, another young person moving back to the Island.

Tonight in Cornwall there is a senior's Christmas dinner at Sam's Restaurant starting at 4:30. Hopefully all the seniors in the community can get out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I, too, want to acknowledge all the people that are watching on EastLink and on the Internet back home in the riding of O'Leary-Inverness. Speaking of O'Leary-Inverness, it seems like it's O'Leary-Inverness day in the gallery. There's, I think, four constituents of mine in the gallery here today and I want to acknowledge them all.

First, start off with Harvey Collicutt. Harvey is from Springfield West in my district. Many know Harvey. He's always emailing us and giving us tips and pointers on how we should behave in the Legislature and the answers we should be providing. Thanks, Harvey, for coming. We have Orville Willis. Orville is just about all things O'Leary-Inverness. He's been involved in just about everything I can think about in my district, Maple Leaf Curling Club, he continues to curl. He's involved with the CF Willis Racetrack as a horse owner up in O'Leary. Involved, actually, in my district executive in the O'Leary-Inverness Liberal Association. I believe he is even on the wall of fame at the Canadian Potato Museum. If you go to the Red Shores Racetrack you will see his family name and his name on for some victories in the winners' circle here at Old Home Week as well as at the racetrack here.

Also, I want to acknowledge Kevin Porter in the back there. Kevin is an executive director with Community Inclusions. They do great work up in the riding of O'Leary-Inverness providing services for people with intellectual disabilities.

As well, the fourth person here from my district is Theresa Arsenault. Theresa does great work with providing a home for people with intellectual disabilities. She actually just recently won an award for her 20 years of service to people with intellectual disabilities, the Pioneer Award from Community Inclusions. I acknowledge her.

I will also acknowledge a friend. Ethel Gallant is in the back there, too, and she also works with providing residential services to people with intellectual disabilities in the West Prince area.

Welcome, everyone.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to rise and welcome everyone into our gallery today. We have quite a full gallery here. I would like to reference a couple of people in particular.

I see Joe McKenna is in today so he is likely giving lots of hockey tips to everybody else in the gallery this afternoon.

But I do want to make a mention of a gentleman that is there today – the member beside already referenced him. Orville Willis is with us today, and Orville Willis has become a great friend of mine as well. He is a terrific supporter of harness racing on Prince Edward Island at all tracks, including the matinee tracks. Over the years he has been a breeder, he has been a trainer, he has been an owner, and one of those pioneers that have been keeping the industry alive and well on Prince Edward Island. I just want to reference that today as I often speak to him over at the track and I very seldom get any tips from him. I'm hoping that may change for this weekend.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I would also like to welcome everybody here today. It's good to see lots of friends of the members here today. A friend of mine, Joe McKenna, is here today. I think he is dropping off a resume. I think I have a retirement in my Mount Stewart poll so I think he's applying for the poll chair job, I would say.

Speaking of Joe, I noticed it is starting to snow out there, so I do want to wish our snow plow drivers a safe winter. Joe might be called out here any second, too.

With that, I just wanted to say hello to everybody in District 7 and have a good day.

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

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

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

I would also like to rise to welcome Joe to the gallery. Joe does a couple of things very well, but two in particular: he predicts the weather probably, as I've said before, better than Boomer and he doesn't have any storms on the horizon that I'm aware of, and the price of gas. I'll not say too much, but Joe is here today and I think we're scheduled for our next IRAC listing here next week so I'm not thinking he is thinking of making a second trip in.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

First off I would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to a wonderful young lady that hails from Stratford and also assists us greatly here in the Legislative Assembly, and that would be JoAnne Holden. It is her birthday today.

I would also like to just thank all of the members of the Mayflower Seniors Club. My wife, Cece, and I attended their annual

Christmas banquet last night and it was truly a wonderful event, wonderful entertainment, the meal was delicious. There was a little bit of singing throughout the evening as well, but one of the highlights that I found last night was when four of the lady members brought out children's quilts that they had produced. They have a quilting group that gets together on Monday mornings and they are very proud of the quilts that they produced and they just wanted to showcase them.

More importantly, they told us there last night that these quilts are actually going to be donated to the Syrian children who came here with their families this time last year. I am very proud of the tremendous work that they individuals have done, and I can attest, looking at the quality of these beautiful quilts last night, that these items will definitely become heirlooms for these families that immigrated to Prince Edward Island last year.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I would like to welcome all those watching at home today and also those who are in the gallery. It's not very often I get to stand in this House and welcome to the gallery someone from my district, so I would like to say welcome to Ethel Ellsworth-Gallant who was announced a little bit earlier, but she is a residential service coordinator for Community Inclusions up west. She has many years devoted, and she's a very passionate and committed individual to help individuals in the West Prince area specifically with special needs, and I wish her all the best.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to welcome everybody in the gallery, and a special welcome to Orville, who the hon. member forgot to mention that he was a darn good coach, too, of hockey. He was actively involved in the community and he coached the best, I want to say.

**Mr. Henderson:** Was he your coach?

**Mr. Dumville:** He was my coach.

I would also like to give a happy birthday to my granddaughter Chloe Jeffery today, too.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I, too, would like to welcome all the folks from West Prince in the public gallery here, Harvey and Orville, and I'd like to say a special hello to all the ones from Community Inclusions there, Kevin and Theresa and Audrey. Community Inclusions is a big part of our community up in West Prince. They do a wonderful service to our community and it's great to see them here.

I'd also like to say hello to all the good people of Alberton-Roseville that may be watching at home on t.v. or on the computer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I would like to welcome everyone into the gallery, too. The press is here again today, great to have the press on board. I'd like to say hello to everybody out in District 1.

Last night I had the opportunity to attend the Souris Regional School band concert, and actually, our Page in the House, Brandon O'Brien, was in the senior band. But it's Darren Chaisson is the instructor, and Darren is one of the musical Chaissons that

come from the east end. If you have Chaissons instructing you in music you're doing the thing right. It was an excellent band. It's my favourite time of year, and they really got you into the Christmas spirit last night. Darren also was saying that's his biggest turnout, biggest numbers in the senior and junior bands.

Also, I'd like to mention just some safety tips. As I was going home last night there was a lot of Christmas trees up and a lot of lights up. For those of you who use live candles during Christmas or any other time of year, but especially at Christmastime, do not use live candles. They have great candles out there now that are (Indistinct) battery operated. I'm a firefighter for the last over 36 years, and I've seen a lot of fires at Christmastime and the cause is live candles. There's nothing worse going to anybody's home anytime, but especially at Christmastime when the family loses everything at Christmastime, so some safety tips: do not use live candles, and make sure you have two ways out. Always have two ways out of your house. Especially this time of year, check your smoke detectors, please. Always have two ways out, check your smoke detectors, and do not use live candles.

I'd like to thank Boomer Gallant for coming to Souris yesterday and collecting all those turkeys from Eastern Kings, and they are going to feed hungry families at Christmastime. A big shout-out to my wife for delivering it to Boomer for me.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I rise and want to say hello to all my constituents from District 11 who are viewing today's proceedings.

I want to acknowledge Marion Murray who's with us today, and her daughter Lorraine, who do some great work with adults with intellectual disabilities. I see Kevin Porter in the gallery as well who's

doing some great work with Community Inclusions. As the minister of education, we're extremely proud of our inclusion practices in the public school system, and I know that they graduate from the public system and move on to communities and families that do the great work that they do.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I'm happy to rise today to welcome everyone to the gallery, and especially those watching at home on EastLink from Summerside-Wilmot, and especially Ernie and Claudette Arsenault who I'm sure will be watching today, unless of course Ernie got his hands on the remote and has turned the channel. Hopefully he didn't get his hands on it yet.

Thank you.

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

#### Statements by Members

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

#### **Bobby Dillon**

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

The curling community was saddened with the passing of Bobby Dillon on November 24<sup>th</sup> at the age of 79 here in Charlottetown. He leaves behind a huge legacy in the curling community.

Bobby was on the curling scene provincially, as well as, nationally, starting in the 1960s. He was known for his skill of the game, sportsmanship, and character. He represented PEI seven times at the Brier from 1962-1974. He was described as an intense but a gentleman.

He and his wife, Cathy, as competitive curlers, were PEI's leading curling couple. In 1974, at the age of 37, he was inducted in the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame in the

curler category. In 1999 he was inducted into the Prince Edward Island Sports Hall of Fame. In 2007 he was installed in the PEI Curling Hall of Fame as well. He represented and promoted the sport off the ice as well, serving on supporting committees. He has been part of host committees that have welcomed national championships here in Charlottetown several times. He was a member of the Charlottetown Curling Club and was given an honorary life membership at the club.

I would like to acknowledge that PEI and the curling community have lost a true patron of the sport and a man all who knew him would call a complete curling gentleman.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

#### **Immaculate Conception Church**

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

Two thousand and seventeen is marking the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a very historic church, the Immaculate Conception Church in Palmer Road.

This spectacular church was built in 1892 and has seating for 1,000 people. It has recently seen a very detailed renovation under the detailed and watchful eye of Father Albin Arsenault. The beautiful blue detailing on the church is a symbolic colour of the Patron Mary who the church was named after.

The exquisite place of worship has been witness to celebrations of wars, peaks and downfalls of harvests and fisheries, but has remained an active and strong congregation throughout the years.

The third Sunday in August has been a date to mark on calendars, as many families plan their PEI holiday around this date. The much anticipated Palmer Road picnic is a true community affair. This event has been a social gathering for parishioners from the past and present, near and far.

This evening there will be a special mass held to acclaim this special anniversary. It will begin with a candle-lit procession lighting the way into the year of the celebration. The church bells will ring out 125 times announcing the commencement of the joyous festivities. Afterward, there will be a social reception at the hall and everyone is welcome to join in.

I would like to congratulate Father Albin Arsenault and all the parishioners of the Immaculate Conception Church in Palmer Road on 125 years of worship and community stewardship.

Thank you.

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

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

### **Kings County Power Lifting**

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

The Kings County Powerlifting Club has been lifting together for almost three years now. This is the second year that they have hosted the Kings County Open power lifting meet and had double the amount of participants this year.

The December 3<sup>rd</sup>, meet at Montague Consolidated was well attended and it showcased athletes from as far away as BC, and I don't mean the back of Cardigan.

This event could not have taken place without the great support from many local community businesses and volunteers. Many athletes, including their own members, walked away with personal bests, provincial records, and even national records.

The Kings County Powerlifting group want to give back to the community, so they donated a portion of the ticket sales to support Special Olympics on Prince Edward Island.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication of Hailey Batchilder, Margaret Carpenter, Miranda Crane, Wyatt Inman, Tracy Curran, and Jeri Munro, who put so much work into their training. I want to congratulate them on running a successful competition yet again.

It's great to see events like this happening again in rural Prince Edward Island.

Thank you.

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

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

### **Salty Publication**

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

It's a great pleasure to rise today to recognize a new publication on Prince Edward Island. *Salty* magazine is PEI's first and only publication devoted to food and farming. As Canada's Food Island, it's only fitting that we should have a monthly publication devoted to the topic.

*Salty* promises to be to the food and farm community what *The Buzz* has become to the arts and entertainment community on this Island.

The free monthly print publication is distributed Island-wide and features high quality food news, thoughtful editorials, exhaustive food-related directories, upcoming food events, profiles of the people creating and shaping the Island's food landscape, and much more.

The women behind *Salty* are; Editor-in-Chief Shannon Courtney, and Publisher Laura Weatherbee. There are also, of course, many volunteer writers and contributors that help bring *Salty* to fruition every month. Editor Shannon, is a young woman of extraordinary talents and drive. A member of the 21 Inc. group, she has proven herself as a progressive, entrepreneurial leader on Prince Edward Island. This recent venture is only the latest contribution she has made in her young life to the vitality of our Island community. Just this week, Shannon was instrumental in organizing the Step Up to the Plate dinner which raised thousands of dollars for the PEI Food Exchange.

Please join me in offering congratulations and best wishes to Laura, Shannon, and to *Salty* magazine.

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

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

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

**FOIPP and Internet contract legal opinion (further)**

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

The following are responses to questions from the Member from Kensington-Malpeque regarding legal advice on the Bell Aliant contract and retroactive loan disclosure.

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

**Home reno program spending (further)**

**Ms. Mundy:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Member from Belfast-Murray River asked me about the budget for home renovation programs.

In last year's budget the department did not under spend for the renovation program. The budgeted amount for 2015-2016 was \$1,111,500. The actual spending was slightly more at \$1,260,054.

The department will spend the allocated budget for the program this year as well. According to the year to date actual and budget forecast we have budgeted \$1,361,500. To date we have spent one million three hundred and one dollars – sorry, one million, three hundred thousand, one hundred – or \$1,301,372. Oh my gosh, there are too many threes there.

Our government met the platform commitment to increase funding to the home repair and renovation programs by \$400,000. This is providing additional help to Islanders across our province, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Questions by Members

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

**Climate change plan**

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

Climate change is on the minds of many Canadians as the Canadian premiers meet with the prime minister tomorrow. Here on Prince Edward Island we're vulnerable to rising sea levels and extreme weather from climate change. Our greenhouse emissions per person are 12 tons a year, second-lowest in Canada.

Question to the minister of environment: What extra sacrifices will Islanders be asked to make as part of your government's climate change plan?

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

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

As alluded to by the Leader of the Opposition, this climate change file is a file that has received a significant amount of attention over the last 12 or 13 months.

Currently, as we speak, leaders from all 13 jurisdictions from across Canada are meeting at a table with our prime minister to determine what a pan-Canadian framework regarding this climate change issue should look like. There will be a lot of discussion held today in Ottawa on that particular purpose.

As the Province of Prince Edward Island, we're looking to contribute in a very big way at that table today, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

**Carbon tax pay date**

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, a key part of the federal government's plan is a new carbon tax.

Suggest (Indistinct) start at \$10 per ton of emissions rising and as much as \$50 per ton after five years. Prince Edward Island's current emissions are roughly 12 tons per person a year, and we'd be looking at taking \$18 million in one year from consumers,

fishers, farmers, and other businesses. By the end of five years that number would rise to \$90 million, or \$620 per resident of PEI.

Question to the environment minister: When would be the earliest that Islanders could expect to start paying a carbon tax?

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

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

Several months ago the federal government did indicate that they would be looking at imposing some method of carbon pricing all across Canada. That's the purpose of establishing this pan-Canada framework. It's the reason why these individuals are in Ottawa today.

Prince Edward Island does have a part to play in climate change. As has been mentioned, we have some issues with eroding shorelines, with rising sea levels.

What we are looking for for Prince Edward Island is a made-in-Prince Edward Island approach that works for Islanders, is effective to the needs to mitigate, to be prepared for adaption, and continue to work on that progress.

There's a lot of work being done, and a lot of work will continue to be done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** So we don't know when. Mr. Speaker, a carbon tax will increase the tax of cost of everyday household items.

Studies suggest that electricity will go up (Indistinct) five cents a kilowatt. Gas and oil will go up an extra 15 cents a litre.

Question to the environment minister. This government is taxing Islanders to death now. How do you expect Islanders, minister, to shoulder these extra costs?

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

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

It is our goal to continue to work on adaptation, mitigation of climate change, as it relates to Prince Edward Island. We want to have a made-in-PEI solution, but that doesn't mean that you don't talk to your neighbours regionally. We'll continue to do that and we'll develop a plan that works in all provinces of our region, and do it in a collective, collaborative manner, keeping in mind those that need other assistance.

There are several ways to work at this and we're going to work together.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

We don't know how much Islanders are going to have to actually pay.

Here on the Island, our biggest sources of emissions are from transportation and agriculture. When the Premier came back from Paris he said that Islanders will have to make some changes. He said: We'll be doing a lot more walking and make fewer trips to the grocery store.

Question to the environment minister: Did the Premier mean that Islanders will be doing a lot more walking because they can't afford to run an automobile, or did the Premier mean that Islanders would have to make fewer trips to the grocery store because they won't be able to afford to buy anything?

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

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

I think it's important to note the amount of work that has gone into this, but we're looking at a made-in-PEI solution.

We know that there are opportunities where we can reduce our carbon footprint in a very effective way and at the same time work with our economy on PEI to build that, develop methods of reducing our carbon

footprint, and allowing Islanders to use programs that will reduce their oil usage, will reduce their heating costs in their homes, and allow them to leave some money in their pockets. But at the same time work towards mitigation, and that's the goal of our climate change issues.

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

### Federal carbon pricing talks

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

Islanders are doing more than their fair share in reducing carbon emissions. Almost 30% of our energy comes from wind turbines and we have very little heavy industry. PEI produces only about half the amount of carbon emissions expected. That's right, we're already better than – 50% better than the rest of Canada when it comes to per capita carbon emissions. Yet we still have the same carbon emission reduction targets.

Question to the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, why didn't you stand up for PEI during federal carbon pricing talks like environment ministers from other provinces did?

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

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

Currently, there's a lot of discussion going on with our Atlantic counterparts. As referenced recently, in the last couple of weeks, Nova Scotia has indicated how they will move forward, or they're looking at discussions with the federal government. New Brunswick laid out some plans (Indistinct) there yesterday.

We're getting ready to look at all those options, work with our regions collectively, but we want to look at a made-in-PEI solution that is effective and efficient. We are leaders now in areas of wind energy. We want to improve on those. We want to make it better for Islanders. But at the same time, we want it to be leading to mitigation and we'll continue to work on that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Carbon emission credit

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

It's funny that the minister mentions a made-in-PEI perspective because during the climate change strategy consultations here on the Island, Islanders found out that strategies to reduce electricity usage were off the table because New Brunswick gets the credit for reduced carbon emissions if we lower our usage. If Islanders produce more local, renewable energy, we don't get credit for the associated reduction in carbon emissions.

A question to the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, why aren't you showing leadership and fighting to get carbon emission credit for locally produced renewable Island energy?

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

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

I'm glad that the hon. member referenced the consultation process as we were working toward our mitigation strategy. I was so impressed by the Islanders that showed up at those events all across PEI and brought some really great ideas out for our consultants to review. They're in that process right now. They'll be bringing back recommendations very soon.

Some of the issues that we were dealing with there were brought forward off the floor in a very effective manner. Currently, we have the two strategies underway. The energy strategy's ready to come out, and some of those crossovers will be dealt with in that strategy as well.

We're looking forward to coming out with some really positive solutions for Prince Edward Island and I hope the hon. member will be pleased with those.

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

### HST and carbon emissions

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, we are still waiting for the final PEI energy strategy and implementation plan that was promised for this fall.

In the draft of that energy strategy it says that HST will be added to home heating oil instead of being removed from all heating sources as recommended by this Legislature's standing committee. Now, this would likely generate over \$10 million in additional tax revenue for the province.

Question to the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, do you plan to use this additional \$10 million tax grab to offer much-needed incentives to reduce carbon emissions or just put in general revenue?

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

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

As with any consultation that's done or when they're performed, there are recommendations that come out of those. Those are recommendations only. As I have mentioned already a couple of times on the floor today, we are looking at a PEI solution. Everything is on the table.

There was no defined methods that we're working towards, but we are going to do our very best to allow some mitigation purposes, be protective of those that are low-income and vulnerable, but at the same time make a very effective process for PEI.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Seedling cost to watershed groups**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, trees harvest solar energy to provide heat, capture and store carbon in the ground, have a built-in air conditioner, remove toxins from the environment, slow global warming, and build themselves without needing a factory.

Planting more trees on PEI is one of the most cost-effective and best ways to lower carbon emissions without putting in a carbon tax. However, this minister has actually

started charging watershed groups for seedlings instead, charging them to reforest this Island.

A question for the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, will you commit today to stop charging watershed groups for trees that they plant to reforest this Island and reduce carbon emissions?

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

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

The watershed groups that do significant work across Prince Edward Island are very in tune with what has to go on in their areas.

In order to get some data on that they were charged an extremely nominal fee, just a few pennies towards the actual fee of the tree, and they appreciate that, and they do agree that –

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct). Stop charging for trees.

**Speaker:** Hon. member, let the minister answer the question.

**Mr. Mitchell:** They do agree that as we are at this time of battling climate change, these trees are an effective method to do that, and we will encourage more of that as we move forward, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Incentives re: transportation-related carbon emissions**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, transportation-related carbon emissions contribute, by far, the most to PEI's output.

There used to be a hybrid car tax rebate, but in typical short-sighted fashion that was cancelled by this government in 2013. This is the low-hanging fruit of carbon emission reduction that should be harvested immediately. For example, incentives for hybrid and electric cars.

A question to the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, will you commit here today to offer incentives as

soon as possible to reduce transportation-related carbon emission, please?

