

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

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MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS	3033
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	3036
CHARLOTTETOWN-LEWIS POINT (Trade HERizons)	3036
TIGNISH-PALMER ROAD (641 West Prince Air Cadets)	3037
SOURIS-ELMIRA (East Pointers)	3037
LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (South Shore Food Share)	3038
ORAL QUESTIONS	3038
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Elected School Boards)	3038
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Municipalities and Post-secondary Institutions re: FOIPP Act)	3039
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Human Rights Commission court case)	3039
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Records of the Securities Commission E-gaming Investigation)	3040
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Stonewalled Hearings from Witnesses and Whistleblowers)	3040
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Breaking Laws re: E-gaming)	3040
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Need for a Child Advocate in the Province)	3041
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Carbon Tax Revenue)	3041
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Gas Tax)	3043
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Taxing Gasoline)	3043
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Energy Strategy)	3044
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Renewable Energy)	3044
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Carbon Tax Revenue)	3045
BELFAST-MURRAY RIVER (Billion Dollar Budget)	3046
LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Research and Projected Costs for Child Advocate Office)	3046
LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Apology and Retract Comments)	3047
LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Child Advocate)	3047
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Allocation of Funds re: Culture and Heritage)	3048
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Support for College of Piping)	3048
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Funding to Promote College of Piping)	3048
WEST ROYALTY-SPRINGVALE (TransCanada Extension)	3049
STRATFORD-KINLOCK (Land Transfer for Mill River)	3050
STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS	3052

HEALTH AND WELLNESS (Renal Care Supports)	3052
FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES (Response to Auditor General's Report on Seniors Housing Program 2017)	3055
COMMUNITIES, LAND AND ENVIRONMENT (Response to Auditor General's Review on Climate Change).....	3056
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....	3058
MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT.....	3059
MOTION 92 (Urging expansion of the insulin pump program for adult Type 1 diabetes)	3059
STRATFORD-KINLOCK	3060
KENSINGTON-MALPEQUE.....	3061
RUSTICO-EMERALD	3062
LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY	3063
SOURIS-ELMIRA	3063
HEALTH AND WELLNESS	3067
CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK.....	3068
MORELL-MERMAID.....	3070
GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS	3070
HEALTH AND WELLNESS	3073
CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK	3075
RUSTICO-EMERALD	3075
STRATFORD-KINLOCK	3076
LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY	3078
FINANCE	3080
ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT	3081
ESTIMATES	3082
INNOVATION PEI	3082
HEALTH AND WELLNESS	3109
ADJOURNED.....	3117

The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to everyone in the gallery and to those watching from home on television or watching on the Internet. Welcome Eddie Lund, again, a regular, now that he's back. Kenneth Murnaghan, a great advocate for brain injuries. Mr. Caseley who runs a great operation in Kelvin Grove, and across and beyond the province.

And to extend our good wishes to the students at UPEI and Holland College and the Collège de L'Île, who are finishing up the year in their various programs, including some who are working with us here in the House and the media, and look forward to their continued success and good work.

To acknowledge the presence in the province of a seasonal visitor, I had an opportunity on the weekend to pick my first bunch of May flowers. It's great to see them back and to know that with the rain we'll have for the balance of the month, that we'll likely have a good harvest this year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

I want to go up into District 19, (Indistinct) everybody there in District 19, Borden-Kinkora.

I want to give a special shout-out to a young lady by the name of Rachel Green. She'll be graduating from Kinkora high this year. She has been accepted to the UPEI Panthers. Not only that, she has also been accepted to the Canada Games Girls soccer team for this year. All the best to Rachel, she's a great

young lady who is a – she's just unbelievable in athletic sports, and I wish her all the best.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

I'd like to welcome everybody to the gallery, Ken and Eddie and everybody else.

I also want to make special mention of a person in District 17, Karen Samples, who used to be working the microphones here in the Legislature. I'm sure we all remember her. She now works invisibly in the Hansard office. She could be typing what I'm saying right now as I'm saying it, so happy birthday to you, Karen.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

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

I want to recognize everybody in the gallery and everybody that's watching home on television or on the Internet.

I also want to send a congratulation out to the UPEI engineering students who helped out at the PEI Bag Co. by innovating – did some innovations to their production line out there. The school of sustainable engineering is a phenomenal project and they're doing phenomenal things. They're also helping a lot of Island companies. I really want to thank the staff and the students of the UPEI sustainable engineering facility.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to welcome everybody to the gallery today, especially my good friend, Greg Caseley. This is Greg's first time coming to Question Period and the proceedings of the House. We welcome Greg here today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKay: I'd also like to welcome everybody watching in from Kensington-Malpeque.

As well, this evening is the Annual President's Dinner of the Kensington Chamber tonight. There is a big crowd expected and hopefully everything goes well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Rural and Regional Development.

Mr. Murphy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Welcome to all the folks in the public gallery and all the folks at home that are watching on the computer or the t.v.

I'm going to give a shout-out again, once more, pleading for some votes for the Alberton PeeWee A Regals. They're currently falling behind quite a bit so we really need the support of Islanders. They're behind 5,700 votes. I'm sure if every Islander got out and cast a vote for them on all the devices that they have at home today, we could overcome that.

They're up against a bigger community. They're up against Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. It's a national contest. Lots of money for charities, for whichever organization wins, and I think we could do it if everybody gets on there and votes today. That's the Chevrolet Good Deeds Cup.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

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

It certainly is a pleasure to rise and welcome all to the gallery today. Of course we have Eddie Lund with us. It's great to have Eddie back. As well, Kenneth Murnaghan is in today – great to have Kenneth in as well. I'm still waiting to see if I won that shed, Kenneth, that we bought the tickets on there earlier.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: Also with us today is Wilf Richard. It's great to see Wilf back into the House there – always a pleasure to have him in. I know he's probably out looking at lobster traps are being built correctly and ice is gone and the boats ready to go, Wilfred. I'll be kind of watching that myself, as we have a relative that we share that is very active in the lobster business as well.

Also, I see Greg Caseley in the gallery today and it's really great to have Greg in. I know Greg has got a great business going up in – close to the Kensington area – they've been in business, I'm going to say: over 30 years. Greg may not be aware of this and I think I'm correct on this, but I think one of the first weddings that Greg and his wife Kathy had a part to play in, was one out in Fort Augustus, back in August 2nd of 1985 was me and my lovely bride, Bonnie. Bonnie and Kathy worked together back in the early days, so Greg and Kathy had a big part to play in that.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Unidentified Voice: (Indistinct)

Mr. Mitchell: Before I close – yeah, we'll do the math on that one.

But before I close, and it's something I neglected to do yesterday, so it's a happy belated fourth birthday to my granddaughter Elliot Mitchell over in Nova Scotia. I think she was watching yesterday and disappointed I didn't get to do it.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's a pleasure to rise and welcome all the people from District 18, Rustico-Emerald that might be watching today. All the farmers and fishers, of course, are out and getting ready for the season. I was up in Cavendish this morning and I was at Robert Stevenson's funeral and I was talking with his son, of course, who's going to be putting in the crop without his father for the first time this year, and they're known for getting the crop in first up in Cavendish there, so I wish them the best of luck – and all of the farmers and fishers of course.

I was also in Hunter River today and had a great visit with Shirley Dickieson who – a retired school teacher, educator, and she had a lot of great insights in education and to health care. It's just fantastic the knowledge of our seniors out there and the input they can have. We really need to make sure that we take the time to listen to them.

Lastly, I want to wish my daughter great luck going over to the Atlantic gymnastics meet – the championships. She leaves tonight, competes tomorrow morning, and hopefully she can do Prince Edward Island proud and maybe even come home with a win, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Henderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to welcome those to the gallery, especially Kenny Murnaghan – is quite involved as an advocate to prevent brain injuries in the province. He does great work on their behalf. Greg Caseley; I also want to acknowledge Greg. When I was minister of tourism and culture, Greg was at just about every event. He had a tent up that he had to take up and take down for all the Fall Flavours events. I know he's a big advocate for the tourism industry.

I also want to take the opportunity to inform the house that Eel Creek is now ice free. That means that the fishers are starting to get out and the oyster dories are getting – I noticed them, people setting their – not their

traps, but their oyster cages and things of that nature and getting them out in the water. Also, fishing boats are going into Hardy's Channel and that's a good sign of lobsters that wouldn't be too far away.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to say hello to everyone up in Souris-Elmira, also. As you start travelling the highways you see more traffic, especially up around home. You can tell that the farmers and the fishermen are both getting out when you see the traffic moving.

I'd just like to say something about the Island provincial hockey play downs held back in March. My wife and I, Shelly, we attended quite a few games on the final day of Sunday. It started off in Morell. We went to the Bantam A crossovers, which the Souris Seahawks lost in the crossovers. After that game, we drove down to Georgetown to see the Atom AAA Island play downs – King's County Atom AAA, which they won in Georgetown. They won the Island championship.

After we left Georgetown, we went into the MacLauchlan centre to watch the midget A tier two play in the championship. It brought back great memories to watch these kids play this midget A tier two game in the championship. They won the championship, and Daniel Chaisson's young fellow Cory, scored a hat trick in his championship game in his final year, and to see the look on these kids' faces when they won that championship.

It doesn't make any difference if it's the NHL, if it's the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, the midget AAA, or midget A, or AA, whenever these kids win a trophy, the excitement that they won something.

My advice to these kids that are going out and play any sport across Prince Edward Island, is try your best, do your best, have fun, and cherish the memories you can make over the years, because I have lots of

championships under my belt and I cherish every one of them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) election pin.

Mr. Roach: I think you broke your arm on that one.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; a hard act to follow.

I welcome everyone here to the House today, everyone in the gallery. It's good to see here Greg Caseley; a big shout out to everyone in District 4.

I met a couple loads of traps going into the wharf today, so it's a wonderful time of the year. Tractors are in the fields.

I just wanted to shout out, also, to the Confederation Centre youth choir who are over in Rome and performing at the Vatican. I don't know if they already performed. It might have been yesterday.

But two of the choir members – Emma MacNeil, the daughter of Tandi MacNeil and Roddie MacNeil, and also Katie MacNeill, the daughter of Paul MacNeill; no relation, one is with one L and one with two – but I'm sure they're having the trip of a lifetime and doing this Island proud to be able to perform at the Vatican, so I wish them the very best and hope we all have a good day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

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

Trade HERizons

Ms. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased today to stand and congratulate the 17 women who recently graduated from the Trade HERizons program.

Trade HERizons is a project designed to increase the number of women in non-traditional trades and technology occupations on Prince Edward Island.

I had the pleasure to address the graduating class on behalf of the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning and have been a fan of the Trade HERizons program since its inception. It's always inspiring to see women exploring new career opportunities.

What I noticed the most about this class is the absolute support they had for each other. As class speaker Corrie Tesselaar, said: We have come through a lot during this course. The pride in their accomplishment that day was evident.

I love to see women succeed and it is important that programs such as Trade HERizons continue to help break down barriers and provide opportunities for women to achieve success.

The percentage of women working in the trades is still low. Actually, the percentage of women in all sectors is low, in politics, at boardroom tables, and at union tables. I am encouraged that Trade HERizons will assist in growing our skilled workforce and in turn grow our economy.

To each of the graduates, I want to say I felt the growing confidence you all had in yourselves to go and succeed in whatever trade you choose. I am so pleased to tell the House today that the majority of this class has applied and have been accepted to trade programs at Holland College.

I would like to thank the Women's Network PEI, Skills PEI, course facilitators Jaime Griffin and Kate Dempsey, and all the mentors who have now given these women the tools needed to succeed in life.

I know this is just the beginning for these young women, and with their new found confidence, I am sure that each of these women will strive to reach the Red Seal in their trade.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like the House to join me today in wishing these 17 women much success in the future and to say how immensely proud we are of each of your accomplishments.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

641st West Prince Air Cadets

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker

I would like to rise today in recognition of the 641st West Prince Air Cadet Squadron who are celebrating their 60th year in Tignish. The 641 Squadron got its charter on February 27th, 1957.

Commanding officer, Captain Angela McAlduff, is in charge of the youth members who are sponsored by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 6 in Tignish. They participate in summer parades, and do things such as graveyard cleanup, et cetera. These young cadets are involved in many community events to help them focus on maintaining their citizenship involvement.

These young members range in age from 12 to 18 and participate in fun, challenging and rewarding activities that allow them to learn valuable life skills such as teamwork, leadership and citizenship.

This type of program is a world class development movement in partnership with the Department of Nation Defense. It helps foster self-confidence, self-discipline and leadership values in the participants.

The league encourages growth in aviation and assists in growth in that field for those that choose to pursue it as a career in later years. It also strengthens interests in effective speaking and music as well. Four pilots have come from this squadron, as well as numerous others who have joined the armed forces, RCMP, other forms of law enforcement and community leaders.

I would like everyone to join me in congratulating the 641st West Prince Air Cadets on this milestone of 60 years.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

East Pointers

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Any time you get up in the House and speak about the youth in your district and their accomplishment, it's an honour.

This past weekend, PEI's own The East Pointers took home a Juno for Traditional Roots Album of the Year.

The band consists of Tim Chaisson on the fiddle, Jake Charron on guitar and Koady Chaisson on banjo. The trio is celebrating their Juno award after Saturday's gala dinner at the Shaw Centre in Ottawa. The Juno for Traditional Roots Album of the Year was for their full-length debut *Secret Victory*.

The group is currently touring in Australia and couldn't be home to accept their award, but band member Tim Chaisson said: Winning was a dream come true for the group.

In their group's Facebook post, the group said: They couldn't be happier celebrating on a Sunday in Australia with a wee bit of champagne and a ginger beer. The group thanked everyone involved in the making of *Secret Victory* and supporting their tunes, songs and shows.

All three members are decorated artists. The Chaisson cousins are part of a sixth generation in a well-known family of PEI fiddlers and folk musicians.

Tim has many previous achievements touring the world as a songwriter, while Koady performed alongside him and supported other touring acts. The band, The East Pointers, officially introduced themselves to audiences when they released a self-titled song *EP* in October 2014. Since then, the group has toured through Atlantic Canada and Australia.

Again, congratulations to The East Pointers on their Juno win. They do PEI proud.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

South Shore Food Share

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

A year and a half ago, I was approached by some neighbours to discuss establishing a food bank in the Crapaud area. The three women who invited me to talk with them had seen a need and they had a vision and a steely determination to 'just do it.' That was in the fall of 2015, and knowing the characters of the people in question, I had little doubt that they would take this from an idea to a reality.

Sure enough, within weeks, and despite a complete lack of experience in setting up such a venture, they had created the South Shore Food Share. It has gone from an informal effort run out of a spare room of someone's house, to a project that serves 18 families now on a weekly basis. There is something inspiring about people who have a vision, energy, determination and stamina, and they are not put off by potential barriers that may lie in their way.

Their motto is: If you can't feed 100 people then just feed one. With contributions from innumerable individuals and groups from the firefighters, to churches, to other community businesses and organizations, the shelves in their food bank have been kept stocked continuously for a year and a half.

I am delighted to recognize Marianna Burda and Jenny and Jackie Myers for their vision, their hard work and their commitment to community. I think I speak for many, including Jackie and Jenny and Marianna, when I say that I also look forward to the day when we don't need food banks or soup kitchens here on Prince Edward Island any more, and where every Islander can live in dignity, having their basic needs met.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

Questions by Members

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Elected school boards

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

Governing effectively is supposed to be a collaboratively approach. Instead, what we keep on seeing from this tired Liberal government is that Islanders' opinions do not matter and only the Premier's opinion matters.

Question to the Premier: Isn't that why you broke your campaign promise to have elected school boards because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, as I recall we brought a new piece of legislation to this House in the spring session of last year. That introduced a whole new approach and a commitment to a learner's centered approach to education in this province.

Indeed, that put forward the three councils without a school board. That legislation was approved by this House and we're moving forward with it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

Question to the Premier: Isn't that why you sit atop the education pyramid, is because only your opinion matters?

Mr. Myers: Good question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I've said this before in this House: I serve as a co-chair. It's very much a collaborative approach with Dr. Bill Whelan, who is the other co-chair and a long record of contributing to school matters and governance in this province, along with 22 others who have come forward through an Engage PEI process, who have a strong track record.

I've said from the beginning that my role in this would be as an inaugural co-chair, but it is anything but sitting atop any pyramid. It's a highly collaborative approach and it's working.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Municipalities and post-secondary institutions re: FOIPP act

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

Another question to the Premier: Isn't that why you refuse to bring Island municipalities and post-secondary institutions under the freedom of information law because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, the question of the FOIPP being applied to post-secondary institutions or to municipalities was a live matter in the election and has come up on other occasions in this province. I have said to, and we have said as a government, to the municipalities and to the post-secondary institutions that we encourage them develop mechanisms and policies that will live up to the principles of FOIPP.