**Speaker:** The hon. minister –

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

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

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

When we went out and did the energy strategy consultations that –

**Mr. Trivers:** Which we haven't seen the report of yet. Release the report. Keep your promise.

**Ms. Biggar:** – Dunsky put together, over 70 recommendations, we are putting together –

**Mr. Trivers:** Follow the rules.

**Ms. Biggar:** We are putting together those recommendations in a fashion that will benefit Islanders and help them reduce their emission use as well, and when the strategy is complete –

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct) show us the incentives, show us the (Indistinct).

**Ms. Biggar:** – in consultation with the climate change strategy, that will be released.

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

### **Carbon tax and fuel prices**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, as far as I can tell this proposed carbon tax is really appearing to follow the European model, and on average, European gas prices are about three dollars a litre. That's almost double that on the Island.

A question to the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment: Minister, will fuel prices double here as a result of a carbon tax, or do you even know how much they will increase?

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

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

The hon. member is doing a tremendous job of fear-mongering out of his chair today.

These targets that are being presented by the federal government, and they are being implemented by the federal government at \$10 per ton, is a fairly low amount, in the range of two cents per litre, as was mentioned at the strategy discussions.

We're working towards all options that are being presented. The fact of what was presented at those consultation processes will be looked at very favourably. Electric vehicles, I'm sure we'll see that as a recommendation we'll be looking at. Much more tree planting on Prince Edward Island is a significant way of continuing on, and we'll look at all those, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Carbon pricing at source of production**

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

Many options are debated about the best way to implement a price on carbon that's fair to the consumer. One suggestion is that the price on carbon should be charged at the source of production rather than the end user.

Minister, do you support this method of carbon pricing?

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

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

As I said, currently there are 13 leaders from all across Canada that are sitting at a table to discuss what this pan-Canadian framework should be, should look like. Much work has gone into that, developing that. Four committees were struck regarding things such as mitigation, adaption.

Prince Edward Island chaired one of those working groups and working committees, and, of course, on Prince Edward Island we've established a new climate change

secretariat who's putting in endless hours of work on this.

All those things will be talked about in Ottawa will be how we move forward, Mr. Speaker, all across Canada, and we will look at all of them.

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

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

Minister, when you were at your national meetings did you suggest this kind of method of carbon pricing to try and protect Islanders from absorbing the heavy cost at purchase?

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

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

All ministers of environment have met several times now with the federal minister of environment regarding climate change. The discussions have been very collaborative. Everybody wants the outcome to be effective, but at the same time work for the provinces they represent.

That work has gone on over the past 13 months, will continue over the next year. Two thousand and eighteen has been an established target for the federal government, and collectively we're all working on that path.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Carbon tax revenue neutral**

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

Minister, will this new carbon tax be revenue neutral? By that I mean, will this new tax revenue be offset by matching tax cuts elsewhere for Island taxpayers, farms, and businesses?

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

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

I believe any revenue of whatever type of method we use on battling climate change has to be used at mitigation factors, it has to be used at reducing our carbon footprint, and we'll be working on those methods, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Minister, the non-answer is worrying us. It's worrying Islanders, especially when we ask if it's going to be revenue neutral. When your government brought in HST you did anything but make it revenue neutral. HST was supposed to be beneficial for businesses and the economy, but what you did was raise it so high that now we take in an extra \$22 million in taxes from Islanders.

You wouldn't make HST revenue neutral. Can we trust your government to make the carbon tax revenue neutral rather than just another tax?

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

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

We've been working with all provinces in regards to climate change, but we as a province will ensure that whatever carbon pricing mechanism does not disadvantage PEI and that it works effectively well with our neighbouring provinces, and we will continue to work on them with them on that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

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

It's concerning. I know we're still in the negotiation stage, but why can't the minister come out and say it's going to be revenue neutral? That is an easy concept to tell Islanders. Will you please commit today to making the carbon tax revenue neutral?

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

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

As I said, I think it's important that whatever dollars get raised from battling climate change goes right back into mitigation, some adaptation purposes. Those are significant to Prince Edward Island. We do have to work with our vulnerable and low-income people to support their needs too, but fiscally neutral – as long as the dollars are being put back into the programs that will aid and help Islanders to reduce their carbon footprint, that's the goal, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Carbon tax questions and answers

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

Minister, we have Islanders who are really worried. They are asking legitimate questions like: Who will get taxed, what will get taxed, how often will the tax be adjusted, will the tax ever go back down?

Minister, when can Islanders expect to get answers to these questions?

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

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

The Islanders that I've been talking to over the last several months are appreciative of the fact that we're looking for that made-in-PEI solution, the one that makes sense for all Islanders here.

They realize that there are climate change situations. It's easy to tell with the change in our weather patterns, the rise of our sea levels. They feel it's important that we do what's right for Islanders. They're very appreciative of the fact that we're taking our time. We have time, everything is on the table, and we're going to work in a very positive way that makes it very effective for Islanders when we're battling this very important issue, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Rural broadband and high-speed Internet

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

The Minister of Economic Development and Tourism has told this House that government is talking to private Internet service providers as well as community groups to get better Internet access on rural Prince Edward Island. There could be many advantages to using community municipal cooperative models for rural Internet: a greater incentive to maintain services in the community, increased flexibility, more responsive service, and the profits stay locally.

Question to the minister: How has government explored the possibility of using community municipal or cooperative models to improve rural broadband?

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

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

As I've said several times in this House, how important ensuring that Islanders and businesses alike from one end of the Island to the other have good high-speed Internet connections. What we've done is we've – and the most recent and a good example is Maximeville, that we sent out an RFP to the suppliers that could come in there, the ISP suppliers that could come in there, and set up broadband services to that community that seems to be a grey area on PEI. We've done that.

But further to that, driving competition in regards to these companies, we've just heard yesterday that one of the suppliers has already offered up to do it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Most of the discussion about rural broadband has centered on economic development, but many other opportunities become available once we have good, true high-speed in all of our communities: distance learning, telemedicine, smart

electric grids, and civic engagement, to name just a few.

A question to the minister: How has government considered these non-economic opportunities, in particular, during its discussions with ISPs?

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

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

I've stated several times in the House that it's not only businesses but students that are learning from whether it's abroad or within Canada from universities. It's extremely important to us and we're taking all facets. That's why we're putting this on the front burner. That's why I've been talking about it in the media. That's why we've been accessing any possible options for communities to come forward. If there are issues out there we want to know about them. We want to understand them. We want to make available any infrastructures in our government, whether it be land or buildings that these towers could be placed on. We'll work with service providers. We want to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

Thank you.

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

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

In order for us to take advantage of all these opportunities multiple departments will need to collaborate, and we know this government's approach to rural development is that all departments have to work together on it.

A question to the minister: How many discussions have you or your staff had with other government departments specifically about how to take advantage of the opportunities that will become available by having true high-speed Internet across Prince Edward Island?

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

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

My department alone covers bioscience, marine tech, aerospace, farming, fishing, and our lending portfolio through FPEI and IIDI. I'm involved in every one of these industries and sectors. We continue to – we – as my mandate is to drive the economy of PEI. I have to look at all these different sectors to ensure that they're reaching capacity, and that's why we've led the country in exports over the past two years. That's why, Mr. Speaker, over 60% of my loan portfolio is in rural PEI.

Thank you.

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

### Open data and new government website

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

My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, with the introduction of a new government website earlier this year, it's my understanding that there's going to be some initiatives taken in relation to open data. Minister, what steps is your department taking to expand the number of open data offerings since the introduction of the new website?

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

**Mr. Roach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I know that the Member from Rustico-Emerald will be listening intently.

Back in June this year my department launched the open data website. I'm very pleased to say that the site has been accessed – there have been hundreds and hundreds of people that have been interested, and in particular the open data community has been very active.

So far, like I said, there's been hundreds of downloads, everything from school enrollment to vehicle licensing and maps and different types of registrations, so it's been very well received in the public, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton, your first supplementary.

### Open data policy

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

Minister, a number of provinces have a policy which outlines how open data is governed and how data sets become available. Could you indicate whether such a policy will be developed and made publicly available?

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

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

There's been a lot of uptake on this particular launch of this particular product. We also released in there the open government practices that we'll be following.

When we started developing the practices, the licenses, the open data standards, we looked to the federal government because the federal government has done the same type of open data system that we are now – and we're following those rules just so that we can be consistent with the other provinces and the federal government across the country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **PISA participation rates**

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

My question today is for the Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture. Mr. Minister, Islanders are proud of our students' performance in the PISA, but there are questions about the PEI sample and participation rates.

Could the minister please advise this House on what participation rates are required for PISA?

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

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

PISA is a very rigorous assessment, a global assessment, that over 500,000 15-year-olds in 72 countries participated in.

In the process, all eligible 15-year-olds' names are referred to Stats Canada. Stats Canada identifies the sample. The sample is then returned back to school principals. At that time they have the responsibility to look at individual's who may have a functional disability, an intellectual disability or limited language experience.

The 2015 PISA sample is statistically equivalent to previous census samples, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

My supplementary question is to the same minister.

Mr. Minister, can you assure Islanders that the PEI student exclusion rate did not affect our results?

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

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

PISA uses two participation rates, both student and school. I do want to add that our exclusion rates were high, but that's a reflection of the rich and inclusive approach that we take to all children in our public school system. As the minister, we're extremely proud of that.

But we had the highest school participation rate in the country at 99.3. Other provinces had many schools who opted out of PISA, for example, Quebec, whose participation rate was 51%, or they had special needs classes or schools that were completely eliminated. This was not the case in Prince Edward Island, and every single one of our schools participated in PISA.

Thank you.

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

**Speaker:** Order, please!

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

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

There's an awful lot of spin going on over there today and I'm sure I'm going to get some spin back here again.

We've seen throughout the revelations around the egaming scandal that a lot of time and money was spent on wining and dining. We know the former finance minister had traveled to London, England, we know that government staff had traveled to London, England to meet with Simplex about one of the components. But perhaps not everyone knows that some of that wining and dining happened right here on Prince Edward Island.

### **Crowbush egaming social**

Question to the Minister of Finance: Can you confirm that Crowbush golf course was closed to the public for a private social involving the various players of the egaming scandal?

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

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

As I've stated a number of times in the House, I rely quite a bit on the Auditor General, as I'd stated many times in the House over the last number of months. The Auditor General has spent, her and her staff, roughly 5,000 hours looking into this file and they've brought that back to the Public Accounts. As I understand, the Auditor General has been twice at Public Accounts prepared to answer the in-depth questions.

But, Mr. Speaker, directly to the question that the member has asked, the answer is no.

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

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

The finance minister may in fact be playing with words on this one because they opened it a day early. They opened it a day early in 2011 and had this private egaming event. So, yeah, they didn't close it a day, but they opened it a day early and it was a day's sales lost for the provincial government, and the golf course made a tidy sum on that day had it been opened.

Question to the finance minister: How much did the government pay for this secret egaming event at Crowbush?

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

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

As we've said many times here in the House, the Auditor General has spent – her and her staff – over 5,000 hours digging into this file, they've looked at over tens of thousands of documents, and the Auditor General has interviewed all the principals involved in this.

The Auditor General was twice before the Public Accounts Committee. The Auditor General has the answer to the specifics in this. I've had, as many others have had, the opportunity to read the Auditor General's reports. The specifics are with the Auditor General.

Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of any kind of a – as the member says – any kind of a secret deal or something that happened at a golf course.

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

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

I and the members over on this side have spent countless hours, too, digging into this file and that's why we ask questions on it. You can hide behind the Auditor General if you wish, but I'll hide behind no one, and I'll stand here and represent Prince Edward Island and ask questions.

Question to the tourism minister: Did the province receive any revenue from this secret egaming junket at Crowbush, or did the taxpayers comp the whole thing like we did the egaming loan?

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

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

Just I'll preface that answer by saying, not only does the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters have the honour of representing Islanders, but the other 26 of us here in this House also have that honour.

Let me make it clear. When the Premier came on board with this government one of the very first things he did was he asked the Auditor General to look into this egaming file. The Auditor General really had carte blanche to go out and use her staff and dig into things. The Auditor General is the one that has all the in-depth information on this after 5,000 hours.

I would suggest that the next time the Auditor General's at the standing committee that might be a great opportunity for them to continue with those types of questions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Your Liberal backbenchers were pretty near crying here the other day because I was asking questions and taking up their time.

The minister can't answer whether or not the taxpayers were on the hook for comping the secret egaming golf tournament in Crowbush, which means that they likely were comped. According to emails we've seen the attendees that day at Crowbush were to include a number of government and private sector people involved in the egaming play, including the chief of staff of the former premier Robert Ghiz and his inner circle.

Question to the Minister of Finance: How is it that you were so unaware that this was happening right under your nose in your own department?

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

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

I will remind the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters that I was elected at the same time that he was, in October of 2011, and I believe that what started to take place, according to the Auditor General's report, commenced in 2008 or 2009.

The reason why the Premier asked the Auditor General to look into that was he wanted to have one person in there that we have all the confidence in the world in, that

Islanders have the confidence in. I'm kind of dismayed to hear that member today state that perhaps they don't have the same confidence in the Auditor General because they're now out doing their own investigation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. LaVie:** Take your cop hat off. You're not a cop anymore! Take it off.

**Mr. Myers:** You're a joke, officially a joke.

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

**Mr. LaVie:** You're retired.

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

That is a complete joke. Never once did we say that. That's a joke. That's a joke of a way to treat a question in this – that's a joke of a way to treat Islanders who want answers in this. There are people who want answers in your district too. There are people who want answers right across Prince Edward Island. That is a joke. I didn't say anything about the Auditor General. Not only am I going to ask him to retract that after Question Period, I expect an apology too.

### **Egaming social meal**

After a long day of golfing, this group of people were quite hungry, and they went to a secret egaming luncheon in Charlottetown at a fancy restaurant.

Question to the finance minister: Did taxpayers pick up the bill for this surf-and-turf at a fancy Charlottetown restaurant?

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

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

Not sure, there's a bit of a question there, but there was an awful lot of preamble before that question. I look forward to reading the Hansard that the member was referring to later.

The Auditor General has done an incredible job of investigating this. Her and her staff have spent a lot of time – and the Auditor General does have all the intricacies and the

answers to that. The Auditor General's report that I refer to, that I see, is the same one that is a public document.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Myers:** So, another non-answer. Another non-answer by this government.

A bunch of people took themselves out to eat at a fancy restaurant. The bill was \$8,143 that night. I hope for the minister's sake and I hope for taxpayers' sakes that we didn't pick up that tab that night.

Question to the Minister of Finance: If taxpayers spent \$8,143 and change on surf-and-turf for the players involved in this egaming scandal, would you consider that to be appropriate?

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

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

The member asked the question. I'm not aware of any dinners. I never saw anything like that in the Auditor General's report. I know that there were other avenues that were being looked at with respect to loyalty cards and those sorts of things.

But my understanding is that that particular file was long closed before the middle of 2011.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I have the receipt, the \$8,000 meal, I have the email that set it all up, and I'll be giving it to the media after Question Period.

As I mentioned before there were folks from Simplex and CMT at this all-day soirée, and there were also staff from your old department. Folks from the Premier's Office, the liquor commission were there. Even your former department's external legal staff, Billy Dow, was there, or supposedly there. Interestingly, though,

there was no one from the Mi'Kmaq Confederacy there.

Interesting that because for months your government's egaming spin was that the Confederacy were the ones driving the bus on the egaming file.

### **Egaming social and Mi'Kmaq Confederacy**

Question to the Minister of Finance: Doesn't it seem strange that Island taxpayers would host a private egaming golf junket, a surf-and-turf gala afterwards, and not include the people who your government supposedly said were driving the bus for this whole file?

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

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

I noticed that the member does kind of start his question off with automatically it's egaming, automatically it's secret, automatically it's all these other things. That's just his words.

The fact is that there was a loyalty card program that was being looked at, and there were a number of people that were involved in a loyalty program.

That had nothing to do with the egaming file.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I'm not sure if the Minister of Finance now is saying the people who did the loyalty card program took themselves golfing free on a government golf course for a whole day and spent \$8,000 eating at Sims steakhouse afterwards. I'm not sure if that's what he's saying, or if it's the egaming people, but suddenly he admits that it happened, which is a lot further ahead than we were for the previous six questions.

Now he knows it happened, and as a matter of fact, he knows who's there.

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

Question to the minister of education: Could you tell the House today whose emails were deleted?

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

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

As the minister responsible for records information management, we have been given clear direction from the Auditor General in respect to the recommendations to respond to her report. As the minister responsible for records information management, as I said, time after time, I take that responsibility very seriously.

Not only are we taking it seriously, we're putting the recommendations into action. Currently, as we're speaking, there are assessments going on and training with all government staff to look at consistencies and procedures. We're also looking at bringing in legislation to tighten up compliance to make sure there's a higher level of accountability and consistency with how we store and record record information, Mr. Speaker.

**An Hon. Member:** Follow the rules.

**Mr. Currie:** We are going to continue. I respect the office of the Auditor General and I take that responsibility very seriously, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Myers:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

During Question Period today the Minister of Finance certainly cast a shadow over the opposition caucus here by saying that we didn't have the confidence in the Auditor General.

That's not a fair assessment. That's not what was said. We've never once – during

Question Period I didn't even mention the Auditor General. I never mentioned her name. During the whole fall session I haven't mentioned her name.

I want to the Minister of Finance to withdraw his comments and apologize to the opposition caucus.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, I will be taking that under advisement.

#### Statements by Ministers

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

#### **Prince Edward Island Analytical Laboratories**

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

I stand today to congratulate the staff of the Prince Edward Island Analytical Laboratories for recently achieving re-accreditation through the Standards Council of Canada.

This accreditation is an international standard awarded following a three-day assessment conducted by a team of experts.

Some Islanders may not be aware of the important services provided by this facility.

Located in the Charlottetown BioCommons Park, the analytical lab provides essential services for our agriculture industry and for all Islanders.

The laboratory offers services for a range of sample types including raw milk, processed dairy products, animal feed, soil, plant tissue compost, manure, plant disease, drinking water, surface water, and wastewater.

There are about 25 staff who carry out this testing each day to ensure Islanders have safe drinking water and the agriculture industry receives the services they need to operate safely and successfully. Many Islanders use these services provided by the PEIAL and it is important we recognize them for the work they do.

The PEIAL does testing for regulators, municipalities, farmers, extension specialists, corporations, government, research scientists, and for the public. Test results are used to diagnose problems, assure general sustainable resource practices, and for regulatory purpose. They must be timely, accurate, and repeatable to afford maximum utility to clients.

It is amazing to see how many Islanders rely on the service of this lab. For example, each year staff tests 275,000 raw milk samples for fat, protein, and lactose to assist them with dairy herd productivity and improvement. They also test about 11,000 soil samples each year and 13,500 drinking water samples are tested for bacteria. On average, the staff tests more than 326,000 samples per year.

In closing, I want to congratulate the staff on their recent international accreditation and thank them for the imperative service they provide to Islanders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I also want to congratulate them on their international award. This is the laboratory that we are so lucky to have, our own laboratory right here in Prince Edward Island, and we are lucky to have that and, as the minister says, that employs 25 people, and it is well used in the agriculture sector. It's used in municipalities, like the minister said, individual homes, and it makes their samples that much quicker when we have our own here right on Prince Edward Island. We don't have to send our samples off.

I just want to congratulate the laboratory on their international award. Keep up the great work and we will continue to use this laboratory, and thank you.

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

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

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

Of course I congratulate them, too, on their accreditation. I was amazed to just learn that from what I understand two tests per Islanders, 360,000 tests. I mean, that is two for every Islander every year. That's incredible.

Of course they don't just do water tests, they do all kinds of other things. Agriculture has transformed and changed so much over the last – we didn't have analytical labs 150 years ago in PEI, but agriculture worked perfectly well. So many aspects of farming have changed: the number of farms, the size of the farms, the crops we grow, the varieties we grow, horse power used to come from the back end of a Clydesdale and now comes from the front end of a John Deer, pest control, the markets that we sell to, fertilizer. I guess that comes from the back end of a Clydesdale as well, or it used to.

But progress in any sector is never either all good or all bad. It's not a black-and-white thing. There are good and bad things about it. Progress can be a beautiful thing, and in agriculture we have had some marvelous things come forward, but I believe that the future of agriculture, supported by analytical labs and the great work that they do, will be embracing all of the good new stuff which has come along, but also remembering the good husbandry of days gone by.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Community Schools**

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

I'm pleased to rise in the House today to recognize the great work of the PEI Association of Community Schools.

The PEI Association of Community Schools has been serving learners of all ages on Prince Edward Island for more than 50 years, and their motto is: Old skills kept alive, new skills are learned at Community School, and individual opportunities are created.

Their programs are used by over 2,500 people over the fall and winter every year. The association runs programming in as many as 30 locations every year and in locations all across Prince Edward Island. PEI community schools rely mostly on dedicated volunteers so they can keep class sign-up costs down and affordable to Islanders, and the courses are as low as \$20.

Many community school programs provide exercise and social activities, and it's a place you can meet new and old friends. Their many years of operation and strong community presence make the PEI Association of Community Schools a secure and valued funding recipient. The association's budget has remained constant over the years and has barely changed since the mid-1990s.

I am pleased to announce today that we have reached an agreement with the community schools for \$125,400 for a three-year funding program.

This three-year funding arrangement will allow the association to plan their programming continuously through the year.

I have taken a number of courses at the community schools and I have seen the Leader of the Third Party out there a number of times. It's a great activity for the winter months and you meet a lot of good people, plus they give you a little meal in between, during recess.

In closing, I extend my sincere thanks to the volunteers who make the association what it is and to all those who recognize that lifelong learning is a key to future success and prosperity for all Islanders.

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, want to congratulate the community schools and all of the great people who pull them off every year. I know that over the years, as far back as I can remember, I remember when they had them in my area,

my mom getting ready to go through the winter to the community school. When I was older, not much older, I had first started the school here in Charlottetown and I didn't have a whole lot of money. I know I went to community school at the Charlottetown Rural one winter and I learned to play the guitar which got me through a whole bunch of years where I didn't have any money so it gave me a pastime, it gave me something to do, and I met some great people. The minister is right, they give you a great meal in the middle of it every night.

I do want to congratulate the wonderful volunteers who pull that off every year. It's great to have it in all of those communities who participate. It's great to see that people are so willing to give their time, to give their skill, to help train their skills and show other people all kinds of things. Depending on the area you can get quite a variety of courses offered. It's wonderful that it still goes on and I want to congratulate the people for carrying it on.

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 welcome this announcement. Of course, the three-year stable funding is incredibly important as these programs go forward. I love everything about community schools. I love the fact that it's a commitment and an encouragement to lifelong learning. I love the fact that it's a community coming together and I particularly love the fact that we're using public spaces. We're expanding the use of these public spaces in our communities and the schools that are such a central part of, particularly, rural Prince Edward Island and using them to their full potential.

Of course, as the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning states, I have been both a teacher and a student at community schools and I have enjoyed both of those things, and the meal of course. I always enjoy the meal.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### Associate Families

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

It is my pleasure to rise today to recognize the contributions of associate family caregivers in Prince Edward Island.

Associate families provide community-based foster homes for individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities. These families offer invaluable support to these individuals by opening their hearts and homes and including them as part of their family.

The individuals living with associate families are integral members of the home and they are part of the family.

There is no greater gift than to welcome someone into your family.

I want to take this opportunity to offer a sincere thank you to associate families for providing a loving and caring home to those who need it most and for creating a nurturing environment where everyone belongs and is valued and supported. The genuine, giving spirit that you demonstrate is an inherent trait that we as Islanders share, and it gives us the hope to believe anything is possible.

Associate caregivers also reap the benefits of having these individuals in their homes. As Bloomfield resident Theresa Arsenault said recently when she was honoured with an award from community inclusions: It's the reward of love, and family togetherness, I have those fond memories to look back on and I've loved every one of them.

I would like to acknowledge the associate families who are here in the House today: Theresa Arsenault from Bloomfield; Marion Murray and her daughter Lorraine Murray, from Charlottetown; Amber Tawil and Darren Tawil from Warren Grove, and their children, Coady and Tanisha, along with

Melissa MacDonald who currently lives with the Tawil family.

There are currently 48 associate families providing homes for 68 individuals across the province.

The recruitment and screening process for associate families is coordinated by community-based organizations that provide programs and services to Islanders with disabilities.

These organizations include Community Connections in Summerside, Queens County Residential Services in Charlottetown, and Community Inclusions in West Prince. I thank Kevin Porter as well for coming along today.

There is an ongoing need for more associate families across Prince Edward Island, and I encourage members of this Assembly and all Islanders to consider becoming an associate family caregiver.

Each of us can help recruit associate families by having conversations with our friends, families, constituents, coworkers, and neighbors.

This is a great way to give back to our community, and anyone who is interested can contact their local community organization or my office for more information.

I would like to say thank you again to all our associate families for helping to make Prince Edward Island a more inclusive place. You make a real difference in the lives of those you support and help create more caring communities for all Islanders.

With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask those members – those people that I spoke of earlier – to stand so we can acknowledge them the way they deserve. Please stand.

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

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

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

I'd like to first and foremost applaud the minister for this great statement today. I truly feel that the individuals that perform this very unselfish, caring act are true heroes in my mind, in my eyes, in our community – the service that you provide to these individuals, opening up your home, opening up your hearts.

I know personally of a family in my district, Stratford-Kinlock, that does this tremendous work as well, and I've had the opportunity to visit that home on many times. Just to actually experience the change in the life of the individual that is brought into this family setting, the experience that they have, I mean, truly, it's not an individual that's joining a family, it's just a family that's becoming larger, because that's in essence what this is all about.

As the minister said, there are currently 68 individuals that have the honour or have the privilege of being connected with an associate family, but certainly the demand is much more. Like the minister said, I would also encourage any individuals, families, that are out there that might like to be involved in this great outreach and community service, I would very much encourage them to do so and contact the minister's office or one of the community organizations.

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.

I would also like to thank the minister for her words and like to echo what the hon. member has just said, that this is heroic work that you're doing. You're the champions of our community and you're teaching us what true compassion, true caring, and kindness looks like, and we all need more models of that in our lives, so thank you all so very much.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Viola Desmond**

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

Today is a landmark day in Canada.

For the very first time, the face of a Bank of Canada note will feature a woman other than Her Majesty.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Viola Desmond was a black Nova Scotia businesswoman who challenged racial segregation at a theatre in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia in 1946 and has been chosen to have her image on the \$10 bill.

When she chose a seat on the main floor to watch a movie on that historical day in 1946, Ms. Desmond was not aware that only white patrons were permitted to sit in that area of the theatre.

Staff demanded that she leave or move to another seating section, but Ms. Desmond stood her ground, kept her seat, and was arrested.

She was injured during the arrest, charged, and held overnight in jail without being advised of her rights.

Ms. Desmond fought the charges, and in doing so became an icon by raising awareness about racial segregation in Canada.

While segregation is not a part of the Canadian history that we are proud of, it is a part of our history that we must acknowledge.

I want to thank Finance Minister Bill Morneau, Status of Women Minister Patty Hajdu, and Bank of Canada Governor Stephen Poloz for honouring civil rights pioneer and fellow Maritimer Viola Desmond.

In selecting the first Canadian woman to adorn the face of a bank note, the Bank of Canada was looking for nominees who

overcame barriers, inspired others, or left a lasting legacy.

Viola Desmond, who is often called Canada's Rosa Parks, fits that bill – the \$10 bill, to be exact – perfectly.

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 followed this – call it a competition – over the last several months in the national media, as well online, and there were a tremendous amount of qualified and heroic Canadian women that their names were put forward. I know here on PEI there was many put forward, a fictitious character as well, but a fictitious character simply didn't fit into this category, so those here on PEI that may be disappointed, I would strongly suggest that they look up the biography of Ms. Desmond because, truly, she is very deserving of this great honour.

I actually watched part of the press conference on CBC earlier today, and it was amazing. Viola Desmond's younger sister was actually at the ceremony and spoke, and it was very moving. She was actually quite comical, but you could see the pride in her face and in the words that she spoke about her older sister.

I want to say one last thing about Ms. Desmond. In this day and age of what we're seeing in society and the comments that we're hearing in this country and our neighbouring country and all around the world, I'm actually becoming very afraid that we are very soon going to need another individual to come forward like Viola Desmond or Rosa Parks because the things, the actions that we're starting to see in society, it's very disheartening.

We've come a long way since 1946, but I'm afraid that as a society in some regards we're starting to slip. We need to make sure that we check and look at ourselves in the mirror to ensure that we do not go down that slippery slope.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Thank you, minister, for this lovely statement. It's about time, I'd say.

I've always admired the courage of people who are willing to stand up to conventional ideas, and particularly to stand up to a law that is an unjust law. The courage that that would have taken for her to do that, particularly for a woman at that time, is just something quite inspiring to me.

I also celebrate the irony that this woman was later, when she was – she was charged the evening that she was removed from the theatre, of course. But she was also later on unjustly convicted of a minor tax violation in an attempt to discredit her and to shame her. I just love the irony that somebody who was unjustly accused of a tax fraud now has her face on one of our bills. I find that a wonderful thing.

The importance of all of these quiet revolutionaries and heroes in our communities are sometimes overlooked.

So, a wonderful statement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

#### 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 the written questions to the Minister of Health and Wellness 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.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table 12 written questions to the Premier, who is also the Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, with regards to funding cuts to the Native Council of PEI with regards to mental health and addictions and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Rustico-Emerald, 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

Motions Other Than Government

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

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

Opposition would like to call Motion No. 7, to the floor.

**Speaker:** That has been read and debate was adjourned by the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Hon. member, if you would like to continue speaking to that motion.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

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

It is my pleasure to rise and speak to this motion. Just to remind all the members here today what this motion is all about, it's incentivizing a lower carbon footprint in Prince Edward Island.

As, Mr. Speaker, you are well aware, we asked a lot of questions about reducing carbon emissions and the carbon pricing strategy and related information to that during Question Period.

This is a motion that we brought to the floor awhile back that addresses these sorts of things. The root of the motion is that in order to reduce our carbon footprint, we have to give people incentive to do it. Right now there are a group of people that have realized that if we keep emitting greenhouse gases at the current rate we're doing it we're going to destroy our world. But, unfortunately, the vast majority of the population is not taking action without incentives. That's what this is all about.

I think that's what this government is missing right now in their approach. They keep talking about strategies and taxes and what they're going to do in the future. What we need right now are incentives to help people lower their carbon footprint immediately.

One of the reasons behind this is that PEI, really, its contribution to greenhouse gases is quite small compared to the other provinces. One reason, of course, is because we have a small population. But another reason is we really don't have a big heavy industrial sector which traditionally uses the vast majority of fossil fuels in power. Another thing is we have tremendous penetration of wind turbines in this province that, on average, provide 29% to 30% of our energy needs and can provide over 90% of the Island's energy needs when the wind is blowing.

Prince Edward Islanders, from a whole Island perspective, already have a lower carbon footprint per capita than the vast majority of provinces in Canada. The number that I had used today in Question Period was about half of what would be expected given the size of our population compared to the rest of Canada.

What we're saying in this motion is we've made strides, we've taken steps to lower our carbon footprint on a broad scale, as an Island as a whole, through initiatives of government and good decisions made by past governments on how to generate our energy. We're not sure that a carbon tax is the right way to use a stick to get Islanders to change their ways of generating carbon emissions and to lower their carbon footprint without offering incentives first and allowing Islanders the chance to use those

incentives before the stick is taken to them. We would like to see the carrot offered.

This government had an incentive as a tax credit for hybrid cars that was removed in 2013. That actually de incentivized purchase of hybrid vehicles. I, myself, owned a hybrid vehicle and I found that just doing the financial calculation on the amount of gas I would save was enough for me to justify the purchase of that vehicle.

One of the incentives that would cost very little money – and I mentioned this before – is very simply putting calculators online on the great new government website, get that good calculator up there so Islanders can plug in the price of a vehicle and the mileage and they can see: Bang, this is going to save me money in the long-term. It may look like – it does cost more upfront, but in the long-run this is the right thing to do for my wallet. On top of it all, it lowers my carbon footprint and it allows me to help this Island reduce global warming. That's very important and that's a low-cost way.

These are the sort of things we need to do as soon as possible. It should have been done yesterday. This is a suggestion I made at least six months ago and we haven't seen much movement on this. That's what I'd emphasize to this government, we got to get these incentives in place right away.

It's no mistake that I talk about transportation first because transportation is responsible for over 70% of the carbon emissions on PEI and it's really the area we need to target first.

We would like to see incentives to assist Islanders in reducing their carbon footprint, especially for transportation, but also for heat, because they are the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in this province.

Another suggestion that I brought up at the climate strategy consultations, and it's one that was brought to me by another Islander – we talked about it during Capital Budget just recently – is the idea that we could use our school transportation as public transportation as well. Unfortunately, the Minister of Finance really did not understand the concept when he brought back the information during our debate on capital budgets. He thought we were trying

to say: Take the public transit and use it for school buses.

No, we're really saying let's marry the two together. Let's take our school buses which go across the vast majority of the Island and have a huge fleet. I believe it was – we're well over 300 school buses when you count the spares in there. Marry the two together, then you'll have a fleet of buses that cover the Island that can be used for both public transit and school transportation.

There was some concerns there that children up to the age they are in grade 4, around 10 years old, maybe shouldn't ride the bus with adults. That would be one of the challenges to iron out. But right now we have school buses that are used twice a day. They're used for one set of routes in the morning, then they sit idle for a large period of the day, then they're used again in the early evening, then they sit idle.

If we could take those buses – and make sure they were the right type of buses that you could use for public transit, as well – you could have buses that were active right from 5:00 a.m. until midnight. It would actually be a much lower cost than trying to provide a separate public transit system which it seems government is always considering. That's one idea of what can be done in terms of incentives to help reduce our carbon footprint – help people drive less and stop burning fossil fuels.

Another thing I wanted to talk about is the fact that, right now, when we're looking at the incentives to reduce carbon emissions, if Islanders locally produce energy, power, for example through solar panels or through wind energy, and therefore lower the amount of electricity we have to import from off-Island – for example, from New Brunswick Power – we don't get credit for the lowering of carbon emissions that produces. We are the ones who are locally producing the local green, clean energy, but it's New Brunswick that gets to claim the carbon emissions. We don't get credit for reducing our electricity and producing our electricity locally.

That would be something, as well, that would be a huge incentive because it would lower the amount we would have to raise in a carbon tax. We would get credit for all of

the carbon emission reduction that we would be doing.

That's something I'd really like this Minister of Communities, Land and Environment and this government to look at very closely. To negotiate with the other provinces and the federal government to make sure we get credit for all of the carbon emission reduction that we're going to get. That will lower the amount of tax that we have to, indeed, charge.

Now, one thing you might be thinking, Mr. Speaker, and some other members and people listening today, it's great, the official opposition is saying through this motion you need to incentivize a lower carbon footprint, but where are you going to get the money?

We've already heard that this government is thinking about putting in a new tax. They want to put the HST on home heating fuel. That's one place that they could get the money without having to introduce a new tax. Also, when they brought in the HST, \$25 million of surplus HST that they didn't need to bring in, they did not make it revenue neutral.

Really, when it comes to finding the money to incentivize a lower carbon footprint it's all about priorities. I know the Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy will agree with me when I say that instead of spending \$35 million of provincial taxpayer dollars to build a new bypass to Cornwall, and put more cars on the road, and burn more fossil fuels, we could have used, at least, a portion of that money to incentivize the purchase of hybrid vehicles and electric vehicles so we would burn less fossil fuels and, in fact, cause less people to be driving cars all the way around. Less maintenance costs on our roads. It all adds up. It's a matter of spending priorities. That's what it really is all about.

Again, just to remind hon. members what this motion is all about. The last clause is:

Therefore be it further resolved that government defers the imposition of a carbon tax until potential incentives could be introduced and their effectiveness measured and evaluated.

This is extremely important. This is something we do very poorly here on PEI, and this government. We don't measure and evaluate the results of incentives and programs we put in place. I mean, when we do the tendency is to try and skew the results in a way that perhaps misrepresents the statistics. We just heard about the PISA test results, and now we're finding that there's a whole section of students, poor performing students, who didn't even write the test. That's an example.

It's extremely important that when we incentivize a lower carbon footprint we have the proper metrics in place to measure the results. I believe the acronym we're looking for is SMART. They have to be specific, measurable – metrics that we can really rely on in the future to make sure we know if the incentives are working. I think they will.

With that, I do urge all hon. members to really carefully go through and read the motion again. It has been a while since it has been on the floor. Make sure you read this motion. Make sure you understand it. I think, if you do, and you think it through, you'll realize that this is really the first step we should take before introducing a carbon tax.

I think, looking around this room today, that we're going to have the vast majority of hon. members in this House vote in favour of this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Get that speech on [bradtrivers.ca](http://bradtrivers.ca). Not yet. Soon, coming soon.

**Speaker:** Order, please!

**Mr. Trivers:** Make sure you subscribe.

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

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

Of course, I rise and I support this motion. There are a few things that I want to touch on.

The first thing I'm going to talk about is the other night in this Assembly we debated a motion that the Leader of the Third Party

took forward and it had to do with guaranteed income. Everybody talked about how hard it has been on a segment of the population of Prince Edward Island who struggles financially here on Prince Edward Island.

It's a really tough struggle here on Prince Edward Island to put food on the table. It's expensive to live in the city. The rent is high. It's expensive to live in rural Prince Edward Island because the gas is expensive. To go anywhere costs a lot of money.

The reason why I think government needs to be extremely careful with the carbon tax is that I think you're just offloading that onto the consumer, and you're going to hurt the people who are already disadvantaged because they can't afford to put food on the table, because they can't afford to put gas in their car, who don't have house insurance anymore because it's something that they had to cut, whose children go to school hungry.

I think that this government is going to increase the number of people who fit into that category if they're not careful. I understand the need to tackle carbon emissions. I understand the need of leaving a clean earth for our children. I also understand the way governments operate. Governments, when they can get a tax, will nearly certainly always try to shove as much of that into their pockets as possible.

In Question Period today we had three members of our caucus asking questions about carbon tax and its implementation. One of the important things that was talked about during that was making it revenue neutral and the minister wouldn't commit to making it revenue neutral.

The reason why we think it's important to keep it revenue neutral is because if it's not, someone is paying. If it's not it's coming out of someone's pocket. If it's not it's likely coming out of everyone's pocket evenly, and that's going to put people at a further disadvantage than they already are trying to survive here on Prince Edward Island.

The second thing is I believe that a carbon tax, or a cap and trade system, or whatever implementation this government chooses to bring in, has a larger negative impact on

rural Prince Edward Island than it does in urban Prince Edward Island.

There are a lot of reasons for that. All of the farming and fishing happens in rural Prince Edward Island. There is a lot of fuel. There's a lot of carbon-type assets that would be burned to operate those industries.

If we were just to go along with Canada and say: Yeah, we'll implement one, that's where it's going to hurt. You can't tell me that we're going to be able to just sell our potatoes at a higher cost because we've taxed the farmers more money. They don't have a market. Their market is very tight now and the margins are really slim.

I don't have to remind any of you, I'm sure, of the crisis we had in the lobster industry here I think it was three years ago now. The problem was that the price that the fishers were getting was far below what they needed to be sustainable. A carbon tax that costs our fishing community more money won't guarantee them more money for their product. They had no control over it that year nor did government nor did anyone else. There's a real issue that you're creating here.

The third part about it is people who live in rural Prince Edward Island need a car to get anywhere. There is no transportation. There is no other way to get anywhere. If you live in Launching your closest grocery store is Montague. That's a 20-minute drive at least just to get groceries. It's a 10-minute drive to get gas for your car. It's a 15-minute drive to take your kid to school or to go to a concert. That's just an everyday part of life.

The people who live where I live take that and just live like that. That's not a big deal to us. Like, I would jump in the car and drive anywhere and it's because I grew up like that. Everywhere I went I had to drive. I grew up in a community that you couldn't walk to another place with lights in a day you were so far away. I grew up in the middle of the Bangor Road where there was nothing there. If I wanted anything or if I needed anything or if we needed gas to cut the lawn we had to load up and head into Cardigan. That's a reality for us.

We don't have the option of walking. We don't have the option of any other mode of

transportation. No bus system comes down the Seven Mile Road bus stops.

Though it's funny, it is funny having travelled through some more progressive countries when it comes to treatment of the environment – I know in Norway, I was there once, and they have a bus system. They have bus stops and they're everywhere, and they are in the middle of – in the middle of nowhere there's a bus station and people use it. Yeah, gas is expensive, but people have adjusted. But government has made it so that they can afford to live there too so they're not – government isn't just taking and taking, and that's what happens in Canada, unfortunately. We just take and take and we don't create prosperity and it's never a goal to have prosperity for people.

The models that are in Europe, if you really want to go that way, you have to do everything. You can't just cherry pick and say: Yes, we're going to tax emissions and yes we're going to tax carbon. There has to be more to it than that. There really does.

It's funny, I heard Justin Trudeau on t.v. one night and he was talking about the economy and he said that basically we had to move to – our economy wouldn't boom unless we taxed carbon. I'm like: He's not an economist, and I'll tell you that. He's not an economist because an economist would never use tax and prosperity together.

This is a tax –

**Ms. Compton:** (Indistinct) balance the books.

**Mr. LaVie:** This finance minister does, though.

**Mr. Myers:** It's a tax, and you know what? A tax scares people and it should. This government brought a new tax in already right here in Prince Edward Island.

**An Hon. Member:** One.

**Mr. Myers:** Well, many.

**Mr. Aylward:** One new one and then they raised (Indistinct).

**Mr. Myers:** One brand new tax so – brought in the HST here on Prince Edward Island, put it on everything, put it on children's clothes.