In fact, I'm speaking to the Federation of Municipalities on Monday, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Honouring the vote on electoral reform

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

Another question to the Premier: Isn't that why you refuse to honour the vote taken by Islanders last fall on electoral reform, because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, as I recall, the Leader of the Opposition voted the same way as I did when there was a motion that came to the floor of this House so I don't see how one would say that only my opinion matters.

Islanders have been consulted and those opinions will be carried forward. Our commitment, as a government, and I hope it's shared is that we will work together to determine a clear opinion of Islanders on this matter.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: It's non-binding.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Human Rights Commission court case

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

Another question to the Premier: Isn't that why you took your own Human Rights Commission to court over discriminating against Islanders with mental illness in Disability Support Program, because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, the judicial review on that matter was taken in the normal course. Really, I would say to adhere to the principles of the rule of law and to address the question of the scope or the jurisdiction or mandate of the Human Rights Commission. This is regular practice in frankly, ensuring that our entire system of administration of justice lives up to the legislation that has been passed in this legislature. That's why that went forward.

I'm pleased to say, and the Minister of Family and Human Services, has announced that the government and department are moving forward to address the issues there.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Records of the securities commission e-gaming investigation

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

Question back to the Premier: Isn't that why your government refuses to unseal the records of the securities commission e-gaming investigation because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I will use the phrase 'the rule of law' once again. The securities commission, or indeed the Superintendent of Securities Office, operates under legislation and with a mandate to conduct investigations on certain terms that respect the confidentiality of the way in which they do their business.

The position that they take is entirely consistent with their legislation and with FOIPP legislation. Indeed, as the hon. members here know the superintendent of securities did, indeed, cooperate with the Auditor General in providing information.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Stonewalled hearings from witnesses and whistleblowers

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

Question to the Premier: Isn't that why you ordered your MLAs on the public accounts committee to stonewall hearings from witnesses and whistleblowers because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any particular information on the matter on which the Leader of the Opposition is raising a question. I'm – certainly it's the first I've heard in any domain about whistleblowers.

In any event, let me say, that what we did on the 9^m day that I was Premier, was ask the Auditor General to look into this matter, which she did with great thoroughness; interviewing close to 60 public servants, looking at 10,000 documents, appearing before committee.

Indeed, I believe this matter has been addressed with the fullness and the thoroughness of the work of the Auditor General.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Breaking laws re: e-gaming

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

Mr. Premier, another question for you: Isn't that why no one was held accountable for

breaking laws on e-gaming because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: It was my understanding, Mr. Speaker, and I took it to be the opinion of the Auditor General that there was not a reason or a basis for proceeding – referring the matter to the police.

Indeed, I don't know why I'm being asked by the Leader of the Opposition about my opinion. That was the opinion of the Auditor General.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Need for a child advocate in the province

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

Final question to the Premier: Isn't that why you will not omit the need for a child advocate because only your opinion matters?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Biggar: Admit, not omit.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, as hon. members here should know we had an extensive child protection review. That reported several months ago after consultation extensively without Prince Edward Island and with interested Islanders.

Indeed, it was their opinion that the best approach is to address the opportunities to provide services, frontline services, and well-coordinated services, to children in need and to families in Prince Edward Island, and that's exactly what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Carbon tax revenue

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm wondering if the Minister of Finance could explain how his pending carbon tax revenue is not found in his Budget book.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That's a very good question. I think it's probably not found in our books, the same as it's not found in any other provincial government's books across the country. This carbon pricing is still unfolding.

Mr. Trivers: No plan, there is no plan.

Mr. Roach: The province of New Brunswick hasn't mentioned it. The province of Nova Scotia hasn't mentioned it. The province of Newfoundland hasn't mentioned it.

I think it's only fair that if Prince Edward Island is going to work towards that, that we need to see what the federal government is going to do at the end of the day with this, and we need to ensure that whatever process is followed on Prince Edward Island, that it's going to be as fair as possible to all Islanders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: A lot of money.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) this together. The shepherd is going to lead us home.

Speaker: The on. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, there is a trend there –

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: All tired Liberal governments. No plan, no telling constituents or their provinces what they're doing.

These Liberals are bringing in a carbon pricing no later than January 1st of this fiscal year. How can the Minister of Finance table a Budget without a single mention or figure for this carbon tax revenue?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trivers: Especially after there was extensive (Indistinct)

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, this is something that I think the public is having great engagement with this across all provinces, and certainly across Prince Edward Island.

I think we need to ensure that when the federal government imposes the carbon pricing on us that the way we move forward is going to be as good as it can be for every taxpayer on Prince Edward Island. We need to ensure that whenever the federal government is talking with other provinces that we have the same information.

We'll certainly be listening and speaking with other provinces as we move forward.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, the minister did pre-budget consultations, asked Islanders their opinion. Where are those opinions? We'd like to know.

We know in the 2016 capital budget there was no mention of the Cornwall bypass and no relevant figures on this federal infrastructure money.

Now, with this operating Budget, the minister deliberately leaves out accounting for his impending carbon tax.

Some Hon. Members: Oh.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: Minister, what are you hiding when it comes to carbon pricing?

Mr. Myers: Good question. Ask the shepherd.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: The member does indicate that there's talks about recommendations or things that we heard from the public, and I did attend a number of sessions across the province, and in each and every session Islanders did share their thoughts with respect to carbon pricing and some with their concerns and some with ideas.

I noted at least one member of the opposition, the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters, did attend a pre-budget session, and I'm sure that when the time allowed from other things that were going on at that pre-budget consultation, that he did hear some of those notes as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did engage the public.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Compton: Islanders are talking about the carbon tax. They want to know what the plan is.

Mr. Myers: I won.

Ms. Compton: But there's no sign of it in the Budget.

We know it's going to increase the price on gas, the price on electricity, and the price on home heating oil.

Mr. Myers: Yeah.

Ms. Compton: Isn't it time for you to come clean to Islanders and tell us what the plan is?

Mr. Myers: Ask the shepherd. He thinks we're all sheep.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: Ask the shepherd.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I don't know how many times I've heard from the opposition across the floor here: You're moving too fast. You're making decisions too quick. You've got to get out there. You've got to make this fast.

Mr. LaVie: You don't move fast.

Mr. Roach: But Mr. Speaker, this is one of those situations where I think it's imperative that we don't get out ahead of the other provinces, that we don't make quick decisions –

Mr. Myers: Like the health accord, remember (Indistinct) shepherd?

Mr. Roach: We want to make sure that as we make decisions going forward –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) remember that?

Mr. Roach: – that whatever – this is not a tax that we're imposing. This is a tax that's being imposed by the federal government. We're going to make sure that we do as much as we possibly can to alleviate any burden on Islanders when that is being put forward.

Mr. R. Brown: Right on.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

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

Taxing gasoline

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Islanders should know, minister, how much these extra taxes are going to be, and you're going to know. You know across the floor there how much it's going to hurt Islanders. You're the tax and spend government. We've seen it over and over again; raising fees, raising – to increase the revenues. It's tax and spend.

Mr. Myers: Tax and spend Liberals.

Mr. R. Brown: Balanced Budget.

Ms. Compton: It's going to especially hurt rural PEI.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: You fried the books.

Ms. Compton: This carbon pricing is a tax grab for your wallets. It's not a good deal for anyone.

Mr. LaVie: You burnt the books.

Ms. Compton: Mr. Speaker, this tired Liberal government charges over 13 cents a litre on provincial gas tax.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Mr. Myers: Ask one to the shepherd.

Ms. Compton: Tax after tax.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Ms. Compton: Minister: How do you expect Islanders to live and work given you're taxing gasoline to such an extent?

Mr. Myers: Good question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's an interesting question, and I look at the cost of gasoline across the country, and I note right now that, for example, the cheapest gas prices in Atlantic Canada is right here on Prince Edward Island.

The reason why we don't want to rush forward with this is that we want to ensure that whatever we do is going to have the least amount of impact on the Island as possible.

An Hon. Member: I've got an idea. Don't do it.

Mr. Roach: That's why this year there was no taxes on the Budget that we put forward.

Mr. Myers: No taxes at all.

Mr. Roach: We did put forward a balanced Budget – you know what, I will say with a slight surplus in it.

An Hon. Member: Tax relief.

Mr. Roach: And we did provide some tax relief, so –

An Hon. Member: Yes, 85,000.