I know, it's funny, the first time after it came in that I had to buy clothes for my children, my youngest fellow, I think he was like 11 at the time, I took him to get sneakers and his feet were big enough to be in men's sizes. Guess what? HST, so it doesn't matter if you're a child –

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

**Mr. Myers:** (Indistinct) and you know what? I can accept it because I probably make an income that I would be able to pay that extra tax, but when you're talking about people that are really struggling to get by, anytime you add those extra taxes onto things like sneakers for children that's an issue. Anytime you add taxes it hurts someone. That's an issue.

I feel like I have an environmental mindset and I care about the cleanliness of our rivers and I would love to see the forests grow here again, and I would love to see people take care of it and not throw things out the window. It always aggravates me when I'm driving down the road and there's garbage in the middle of the road. Those things bother me. Those things bother me because who has the right to pollute the Earth on someone else, anyone, or let alone people that aren't even born yet. Those things bother me.

But at the same time I don't trust government enough that they will do the right thing and they won't just use this to make money. If you truly cared about it, number one you would be a lot more open than you were today in Question Period because you wouldn't answer anything. You would tell Islanders exactly what the plan was, what the discussions were when you are all meeting. Nova Scotia has already said they're doing cap and trade so they're not with us. Either that or we're doing cap and trade too and you're just not telling anybody yet.

These are things you have to be open with right from the start, and the other thing is – and I will stand by this point right to the end – bring in the programs to help people first, and then tax. Give people the opportunity to

move to greener technology, to solar energy at home, to get to an electric car. Bring in programs that will help people reduce their personal carbon footprint first and let that cycle run through and then bring in a carbon tax. Because once you tax people and take more out of their pockets it's going to be a lot harder for them to get solar energy in their homes, to get to an electric car, to get to any technology in around their home that they would personally be using that would help them be greener and reduce their carbon footprint.

If you tax them first they're not going to be able to do that. If you truly care about the environment and you truly care about the future, as I do – I would support a tax on carbon that first had a rebate system. If there was a good rebate system already in place so I could trust you then that you're not going to tax us and give us nothing back and tax us and do nothing for the environment, which is what I'm scared of – so if you won't put those things in place first then I won't be able to trust you to do them after you start getting the tax.

I need to only look at the plebiscite that a promise probably isn't going to be enough for me and many other Islanders at this point. We're going to need you guys to bring in the programs first. Okay? That's very simple. You bring in the programs and then come back for the tax, and I think you will find a lot of people more agreeable. You're not very open, you're not very transparent, and you certainly don't follow through on your promises, as the plebiscite would be a great indicator of.

This is one where you're going to have to listen to Islanders because they're not happy with you –

**Mr. LaVie:** Eighteen per cent not happy.

**Mr. Myers:** You're dropping in the polls. People feel like they're being pushed down by you.

**Mr. Aylward:** You're getting a (Indistinct) for Christmas because you like sliding so much.

**Mr. Myers:** So make sure that you come with a big rebate program for Islanders first.

Show us that you care about the environment.

**Mr. Aylward:** A big long one.

**Mr. Myers:** Then after you do that come back and say: Here is how we're going to tax it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Can I have the podium, please?

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct) roll their eyes.

**Ms. Biggar:** Try not to roll your eyes.

Thank you very much.

It's a pleasure to rise and speak to clarify some information that has been already stated. A couple of things I will get to is first of all that the Member from Rustico-Emerald had stated that transportation makes up 70% of our GHG emissions here on Prince Edward Island, and I must state that that is incorrect. It's 42%. I just want to clarify that because climate change is a very serious challenge for Prince Edward Island.

But it also presents opportunities for Prince Edward Island to continue to be a leader in mitigating the impacts of climate change while growing a green economy.

When I think about the people of Lennox Island, which is my constituency, I see a First Nations community under a real threat from sea-level rise and climate change.

When I think about the people of Souris where we had to install an \$8 million bridge, that's a town where ocean storms are changing with global warming, and we have had to carry out major upgrades in seawall projects to protect the Souris causeway from erosion and flooding.

When I think of North Rustico, the Member from Rustico-Emerald's constituency, I think of where storm surges can cause

tremendous damages to homes and businesses.

But I'm proud of the work that my department's energy division – have been dealing with this challenge head on.

The province's four wind farms have helped make Prince Edward Island a world leader in producing electricity from wind.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Mr. Speaker, we're second in the world next to Denmark in our wind production.

Prince Edward Island now has 204 megawatts of wind capacity that supplies almost 25% of the province's electricity requirements. The PEI Energy Corporation owns and operates 73 megawatts of total wind power capacity.

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

**Mr. R. Brown:** And it's 18 megawatts from that plant.

**Mr. LaVie:** Eighteen megawatts?

**Ms. Biggar:** All the power from the four wind farms that are operated by the PEI Energy Corporation is being sold to Maritime Electric for PEI customers only.

Together, the province's four wind farms, developed by the PEI Energy Corporation, generate more than 250 million kilowatt hours of emission-free electricity per year for Island consumers.

**An Hon. Member:** Great, that's a great (Indistinct).

**Ms. Biggar:** The province's four wind farms as well will generate annual revenue of approximately \$20 million for the province through the power purchase agreements with Maritime Electric Company Ltd. This is happening because we have a government committed to providing Islanders with energy that is reliable, affordable, and increasingly renewable.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's happening because we have committed to dealing directly with the challenge of carbon emissions –

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

**Ms. Biggar:** – and energy use on Prince Edward Island.

**Speaker:** Hon. minister, just – hon. members, one of the rules of the House is that you don't interrupt another member while they're speaking. Okay? You know, it's just a simple rule.

Carry on.

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

The last year, my department has been working with Islanders and experts across this province on a new provincial energy strategy. The Government of Prince Edward Island has developed a 10-year energy strategy to reduce energy use, establish cleaner and locally produced energy sources, and moderate potential price increases. The goal of the strategy is to develop a stronger, more sustainable, and resilient province. The strategy was developed following three guiding principles: reducing greenhouse gas emissions, implementing cost-effective actions and decisions, and creating local economic opportunities.

The strategy will result in energy savings for Islanders and create greater self-sufficiency by reducing our reliance on imported fossil fuels. It will create new employment and economic opportunities through retrofitting projects and the generation of more locally-produced energy.

The strategy will focus on five key areas to direct our energy future: energy efficiency and conservation, power generation and management, energy storage, biomass and heating, and transportation.

Our government recognizes that energy use is a challenge for Islanders. That's why we have invested in the province's emerging public transportation system.

As well, I'm happy to recognize that the Member from Rustico-Emerald has finally recognized that we are investing \$35 million

as a province in the Trans-Canada Highway

**Mr. Trivers:** I never said otherwise.

**Ms. Biggar:** – extension, and the key to understanding that for this project is to recognize that our government is committed to investing in infrastructure that supports economic growth. We are an exporting province.

Our key traditional industries of farming, fishing, and tourism rely on safe, efficient transport of peoples and goods. Our high growth, new industries like aerospace and bioscience, rely on safe, efficient transport of people and goods.

Highway infrastructure is economic infrastructure. Our department will pay out \$985,000 in wages over this project. The contract will take 29 months of construction to complete over four years. Material cost in PEI will be over \$24 million over the next four years, which includes asphalt mix, select (Indistinct), excavation of materials, placing granular (Indistinct), and environmental controls.

This project will generate important economic benefits during the 2016-2021 construction period. For example, it is estimated that over 500 jobs will be created in total over that period. The construction will also generate over \$40 million in GDP within the provincial economy.

Let's look, in particular, at phase 1 that was just completed. On that project there were the contractors employed, 54 staff for varied periods of time over three months. Three hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars was paid out in wages by the contractor. Our department employed 12 casual staff members at a cost of \$112,000 over those months. The total project for phase 1 was \$5,000,300 excluding land, much of that going to Island suppliers of goods and services.

For the total project, we estimate a cost of \$61 million, excluding land purchases. Contractors will pay out over \$10 million in wages and benefits for this project over the next four years.

We are investing in highway community connector roads so that we can protect lives and facilitate economic growth.

The economic case for the Cornwall perimeter highway, or the Trans-Canada extension, is strong when you look at the difference in development between two comparable communities, Cornwall and Stratford.

In Stratford, where the main street for development and access is Stratford road, in the most recent available census we saw a 21% population growth compared to 10% growth in Cornwall where the main thoroughfare is the Trans-Canada Highway. Thanks to the cooperation, we've been able – also of the federal government – we've been able to support 20 water and wastewater projects worth \$33 million in Island communities, and that isn't even counting the planned \$19 million wastewater treatment project for Stratford.

Thanks to that cooperation, we have been able to proceed with the Trans-Canada Highway extension that the town of Cornwall and successive provincial governments have been pursuing back to 1979. This is a project that upgrades 9.5 kilometres of the Trans-Canada Highway from New Haven to Maypoint Road, and it will have an immediate beneficial effect for Cornwall.

The economic study now underway will provide a more definite answer to the expected economic effects of this project in Cornwall, and we expect a draft report from that in December.

As well, as part of our department we have helped thousands of people and businesses to gain control of energy use and reduce their energy bills through efficiency grants and loans, and I would like to highlight some of those.

Since opening in 2008, efficiencyPEI has provided over \$7 million in grants to over 8,000 residential clients, \$9.4 million in loans to 1,775 residential clients, a free weatherization service for 3,600 low-income homes, over 500 businesses with programs and services to help reduce their energy consumption, and have generated over \$50 million in building renovation expenditures.

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct), we get no power and emission credits for any of that, none.

**Ms. Biggar:** Energy efficiency grants. Grant applicants are down approximately 25% compared to last year, mainly due to the low cost of home heating oil. To date efficiencyPEI has received and/or processed 377 grants at a value of \$246,060. In 2015-2016 year 85% of all the grants issued by efficiencyPEI were for air-sourced heat pumps. So far this year heat pumps comprise approximately 80% of all grant applications at efficiencyPEI. We expect to be able to deliver grants to the Islanders right through to the end of the fiscal year, certainly for those who want to convert to other sources of heat.

We have recently announced, it's the new Home Energy Audit Program, and financial assistance is available to assist Islanders in completing an energuide evaluation of their home. EfficiencyPEI will provide an initial subsidy of \$150 paid directly to the audit company. If the homeowners complete recommended energy upgrades, they will also provide an additional subsidy up to the total value of the energy audit to a maximum of \$150.

We have helped thousands of people. We are converting many of our public buildings to carbon neutral renewable biomass heating.

With the ongoing project to install two new power cables across the Northumberland Strait will increase our province's capacity to produce and export (Indistinct) –

**Mr. Trivers:** The biggest (Indistinct)

**Ms. Biggar:** – wind generated electricity –

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct) low hanging fruit.

**Ms. Biggar:** Our provincial government is continuing to work to reduce carbon emissions for energy on Prince Edward Island .

**Leader of the Opposition:** Why aren't you (Indistinct)?

**Ms. Biggar:** This is a complicated challenge, but we will continue to work

towards a sustainable, affordable, renewable energy system for all Islanders.

As this work continues I believe we must first address how we can take a made-in-Prince Edward Island approach. For that reason, I will not be supporting this motion.

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

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

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, as a province, we have, indeed, been a leader in moving to cleaner and renewable energy and conservation.

As mentioned earlier, our wind regime is second only to Denmark and we have seen innovations in the use of biomass and our approach to waste reduction.

Islanders are faced with unique challenges related to climate change. Rising sea levels, eroding shorelines, and recent intense weather events reinforce the importance of taking proactive steps in cooperation with regional and federal governments to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Our greenhouse gas emissions are low compared to the overall emission in the country. PEI must do its part to combat climate change. The federal government has mandated that all provinces and territories implement a carbon pricing mechanism by 2018.

Prince Edward Island will introduce a made-in-PEI approach to carbon pricing which positively contributes to climate change action while considering the particular elements of our economy.

**Leader of the Opposition:** You just admitted carbon tax is coming.

**Mr. Mitchell:** We will ensure that carbon pricing will not disadvantage PEI relative to the rest of Canada, especially with our neighbouring provinces.

We must ensure that any pricing measures lead to mitigation of carbon emissions while we continue to grow our provincial economy.

We must be sensitive to the needs of lower and moderate-income Islanders and to our agriculture and fishing sectors. Work is underway on our government's energy strategy and climate change mitigation policy, and will result in an integrated approach to tackling climate change while creating economic growth and providing choices for Islanders as we move to a low-carbon economy.

A newly created Climate Change Secretariat has been tasked with leading the design and the implementation of a carbon pricing mechanism for our wonderful province. We are working toward a customized approach that will positively contribute to local, regional, national, and international climate change efforts.

We will also be paying particular attention to providing supports to lower income Islanders as we collectively work together to lower our carbon pollution levels.

We are in the early stages of examining what carbon pricing will and should look like for Prince Edward Island. Work continues on our new provincial climate strategy.

I believe it's too soon for this motion as there is other work underway that must be addressed. Currently, leaders from all across Canada are meeting at a table in Ottawa with our prime minister and I'm sure there will be much valuable discussion held there today. As we move forward, no doubt a great plan will be developed, and a great plan for Prince Edward Island will be put in place.

With that, I think we're in early days, but it is encouraging to hear that the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, the Member from Rustico-Emerald, and other members of the opposition will, indeed, be providing positive response when we bring forward a new plan that has all the best interests of Islanders at hand as we move forward to battle this very serious issue of climate change on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** You're going to get it now. Here it comes.

**Mr. R. Brown:** He's going to give it to you guys, too, don't worry.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Maybe you're right, Richard.

**Mr. R. Brown:** He knows I believe in higher taxes.

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

It's a pleasure to rise and speak to this motion. It's also a pleasure, as a Green Party member, to hear such vigorous debate on what is, undoubtedly, the challenge of our time, that of climate change. Nobody anywhere, apart from a few real fringe elements, now question whether climate change is the greatest challenge of our day. It's absolutely accepted –

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yes, right, as I said, a few fringe elements.

Getting from where we are now to where we need to be is going to be tricky. The challenge, I believe, and I think what this motion is trying to do, is to understand that, yes, we have a problem, and we need to fix this. We need to get off fossil fuels, we need to lower our greenhouse emissions. We must do that in a way that does not disadvantage vulnerable Islanders.

I think we have a particularly unique situation here in that I also believe that rural Islanders, unless we're very careful, may be more affected by a pollution tax than other Islanders.

I want to go through this motion clause by clause and give my thoughts on each of them.

The first one says: Whereas Prince Edward Island's generation of greenhouse gases is minor compared to other provinces due to the small size of our population and the lack of a heavy industrial sector.

That's absolutely true. We produce relatively little greenhouse gas emissions per capital. As the hon. member stated earlier,

that is in large part because we don't have heavy industry here on Prince Edward Island. The other provinces, Quebec and Ontario, Alberta, the places where they have heavy industry, that's why their per capita emissions are much greater than ours.

Yes, we are not a big contributor. We also, of course, have a tiny population, we're less than half of 1% of the Canadian population. Canada, itself, only produces 2% of global emissions. In some respects what we produce here is almost insignificant, but it's not.

It's almost like somebody saying: I'm not going to bother paying my taxes, it's only me, we will let somebody else take care of that. If we all adopt that attitude, we're in big trouble.

We have a responsibility to be leaders here. I've spoken about this in the House already. Yes, we don't contribute much, but we are, in many ways, far more vulnerable than other places. We're a small Island jurisdiction. Other places like us, understanding their vulnerabilities – Tuvalu, Western Samoa, Sri Lanka, the Azores – all of these small island states have become world leaders in green energy because they realize they can't stop it by themselves, but they have to be a model, a sort of a beacon of hope for the rest of the world. I think that's what we should be doing.

In the first conditional clause, yes, we are small, but we should never forget that we are incredibly vulnerable and unless we show leadership in this, we are really shooting ourselves in the foot, if you like.

The second conditional clause: And whereas Prince Edward Islanders already pay significant costs for energy in the forms of fuel and excise taxes on gasoline and furnace oil.

I absolutely agree with that, and it's a huge problem for our economy. Five hundred million dollars a year leaves Prince Edward Islands which could, if we were to transform particularly our transportation sector into something more green, some of those dollars – there are a larger percentage of those dollars could stay here. I absolutely agree with that. That's a problem, it's a problem in

our economy, and it's a big handicap towards us becoming more sustainable here.

The third conditional clause: And whereas Prince Edward Island has already taken significant steps to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels through the development of alternative energy sources such as wind and biogas.

Again, I absolutely agree, that's true. We've done some fantastic things, we've done well, but we could do better. We can always do better. We could increase our wind penetration here, particularly as storage possibilities come forward. Technology in that area is just moving leaps and bounds. There's no reason why, once we have reliable storage, that we could not be 100% green energy here through wind. We obviously only harness a tiny percentage of the potential. We could use solar, we could use biomass. There'd be talk of tidal as well. But really the big ones are the ones I think we should be focusing on – increasing our wind in combination with storage facilities and solar.

The fourth clause: And whereas the introduction of a carbon tax in Prince Edward Island would unfairly penalize the residents, farms and businesses of our province who contribute very little to the carbon footprint of our nation.

This is where I start to diverge from the intent of the motion. Yes, first of all, the assumption that this would unfairly penalize residents, I don't buy that, I don't get that. I think if this is instituted properly and carefully and it's revenue neutral – and that's the critical thing here.

**Mr. Trivers:** Taking money out of people's pockets you have to do it carefully. They don't understand (Indistinct).

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Totally, but how much longer are they going to be around for?

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct) 18 years.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** The trick here is installing a payment for pollution, a price on pollution, which does not disadvantage particularly rural Islanders, the farming community here, the agriculture community.

Of course, they're extremely reliant on fossil fuels at the moment. Now that could change. I saw, actually, an electric John Deere tractor on a post the other day on Facebook. Things are even moving in that area. Of course, we have the Amish here on Prince Edward Island whose horse power is provided by horses. I'm not suggesting we go back there. I'm just saying that we have opportunities here to adapt our big industries which are farming and fishing and tourism, to be more green. But we have to be careful in how we do that.

The fifth conditional clause: And whereas the introduction of incentives for consumers, farms and businesses may have a more positive impact to influence a reduced carbon footprint.

This is not an either/or situation. I don't agree with – and I can't remember which member said we're not ready for this yet. We have to get the incentives in place first and then we can introduce the tax. We don't have time for that. This is the biggest challenge of our day. There are drastic things happening in our climate and we are particularly vulnerable here on Prince Edward Island. We have to be bold here, we have to act now.

One of the members talked about it's not fair for those who are not even born yet. This is one of the responsibilities that we have as legislators looking to the future. It's our job to have a succession plan for Prince Edward Island and collectively for the rest of the world. This is one area where we cannot compromise. We have to get this right. There is no more time to procrastinate. We have to do it now.

I don't believe that it's an either/or, I think we need incentives. Absolutely, we need to bring back the rebates for electric cars and hybrid cars. We need to build ourselves a public transportation system here which is particularly suited to our unique situation here.

The Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, I believe it was, talked about Norway where they have a public transportation system that services the most rural parts of that country. We are the most densely populated province in Canada. I know we have a large rural population here, but we're very densely

populated. If we were smart and we had the political will, we could create here a public transportation system that would work. It's not going to happen overnight, but it could happen.

**An Hon. Member:** Trades.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** No trades. Small buses – there are ways of doing it, but it's something that we need to have because we cannot inconvenience rural Islanders, either economically or in terms of their day-to-day lives. If we make gas more expensive for them and do not make it possible for them to have alternative means of transportation and movement, then that's a problem.

Again, it's a sort of concerted effort of a number of things that all have to happen together. But it's not an either/or, everything has to happen together, both the pollution price that we need, the price on carbon, and the incentives for people to do the right thing. That tax, if you like, or price on carbon is done in a way that is revenue neutral and the money goes back to Islanders. That's absolutely critical. I agree wholeheartedly with the official opposition on that.

On the sixth operative clause: And whereas many Prince Edward Islanders do not have access to a publicly funded transit system – I've already talked about that, I'll move on to the seventh.

Then we get into the operative clauses: Therefore be it resolved that government investigate the provision of incentives to assist Islanders in reducing their carbon footprint – blah, blah, blah, blah.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yes, again, I've already spoken about the fact that we need incentives, but that's not all that we need. We need carrots and we need sticks. We need to make it possible for Islanders because what we want – we don't necessarily need fossil fuels, what we want is we need mobility, we need to be able to get from A to B. We want our homes to be warm, we want hot showers, and we want cold beer, that's what we want. Well, when we say we need, but that's what we want.

All of those things can be delivered without fossil fuels. We have grown this infrastructure which is entirely dependent upon fossil fuels and we have to get off that. We have to get off that addiction. That's not going to happen overnight, but it's something we can and we absolutely have to do.

The final operative clause, this is where I'm afraid I lose it on this motion, and I will not be supporting this motion, despite, obviously, my great commitment to the need for action on climate change: Therefore be it resolved that government defers the imposition of a carbon tax.

We have not got time to procrastinate. This is the biggest issue for our day. We must do this but we must do it in a way that does not disadvantage either low-income Islanders or rural Islanders. This can be done right.

I, of course, look forward to seeing what the minister brings to this House once all the negotiations are complete in Ottawa this weekend. We need action on this. I absolutely admire the official opposition's – all of their questions in Question Period today. I felt like I was sitting on a green side of the House here. It was awesome.

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

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

**An Hon. Member:** You're their new leader.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I appreciate the efforts. I want to support this. Part of me really wants to support this. But there's a mechanism in here. The delay is just something I cannot support.

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I won't be supporting this motion.

Thank you.

**Mr. R. Brown:** By the time the Tories got (Indistinct) the water'd be up to Bonshaw Hills. Bonshaw, PEI, by the time the Tories (Indistinct).

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Paul (Indistinct) will look out for us.

**Speaker:** Let's have some order, members.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

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

This is an interesting motion in terms of the wording of it, and kind of the progression in the last number of years as to how this has come to the limelight in Canada in particular. Obviously, climate change has been an issue that has become a hot topic over the last I'm going to say decade and a half –

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

**Mr. J. Brown:** – yeah, exactly – around the world, and it is something that we are particularly sensitive to here on Prince Edward Island, being a low-lying island that is basically made of sand.

There's a parable in the Bible about what happens when you build your house on the sand, and I think we would do well to take a few lessons from that, and I think given that we all have, we've got to be very careful about what happens.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Generally, we'd have to build an ark.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Exactly. That's actually been done, (Indistinct) last week it was announced down in the States, they completed an ark.

Anyway, the point that I'd like to get around to is that we need to see the opportunity in this, and we're only going to see the opportunity in it as a civilization if we are forced to do something to change. I think there are a few ways that you can be forced to do something to change. I don't disagree with the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald in terms of the impact that incentives can have in creating change. I note that I was at a conference recently where they were talking about the incentives that Quebec has given to allow folks there to purchase fully electric vehicles – and I note that they don't incent hybrid vehicles, only fully electric vehicles.

The reason for that, and this gets around to the thrust of my point, is that they are focusing on the development of technology related to the storage of power. They figure if they can get a number of Quebecers driving fully electric vehicles they will be able to move that technology forward and they'll become leaders in that field and more technology will grow out of that.

That was really going back to the current President of the United States. When he came in he figured the writing's on the wall and we better get our minds around that and we better do what we can to be leaders in the industry. Otherwise, we will effectively be buying technology off of others. I think here in Canada – the US has kind of swung the other way – but here in Canada we now have the opportunity where our prime minister has recognized that this is an issue that we're all going to have to become very aware of.

I think as Prince Edward Islanders we need to be doing our utmost to figure out what we can do to basically advocate on behalf of Prince Edward Island as a place where we are one of the greenest provinces in the country, and it's not just because we're sitting on our hands and we have a small population. It's because we've made efforts at a cost to Prince Edward Islanders to put up windmills, do things like have the wind energy institute in West Point where different power storage capacity technologies have been explored.

We could easily sit here and say that countries like China, where they still rely very heavily on coal to fire everything from their heavy industrial – their factories and that kind of thing that we buy our clothes from or our cars from or whatever it might be – and we could say: It's not going to make a difference one way or another.

But the reality is, unless we start to set the example, and unless we start to figure out the technology that we're going to need to move through the next industrial revolution, this is not going to happen.

The flipside of that is all of the opportunity to really move forward economically – and if you look through history, it bears out that way – the civilizations and the countries that do the best are those that figure out, first,

what is going to be the next technology that's going to be important over the next 50 or 100 or 150 years, and they figure out how they can stake their claim to that and basically build an enterprise around it.

We have an opportunity now as Canadians where we can basically put our mark on green technologies and we can start to use them.

**Mr. Trivers:** That's what we're saying, incentivize green technologies.

**Mr. J. Brown:** We start to see the importance of doing that when you look at the different oil pipelines that have been talked about over the last decade going down into the United States, and in particular Keystone, which was not permitted to go down because we have, quote unquote, dirty oil here. You contrast that with the conversation that's going on now about pipelines in Canada where we're saying: We do have to rely on oil for the time being, but at a given point in time we'd hope to switch away from it.

We need to recognize offsets, and I think the big thing about that gets to be that there needs to be an education process. It may need some incentive, but you cannot take away the stick just because you have a carrot there. You need the stick as well –

**Mr. Trivers:** You haven't even tried the carrot yet.

**Mr. J. Brown:** – and to really – well –

**Mr. Trivers:** You're beating your donkey before you give it a carrot or what?

**Mr. J. Brown:** To really make it happen, you do need the stick in addition to the carrot.

The point is it's all about recognizing the issue and, incentives aside, it's going to take a lot of momentum to shift the direction that we're heading in to a different direction and to rely less and less on carbon to get ourselves around or to feed us or whatever it is that we're going to do, and to rely more and more on renewable sources of energy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Are there any other members who would like to speak to this motion?

If not, I will go back to the mover of the motion, the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald to close the gate on the motion.

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

This is a very important motion. We're talking about greenhouse gases and carbon emissions, and I think – I am encouraged to hear that I believe every single member in this House understands how important climate change is to Prince Edward Island, how profound an impact it could have on this Island if greenhouse gases that are produced by carbon emissions cause water levels to rise and our Island starts to fall below the surface of the ocean, as well as catastrophic weather events come through at more and more intense levels.

That's point one. Everyone recognizes the importance of climate change and the importance of lowering our carbon footprint to stop emissions of carbons, which of course are greenhouse gases which cause climate change.

But one thing that I don't understand is why every member here in this House wants – every member, I should say, that is speaking against this motion and is considering voting against this motion – why they want to put another tax on Islanders.

I mean, do the members in this House that want to vote against this motion, do they support our farmers, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Myers:** No.

**Mr. Trivers:** Do they support our fishermen, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** Yes.

**Mr. Myers:** No.

**Mr. Trivers:** Are they thinking of our seniors on fixed incomes?

**Some Hon. Members:** Yes.

**Mr. Myers:** No.

**Mr. Trivers:** Are they thinking of the working poor that are already having trouble paying their bills?

**Mr. LaVie:** No.

**Mr. Myers:** No.

**Ms. Biggar:** Yes.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Yes.

**Mr. Trivers:** It doesn't seem to me that they are, and I would expect that they would think of that.

This government seems to think, in conjunction with the federal government, whenever they need more money to do something, they can put another tax in place or increase an existing tax and reach into taxpayers' wallets and pull out more money.

**Mr. LaVie:** Exactly.

**Mr. Aylward:** That's why they're Liberals. What would you (Indistinct)?

**Mr. Trivers:** I tell you, this motion is all about putting incentives in place. It's about spending existing taxpayer money wisely. It's about prioritizing that spending. It's about understanding what incentives are going to work and putting betterments in place to ensure they know that prior to putting a tax in place. It's the kneejerk reaction of this government, this Liberal government, and it appears the Leader of the Third Party, the Green Party, as well.

It's the kneejerk reaction to just slap another tax on this electorate, and that's what this motion is saying. Let's do our research. Let's (Indistinct) there's been talk of a stick and a carrot –

**Mr. LaVie:** Shutting down the bridges, closing bridges.

**An Hon. Member:** Third time with the stick and the carrot.

**Mr. Trivers:** The Green Party and the Liberal Party, they want to get out the stick and start beating this electorate before they're even offered a carrot Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to move this motion and I would urge all members, if they support Islanders, to vote in favour of this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Speaker:** Order, please!

Are we ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**An Hon. Member:** Standing vote.

**Speaker:** A recorded division has been requested.

Sergeant-at-Arms, you can ring the bell.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Mr. Speaker, the opposition is ready for the vote.

**Speaker:** Thank you, Opposition Whip.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, government is ready for the vote.

**Speaker:** Thank you, Government Whip.

All those voting against the motion, please stand.

**Clerk Assistant (R. Reddin):** The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, the hon. Minister of Finance, the hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, the hon. Minister of Family and Human Services, the hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale, the hon. Member from Alberton-Roseville, the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, the hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, the hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, the hon. Leader of the Third Party, the hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, and the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton.

**Speaker:** All those voting in favour of the motion, please stand.

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

**Speaker:** Order, please!

**Clerk Assistant (R. Reddin):** The hon. Leader of the Opposition, the hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid, the hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River, the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, and the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Speaker:** The motion is defeated.

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

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

The opposition would now like to call Motion No. 8 to the floor.

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

**Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees:** Motion No. 8.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, the following motion:

**WHEREAS** the 2015 Auditor General's Report has outlined a number of serious concerns relating to the management of current and abandoned contaminated sites across the province;

**AND WHEREAS** the Auditor General has indicated that a complete list of known or suspected contaminated sites has not been compiled;

**AND WHEREAS** the Auditor General further indicates that there are a number of known or suspected contaminated sites where no risk assessments have been undertaken;

**AND WHEREAS** these sites pose the potential to have a serious impact on our physical environment as well as human health;

**AND WHEREAS** the Auditor General also calls into question the potential for an economic impact on our provincial finances due to clean up requirements;

**AND WHEREAS** members of the public have found it difficult to obtain information online regarding contaminated sites;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that this Legislative Assembly endorse the recommendations of the Auditor General calling for immediate action to address these serious gaps in the management of contaminated sites;

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this government live up to its promise of open data and transparency by improving the availability of public information in relation to the location of these sites, the contaminants that are present, the environmental assessment and the remediation that is necessary and being taken to address any environmental concerns.

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

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

I rise today to address in this House a serious environmental concern that our caucus, the official opposition, believes is not receiving the attention that it deserves from government.

As you know, our Auditor General – they know the Auditor General very well over on the government side – in her 2015 examination of the management of contaminated sites in our province outlined numerous concerns. The Department of Communities, Land and Environment is responsible through the *Environmental Protection Act* to protect our environment.

Islanders expect that the minister would take his duties to protect our environment seriously, but unfortunately we're not quite there under this current government. The Auditor General's report on this file is nothing short of alarming. I don't think any of us really suspected the degree to which information about these sites was not being maintained. For example, it's only very recently that a complete list of the sites was

even published and that, frankly, is hard to find. It's also disconcerting to read that because of the lack of tracking and documentation no one even knows if some of these sites have been examined or if any remedial work has been done on many of them.

The auditor talked about why proper management of contaminated sites is important to our province and I think most Islanders get it. I think most Islanders know that contaminated sites pose a serious threat to our environment and our health. What surprises me is that our government, which should be concerned about the kinds of threats these sites pose to our province, appears to have been lax in just about every aspect of their monitoring. These sites can be a risk to our human health, to the wildlife in the area, and they can contaminate our drinking water.

I just want to cut to the chase here. We need to make sure that our contaminated sites on this Island are fully documented, they are published in an open way to all Islanders. You should be able to go on and you should be able to get not only a complete list of contaminated sites in the province, but all sites that are under review. You should be able to put in a property ID and find out if there are any contaminated sites or suspected contaminated sites within a given radius of that property ID, and that should all be available right at the fingertips of anyone who wants to go online and look for it.

I would urge that this government take a very thorough and very quick – quick as in immediate – look at their policies around contaminated sites. I think it's important that this happen as soon as possible so that Islanders are not in the dark any longer about where the contaminated sites are and what's happening with them. We can't wait for a case where someone buys a property and they don't know it's contaminated and they end up with something like, for example, oil in their drinking water. That could even be adjacent to a contaminated site.

I would urge that everyone in this House support this motion, give it their due attention. Please read the motion again if you haven't given it its full attention

because I think it is a very important motion, and I urge you to support it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I guess it was back last winter or last spring we had come to the realization that the dump in Cardigan, which Mike Currie closed whenever he came to government in 1996, hadn't been monitored in a long time and none of the wells around it and the properties, the private landowners' properties, hadn't had any tests. Then some of the test that were in it had levels of arsenic and other things that you would be concerned about having your children drink or having in the water table.

It's still a concern of mine. While I realize that those dumps were the old way of doing things – and I remember quite well, going to the dump in Cardigan when I was young. We used to go every Saturday, nothing was sorted. Whatever you didn't need any more just went in the dump. That's just the way it was. I remember when they slowly started taking the larger appliances and piling them in a different area and somebody would come along and crush them and take the metal. Even when I first started going there that wasn't the case. There was a hole in the ground and everything went in it.

It's a problem that was created over the years and I don't blame this government for creating that problem because that's the way things were done at that point in time.

Thankfully, we have come a long way when it comes to how we handle our garbage. We recycle, we sort, we do a much better job here on PEI than we did a number of years ago.

I still have concerns because, as a province, that is – it's an owned infrastructure that's contaminated. It's a dump. It was a government dump. It's still contaminated. It probably always will be. It certainly will be in our lifetimes. That government come up with some sort of policy that, I think, to keep testing around the area. That was

something I had pushed the minister for help on at that time. That's one of the ones that's close to me, and it's near and dear to my heart because I understand that issue well. I remember the fight to have it closed all through the 1990s. It's something that, through a part of my life, was not only a place that I went, but I can remember it well when the fight came on to close it.

What happened in the 1990s was the then-government of the day started sending all the garbage to Cardigan. The garbage was coming from Charlottetown and everywhere. What had been one time a community dump just filled up in a matter of a few years.

I feel like, while we made a great progression with the way we now handle and sort and recycle, we have to be mindful that there's stuff buried in the ground, probably all over Prince Edward Island, that should be concerning to us. There's really not much we can do about it being there. We should be proactively testing areas.

I know the department of environment would have hydrologists who would know where the water is running and how it was running and where it was going, so they could best accurately pick the spots that should be tested.

Also, like the Member from Rustico-Emerald said, we need to be able to make it searchable. I remember the time that we were finding some of them out. Even the contaminated dump in Cardigan, the reason why we could find it on the contaminated list was you have to search by the PID. I knew where it was because it was a dump. It wasn't a secret location.

Somebody who would move here from another province, or another country, could be looking at a piece of land directly adjacent to that property, not know that it was a dump, because how would they, and not be able to search it on the website.

There needs to be a broader search capability that allows people to say Cardigan, or Kings County or PEI, so that if I want to search them all, I can search them all. If I want to narrow down to a community or a location that way, it's there for Islanders so that they can look and tell

where these are, or prospective Islanders, people who want to move here. Maybe there's a big chunk of land for sale and they think they're a steal and they wonder why the locals aren't buying it. The locals all know something that they don't. That's not fair either.

I certainly support this motion. It's just about a little more openness on the data side. I know you have it, I know you can search for it, but the information that you need is too specific. If we could broaden the search capabilities so that it was more user-friendly for everybody, I think we'd be happy, Islanders would be happy.

I think it's possible because you're already willingly sharing the data now. It's just a matter of showing it in a different way so that people can search it a little more broadly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to respond to Motion No. 8 by adding that, as minister responsible, I do agree that we endorse the recommendations of the Auditor General on the management of contaminated sites.

That's exactly what my department is doing. The Department of Communities, Land and Environment is currently working on fulfilling every one of the recommendations set out by the Auditor General in her report. We recognize that there were areas that this file could be improved, and have taken action to see that those occur.

Our goal is always to provide the best service possible to Islanders, and the most effective. We're open to recommendations of how we can improve on services. Response to these recommendations – all of the recommendations outlined under the management of contaminated sites sections are being addressed with a couple of administrative changes within our environmental division.

I would like to take a couple of minutes to walk through some of the recommendations and outline the action taken in response by my department.

Recommendations 4.19-4.39 ask that we ensure all contaminated sites are added to a registry. That work has been completed. Recommendation 4.56 asks that we ensure that all government-owned, government responsible sites are identified. That work has been completed. Recommendation 4.33 asks that we ensure reports from consultants are received in a timely manner. That is also completed with regulations being followed to ensure that strict timelines are being met. Recommendations 4.57 and 4.58 ask that we complete risk-assessments and identify monitoring work for all government-owned contaminated sites. A working group has been established to take on this process with representatives from the Departments of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, Communities, Land and Environment, and, as well, Finance.

This working group has identified all government-owned sites and sites government has accepted the responsibility for. They have also prioritized all sites for further on-site assessment work. Within the next three weeks the group will complete their long-term strategy for assessing and monitoring contaminated sites that will be presented to the Cabinet committee on priorities. Following that strategy development they will be providing cost assessments to Treasury Board.

A majority of the recommendations the Auditor General had were around administration. Although the work was being done, it may not have been being recorded, and/or tracked in the most effective way possible. Three overall initiatives have been taken on to address the remaining Auditor General's recommendations. They include the development on a new internal policy and upgraded database, which will better record and track those contaminated sites and the collaboration with Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy

Perhaps, most importantly, when it comes to transparency and openness on this file for the public, a new GIS map layer has been

developed to publicly display the sites that have been –

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

**Mr. Mitchell:** – designated in the contaminated sites registry.

You can access this through our department website. When you pull up the site, you will see the 111 sites mapped out across an image of Prince Edward Island. There is information that will tell you the owner of the site, the community it's located in, a description of that site, and detailed images of the contaminated.

These actions I've outlined show that great progress has been made on this file over the past year. I wanted to thank my staff and the staff of TIE and finance for taking this on and moving this important work forward.

I think the work has been done well to serve Islanders and ensure contaminated sites on Prince Edward Island are being diligently recorded and addressed.

In closing, I would say that our government would be in support of this motion as work is currently underway to address the management of contaminated sites, and that our recent initiatives have already increased the transparency and availability of public information in relation to each and every one of these sites.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I –

**An Hon. Member:** Call the hour.

**Mr. LaVie:** Extend the hour.

**Speaker:** The hour has been called.

**Mr. LaVie:** Extend the hour.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Extend the hour.

**Speaker:** Do we have – no, we don't have.

**Mr. LaVie:** Just wanted to vote.

**Speaker:** This House will recess until 7:00 p.m. this evening.

**The Legislature recessed until 7:00 p.m.**

#### Orders of the Day (Government)

**Speaker:** 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 Assistant and Clerk of Committees:** Order No. 1, Consideration of the Capital Estimates, in Committee.

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

**Mr. McIsaac:** 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 capital supply to Her Majesty.

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

I will ask the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point 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're on page 21.

Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy

**Mr. Roach:** Permission to bring someone on the floor?

**Some Hon. Members:** Granted.

**Chair:** Welcome. Could you please state your name and your position for the record?

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

**Chair:** Thank you.

Hon. members, before I get into the list to ask questions, the hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy has something she'd like to say.

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

There were a number of questions on some of the sections specific to land. I have some information to bring back on that in regard to the land acquisition from December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016-2017, that are 50,000 or greater in cost purchases of land.

Under the property acquisition in your book there was 47 acres of land bought in Millvale required for Communities, Land and Environment. That was 52,000. The parcel number is here. I will table this as well. Then, if you wanted to look up the name of that person and that parcel number is registered with the deeds office.

Then in Nail Pond there was 46.5 acres purchased and that, again, was acquired for Communities, Land and Environment and that was 50,000.

Acquisitions for highways from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to December 8<sup>th</sup>, there was a purchase of 7.84 acres of land in Mount Mellick that was 56,100. That was acquired to build a cul-de-sac. In addition the department had to remove property that was there to access the Trans-Canada Highway for the Mount Mellick road realignment project.

I also have a list of properties and parcels that have been purchased over the years in preparation for the Trans-Canada Highway project. In August 2014 there was actually a land exchange of 4.4 acres. July 2002 there was two acres purchased for 88,967. June 2000, there was 14 acres purchased for 55,000. May 2004 –

**Chair:** Excuse me, hon. Minister of Transportation.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Biggar:** The question was how much land was purchased for the –

**Leader of the Opposition:** You bought two acres for 80,000 and then I think you said you bought 14 acres for 50,000.

**Ms. Biggar:** Fifty-five thousand back in June of 2000. Parcel number 616011.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Will we know why the reason such a difference of price? We went from 25,000 an acre to 14 and 50.

**Mr. Roach:** It depends on the land, if there's a house on it.

**Chair:** Hon. members, I've been asked if the minister of transportation would just give them a copy, they could take a look instead of reading it through.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct) I just want to make sure you're aware of the number of purchases.

**Chair:** Thank you, hon. minister.

**Ms. Biggar:** There was one more thing that I had been asked to bring back, Madam Chair.

**Chair:** I think they were just asking for copies of what you brought back.

**Ms. Biggar:** The Member from Stratford-Kinlock had asked me for the hydrogen bus project.

**Chair:** Okay, sure.

**Ms. Biggar:** Do you want to hear that?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I don't mean to take up any time.