Mr. Roach: The member opposite should make sure that when she makes a statement like that, try to get the facts straight.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: Remember the shepherd in the health accord? He had us saved. The shepherd has us saved, remember?

Energy strategy

Ms. Compton: Mr. Speaker –

Speaker: Okay –

Ms. Compton: – the fact is this is going to hurt Islanders. It doesn't matter how you spin it, it's going to hurt Islanders, and especially rural Prince Edward Island; people who need to drive to work, drive to get their groceries, drive to medical appointments, drive to child care – it's going to hurt rural Islanders, but all Islanders.

Minister, why is your government's energy strategy recommending a new tax that

targets Islanders with older cars more than Islanders with new vehicles?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm kind of disheartened that the Member from Belfast-Murray River –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: – is being so pessimistic in her questions. It's like: You're going to do this, you're going to do that.

The reason why we're being very careful about moving forward with this tax –

Mr. Myers: Was because of the mistake (Indistinct) shepherd (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: We want to ensure that when this tax comes forward that we're going to be in alignment with the energy strategy that's coming forward –

Ms. Biggar: Climate change.

Mr. Roach: We're going to be in line with the climate change strategy that's coming forward. To come out and start making recommendations or making decisions until those strategies are in front of us in the fall just would not be proper at all.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Renewable energy

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We're always accused of being negative when we hold government to account. That's our job.

Mr. Myers: They don't like to be questioned.

Ms. Compton: So let's spin it around a little bit here. Are you fighting to get PEI a better deal because of the investments we've

already made in renewable energy? Have you thought about that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The only spinning that's going on in here today is across the floor.

Some Hon. Members: Oh.

Mr. Roach: Of course we're trying – of course we're talking about the energy that we have in Prince Edward Island. It's part of our energy strategy. There's no question that that will be a huge topic that we're going to go forward with, and that's why we don't want to make our move too quickly. We want to see what deals the other provinces are going to cut, and we're going to be right there with our own when we're talking about producing our own green energy. We're one of the best in the country, Mr. Speaker –

Mr. R. Brown: Yes.

Mr. Roach: – and we tell Ottawa that every chance we get.

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: No, we're the best.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) had a (Indistinct) me.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

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

Carbon tax revenue (further)

Ms. Compton: Do I have two? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We know. We hear you have all the answers. Have you started calculating the cost to every Island family and how that's going to affect them with this carbon tax that your government is going to impose?

Mr. Myers: Good question. Good question.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Myers: Are we getting a good deal? (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have some tremendous public servants within government that work very hard and they certainly do the due diligence on this. We're going to look at every aspect of that carbon pricing and how it's going to affect low-income earners, medium-income earners, across the Province and we're going to make sure that we do our absolute best to look after Islanders.

Mr. R. Brown: That's right.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We know this government is going down in history. We know that.

Mr. Myers: Yeah.

Mr. R. Brown: Yeah. It's one of the best.

Ms. Compton: Yeah.

Mr. Myers: The shepherd's going to lead them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear! Hear!

Mr. Myers: The shepherd's going to lead them. The shepherd's going to lead them.

Ms. Compton: They're all applauding –

Mr. Myers: The worst premier since Catherine Callbeck.

Ms. Compton: They're all applauding the sinking ship.

An Hon. Member: Bring back Ghiz.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: They're going down in history.

An Hon. Member: Pretty nervous.

Billion dollar budget

Ms. Compton: The billion dollar budget. Minister, why is a billion dollars alone in provincial tax and fee revenue not enough for this tired Liberal government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: Good question. Good question.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's obvious that the member from Belfast-Murray River has just boarded the HMCS doom and gloom.

Mr. R. Brown: Yes. (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: This government – doom and gloom is all we've heard for almost six years now from across the floor, Mr. Speaker. We're over here, we've balanced the budget, we've got a surplus.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Speaker: Go ahead, hon. minister.

Mr. Roach: We're going to go forward with that carbon pricing.

Ms. Biggar: We're making investments.

Speaker: Go ahead, hon. minister.

Mr. Roach: Mr. Speaker, we're moving ahead very cautiously with carbon pricing. We know what great assets we have here in PEI. We know we have to marry that up with the two plans that are coming and strategies that are coming in the fall and for us to move forward now without having the full knowledge of both of those would simply be inappropriate and it wouldn't be a fair deal to Islanders to go ahead and do that at all.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Research and projected costs for Child Advocated office

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday I asked the Minister of Justice and Public Safety to table the research and analysis that led him to dismiss repeated calls to create a child advocate on Prince Edward Island. As government has rejected that option, against the recommendations of the Campbell Hennessey inquest jury, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, both opposition parties, and the collective wisdom of every other province in Canada – I thought that was a reasonable request.

So, I ask once again: Will the minister provide this house with the research, including projected costs that informed his decision not to create an independent office of the child advocate?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: Good question.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, as has been said in this House, our approach as government is to address the priority needs where the resources are available and we have done that consistently since coming to government. We've created, now, a child lawyer, whose functions will be to advocate and to be a voice for children. We've created and have brought legislation this session to create a parent coordinating program. We've created and supported financially the Triple P - Positive Parenting Program. We've created the supervised access centres and the Bridges Program. All of those together with community organizations, is what we are doing and doing together with the community to serve children and families in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Apology and retract comments

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

I have to say I was especially disappointed by the minister's suggestion that my insistence on an independent oversight is a partisan maneuver. That, in my mind, is cynical and self-serving assessment of how government should work. I imagine that the minister realizes that democratic institutions need to be subject to independent oversight. That is, actually, at its very essence the difference between –

Ms. Biggar: Question?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: – democracy and tyranny. Will the minister retract his comments and apologize to every democratically elected member of this House?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I don't think I used the word 'partisan'. But what I did point out is that there are two perspectives here 1) the one that we're advancing, which is to serve on a priority basis with the resources that are available and we've done it in my own department now, almost to the tune of \$500,000 in various commitments and initiatives. Other departments have done likewise. There are committee organizations working on this.

So, that is our perspective and the perspective of finding gaps or pointing out shortcomings is one that is actually actively undertaken here in this House – which is happening and I encourage that. And it's happening through the work of the deputy minister's committee on social policy which is a very effective group as is the Bridge Program.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Child Advocate

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

Independent oversight serves the public and the government by examining concerns and suggesting solutions to address them. It only serves the opposition if government refuses to act on those recommendations.

A question to the minister: Every other province has the independent oversight of a child advocate.

Mr. LaVie: Yeah.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Does he think they were all created to serve opposition purposes rather than the children in the rest of Canada?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier and Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, we've said this on many topics in this government and that is: Prince Edward Island has an opportunity to do better than other provinces and to work together with the community and across government and, indeed, in this House which we're doing.

The fact that questions are being asked is all part of the process and we encourage that. I don't think I questioned that whatsoever. We had a conference not long ago in the first of March on troubled youth. There were organizations there, there were various parts of government represented and it was a very effective exercise to build the capacity and to work together to look after the children of this province.

Mr. Trivers: Less talk, more action.

Premier MacLauchlan: The question that was raised again on the first point –

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Premier MacLauchlan: – I will table the background work we've done on this and I will table documents to show that we are addressing the needs and doing a very good job of that.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Allocation of funds re: culture and heritage

Mr. Palmer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture: With the Budget that was just released, there is \$3.5 million allotted specifically to culture and heritage. Could the minister explain to the House how these funds are being allocated?

Mr. Myers: I wish we could play a laugh track in here.

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

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

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

We, as a government, have tremendous respect for our cultured community – a community that generates over \$125 million in economic spinoffs in all areas of the province. I'm very pleased that we did launch the culture strategy to continue to raise the awareness, but also to continue to profile culture.

Our government has committed – includes \$2.3 million for cultural affairs, \$1.2 million to support heritage initiatives in our province. This includes more than \$2 million in grants to cultural organizations, performance venues, museum, events and Island artists. We'll continue to build the sector and work closely with Island artists in this province.

Mr. R. Brown: Great. Great job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

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

Support for College of Piping

Mr. Palmer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The College of Piping in Summerside, in my district, is a world-class training centre – in fact, one of only two such locations in the world. As the minister responsible for culture, what is your department doing to support this cultural institution?

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

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

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Currie: I am well aware and the MLA from Summerside – our MLAs from the area are huge supporters of the College of Piping and we recognize their presence, not only on the provincial, the regional, the national, and the international stage. We are certainly very committed to work closely with the college to continue to build on what, currently, they're doing and continue to profile them globally.