**Chair:** No, you can take up as much time, they just asked –

**Ms. Biggar:** There had been a question on another section that really was in regard to the hydrogen bus demonstration project. That was a project that took place with the PEI Energy Corporation from November 2007 to March 2010.

The hydrogen bus project was part of the national demonstration program that saw 10

Ford hydrogen buses deployed in cities across Canada. The energy corp cost to participate in the demonstration was minimal as the buses were provided by Ford free of charge. The fuel and fueling equipment was funded by Natural Resources Canada. The purpose of that project was to demonstrate hydrogen as a low emission fuel and generate data that Ford could use in developing future hydrogen vehicles and provide an opportunity to build local technical capacity for working with hydrogen vehicles and fueling equipment.

The project also provided benefits through creating awareness of alternative transportation fuel options, familiarizing regulatory agencies with the application, hydrogen safety codes and standards, and drawing attention to PEI as the leader in clean energy solutions.

Over the course of the project the buses logged over 32,000 kilometres operating within the fleet of the Charlottetown transit system. Generally, the buses worked well over the demonstration period and the project ended when the funding agreement expired.

The only thing else I know on this, hon. members, is it took about two hours to fuel the buses, but I'll table this as well.

**Chair:** Thank you.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

I wonder if I could ask a question on the information that the minister just is preparing to table.

**Chair:** Sure. We've already passed that section. She was just bringing back information.

**Mr. Aylward:** I realize that, Chair, but unfortunately when I had asked the original question she didn't have the information so that I could ask questions.

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

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

I wonder what has happened to the hydrogen refueling stations, particularly the one that was at the government garage, since this project ended in 2010.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** All of that equipment was part of the project so it was returned with the buses.

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I do have a short question about the stuff that she has been providing on the land purchases. I would like to know: What, actually, is the process that you go through to purchase land?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** When we are purchasing land, actually, we just implemented a new policy that was approved by Executive Council last year.

The process is if we are purchasing land for a project we have the expertise within our department, first of all, for doing land value assessments, so we do that assessment on that piece of property and make an offer to a landowner. If that landowner does not agree with our internal assessment, they can get an independent assessment as well. Then whatever that is, and depending on where we are – there's usually a 10% variance, I'm going to say – we try to come to an agreement based on our assessment, the independent assessment.

If in the end they still cannot agree on it, what we do is take that assessment and add on 10% and we expropriate the land and that is our policy, but everyone is treated equally.

**Chair:** Thank you, minister. Do you have all of your documentation?

**Ms. Biggar:** The only thing I have left to table is this hydrogen bus demonstration project.

**Chair:** Perfect.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

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

Hon. members, before we go on, the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism has indicated that he is bringing back answers as well.

The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

**Mr. MacDonald:** The question came from the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid in regards to capital improvements to Crow Bush Cove, and I have a list of those for the past five years.

**Chair:** Great, thank you.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Thank you.

**Chair:** The hon. Minister of Finance has some information he has also brought back before we get into questions.

The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Roach:** Thank you, Chair, and again for the Member from Morell-Mermaid.

He has a question in respect to the Morell schools capital repair amounts and short-term project descriptions. I have that to file as well.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you.

Hon. members, on the top of page 21 the first section under Land has been read and the Total Land has been read.

I have questions. Are there any other questions on the land section? Okay great. On the speaking list I have the Leader of the Opposition, I have the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, the hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque, and the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I want to go to equipment is what I want to go to.

**Mr. Roach:** Are we going to carry the other one first?

**Mr. MacKay:** No, I've got a question on there.

**Chair:** You have a question on that section?

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

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

I'm just curious. On the first phase some of the land purchases – how much land was purchased in phase 1? How many parcels, do you know right off the top of your head?

**Ms. Biggar:** Very little.

**Mr. MacKay:** Very little?

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

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

We didn't have to purchase very much because the scope of the project, most of it was able to be done within the right of ways that we already had so there is very little that had to be purchased. But I think the information I brought back was anything that was over \$50,000, but we didn't have to purchase a lot of land for this particular first phase. I can get that.

**Mr. MacKay:** No (Indistinct).

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

**Mr. MacKay:** My next question: Are there landowners' names on the list that you took back?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** The PID number is there. All of those purchases are registered with the registry of deeds, so anybody that wants to go in there and look up the parcel number can attribute it to a name. I have not provided the names, but I have provided the parcel number.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Chair, I will just cut to the chase. On the first phase, was there any of Ron MacKinley's land or family members' purchased in phase 1?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I would have to go back and check it. As to the list of names, I can tell you that there was no land purchased by a former member of the Legislature, anything belonging to that former member.

**Mr. MacKay:** And does that go for phase 2 as well?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** The property in phase 2? We're still under negotiations but I don't believe any of that crosses any property.

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

**Chair:** Thank you.

Shall that section carry? Carried.

Equipment. "Appropriations provided for acquisition of Capital equipment." Light Fleet: 800,000; Heavy Equipment: 1,000,000. Total Equipment: 1,800,000.

I have a question from the Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** So in the light fleet, what are we replacing in the light fleet?

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

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

In the light fleet there were 27 vehicles purchased, including three for Health PEI, plus two purchased and one invoiced for Island Waste Management Corporation, one for the English Language School Board. The light fleet is made up of cars, vans, SUVs, and trucks of less than one and a half tons.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair, how many vehicles do we have totally in the light fleet across the whole province?

**Ms. Biggar:** Just a minute, I'll get you that.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** In the total light fleet we have 368, including health.

**Leader of the Opposition:** 368 including what?

**Ms. Biggar:** Vehicles, including the ones in health.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** What is the schedule on how we replace these vehicles? What is the policy or guideline on how these actually come up for replacement and so on?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** A lot of them have high kilometres on them but we regularly maintain them and monitor them, and if there are issues with them then we go through a process of what's required, but they are not automatically – I'm talking about the light fleet – not automatically replaced every four years per se or anything like that. It's monitored as to the condition of the vehicle and the amount of kilometres and the amount of money that has to be invested to keep them repaired, so you have to offset that.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Who makes the decision on who gets a government vehicle?

**Ms. Biggar:** A government vehicle?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We have a fleet manager in my department and the request goes to the fleet

manager as to what is required for replacement, if you're talking in that particular section. But when we look at our heavy equipment, of course, our director is Darren Chaisson. The staff on the equipment side of things and in that division look at what heavy pieces of equipment need to be replaced. When you're talking about light fleet it goes to the manager and the fleet manager.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair, minister, vehicles.

Is there a policy in government that says that they will only use low test and that they will only use self-serve?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** You're talking about the fuel contract?

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** If I have a government vehicle –

**Ms. Biggar:** If you have a government vehicle –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, I don't, but if I were to, would I be allowed to go in and use high test as much as I want or do we have a policy that you must use low test, or am I allowed to go to full serve when I should be going to self-serve to save some money?

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

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, what's required is whatever the specs of the vehicle require because there are some vehicles that require the low grade and there are other vehicles that may require a mid grade.

**Leader of the Opposition:** What about self-serve and full serve?

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

**Mr. Roach:** I know that I can only speak for myself as a person who does use a government vehicle, that I do all self-serve.

**Ms. Biggar:** Chair?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I can speak for myself and I pump my own gas.

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

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

My questions are more for the Capital Improvements – Highways section.

**Chair:** Okay, well, we'll move onto the hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque. Did you have any questions on this section?

**Mr. MacKay:** No, I was good.

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

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

I'm just wondering, with regards to – and I understand how fleets run over, especially when you're accumulating such high kilometres on the vehicles and the wear and tear on them. But what's the common practice for disposal of those vehicles? Is there a trade-in? Or, I know I have seen before publicized auctions, but not very often. What's the most common practice for –

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

**Mr. Roach:** Yes, a very good question. The most common practice is trade-in.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay.

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

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

I just wanted to move down to the heavy equipment line for a minute, if that's okay.

Could you give a brief explanation of the specifics between what would be defined at light fleet and heavy equipment?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Sure, I'll just give you an update. There are actually what we call two heavy – in heavy fleet there's 295 pieces and related attachments. That is this particular year we purchased 26 pieces of rolling fleet and attachments. Our rolling fleet purchases include 12 vehicles: two utility tractors, six tandem trucks, and four loaders, all for the department of transportation and infrastructure.

Purchases of attachments and other items included: one utility trailer, seven plow accessories and greasing systems, four loader-mount blowers, two automatic greasing systems, four loader plow gear, as well as brine tanks and a fuel system for Bridgetown.

Those are the kind of pieces of equipment we have in the heavy fleet.

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

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

I see on page three, when we go across the five-year outlook, you're budgeting a million dollars per year for heavy equipment and I don't see, unless I'm missing something, I don't see the light fleet listed there as well. Oh, sorry, the light fleet is the bottom line there, 800,000.

Back to the heavy equipment again. Is the province completely out of the paving-resurfacing business through the department of transportation and it's solely contracted out to private contractors now?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's correct.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** There was a specialized piece of equipment purchased back just a couple of years ago, and it was state-of-the-art, essentially, at that time. What happened to that piece of equipment? Because I

believe that there was a considerable price tag attached to it.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Could you explain a little bit further on what you mean by that piece of equipment? We did not purchase anything to do any paving in the last few years.

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

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

It was a piece of equipment that was spec'd for resurfacing. At that time I think the department had gone down to one of the states south of our border to look at some trials and some tests where it was being used, and felt that it would be quite adaptable to our climate for not only milling current asphalt that was laid, but then reapplying it.

**Ms. Biggar:** You're talking about the hot mix resurfacer?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's not a piece of property that the department purchased, hon. member.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** If the department had that piece of equipment here, how was it here? It never existed here?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That piece of property is owned by a construction company on Prince Edward Island, not by the department.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay, so –

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

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

So there was zero taxpayers' dollars went into purchasing that piece of equipment?

**Ms. Biggar:** Nothing out of my department (Indistinct) purchasing that or it's not in any of the capital budgets or operating budgets of any department.

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

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

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

I'm curious about equipment that's placed at remote salt sheds that's not owned by government. Is there any of that that's done? Does the department go out to contractors and rent their equipment to place at salt sheds to load government trucks?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We do tender out from private contractors to load trucks for sand at those sand piles.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Can you explain how that tender process works? How are they paid? Are they paid for every day they're sitting there? Are they paid by the hour? Are they paid – what?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We tender out for the scope of the winter project, for instance, and whoever gets the lowest tender on what they figure it's going to cost them and how many hours they're going to put into it. That's how the tender goes.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I can understand tendering out for the whole season of four months, but are they also paid per hour use?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** No. I can get some further information, but not to my knowledge. I can bring that back. I can bring information back.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'd like to have a list of all equipment that the government has tendered with that's parked at garages around the Island, listing the companies that have the tender.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Yeah, I just want to be clear on what you're asking me for. You want a list of what private contractors are loading and parking their equipment at the sand piles across Prince Edward Island?

**Leader of the Opposition:** You got it.

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay. You got it.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Another question I'm curious on that's been brought is the government ministers do have to travel around wherever they have to go. We do purchase a lot of fuel at service stations across the Island. Who collects the air miles?

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

**An Hon. Member:** That's a good question.

**Mr. Roach:** It's not required.

**Ms. Biggar:** It's not – there's no – I don't have an air mile card on my Esso card.

**An Hon. Member:** It's a good point, though.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** What I'm wondering here: Is there an opportunity, I guess, that if there was an Air Miles card or an Aeroplan card assigned to a credit card and we use that at a gas station, then possibly the Air Miles collected could be used by government for travel.

**An Hon. Member:** I think the tender's sent out.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** The tender for fuel for government cars is tendered out, and right now it's Esso that has that contract, so we have a gas – if you have a gas card, then you use that gas card. There's no Air Miles attached to that that I'm aware of.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, there's Esso Extra points, so, Chair –

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I can tell –

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Is there any policy in place in regards to – there's no policy in place.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** You want to take that question, hon. member?

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

**Mr. Roach:** I think that when the tender goes out and the various oil companies participate in that tender, there may be a price on the tank, but in tender process it would come back on the bulk of purchase with a much lower price, so I think everything would be kind of included in that.

**Leader of the Opposition:** And I know that's (Indistinct).

**Mr. Roach:** Yeah. That's the way that it works, hon. member.

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

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

I'd like to ask about a piece of equipment that I understand was considered to be purchased a few years ago. It's a high-temperature incinerator. We know there's a large stockpile of tires up west, a quarter of a million tires, and there is an incinerator that one can buy that would denature those tires into a carbon-like substance, steel, and

a diesel-type fuel. I know that was the original purpose of the company which acquired those tires and was going to dispose of them.

Is there any plan to purchase such an incinerator, or do you even know about it?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** What I know about the project that was ceased back in, I think, 2013, those tires were being chipped. They weren't being burned here. But we have no plans to buy an incinerator to burn tires.

Now, there are I think some changes being made to the plant on Riverside Drive. They are looking at changing their system to dispose of more garbage. Whether or not they'll, at some point, be able to also handle some of the chips – but we are using some of those chips in some of our construction as well to spread around to help with run-off and those things. We are using that. But we do not have any plans, within my department, to tender for or to purchase by ourselves an incinerator for tires.

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

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

Are you making much of a dent in those piles with the uses that you have just described?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We're also shipping those tires that are in Alma, as well as the ones that are collected across Prince Edward Island, to Montreal. We've probably taken about half of them away. We can only ship – if the plant in Montreal could take them all tomorrow, we would ship them. They are only able to take a certain volume. That's what is confining us to getting rid of them all at once is what the incinerator in Montreal will take. It's the only one that there is. The closest one to PEI is the one in Montreal. We have been able to ship a great number from that particular site.

In addition to that, we have regular ones that we collect at garages on a regular basis and

they are shipped off-Island as well. The challenge is how much the provider in Montreal can take.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** If this is our chosen method of disposal of the tires, is the Montreal facility paying us for the tires or are we paying to transport them there, and if so, how much is that costing the province?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We contract a trucking company to haul them to Montreal, but they do not pay us for them.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Do we have some sense of how much each truckload of tires is costing us to ship them to Montreal?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I can bring that back.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, I'd appreciate that.

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

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

Also, how many truckloads is it going to take to get rid of the accumulated stockpile of tires that are in Alma in the moment? If you could bring that back to me, also.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I would just like to point out that it is through Island Waste Management Corporation that is responsible for shipping those. I can go back to them and find that – I'll have to get them to give me that information. It's not internal. I'll find out what I can.

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

**Chair:** Hon. members, before I move onto the next question I'm going to give way to

hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock for recognition.

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

I just wanted to recognize a couple of individuals who are in the gallery here with us this evening. You may have recently seen a news article in the *Guardian*, I think it was published on December 5<sup>th</sup>. That would be Chris van Ouwerkerk and Jennifer Lavoie. Chris owns Butcher & Butcher. It's a butcher shop, obviously, on the St. Peters Road. He also has Jercules beef jerky, which is probably –

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

**Mr. Aylward:** – definitely my favourite.

Chris is actually a law student, currently going to school full-time and running this operation, as well. Jennifer, I believe, actually runs the business for Chris, or with Chris, while he's out of province going to law school.

I just wanted to give them a quick shout-out and just recognize them for their hard work and dedication and entrepreneurship.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Since the Leader of the Third Party brought up the Huntley dump, which triggered my memory, the question is: Why was no action ever taken against the person responsible that was contracted in the first place to get rid of those tires?

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

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

That particular company went bankrupt, hon. member, there was a death in the family, as you may know, and they did go bankrupt subsequent to the death of the principal owner of the company.

There was no action that we were able to take to retrieve any money from them for anything.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair, are we not talking about the same individual who is possibly involved in the water bottling plant out in Brookvale?

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

**An Hon. Member:** Madam Chair, is this question here –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Pardon me?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I don't know, hon. member. I know who I'm talking about. Whether or not they're involved – that, anything to do with the bottling plant doesn't come through me.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I would like to find out that answer.

Chair, another question?

**Chair:** Is it related to –

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes, it is.

**Chair:** Is it related to light fleet, heavy fleet equipment?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah. I can make it compared to it.

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

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** All these tires from heavy fleet vehicles that are buried, what are we going to do with those that are buried in the ground up there at the Huntley dump?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I don't have an answer for that.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** As I said, I'll have to go back to Island Waste Management Corporation, because they are in charge of all the tire disposal. I'll ask that question.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** The final thing on this subject.

I know for almost 99.9% that there were a lot of tires that were contracted and hauled out of there this fall. They were hauled down to Miscouche, and in that process they discovered piles of tires that were buried underground by the previous company. I think the government needs to look in and investigate that.

**Ms. Biggar:** I'm sure the department of environment would check that out.

**Mr. Mitchell:** (Indistinct) if there was a report made on it, hon. member, I'm sure it has been investigated.

**Chair:** That's the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

**Mr. Mitchell:** The process is a phone call is made and our people respond. If that occurred, then I'm sure they're well aware of it. If it hasn't, I'll indicate that you're putting the request forward tonight.

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

**Mr. Gallant:** Madam Chair.

**Chair:** On this section?

**Mr. MacKay:** Well, no, actually, but I'm hoping you can forgive me for this because we didn't have this paperwork before.

I just have one question. I'm just curious, and I know it's a minor question. With the paperwork we got on the land purchases, there are some that say land exchange, but it doesn't have a parcel number. I'm just curious: What was it exchanged for? There's no information there.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** PID number 245134. That's the parcel number of the land exchange, August 2014, is that what you're referring to?

**Mr. MacKay:** Chair, there are three of them: June 2000 –

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay.

**Mr. MacKay:** – there's no dollar figure, 7.1 acres.

**Ms. Biggar:** June 2000. What number is the PID you're referring to?

**Mr. MacKay:** There's no PID on it, that's why –

**Ms. Biggar:** Okay, I see that.

**Mr. MacKay:** There's just no – I'm curious –

**Ms. Biggar:** We'll have to find that out.

**Mr. MacKay:** – of what this exchange was (Indistinct).

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll have to find that out.

**Mr. MacKay:** Okay. There are three of them there on the sheet.

**Ms. Biggar:** On that second page.

**Mr. MacKay:** Yeah, and there's one, I think, on the third.

Thank you, Chair.

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

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

I'd just like a point of clarity. Where did the tires go in Miscouche? There's no landfill in Miscouche. There's one in Wellington Centre.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** They're shipped to the site in Wellington where they're picked up then and forwarded on to Montreal.

**Chair:** Good. Thank you.

**Ms. Biggar:** Madam Chair, could I just –

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I'm making an observation and I'll verify this, but if look at the PID on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2000, for 882761, I'm surmising, and I'll verify that, that those purchases could be all related to that PID number, but I'll verify that.

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

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

I guess I'd like to know, when it says, land exchange, what was it exchanged for?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I will found that out. Normally if you're having land exchange it's one piece for another. Sometimes we have a land exchange – and I'm going to give an example here of the Bedeque project we just completed, the realignment in Bedeque. We had to take a corner of a piece of property off there in exchange for that. We provided that landowner with three or four truckloads of fill, or something, in equal value to what that purchase would have been.

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

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

There's only three there so I wouldn't put it out of your way if it was too much inconvenience, but only three, if you don't mind.

**Ms. Biggar:** Don't mind.

**Mr. MacKay:** Thank you.

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

Capital Improvements – Highways  
“Appropriations provided for highway and bridge construction.” Bridges: 5,000,000.  
National and Collector Highways:  
15,000,000. Cornwall Perimeter Highway:  
14,000,000. Provincial Paving: 5,500,000.

Total Capital Improvements – Highways:  
39,500,000.

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

**Mr. MacKay:** The national collector highways. The collector highways, I remember the minister saying last year I think, there had to be 1,000 cars a day on those roads.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Perfect, that's great news. What is that number now?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** What do you mean, what is that number now? It's still 1,000 or –

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

**Ms. Biggar:** No, it was 10,000.

**Mr. MacKay:** There are hardly any roads in my district that have 1,000 cars a day on it that are in rough shape so how can –

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

**Mr. MacKay:** I'm curious, how we can get around those 1,000 cars.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** As part of our regular road maintenance, there are roads that are identified under the recap program. We look at each district to see what improvements can be made that may not meet that 1,000 car count. It has to be – and I might clarify this – 1,000 cars on average annually. Perhaps during the middle of the summer – I know we had a discussion about a particular road in your district – we can do a car count there. I expect during the summer there's 1,000, but would they average out the 1,000 for the year? We can put a car counter on particular roads to get the average of that car count.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** On that one road in particular there might be 1,000 cars in the summer, but there wouldn't be 50 cars in the wintertime. If it averages out, there's not a road in my district that would ever fall under that category.

**Mr. J. Brown:** You just shot yourself in the foot there.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you. I would expect there are some, and I can go back and get the number counts for your particular district.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Are there any exceptions at all with that 1,000, if it's close to it? There are no exceptions at all?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** It has to be 1,000 or higher.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Actually, that's what I was wondering. I was wondering if we could get the information of the roads that were done last year to see. I've seen some roads – not in my district obviously, in other districts – that I don't think there would be 1,000 cars a day on, so I'd love to see what roads we're doing.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We did Hunter River, Route 13, which qualified. We did Stanley Bridge, which qualified. We did a section up in the Alberton area. We did some down in Georgetown. Depending on the road –

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

**Mr. MacKay:** No, Stanley Bridge is not my district.

**Ms. Biggar:** I can get the list of what was done in your district.

**Mr. MacKay:** That would be great, thank you. Could I get a list of all the districts that were done just under the last year? I don't want you to go back too far.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. MacKay:** Yeah.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. MacKay:** That's great.

**Chair:** Shall the section carry?

I have one name on the list for that section and nobody else.

**Mr. Trivers:** I got a question too. You looked right at me.

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

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

I note that if we look back to the –

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

**Chair:** Sorry, the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I note that if we look back to the 2016-2017 budget forecast and estimate, of course, the Cornwall perimeter highway doesn't appear in the estimate because we never talked about it at that point. But in the forecast it comes in as 6,200,000.

I also note that the amount for the national collector highways has gone up by 4,000,000. Is that 4,000,000 part of phase 1 on the Cornwall Bypass or was that for some other project?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's mostly under the collector highways. The 4,000,000 was that cost-sharing for those collector highways.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Can you tell the House why it's 4,000,000 more than was estimated?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's when we got the expand. As was just noted, we were able to get a new deal with the feds which we hadn't expected would come through. In order to take advantage of it that's why that figure is there. It was new funding that was eligible under the collector highways so we were able to use it in that way.

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

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

A couple of weeks ago I asked for some documents from the minister about the safety studies and the economic impact studies done to justify the Cornwall bypass highway. You tabled a large amount of documents which you said (Indistinct) keep us busy, and indeed they have kept us busy going through them. There was very little in there that was of an economic – mostly engineering studies and there was some studies about talking about transportation by rail, which really are not relevant to what we're talking about here at all.

A couple of questions on that. I do have accident statistics which we got independently. A lot of them are to do with the North River Causeway and of the bypass, and also the New Haven end of the bypass, if you like, are out there. But there's very little information about the main (Indistinct) going around the town of Cornwall itself.

Do you have any statistics on the accidents within the part of the Trans-Canada which now goes through the town of Cornwall itself?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We'd have to go back to the RCMP and get those statistics, hon. member. We don't keep the statistics that you have or figures we were able to get from the RCMP, so we don't actually keep those at highway safety. We'd have to put a

request into the RCMP to get information on a specific kilometre of highway. Those statistics are through RCMP, but we can put a request in. I don't know how long it will take, but we can put the request in.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** We did exactly that and I have the statistics. I can table this. Can I table this now or does it have to be tomorrow?

**Chair:** No, it can be now.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Okay, I'll table it at the end of this discussion.

It gives very interesting and valuable statistics, but it's impossible to tease out the bit from the actual town of Cornwall. More importantly, we asked for a comparison of the accident statistics within the distance of the planned perimeter highway expansion and the rest of the Trans-Canada on PEI and they could not provide that to us. I'm assuming, given that safety was one of the two rationale for building the highway, that you have that information.

Could you let us know if that's a particularly dangerous part of the highway?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That particular part of the highway has about 25,000 cars going through the middle of a community on a daily average basis.

I guess our concern is: Do we wait until someone is killed there? Or do we help alleviate some of the traffic, the major thoroughfare in that community. That is one of the factors in moving forward with the Trans-Canada Highway extension.

The other factor is that we are an export province and a major portion of the transportation that goes through the middle of Cornwall is for exports. When we look at that factor, we are finalizing our economic impact study. I did release some figures that I was able to get on a draft basis from the companies that are doing our final analysis on that. I have released those figures here recently in the House on what the economic

impact for the area is. Comparisons between developments in the town of Cornwall compared to the town of Stratford in regard to building permits and development in the area and what that will do for that particular area. That all plays into our economic impact.

Safety is, again, a top priority for that community. We have had great response back from people that have been concerned for their children and the fact that that amount of traffic goes through on a daily basis right through their town.

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

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

Thank you, minister. I, too, have sympathy for the people of Cornwall. It's obviously not an ideal situation to have all of these trucks going through the middle of your community all of the time, and indeed we need to do something to improve that situation. I absolutely agree with you on that.

My concern is that: Is the planned perimeter highway the best way of doing that, the most efficient, the most cost-effective way of improving safety through Cornwall? Did you look at any other possibilities other than building this perimeter highway?

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

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

**Ms. Biggar:** What would you suggest?

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I don't build roads so I don't know. But I just wonder whether the price tag of 65 million – and again I know that's not all provincial dollars, before I get jumped on – but whether the money could have been spent alternatively to produce the safety that we all want without the hefty price tag. I don't know.

**Mr. Roach:** Chair?

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

**Mr. Roach:** I can say for certain that the previous plan that was looked at with building another new bridge and going

through an area, the environmental impact that that would have had, was probably – would you say double this or better?

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Roach:** Better than double the value of this alternative. The original Cornwall bypass would have been considerably more expensive and would have been a lot, I suppose, more detrimental to the environment had a second bridge been built further up the North River. I think the plan then was to attach it to a small island and then jump again over water and that was extremely costly.

I think the one that we're discussing here now is probably an alternative to the original one.

**Ms. Biggar:** Chair?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Just to add to that, the original plan, the bridge alone I think was something like \$85 million when we're talking about the most cost effective way. Also, when the previous government started that plan at that time there was no cost-sharing dollars available. It's only since 2014, 2012, the National Build Canada Fund has helped Prince Edward Island improve their Trans-Canada Highway so that it is safer.

This was an opportunity that we may not have again as a province to address some of the high traffic areas so that is – but looking at the plan that was there originally compared to what it is today, I can confidently say it is the most cost-effective way to address some of those problems and to have more opportunities for that community to develop. As you're aware, it's pretty well landlocked in any kind of development. We will be doing an exit into the Terry Fox centre which right now, and anybody that has to go to the Terry Fox centre, they go up the middle of a back street of a residential area and the schools up in that area as well.

It will take traffic away from the school, it will take traffic away from the residential area, and it will take traffic away from the middle of the community. But it is also an

economic infrastructure project that will contribute to the economy of Prince Edward Island as well, as I had noted earlier in some of my comments this afternoon talking about the project. We are an export economy and this will add to our economy as well with more opportunities, not just for Cornwall but for exporting our products from Prince Edward Island.

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

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

I remember the comments you made either earlier today or yesterday about the GDP impact that building this road will have and the jobs it will create, temporary jobs of course. I don't contend the fact that there will be an immediate GDP impact for the Island and particularly for Cornwall, but I'm more interested in the long-term impacts, economic impacts, specifically on Cornwall. I know you have a study underway at the moment. Is that correct?

**Ms. Biggar:** Yes.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Do you have any idea when that will be completed?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** It will be done by the end of December and I'm sure we can put it up on our website as soon as we get it.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'm good for now (Indistinct).

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

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

Under this section there are four lines: bridges, national and collector highways, Cornwall perimeter highway, and provincial paving that total 39,500,000, which is a whole lot of taxpayer money. We're sitting here and asking questions to break down the details of these. Do you publish the details of what you're planning to do anywhere that the general public can see?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Anytime we make plans under capital to do work those always go out to tender before they're done, hon. member. I can give you a bit of an update on what we actually did with that money. We will be planning to do more and they always are made public as they come out in different phases of projects.

**Mr. Trivers:** My concern, Chair –

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

**Mr. Trivers:** – is I'm sitting here. I'm the MLA for District 18 Rustico-Emerald, or I may be somebody who lives in that district, and I want to know what work is being done on the collector highways, the bridges, and the provincial paving in my district. Really, from what I can tell, there's no easy way to find that out and I wondered why.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** All of those projects are sent, hon. member, to Ottawa so when we submit, if it's under a collector agreement, those are cost-shared. Anything to do with the federal is cost-shared. All of those are audited first of all, hon. member, but once we pass the Capital Budget then we can start putting tenders out on what is going to be done over the course of the construction year.

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

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

I think you're missing my point, minister. What I want to know is how you communicate the information to the general public. Because right now it's about rumor and coffee shops and who read the tender or not. I think it's really doing a very poor job of letting the public know what's going on. I find out what work is going on in my district half the time because I'm driving down the road and I see a construction crew. I was wondering if you have any plans to improve on that.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Actually, yes, we do have a plan to improve on that, hon. member. I think it's very important, and I have relayed this to my department, that if there is going to be a project in the spring in a particular community that there should be ample lead time to get that information out and meet with the stakeholders in that community, whether it's the fire department or a particular group or the school board, and have public meetings if there is a major project going to be held in the community, if it's a bridge, for instance, going to be replaced.

I have made it very clear within my department that we should have wholesome communication with those communities.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** How do you set the priorities on what capital improvements are to be done on the highway side?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** You're talking about highways or bridges? Each one has different criteria.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Why don't we look at provincial paving?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll give you – provincial paving is broken down, hon. member, into a couple of sections. For instance, last year we did 113 –

**Mr. Trivers:** It would be nice to see those sections in the budget.

**Ms. Biggar:** I'm just going to tell you what they are, if you don't mind.

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct) let us know instead of having to wait.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** There were 113 kilometres of highways done. Seventy-six of that is what we call recap. That's out of highway maintenance. Thirty kilometres of roads and seven – we have roads that are done under capital, and roads that were done under the collector highway. We had 76 kilometres of roads that were recapped. Thirty kilometres were roads were improved under capital, and seven kilometres of highway reconstruction was done under – of those, two of those major projects were undertaken during the 2016 season: Route 1, the Trans-Canada Highway, that's the Maypoint, that's our –

**Mr. Trivers:** I asked how you set your priorities.

**Ms. Biggar:** How do we set our priorities?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** It depends on the condition of the road, for starters, and the traffic that is on that road.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Last year you sent an email out to all the MLAs. You asked us to come up with our priorities for the roads and present them to you.

**Ms. Biggar:** Yes.

**Mr. Trivers:** I held an infrastructure summit in my district in conjunction with District 20 and District 19. I came up with a list of priorities for you, minister. I had eight immediate priorities that covered off about 12 kilometres worth of resurfacing –

**Mr. Roach:** Who is going to give up theirs to you?

**Mr. R. Brown:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** – and I had 32 kilometres in total –

**Mr. McIsaac:** (Indistinct) a lot of taxpayers' money (Indistinct).

**Mr. Roach:** For one district.

**Mr. Trivers:** My point, minister, is not only – my point is, for example, when I'm driving in my district, I came across one kilometre of pavement that was not in my top eight priorities, and I want to know how it got there.

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

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

At different times, if find that we have flexibility in our budget, our department also makes decisions on what roads that are done. It's not solely in the hands of the MLAs, I should point out. Based on the condition of the road, the traffic that's on that road, we may come back and look at the priorities that were given by certain districts. For instance, the road you're referring to is an eight-kilometre road. There were some bad sections on it. Rather than wait until all those – in the summertime there are over 1,000 cars that travel that particular road, hon. member, and there was a bad section.

When those things happen – we had the same thing down in Georgetown. We paved a section down there. Rather than wait until they're totally smashed up from the traffic that goes on them, our department will make a decision independently as well.

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

You do know the road in question is Grahams Road, which is an eight-kilometre road. It does need work, and it was on my list, but it was not one of the eight priorities. The one kilometre worth of recap that was done on that was not done where the resurfacing had left off previously in the past. It was sort of put in the middle of the road, not necessarily what I would have said was the worst section of the road, and it ended right at the driveway of the Liberal candidate of record's house.

I wanted to know, was there any political patronage involved in this paving (Indistinct)?

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

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

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

**Chair:** Order, please!

**Mr. Roach:** Capital budget, we're in capital budget.

**Chair:** Order, please!

The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

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

Anytime that we do paving we may not necessarily – anytime we do paving, or what we do recap, hon. member, I'm not an engineer, nor are you, so I have to take the advice of what my department recommends is the worst section of a particular road to do.

It doesn't matter to me who lives on that road. If I take the recommendation of the department that it needs to be done, that's the decision that is made.

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

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

The minister made a comment back when the Leader of the Third Party was asking some questions and she made an excellent point when she was talking about the Cornwall bypass and the traffic on the highway that goes through Cornwall.

Her statement was: Do we wait until someone was killed there?

I guess my question would be: When will we see proper lights installed at the new crosswalk on the Bunbury Road leading from Horton Park leading over to the Bunbury mall?

We've already had several very close accidents there. As a matter of fact, there was one young lady that I know of, she was walking across the crosswalk, it was at night, it was dark, and there was a car came, and actually the passenger's mirror clipped right across her back.

She wasn't injured. She was kind of pushed a little bit, but luckily she wasn't hurt badly.

I know that the media have been looking into this. I know I've spoken to the minister about it. We did talk about this crosswalk for an extended period of time. The town of Stratford spent, I think, approximately \$25,000 to install the appropriate sidewalks leading up to the crosswalk on either side.

Again, your statement was: Do we wait until someone is killed there?

What the residents of Stratford are asking for is proper lighting that can be activated by a button to indicate, to show cars that are coming from either direction, either coming off the off-ramp from the Hillsborough Bridge, or coming up the Bunbury Road, just finishing coming around a turn. We need proper lighting there. When will that happen, minister?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you. I have asked my department to give me traffic counts on that particular highway compared to the other area that you reference.

I know in discussion with some of your residents they reference another area that has actually a hand-activated crosswalk lighting. I've asked for traffic counts on there. I've asked for the lighting overhead to be reviewed. We are in that process right now.

In combination with the signage we have there we already do have some street lights here, but I have asked for more lighting to be reviewed in terms of: Do we need another streetlight that's directed over the top of the sidewalk? I have asked for traffic counts for comparison because when you're comparing one area to another you do have to take traffic counts into account as well. That is under review.

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

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

I don't think it has as much to do with traffic count as it does with the actual location and the alignment of the road and the crosswalk and the volume of foot traffic that goes across there.

Again, you and I have talked about this crosswalk, and I was extremely happy that the crosswalk was installed. The town of Stratford did a tremendous amount of work lobbying and advocating for that, and spending money for the lead up sidewalks. You and I had great discussions with regards to it and getting it there.

Again –

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

**Mr. Aylward:** No, we're not looking for a stoplight. What we're looking for is a light that is over top of a crosswalk. You see them all over the place. You see them on the Stratford Road, coming across from where CGI is over to Glen Stewart Road. So that if there are pedestrians coming across, maybe they're coming back from No Frills with their weekly groceries, if they were actually able to afford to buy groceries with all the taxes that your government brings in –

**Mr. Roach:** Oh, he had to go –

**Mr. Aylward:** – but it would be light that –

**Mr. J. Brown:** (Indistinct) game you need some (Indistinct) strategy (Indistinct).

**Mr. Aylward:** – goes across the top of the crosswalk. It's not a stoplight –

**Mr. Roach:** This is turning into (Indistinct) –

**Mr. Aylward:** – it's simply an indicator that flashes –

**Mr. Roach:** – foolishness (Indistinct)

**Mr. Aylward:** – to let oncoming traffic know that there's a pedestrian coming into the crosswalk. That's what we're looking for. When can we expect that to be installed, minister?

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

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

As I said, we have that particular intersection under review at the moment. It's a two-lane highway, hon. member. I'm

having that compared to where the other lights are that were referenced. Is that a four-lane highway? Is that a two-lane highway? We're having that under review.

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

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

If the minister would like to come over when the House recesses and just spend half an hour with me, I can simply show it to you, and show you what a two-lane highway is compared to a four-lane highway and the traffic volumes. It has nothing to do with the traffic volume –

**Ms. Biggar:** It does.

**Mr. Aylward:** It has everything to do with the alignment of the road, and it has everything to do with the amount of foot traffic. Are you going to have somebody there to monitor how many people are crossing the road? If you're going to do that, we might as well hire a crossing guard and not have that light.

Anyway, Chair, I want to move on. I have a couple more questions if that's okay.

**Chair:** Yes.

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

There's been a lot of talk over the last number of years about a very dangerous intersection a little further up the Trans-Canada Highway, the crossroads intersection. I'm wondering if the minister can give us an update on where that project currently stands.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Could you reference the name of the roads you're referring to at those crossroads?

**Mr. Aylward:** Sure, it's the Mason Road that comes out onto the Trans-Canada Highway. The fire department, EMS, the RCMP enter and exit there, the funeral home, there's a daycare, there's a John Deere dealership there.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll take (Indistinct) information back.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you, Chair. Also, I know I've brought this up in the budget every year, I brought it up in the capital budget every year, I know that recently the Leader of the Third Party has brought it up. Just wondering what we can expect with regards to movement on an active access or pedway bike lane on the Hillsborough Bridge so that people can come back and forth from Charlottetown to Stratford and make it a safe, accessible access across.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** As I mentioned to the Leader of the Third Party when I referred to it, hon. member, one of the things that has not been done – in conjunction with the City of Charlottetown and Stratford – is to actually look at how we can enhance the approaches to those bridges. That is actually one of the most dangerous areas there if you're on a bike or a pedestrian crossing onto the approach itself.

There has been no – and we would have to partner with those communities to do anything, so those discussions have not come to our attention from the city of Charlottetown or Stratford that that is something that we could work on. There's no plans in regard to that, so I think we need to have, as I indicated, those kind of discussions as well.

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

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

Last question I have for this section would be with regards to – and I'm just assuming it would have to be lumped in here and in capital somehow – but it would be in relation to the wastewater treatment plant and the ongoing trials and tribulations that we have in Stratford with our current plant. I

know that the Premier has been writing back and forth to the council, to the mayor of Stratford and to the city of Charlottetown.

I'm wondering: Has there been any federal and provincial funding set aside to address this issue, and what is the plan moving forward?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Those particular projects are underwater and wastewater treatment and they're not in Capital Budget, hon. member. They'll be in the operating budget and the estimates in the spring.

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

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

I just had a couple of quick questions there for the minister.

**Ms. Biggar:** Snappers.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Pardon me?

**Ms. Biggar:** Snappers?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Your bridges, you've got \$5 million slated for that.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct) those here.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah. This spring, I brought up the concerns about the Charlottetown bridge and how bad a shape that is, and that the posts are broke. There's no question about it. I was talking to the engineers about it. Is that in the Budget for this year to get repaired?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll have to go back. Like I said, when we submit our projects we will notify any of the MLAs of any work that's coming to their district so that they are aware that there's a tender coming out. I'll make that promise that if there's a tender coming out that's in reference to a project that's going to be tendered in your district, you will get advanced notice that that tender's going to be in the paper, and that

we will be coming out as well to the communities to talk to them.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Down in Lords Pond you barricaded that bridge for safety reasons. I can understand that. Is there going to be anything done to that bridge? The farmers that do use it would like it in some way or shape put back so that they can use at least farm machinery over top of it to get to them fields in that area. If you could consider that, that would be great.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We have had great discussion with the watershed group that do a lot of work around that particular area, and I know they did some great improvements to the park area.

When we close off a bridge, and I know that my colleague here can attest to it, we look at the radius of going around. If it's a one-kilometre radius to get to the other side, for instance, we take that all into account as to the shortest route to get around, and we look at the radius.

I'm just going to be honest here, not planning, I don't think that will be opened up.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair, or minister, is it possible to get a map of the provincial roads that show what actually fall under national and collector highways?

**Ms. Biggar:** It's all on our website. It has been since last spring.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Paulabigger.com

**Ms. Biggar:** It is.

**An Hon. Member:** I wouldn't touch that (Indistinct).

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

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

**Mr. Aylward:** What kind of site that'll bring you to.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Chair?

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Under provincial paving, this 5.5 million, is this going to be used for recap, or what's the earmark for?

**Ms. Biggar:** It's a combination of – just trying to find my notes here, got them all over the place, sorry. (Indistinct) done of that one. Sorry, members. Oh, here it is. The paving itself? It's a combination of capital and recap.

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

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

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

Inspired by the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment who informed the House earlier today that we were going to have a list of the contaminated sites and a map showing where they are, has this department ever – your department, minister – ever thought of in the springtime – I realize you can't do it now because we don't know what sort of damage the winter is going to mete out on the roads. But in the springtime, would you ever consider making available a map of the roads that you plan on repaving or doing work on?

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

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

Every spring, how many of kilometres of recap, for instance, we're going to do, we tender those out. Everything is tendered publicly. If it's 70 kilometres that we're going to do in a particular season, we can put a map up that would identify what's going to be done. But sometimes that road might be identified and then maybe an MLA and say: I have a different, a really bad spot

and I need to shift this half-kilometre over to that half – we can certainly do it. It happens. But we can do that. It's not –

**Mr. Trivers:** It would be fantastic.

**Ms. Biggar:** It's not hard.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'd just like to echo what Rustico-Emerald just said. I think that would be fantastic. Even if it has to be adjusted and amended, I realize that, that it's not cast in stone.