We currently are supporting the College of Piping with a grant of \$115,000, but we are also supporting the Harbourfront Theatre with a grant of \$161,000. Summerside continues to be a cultural leader in this province. We are going to continue to work with them and work hard with them.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot your secondary supplementary.

Funding to promote College of Piping

Mr. Palmer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The mandate of the college is to preserve and promote the Celtic heritage.

Is your department offering any type of funding that could assist the college in promotion of the school?

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

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

The \$115,000 does support the College of Piping's marketing plan. The college is free to allocate that, and those resources, but I'd also encourage all hon. members of the Legislative Assembly to pay attention to the conversation that we will be having in communities across Prince Edward Island that are tied into our cultural strategy.

I believe, as the minister responsible for culture that we have an exciting opportunity on Prince Edward Island to continue to elevate and build on the great things that are going on with Island artists in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

TransCanada Extension

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy: Could the minister update the Legislature on the status of the TransCanada Extension?

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

Mr. Myers: Just topping up the Island Coastal fund.

An Hon. Member: Good question.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The investments we are making in infrastructure right across Prince Edward Island are going to help grow our economy, create jobs, and make it safer to travel on roads.

The TransCanada Highway is a major corridor for exports and imports on Prince Edward Island. We have over 500 trucks that leave this province –

An Hon. Member: Drive around the other (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – with Island products and that many that come, as well, on a daily basis.

The Trans Canada Highway extension within the town of Cornwall is also an important addition to our infrastructure project this year, but we're going to be doing projects in Bloomfield. We're going to be doing a major project in Mount Herbert –

Mr. LaVie: Souris-Elmira.

Ms. Biggar: – we're going to be doing on in Rollo Bay –

Mr. LaVie: Souris-Elmira.

Ms. Biggar: – so we're doing projects through our investments in infrastructure –

An Hon. Member: Rollo Bay (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – right across PEI.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) get my share.

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

Mr. LaVie: Get my share.

Mr. Dumville: As the work is done in stages, could the minister update: What is the next stage in this project?

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We've had a very busy winter, meeting with community in that area as to what stage the projects are going to take part in. Within the next few weeks, we will be starting Phase 2A, which will be the roundabout at the North River area. By the fall we expect to start the Phase 2B of that particular project.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

According to your projections: When would the project be completed?

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As we made a commitment to start this project last year we'll be doing it, as I said in phases. We did Phase 1 and now 2A and 2B. We are anticipating that that will be finished in 2019 for operational. We will have some final pieces to finish up in 2020.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Land transfer for Mill River

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Documents filed Tuesday in court show that the Premier is going to fight our First Nations over his botched sweetheart Mill River deal.

Ironically, the Order in Council for Mill River was issued the exact same date Cabinet met with the chiefs and promised an open and respectful relationship.

Question to the Premier: Premier, why did you tell the chiefs when meeting with them that you had just transferred the land against their objectives?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trivers: Good question.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, as I said in the House yesterday, we have a long respectful and honourable –

Mr. Trivers: Great relationship.

Premier MacLauchlan: – relationship with the chiefs and with the confederacy and with the First Nations in this province. It's one that I'm honoured to participate in as Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs

and as Premier. I have great respect for the chiefs and that is exactly the spirit in which we conduct that relationship.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, this is, in fact, what the chiefs wrote back to the Premier, and I quote: Adding insult to injury with our full band councils present in a meeting with you and your Cabinet on January 10th of this year. We sat and listened to you speak about the importance of the relationship between the province and the Mi'kmaq. However, in reality what you hid from us was that you were simultaneously planning to convey the very property against our strenuous rights-based objections.

Again to the Premier: Why is this how you treat our First Nations people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I'll say again that our relationship is one that we value; that we honour, that we conduct on honourable terms.

That does involve, by the nature of things, does involve the province and the confederacy, the chiefs having issues or having consultation and a continuing relationship around land and resources. Indeed, we have a constitutional obligation on that front. It's one that is met through many transactions in the course of every year.

That's a commitment that we've had and we continue to have. On this issue –

An Hon. Member: Except for Mill River.

Premier MacLauchlan: – our conversations continue.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, the Premier told us yesterday he is committed to his duty to consult with the chiefs.

Again, this is what the chiefs wrote: Yet, against our objectives the provincial crown advised that it was moving ahead only 24 hours after you talked about the importance of things like respect, good faith and meaningful negotiations. Clearly, these are not concepts that you embrace.

Again to the Premier: Why is this how you treat our First Nations people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, we have a positive respectful relationship. That covers many points; land and resources; health; justice; economic development; workforce; education and we actively engage in that relationship. We have a very robust agenda –

Mr. Myers: You have a duty to consult.

Premier MacLauchlan: – we currently have a very active discussion going.

I am very confident –

Mr. Myers: Constitutional.

Premier MacLauchlan: – that that relationship will continue to be a positive one for the First –

Mr. Myers: Unless that's over your head.

Premier MacLauchlan: – Nations and for our entire province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier told us yesterday he has an honoured relationship with the chiefs. Again, he had repeated that today.

Again, I quote, and the chiefs wrote: Premier, it is difficult to find the words to properly describe the level of betrayal that we feel.

Premier: Why is this how you treat the people of our First Nations?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, as I informed the House yesterday, on Tuesday of last week we had a very positive all-day meeting, a tripartite meeting. Many parts of the provincial government represented; public servants, people from all parts of the First Nations communities, federal government around the actions that would follow on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Indeed –

Mr. Myers: Nothing to do with the duty to consult Mill River.

Premier MacLauchlan: – on Tuesday evening –

Mr. Myers: It's constitutional.

Premier MacLauchlan: – I had dinner with the chiefs and with representatives of the confederacy. I'm very positive and committed, as I've said, and that is exactly how we conduct that relationship and will continue to do so.

It's with the upmost respect for the chiefs in their leadership and in our relationship.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier told us yesterday the relationship with the chiefs is a great relationship. Again, he talks about it here again today.

Again, I go back to what the chiefs wrote, and I quote: You breached our trust, Premier, and demonstrated a good faith relationship with the Indigenous Mi'kmaq is not something that is important to you.

Again to the Premier: Why is this how you treat the First Nations people of Prince Edward Island?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, we have a very advanced and filled-out relationship with the chiefs and with the confederacy and with the First Nations communities in this province, and we're proud of that, and I stick to what I said, that we honour that.

Of course, in any relationship, you work at it and you move forward and you continue to do your best and do your best together to achieve everything that we possibly can, and we're currently engaged and work toward what would be a framework agreement that would be a confirmation of those relationships and a basis on which we move forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, your final question.

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

Yesterday, the Premier said despite my best efforts, he would not stand in the House and say that he disagrees with the chiefs and their comments with regards to this court injunction that's been filed against the province.

Again, the chiefs wrote, and I quote: Good faith, respect, partnership, openness – those are not just words to us, Premier. They mean something to us. We thought they did to you as well.

Again to the Premier: Why is this how you treat our First Nations people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, this is an honoured relationship. It's a very important relationship to me, as Premier and minister, to our government, and to all Prince Edward Islanders, and it's very important as we stand in this House that we not find opportunities to injure that relationship or to cast aspersions on it, and it's exactly in that spirit –

Mr. Myers: Your letter.

Premier MacLauchlan: It's exactly in that spirit –

Mr. Myers: You don't understand the constitution.

Premier MacLauchlan: – that I've said and that I have confirmed that we work with the chiefs –

Mr. Myers: You've obviously never practiced the law, constitutional law.

Premier MacLauchlan: – we respect them, we have a good faith relationship, and we're very optimistic about what we're achieving together, between our government and our people and our province and the First Nations leadership and community in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Statements by Ministers

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Renal Care Supports

Mr. Henderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Most of us don't think about our kidneys very often, but they are among our major organs, providing a filter for our bodies that is essential to life.

Kidneys are always top of mind for the 124 Islanders who are on dialysis, the 80 who are undergoing preventative treatment to

avoid dialysis, and the 91 who have undergone a kidney transplant, and the 34 who are, or will soon be, on a waitlist for a transplant.

Our government is taking major steps to improve our life-saving renal care program, and as was mentioned in this year's Budget Address, those expansions will continue.

A year ago, every Islander requiring in-province dialysis was on hemodialysis, which is when you need to be hooked up to a machine at a dialysis clinic that filters your blood for several hours.

However, anyone requiring peritoneal dialysis had to go out of the province for their care.

Peritoneal dialysis is a more gentle form of dialysis where the blood is cleaned inside the body.

Peritoneal dialysis is performed at home, either by the patient or with home care supports, and in some cases it can even be done overnight while the patient is asleep.

Now, I am happy to announce that all our peritoneal dialysis patients are receiving treatment on Prince Edward Island, and we are expanding that program so more Islanders can access it.

An Hon. Member: Great.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Henderson: We will also be exploring the options for tele-health so patients at home can have additional supports available, and this happens in several other jurisdictions, and we are looking to see if this would be a viable option here on Prince Edward Island.

We also have been expanding our post-transplant supports so we are better equipped to care for each individual when they return to PEI after undergoing a kidney transplant surgery.

We have added service hours, increased patient capacity at our dialysis clinics across the province, and hired additional staff so we are better equipped to expand those programs.

Renal care services save lives Mr. Speaker, and we are committed to ensuring Islanders can access these services right here on Prince Edward Island.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roach: Great program.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Having been around here for a few years I've been here long enough to remember the time that this government marched into Souris and tried to rip out the dialysis chairs right out of the Souris Hospital.

If it wasn't for the fact that there was a big rally –

Mr. LaVie: We stopped it.

Mr. Myers: – here. All of Souris was here. They had buses –

Mr. Roach: Never happened.

Mr. Myers: – here. The only thing –

Mr. LaVie: We did.

Mr. Myers: Never happened? That is unbelievable out of the Minister of Finance that he doesn't think that happened. Tried to rip that right out of the heart of Souris. If it wasn't for the leadership that they had and a great MLA; the leadership they had in the community, the fact that they fought so hard against government, you guys would have had way less dialysis in this province than you have now.

I'm thankful that we had the great people of Souris. They came to Charlottetown. They fought the Charlottetown-centric government that's still in place today to ensure that in their hometown people were able to live, in comfort –

Mr. LaVie: That's true.

Mr. Myers: – with their own dialysis unit –

Mr. LaVie: He knows.

Mr. Myers: – right in Souris.

While I think it's great that it has continued to expand, it's the pioneers, like the people from Souris, that fought you fellows, so they forced your hand; that made you do what you finally are doing here today that you probably should have done close to 10 years ago.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roach: The former member for Souris put it there.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) emergency room.

Speaker: Next responding –

Mr. LaVie: Albert Fogarty was a great man.

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) put it there in the first place.

Speaker: Okay –

Mr. LaVie: Albert Fogarty was a great man.

An Hon. Member: It (Indistinct) have been there (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Remember back then they called you the minister of flip-flop?

Speaker: Okay members, let's have some order here.

Next speaking to the minister's statement will be the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Much of Question Period today, if memory serves me right, surrounded a series of questions about government not listening to Islanders.

I remember back to the days when Nathan Bushey was spearheading the movement in Souris, Kings County, to maintain services in the hospital there and –

Ms. Biggar: We did listen.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: You did listen, indeed, minister. I thank you for that. I wish it would not take the sort of collective effort of Islanders to fight against a proposition as you made then to make that happen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Having said that, this is a good announcement. Peritoneal dialysis is a far easier procedure. To be able to offer this now on Prince Edward Island is a big step forward. I thank you for that, minister.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: Allan Campbell lost his seat over it.

An Hon. Member: No.

Mr. LaVie: He lost (Indistinct)

Speaker: Next –

Mr. Roach: Remember it was enhanced. You remember that.

Mr. LaVie: Allan Campbell lost his seat.

Mr. Currie: Don't forget the manor and the school.

Speaker: Members, are we going to have some order here?

An Hon. Member: I'd like some.

Speaker: I mean if you can't have some order at least have respect.

Minister Mundy – or I'm sorry –

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Yes, she is. She's going to do a statement and be quiet and listen to her.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Go ahead, hon. Minister of Family and Human Services.

Response to Auditor General's Report on Seniors Housing Program 2017

Ms. Mundy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that's the best introduction yet.

I am happy to rise to today to respond to the 2017 Auditor General's Report on Seniors Housing Program. I have responded to the Auditor General's office and provided a summary of the work plan and timeline to address the recommendations, which I will table in the House today.

Government recognizes the importance of social housing in providing shelter and comfort for those who need it most. We are also committed to helping Islanders remain in their own homes and maintain their independence through programs like; the Prince Edward Island Home Renovation Program; Seniors Safe @ Home Program, and Seniors Home Repair Program.

The Department of Family and Human Services recognizes the importance of strategic planning to address the recommendations related to the housing waitlists.

Work has already started to ensure we can meet housing needs on a provincial level and ensure that all clients applying for housing are treated in a consistent manner.

The provincial housing strategy, which is expected to be completed this year, will also help us to better manage housing waitlist and ensure those most in need are served first.

Much progress has been made to date and we are committed to completing the work to ensure full compliance with the 10 recommendations.

We are at varying stages of progress for each recommendation with many expected to be completed by the fall of this year. We appreciate the Auditor General's recommendations, which are valuable in assisting housing services to improve the quality and transparency of programs provided to Islanders.

My department is committed to completing improvement processes already initiated to

ensure full compliance with the 10 recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I've been around this House long enough that I've heard a lot of these speeches how that there was going to be a fix for low-income housing; how there is going to fix for seniors housing. I heard Justin Trudeau talk about it. There was supposed to be all this money coming, and government was going jump right on it.

I'm quite sick, as are, I'm sure, many Islanders, of hearing about it. Islanders would like to see it. The action that we see out of this government, and we see it right down the street here at Holland College, affordable housing that exists in Charlottetown; you're allowing it to be bulldozed. You're shoving immigrants out of their business; out of their apartments; giving them no place to go in a place where they don't have any family supports or supports of their own yet. It's shameful that this government hasn't stepped in already to fix that problem.

Yet, we're hearing about how you're going to fix another problem. Well you guys are creating more problems than probably could be fixed in 10 years after you're gone. I think it's high time that there are no more speeches in the House about this stuff and that there is action. When we see action on the ground; when we see that it actually is – that there actually is affordable housing that has a cap that isn't so ridiculously low that you're not starving seniors in your province, then come back and talk to –

Ms. Biggar: You cancelled it.

Mr. Myers: – this House. Come back and talk to this House –

Ms. Biggar: You cancelled it.

Mr. Myers: – when you have solved the issue. Quit coming to this House and telling

us you're going to do stuff, because I find it hard to believe, because you've done nothing, but kick people out of their homes in the last 10 years. You should be shamed over that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Biggar: Your government cancelled it (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: What government? Whose government?

Ms. Biggar: Yours!

Mr. LaVie: What did they do?

Mr. J. Brown: You know.

Mr. Trivers: I don't think any of us in here was ever in government (Indistinct)

Speaker: Okay.

Ms. Biggar: Try going back in history.

Speaker: Now we'll have a minister's statement from the –

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct) actually in government for 10 years.

An Hon. Member: There you go infrastructure het it.

Speaker: Are you going to be quiet?

Mr. Trivers: Tell her.

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

Response to Auditor General's Review on Climate Change

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the Auditor General's most recent report there was a review pertaining to climate change. Several recommendations were noted by the Auditor General's office and I would like to provide an update on those recommendations and respond to the points raised.

The auditing took place in late 2016. If it had been done today, most of the

recommendations are already being implemented or addressed through the efforts of the newly created Climate Change Secretariat.

The secretariat has membership from multiple departments and is a good example of government working together to address an issue that is critical to Prince Edward Island.

The secretariat formed in October, 2016, is leading the provincial government's climate change-related efforts by overseeing the development of a new Climate Change Action Plan, which will encompass both climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

The Climate Change Secretariat led by Executive Director, Todd Dupuis, has created five working groups that will assist in the developing of the Climate Change Action Plan. Those working groups are currently considering recommendations from the recently released Dunsky Energy report entitled, Recommendations for the Development of a Climate Change Mitigation Strategy.

Their advice will form the basis of the mitigation aspect of the Action Plan. This coming fall the working groups will consider the climate change adaptation recommendations from the UPEI Climate Change Research Lab and their subsequent advice will be incorporated into the plan in 2018.

The work of the Secretariat addresses several AG recommendations, including recommendations to: coordinate provincial strategy development and implementation related to climate change; develop a climate change strategy including both mitigation and adaptation; ensure documented implementation plans are completed for all key mitigation actions; to ensure documented implementation plans are completed for all key adaption actions; and to provide annual public reports on progress made to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The report also recommends that Executive Council should approve provincial climate change strategies and certainly, that will be the case. The Climate Change Action Plan

will be presented to Executive Council for final approval.