It might be nice not just for the MLAs to have access to that, but the communities around or through which the recap or the repaving is going to be done. I would really appreciate that, minister.

Thank you.

**An Hon. Member:** Carry the section.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** (Indistinct).

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

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

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I know the minister will be aware of which road I'm referring to here, but when a road is –

**Chair:** Hon. members, the Leader of the Third Party has the floor.

**Ms. Biggar:** Just because you don't have paving in your district doesn't mean you can't (Indistinct) the others.

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

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

**Chair:** Hon. members, the Leader of the Third Party has the floor.

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

When a road is paved with millings that are just rolled, the durability of that just does

not seem to be there. You end up with often worse potholes than you started with.

Has the department considered any other options? You know I'm talking about the Nine Mile Creek Wharf Road at the moment, which has been repaired again, which is an annual event and it never seems to get through even one season. Are there other options other than the so-called paving with millings?

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

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

Most people think millings are the answer to everything on a clay road. The best thing that I could recommend on a clay road that is soft, to be built up, is imported gravel. Because as you build it up and if you can, over the course of a number of years, build it up enough with a good hard base and round it off, which is what we try to do is raise it, and that way you get the water running off. We have a certain amount of budget every year that we do use for gravel. But everybody likes to see something black on it. They think that's the be-all and end-all. That's what I could recommend.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you. You just mentioned something there that tweaked my attention about the water running off the roads.

As we know, the silting up of rivers because of run-off from – well, it could be agricultural – but oftentimes it's from clay roads. Is there a plan – or who chooses, maybe that's a better way of putting it, which clay roads will have that sort of gravel treatment in order to minimize the amount of clay run-off during the wet season?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Again, we look at the amount of traffic that's on it. In the case of your road you're referring to, we do have fishers go down there so we do try to ensure that roads that fishers highly use for industry are kept up as opposed to some roads that are

just there, the middle of a heritage road type of thing that nobody lives on or nobody really uses. In consultation with the community we just have those communications.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** My first question – I have three questions, Chair.

My first question is there's a community mailbox at the top of Grahams Road and it really doesn't have any lighting there. I got an email from a constituent that said they're fumbling around in the dark to try and open their mailbox, especially this time of year, the short days.

I was wondering if there was room in the Capital Budget to put up some sort of lighting there, a street light, perhaps.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Is that an incorporated area?

**Mr. Trivers:** No.

**Ms. Biggar:** No. We'll take it under advisement.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Was the paving on Grahams Road done under provincial paving or national and collector highways?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Highway maintenance recap.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** You mentioned earlier today that Grahams Road does have more than 1,000 cars a day.

**Ms. Biggar:** In the summer.

**Mr. Trivers:** That's what you said, in the summer. It does not qualify as a collector road, then?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** It does have that traffic count in the summer similar to the one in Malpeque. However, in order to qualify it has to be an average annual 1,000 cars per day.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Along the lines of the question from the Leader of the Third Party, would the purchase of gravel to improve clay roads – especially, of course, in the spring and the fall we've had lots of issues with roads especially in my district, it seems, lots of media. Actually, there's still lots more problems with it. Is the purchase of gravel, especially good quality, off-Island grade A gravel, something that's included in capital improvements?

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

**Chair:** Hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, you are not helping the situation.

Thank you.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald has the floor.

**Mr. Trivers:** That was my last question.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** That's not in this budget, gravel.

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

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

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

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

We talked about bridges that need to be replaced. There's one in my district, the Floating Bridge Road. I've had a number of inquiries about it. It's on a dirt road, Floating Bridge Road. It's between Iris and

Murray River and there are a number of people concerned that it's not being replaced. I'm just wondering if it is in the plan to replace it. Do you know where it is?

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

**Ms. Biggar:** If it's already closed down, hon. member, we would have looked at what the radius is to travel around the other way. Usually we look with a five-kilometre radius, and if you can get to the other side without impediment, then in some cases we are not replacing those bridges.

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

**Ms. Compton:** I was approached by a constituent who had an interest from the Amish to purchase on that particular road because it is not travelled that much (Indistinct) a road, but it's within a certain kilometre to Murray River which the Amish would be interested in because there is a bank there and a bit of a town. They would like to purchase, but they want to ensure that the bridge is replaced.

I just put that out to the minister to maybe consider that because we're encouraging the Amish to come to PEI.

**Ms. Biggar:** Was that a comment or a question?

**Ms. Compton:** (Indistinct) to consider that because there is (Indistinct). It's an opportunity to have some Amish move into that area because there is interest in that particular property.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** As with anyone who is buying property on Prince Edward Island, be it on a seasonal road or an area like that, the real estate agents, we work closely with them. We are in the process, actually, of compiling a map to go online that will show where the seasonal roads are, where the clay roads are. We often have people buying property, building on clay roads, knowing that that is the designation of that road. Then it may have been implied that it may be paved in the future, or in this case you buy it and

they'll replace the bridge for you. Those are not conditions that go with any sale of a property.

We are very open to the Amish coming and working very closely with that community. I encourage anybody to look at property in rural PEI, but we don't tie it to replacing a particular bridge in order to do a land sale.

**Chair:** Shall the section carry?

**Some Hon. Members:** Carried.

**Ms. Biggar:** No, she's not done.

**Chair:** Oh, sorry.

The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

**Ms. Compton:** I don't think there was any implication that the bridge would be repaired, but they are interested in that area. I'm not sure the Amish use the Internet. Maybe someone else can let me know about that.

I'm wondering also about – there have been a lot of problems with downed power lines. We all know that on PEI the (Indistinct) and the practice is to chop trees off just below the power lines. Rather than just chopping them off – it looks ugly across the province, it really does look ugly – is there a way we could cut those trees down to the ground and use them as biofuel? Also, it would help for the ability for Maritime Electric and H-Line and all those crews to replace the lines or repair the lines when they're doing it because those trees are still in the way. I'm just putting that question to you, minister, because I think it's a great idea.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll have that discussion with Maritime Electric.

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

**Ms. Compton:** You mentioned imported gravel and that that's the best treatment for a clay road, which I would agree.

**Ms. Biggar:** Good quality gravel.

**Ms. Compton:** Good quality, okay, we won't say imported.

The Gairloch Road. I've got a number of constituents who contacted me over and over again because it is a road that people live on, and it has not really been upgraded for a long time. They keep saying they don't want a paved road, they would just like to be brought back up to what it should be.

In keeping with the challenges we had with downed power lines, we're looking at people that live on that road as well, that if we had a road that was brought back to what it should be – I know there was a plan presented to the department. I'm just wondering if you could come back to me with where that plan is and when the Gairloch Road could be upgraded to where it was. Because I know with grading, all that imported gravel has been probably pushed into the ditch over the years.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** We can look at doing some improvements to that road to bring it back up. As I said, over the course of a number of years it takes. You can't do – you know, so we will look at it.

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

**Ms. Compton:** I appreciate that very much, minister, and I also want to thank you for the recap that you provided on the Camp Road in Flat River. It's great to have it there. It's not a –

**Ms. Biggar:** That's more coming there now (Indistinct).

**Ms. Compton:** It's not an overly heavily travelled road, but it had to be done, so I do appreciate that.

Thank you, Chair.

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

Capital Improvements – Buildings.  
“Appropriations provided for the renovation, retrofit, and construction of Government-owned buildings and properties.” Buildings:

4,820,000. Total Capital Improvements Buildings: 4,820,000.

I have a question from the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

Bridgetown depot, minister. It's my understanding that Bridgetown depot was paved or the whole yard was fixed up and there was no tender. Can you shed some light on that or explain that?

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll have to go back and find that information.

**Leader of the Opposition:** I'd like to know who, Chair –

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** – if there was a tender process, how many companies bid on it, or if no tender and only one company got it, being Chapman's.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Just for clarification, you're talking about the Bridgetown depot parking lot?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah.

**Ms. Biggar:** We'll bring that information back.

**Chair:** Thank you.

Shall the section carry? Sorry.

The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

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

I'd like if the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism would listen in on this question as well.

We have an awesome –

**An Hon. Member:** MLA.

**Mr. MacEwen:** - committee – MLA – committee in our area called Northside

Communities Initiative, and they've been raising a lot of money through the Morell Sportsman's Dinner, through Christmas dinners. They're very significant amounts of money, and now they have the Chase the Ace fundraiser which has added quite a bit to that, and it's all in aid of a local rink which we're doing a major renovation on, and the minister might be familiar with that.

I know the Evangeline rink received 1.6 million from the province. I know the Montague rink received 2.2 million from the province. I know the Tignish rink received 1.07 million from the province. The rink in Cornwall received 500,000. All of this matched, or not matched, but major amounts of money from the federal government, and significant local funding as well from a lot of those committees that did a lot of good work.

I'm wondering if the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism would commit his support to – I understand this is a renovation, it's not a new rink – but commit his support to the wonderful communities in and around Morell with our renovations going on to the rink.

**Ms. Biggar:** I'll take it.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Thank you.

The funding, first of all, that the member is referring to, none of that's under capital. I want to make sure you understand that. Secondly, all of those funds – because I was on this committee for seven years – was out of the Island Community Fund which ended in the winter of 2014. There are no funds under infrastructure to assist anything that you referred to.

However, I think you maybe want to talk to your MP MacAulay. Maybe there'll be some funding that, who knows, he might be able to help you with.

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

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

Thank you, minister, for that response. That is exactly my point, that there is no Island Community Fund, and my local MP, who happens to live in the wonderful District 7, is quite informed and he is on board.

I will rephrase it again. I understand – you're right – that funding is no longer available and I appreciate that.

I will rephrase it again to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism who does have funding for this type of project, and just wanted to reiterate to him the importance of maxing out as much funds as he can in that department for this project.

Minister, would you commit to going to bat for our community with this project?

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** I (Indistinct) you're asking for a loan, not a grant.

**Mr. MacEwen:** That is incorrect.

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

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

The members are talking about the federal government. The federal government is there.

**An Hon. Member:** How much?

**Mr. MacEwen:** We don't need to get into the semantics of it out here –

**Mr. R. Brown:** Oh, must have been pretty good.

**Mr. MacEwen:** No, I understand they're in negotiation with the department now, I know we are, and I just wanted to highlight that, and that your department will be there for our community, like the government was under the rinks.

I know it was a different pot of money, but I just want to make sure that this government is well aware of a great project, a great fundraising initiative, and will come to the table. We're not talking millions of dollars. We're talking hundreds of thousands and in

the lower end of hundreds of thousands (Indistinct).

**Mr. R. Brown:** That goes from 100,000- (Indistinct).

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Yeah, I just want to make a comment about how our department does support a lot of the community groups, whether it's gravel for their parking lots or millings for their parking lots or rolling their ball fields. We try to help out as much as we can, and we do that in-kind.

I appreciate all the work that those community groups do in their local communities, and we do try to help out as much as we can.

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

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

I notice that the amount of money being devoted to this is more than double what it was last year, and if you look to next year it goes up to almost 8 million. I'm just wondering why it fluctuates so much then it goes back down again after next year. Is there a reason why the amount of money devoted to this changes so drastically?

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

**Mr. Roach:** Yes. There's ongoing construction at the Queens County, the new depot highway – maintenance depot – and that's where the bulk of the work will be done for completion is in that second unit that's going out, and that's why it goes up to that amount of money. That project is out over, I think, in total four years.

**Ms. Biggar:** Yes.

**Mr. Roach:** So the biggest year will be 2018-2019.

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

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

Would I be right in thinking that the Borden Fabrication Yard would fall under this

section? I would not be right in thinking – okay.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Carry the section.

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

**Chair:** Thank you.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

**Mr. Aylward:** I have one more question.

**Ms. Casey:** Total Capital Expenditure – Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy: 46,485,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. R. Brown:** That's a lot of money.

**Chair:** Hon. members, the total capital plan for this year: 96,645,300.

Shall the total carry? Carried.

**Mr. Roach:** Madam Chair, I move the Speaker take the chair, and that the Chair make report to Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. Roach:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family and Human Services, that the report of the committee be received.

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

**Chair:** Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Minister of Family and Human Services.

**Ms. Mundy:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Finance, that the 24<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees:** Order No. 24, *Appropriation Act (Capital*

*Expenditures) 2017*, Bill No. 54, ordered for second reading.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance, that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

**Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees:** *Appropriation Act (Capital Expenditures) 2017*, Bill No. 54, read a second time.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** 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 said bill.

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

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

**Chair (Casey):** The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intituled *Appropriation Act (Capital Expenditures) 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Chair:** Minister, they would just like an overview.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Just a quick summary.

**Mr. Roach:** Very good.

Thank you, Chair.

This has to do with the capital expenditures for the forthcoming year and it has to do with the following: Communities, Land and Environment; Education, Early Learning and Culture; Family and Human Services; Finance; Health PEI; Justice and Public Safety; Tourism PEI; Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

This is for the approval of the total capital expenditure of 96,645,300.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Carry the bill.

**An Hon. Member:** Carried.

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

**Chair:** *Appropriation Act (Capital Expenditures) 2017*.

Shall it carry? Carried.

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

**Chair:** We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal servants, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island, towards appropriating the several supplies raised for the exigencies of Her Majesty's Government and for the other purposes hereinafter mentioned, do humbly beseech that it be enacted:

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

Shall it carry? Carried.

**Mr. Roach:** Madam 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 intituled *Appropriation Act (Capital Expenditures) 2017*, 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 Family and Human Services.

**Ms. Mundy:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, that the 26<sup>th</sup> order of the day be now read.

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

**Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees:** Order No. 26, *Municipal Government Act*, Bill No. 58, in Committee.

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

**Ms. Mundy:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Communities, Land and Environment, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

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

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yes.

**Mr. MacKay:** Yes, please.

**Chair:** Hon. minister, would you like to bring somebody on the floor?

**Mr. Mitchell:** Yes. Could I have permission to bring a (Indistinct)?

**Mr. MacKay:** Granted.

**Chair:** Permission to bring a stranger onto the floor?

**An Hon. Member:** Granted.

**An Hon. Member:** Sure.

**Chair:** Hello. Could you please state your name and your position for the record?

**Samantha Murphy Manager:** Thank you.

Samantha Murphy, Manager of Municipal Affairs.

**Chair:** Welcome, Ms. Murphy.

Hon. members, we are on page 7. I think we were going page by page, and I think Ms. Murphy was explaining sections 14 and 15 and there was discussion underway.

Minister?

**Mr. Mitchell:** Just before we begin, can I bring back some clarity to a question asked by the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters?

**Chair:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Mitchell:** During the last time that we had this bill brought to the table the hon. member asked about the need for the minister's powers to be included in that. I said I would take it away and check with the legislative legal folks.

It has been determined that those powers do have to remain within the act, just to clarify that for that member, and any other members who might have any concern about that.

**Chair:** Sections 14 and 15 have been read.

Shall they carry?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Can I ask one question before?

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

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

(Indistinct) concerns me is the emergency measure planning. The actual plans itself, and how often that department actually reviews them. My name is still in several plans that I have seen and I haven't policed since 2005.

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

**Mr. Mitchell:** Although that falls under a different act under a different minister, Sam probably can address the fact of what we expect within this new legislation. Definitely, there will be conversations had that – but you can explain that.

**Samantha Murphy Manager:** Thank you.

We did work with emergency measures to look at the appropriate timeframe to be reviewing those, so there will be a review every three years and operational exercises every three years.

The intent is to bring this into more frequent review and examination.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** I don't agree with the three-year timeline. I'll tell you why.

When I was in Borden-Carleton as the chief, myself and the fire chief, we used to meet once every six months to go over the municipal act and that plan.

I don't understand why they need three years under the act to do those checks and balances. I don't see why they can't be done, or a requirement that they be done and updated, every six month to a year.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Obviously, hon. member, we're looking at things with the least burden possible and modernize and streamline.

It was brought through, this bill, leaders that put a lot of this together. Obviously, they feel that three years is an appropriate time and the one that we worked on.

Sam, would you like to add anything to that?

**Chair:** Samantha Murphy.

**Samantha Murphy Manager:** Sure. It's sections 144 through to 146 that speak about emergency measures and those plans. It's absolutely a balance between the amount of time that needs to be dedicated to it versus exercising and all the other elements of it, and the other requirements of councils.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Would the department be willing to look at an amendment to shorten that timeline? Drop it from three to two?

**Mr. Mitchell:** That's a good point that Sam brings up. It's in alignment with other provinces. It's what they use as well. It's

kind of a standard of how they deal with this particular issue.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay, for now.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I remember the discussion being interrupted while I was asking this question, so forgive if I'm repeating something I asked last time.

It was to do with the municipal planning services. That phrase, which doesn't appear anywhere else and isn't defined in the definitions at the beginning of the document – I see it. I'm in section 14 (b) at the minute, the second line: "within five years after the coming into force of this Act, municipal planning services, including an official plan and bylaws" – these are the things that are mandated.

I'm wondering. I understand that municipal planning services obviously include an official plan, a land use plan, but would that also encompass such things as strategic plans, economic workforce plans, environmental plans? I'm not just sure what that terminology means.

**Chair:** Samantha Murphy.

**Samantha Murphy Manager:** Generally, your official plans would include some aspects of economic development, long-term growth. Those are standards parts of an official plan.

The other aspects that wouldn't be enumerated here would be the development control, subdivision and development permits. All the sort of implementation side of land use planning.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'm moving down to section 15. One of the burdens, of course, of smaller municipalities is the extra administrative work that they are going to mandated to do.

In 15(3)(a) – no, sorry, I'll get to that in a second. How is the department going to deal with small municipalities who do not want or can't arrange some sort of partnership or marriage with their neighbours, yet want to

remain as independent, autonomous municipalities? Will the department be there to help them with finances and with resources so that they can maintain their autonomy even though they're smaller?

**Mr. Mitchell:** I have indicated this over and over again with municipalities of all sizes. We're looking at working co-operatively with them to establish a path needed to get to a particular area, their area, to perform these duties.

When they do get there, they are going to require more office hours and people in those offices to work with their public on the particular services that they will be part of.

As a transition I understand it that – and I've indicated that we will work with them, with the supports that we have, and trying to also to begin conversations with their neighbours and an ultimate means of shared services that can accommodate all of these needs very effectively.

It's a new way of doing business, I'll grant you that, in a lot of these municipalities. It's optimistic that they seem to be open to it in a lot of cases. There may be one or two, I think, that we'll have to work a little harder with, but we're willing to do that. We're doing that now, really. We'll continue to do that.

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

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

One of the areas where there's ministerial oversight or approval required is in 15(3((a)), where the minister's permission is required, or approval is required for a new municipality.

You mentioned at the very beginning there, in a preamble, minister, that in reference to some of the questions, I assume from Member from Rustico-Emerald, the other day, that you checked with legal counsel. That you do, indeed, need to keep your powers as in the act, but you didn't offer any rationale for that. I'm wondering why that is the case. Why did they tell you that that was necessary?

**Mr. Mitchell:** To put it in basically its most simplistic terms, it is to ensure public

interest is maintained. If we're asking municipal councils to do specific things and they choose not to do it, you do have to step in and encourage them to do that thing. That's done by a minister.

There's also to exercise judgment in gray areas that pertain to municipal functioning. Those are things, as minister, I have to go in and make clear. It had to occur in other jurisdictions as well. These are not new things, and the fact the powers of the minister had, previously, inside of three of the old acts.

It's just to bring forth the last resort, they're last resort reasons, but I have several examples of other municipalities across the country where they actually had to be acted on.

I don't really feel, unless it's absolutely necessary, that we drag other areas of Canada into our needs. It just needs to be there to ensure that in those last resort, worst-case conditions there is a mechanism in place that can keep a municipality functioning and functioning well until an alternative measure can come into place. It's for the protection of the residents.

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

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

Minister, thanks for bringing back an explanation about why the power for the minister needs to remain in the act –

**Mr. MacEwen:** (Indistinct) explanation.

**Mr. Trivers:** – for initiating the proposal to establish a new municipality and then 15(2) for the dissolution and restructuring of a municipality.

I was wondering – first a question. I have a couple of amendments. Before I introduce them, though, really, it's not necessary that the need of the minister to do it, it's really the need for either the government or, more properly, the Legislative Assembly to be able to initiate those actions, is that correct?

**Mr. Mitchell:** This act is driven by government. It's the minister that those powers are given to.

**Mr. Trivers:** Chair, I would like to introduce a motion.

**An Hon. Member:** Call the hour.

**Chair:** A motion?

**Mr. Trivers:** An amendment. Pardon me.

**Chair:** The hour has been called.

Thank you.

**Mr. Mitchell:** 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 a bill to be intituled *Municipal Government Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

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

The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

**Mr. Gallant:** I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, that this House adjourn until Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m.

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

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, at 10:00 a.m.