A provincial risk assessment for adaptation to climate change that identifies, analyzes and prioritizes key risks was also recommended by the Auditor General.

Mr. LaVie: Call the hour.

Mr. Mitchell: Government is planning to begin this work later this year.

The work will be used to inform the secretariat on risks to public assets as a result of climate change. Work being done by UPEI Climate Research Lab will inform the secretariat on risks to other assets, as well.

The work will be used to inform the secretariat on risk to public assets as a result of climate change. The work being done by the UPEI Climate Research Lab will inform the secretariat on risks to other assets as well.

In closing, I would like to thank the Auditor General and her staff for the great work that they do and thank you for the opportunity to update all Islanders on the progress made on recommendations related to climate change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Luckily, I can take my time speaking this time because I'll have a lot of time to fill here to equal that –

An Hon. Member: Call the hour.

Mr. Myers: Do you know, Mr. Speaker, there's a disturbing trend in the minister's statement today. Now, we of course didn't know prior to what they were going to be, but now I know why the House leader didn't want to tell us because it's all announcements that government is making where they are covering up for things that they did wrong.

We have one where they really messed up with –

Mr. MacEwen: Seniors housing.

Mr. Myers: – seniors housing, and the Auditor General pointed out. We have one now from this minister that they have all kinds of things going haywire in their department and the Auditor General had to point it out.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) dialysis.

Mr. Myers: We had the dialysis that had to be fixed by the people of Souris in March and into the Legislature, bus loads and bus loads of them, a piping band piped them up to the steps and everything. This is a government that appears to be bankrupt, not only financially, but idealistically, too. They have no ideas. This is a government who is bankrupt of ideas.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: They absolutely rely on the Auditor General just so they can have minister statements; they rely on Auditor General reports to come forward. You know what? I'm going to say the minister of the environment; he's a pretty good guy. I'm not going to go too hard on him.

An Hon. Member: Great minister.

Mr. Myers: I said in the past I thought he should have been premier.

Mr. LaVie: Next premier.

Mr. Aylward: (Indistinct) premier.

Ms. Compton: (Indistinct) premier.

Mr. Myers: He could have been premier. He might still be.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: I heard the engines of leadership are starting up over in the Sherwood area. It's hard to tell which part of Sherwood that the engines are revving the loudest, but there are a lot of engines revving in Sherwood these days for a leadership of the Liberal Party. You are out polling the guy you have, and you are out

polling yourselves. It's good times and I think you're a good guy, and you know what? Maybe if you were sitting in this chair the announcements would be positive, forward-thinking things and not apologies for mistakes.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) making speeches tomorrow.

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. J. Brown: I think we better give them the list back so they know (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

It's long been recognized that climate change is the singular most important challenge that humanity faces and I believe it is government's responsibility, in part, to for succession planning, to look ahead and to plan for the future and to be responsible. Our generation has done a terrible job of living on this planet. I think there are all kinds of evidence to support that statement.

One way that we can start to clear up the mess, at least the environmental mess – never mind the economic and social problems that our children are going to inherit – is to start dealing with climate change now. The minister talked about mitigation and adaptation. It's important we realize that the days of mitigating for climate change or avoidance of climate change are pretty well gone, but that's generally accepted, and that we have to – it's adaptation we're talking about here. It's about reacting, and it's about adjusting to the changes which are coming.

Here on Prince Edward Island, we contribute minutely to the greenhouse gas emissions of this planet, but we will be affected profoundly by climate change because we are a small Island state.

As such, we need to join places like the Azores and Tuvalu and Sri Lanka, who are world leaders, and we are in part that. I give this government credit, and previous administrations, for having the foresight to invest heavily in alternative energies here, but that's just a small portion of what we need to be doing.

I look forward to seeing the details of this, minister. I appreciate the statement and I hope we all agree that this is something –

Mr. LaVie: Just another plan.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: – that we have to take very seriously.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) just another plan. He doesn't get it. He's not here long enough (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: Remember that (Indistinct)

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: That's why you're in last place and he's in second place.

Mr. Myers: The engines are revving in Sherwood.

Mr. LaVie: We like it in last place.

Mr. Myers: The engines are revving in Sherwood.

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

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

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

By Command of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, I beg leave to table Holland College Annual Report 2015-2016 and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that the

said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table the Department of Community, Land and Environment's response to the Auditor General's Report related to climate change and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Family and Human Services.

Ms. Mundy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

By leave of the House, I beg leave to table a response to the 2017 Auditor General Report on the Seniors Housing Program and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

By leave of the House, I beg leave to table written questions to the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Belfast-Murray River, 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: Mr. Speaker, opposition would like to call Motion 92 to the floor.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Ms. Biggar: Could we have the title of that?

Mr. Aylward: It's Motion 92.

Ms. Biggar: Yes, I know.

Mr. Aylward: (Indistinct)

Clerk Assistant (R. Reddin): Motion No. 92.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque, the following motion:

WHEREAS the current insulin pump program which offers assistance for the purchase of insulin pumps for Islanders suffering from Type 1 diabetes is only available to children and young adults under the age of 18;

AND WHEREAS there are many adults with Type 1 diabetes in our province whose health would benefit greatly by being able to utilize an insulin pump;

AND WHEREAS the costs of an insulin pump and the various supplies necessary for its operation is cost prohibitive to many adult diabetics;

AND WHEREAS many individuals who cannot afford to purchase this equipment suffer unnecessary hospitalizations and recurring health problems that could have been curtailed had they been utilizing an insulin pump;

AND WHEREAS the expansion of the insulin pump program to include adults over the age of 18 would greatly improve the health of Islanders suffering from this disease and result in less cost to our overall health system;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly urge the PEI government to expand coverage for the

insulin pump program to include the adult population of our province.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to the necessity of expanding the insulin pump program in our province to include the adult population. Our opposition has brought this issue before the House several times, both through motions and through Question Period. I can assure this House today that we intend to keep on pressuring government to bring forward this program, as we did until they finally brought it in for those under 18, and until the government decides to do the wise thing and broaden the program to include individuals over the age of 18.

Jake Reid, Senior Leader, Government Relations with Diabetes Canada, has expressed the association's concern about the age restriction on PEI's Insulin Pump Program. He indicates that many other provinces help fund insulin pumps for residents up to the age of 25, and there are no age restrictions in some other provinces.

One in three Islanders now has diabetes or pre-diabetes. I don't think that is a number we can ignore. It is projected that cases of diabetes will increase from 2017 to 2026 by upwards of 41%. We have an aging population and we need to start now through the establishment of an insulin-pump program to ensure that these individuals do not find themselves with severe and costly complications.

The expansion of the Insulin Pump Program, I believe, can be viewed primarily as a preventative measure that will reduce our overall health costs from diabetes. Studies show that the costs of an Insulin Pump Program are far lower than the costs associated with diabetes complications that often end up with lengthy hospital stays.

Figures indicate that people with diabetes are over three times more likely to be hospitalized with cardiovascular disease. They are 12 times more likely to be hospitalized with an end-stage renal disease and over 20 times more likely to be

hospitalized for a non-traumatic lower limb amputation compared to the general population. Diabetes contributes to 30% of strokes, 40% of heart attacks, 50% of kidney failure requiring dialysis, and 70% of non-traumatic lower limb amputations, and is a leading cause of vision loss.

Fifty-seven per cent of Canadians with diabetes cannot adhere to prescribed treatment due to the high out-of-pocket costs of needed medications, devices and supplies. The majority of Canadians may spend more than 3% of their income, or over \$1,500 a year, on diabetes medications, and devices.

The cost of an insulin pump runs in the \$7,000 range. Many Islanders, as you know, cannot afford that kind of an expenditure. We, unfortunately, also have one of the lowest rates of income in the entire country, which means that often the costs of drugs may be cut to meet the need of household budget for food and clothing.

We also have a population where 60% of adults are overweight or obese, much higher than the national average of 52%. The prevalence of pre-diabetes in this province is the second highest among provinces. PEI also has the highest rural population in Canada, so accessing care for people with diabetes can, in fact, be challenging.

Surely if we can find upwards of \$8 million for GeoSweep, \$1.5 million for e-gaming and another \$10.9 million to pay for hotels and resorts for multi-millionaires in our province, we can find the money to fund such an important program that will ensure a better life for hundreds of Islanders. It is time to do the right thing and ensure that Islanders with type 1 diabetes can access this treatment mode.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacKay: All you had to do was ask.

Mr. R. Brown: I did.

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today in the House to second this motion, which will ensure that Prince Edward Islanders suffering with type 1 diabetes will be able to find greater stability in controlling their disease.

The mover of this motion outlined numerous statistics, all of which will ensure that if something is not done, PEI's health costs will be skyrocketing as a result of diabetes in our ever-aging population. I believe we need to take every measure we can to try and counter some of those costs by taking preventative measures through better education, addressing obesity, and providing our adult population with diabetes with insulin pumps.

I believe everyone in this House knows of someone who has been in hospital, or is always going to the hospital, with serious complications from diabetes. Many endure a lot of physical trauma from their treatments and it is sad to think that some of these complications could have been prevented had they been able to access an insulin pump.

Another situation to consider, is that 30% of people with diabetes have clinically relevant depressive symptoms, and individuals with depression have an approximately 60% increased risk of developing diabetes. The emphasis must be on prevention of this disease in our population and on ensuring that those who do have it stay as healthy as they possibly can. An Insulin Pump Program for our adult population will certainly help.

The risk of blindness in people with diabetes is up to 25 times higher than those without diabetes and, in fact, diabetes is the leading cause of acquired blindness in Canadians under the age of 50. Foot ulceration affects an estimated 15% - 25% of people with diabetes in their lifetime. One third of amputations in 2011-2012 were performed on people reporting a diabetic foot wound.

This is not about affording something, it is not about a budget expenditure, it's about the quality of life for a large population of our province. We believe the province can afford the implementation of an Insulin Pump Program for Islanders with type 1 diabetes. Much of our support is based on a report carried out by the Canadian Diabetes Association entitled, The Economic Benefit

of Public Funding of Insulin Pumps in Prince Edward Island.

The report shows that funding insulin pumps for people with type 1 diabetes in the province will actually save the province money in the long run. A report by the Canadian Diabetes Association shows that insulin pumps are more effective in preventing serious complications that arise from diabetes over the long-term. Indeed, the report indicates that funding insulin pumps for type 1 diabetes would likely decrease the base case annual incidence rate of myocardial infarction by 10%, the rate of end stage renal disease by 20.4%, and lower limb amputation by 7%. While I don't like to base our motion just on dollar savings, the figures just quoted, I believe, would be substantial in terms of hospitalizations, surgeries and long-term care and rehabilitation. Obviously, implementing an Insulin Pump Program will save money and also keep individuals from suffering through agonizing surgery and physical health problems.

About 15 years ago, I came home one day to my mother in bed. At the time, that was a surprise to me because my mother never got sick. She was bulletproof. When everybody else had the flu, my mother didn't get sick. For 30 days my mother was in bed and we thought there was something severely wrong with her. We took her to doctors, took her to hospitals. We couldn't find absolutely anything and it turned out she had a severe case of diabetes. My mother was fortunate enough she could afford her own insulin pump and that's the first route we went. She's had an insulin pump now for 15 years and you talk for a healthy person today - she enjoys an active life and nothing seems to get in her way. There's no question in my mind, if she didn't have that resource for that insulin pump, it might be a different story today.

There is a need for this service to be provided. I believe this government knows that and it is time to respond. I would ask for the support of all members of this Legislative Assembly for our motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just wanted to rise in support of this motion. I think that the Member from Stratford-Kinlock who moved the motion and the Member from Kensington-Malpeque, who seconded the motion, brought up some extremely good reasons about why this government should fund insulin pumps for adults with type 1 diabetes. Not the least of which, based on the Canadian Diabetes Association analysis, it could actually save this government money in health costs. That's what the Canadian Diabetes Association says. This is the sort of common sense decision that we need to take.

I've talked to people time and time again that work in health care in this province, who are throwing up their hands in the air and saying: I guess there's nothing we can do. The system's too big, it can't change. Well, it can change. It must change. We have to take a look at what the experts are saying like the Canadian Diabetes Association. They're saying: A program like this, funding insulin pumps for adults with type 1 diabetes, may actually save the province money in health care costs, because of the whole number of related complications that occur when someone with type 1 diabetes cannot afford to give themselves the proper treatment.

To me, this is a common sense, intelligent approach, it's fiscally good, and I would urge every member in this House to support this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

The insulin pumps are part of the armamentarium that can be used to treat diabetes, and it's used exclusively for type 1 diabetes, which – as I'm sure many in the

House know – afflicts only about 10% of those with diabetes, and it's not a preventable form of diabetes; it's a largely genetic problem.

Ninety per cent – over 90% of diabetics suffer from type 2 diabetes, which is preventable.

I'm going to talk a little bit later about what governments may be able to do to help in preventing all of those cases of diabetes which cost the health care system a huge amount of money. Here on Prince Edward Island, the direct annual cost of diabetes to the health system is over \$14 million. It's a huge sum of money.

It's something that we can – this is largely a preventable disease; however, type 1 diabetes is not. And it has been shown, as some of the hon. members have already said, that diabetes pumps can save the health care system money – not immediately. The upfront cost is not insignificant, several thousand dollars. But the long-term potential savings to the health care system are significant.

There are certainly pros and cons of them. The insulin pumps provide better control, and of course you need fewer needles. You just have to replace the cannula every few days.

But, I mean, they're not without their problems: They have a high risk of infection and the cost, as I've just mentioned, is sometimes prohibitive.

But given that 90% of diabetic cases on Prince Edward Island and around the world are preventable, I think if we're looking at cost savings – I don't want to stand here and pretend that by providing insulin pumps to all ages of Islanders that we're going to save the health care system a significant amount of money, but I will stand here and suggest that if government were to take some really substantial preventive measures to try and prevent diabetes from forming in the first place, that then we could save substantial amounts of money.

Here are some things that we know: That diabetes is caused by – welcome back, health minister

We know that diabetes –

Ms. Biggar: Not supposed to say that.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: – is caused by – the preventable form of diabetes is caused by a number of things, and if we were to develop healthier lifestyles, better diets, watched our weight, and didn't smoke, a large number of cases of diabetes could be avoided.

How can government help in this regard? Well, in promoting healthy lifestyles, how about we remove tax from things like the purchase of bicycles, to gym memberships, to running equipment, to all of the things that promote active lifestyles?

We used to have the capability here on Prince Edward Island before we adopted the HST, to take tax off various items, and we did that. We have now lost, largely, that ability, and I think that's a real shame.

However, government still does have within the agreement with the federal government on HST, the ability to do that, to take taxes off – I can't remember what the percentage is, but a certain percentage of goods and services here on Prince Edward Island; certainly enough that we could include gym memberships, bicycles, and all sorts of active gear. So that's one thing that government could do.

We could also expand our active transportation network, and I want to give credit here to the minister for what has been done with the first phase of the Cornwall bypass, where a separate active transportation link, for the first time, has been constructed on Prince Edward Island. It's a small start, but it's significant.

Ms. Biggar: Check out our map.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I have, and I see – at least on paper – good things lie ahead.

Promoting active transportation here on Prince Edward Island is another way that governments can help to reduce incidence of diabetes.

When it comes to healthy eating, which is one of the components of preventing diabetes, I think that the school program for – the school lunch program could play a

significant role there, and again I applaud the government for coming forward through the departments of health and wellness and education and agriculture to make this program a reality. I understand it's only in a pilot phase at the moment, but I look forward to that being rolled out across the province. Because when our children are eating healthily in schools, and we are promoting local production of food, that's going to help their health.

Of course, this is not just good for diabetes; this is good for heart disease, it's good for cancers, it's good for mental health as well. All of these things – diet, exercise, healthy lifestyles – can have a significant impact on reducing the incidence of all of these health problems.

I stand to support this motion and I look forward to hearing some government members speaking on it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you, hon. leader.

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

Mr. LaVie: Mr. Speaker, yes.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Diabetes is serious here in our province, and the current insulin program, which offers assistance for the purchase of an insulin pump for an Islander suffering from type 1 diabetes, is only available to children and young adults under the age of 18.

We have lots of people with type 1 diabetes over the age of 18 that need help with insulin pumps.

I know in my own family, we have diabetes in the family, and my wife has diabetes and she went to her last appointment – her readings were up high and there were lows, and she couldn't get them regulated, so of course she goes back to her family doctor and he was going to put her on the needle.

So my wife asked the doctor, she says: Is there any way that I can beat this needle? And he says: Oh yes. He says there is. He says: I wish more people were like you that came into my office and asked to beat the needle instead of just taking the needle for diabetes.

And probably not everybody is in the same case. Some cases are probably more severe.

But she says: How can I do this? So he says: With the proper diets and exercise, you can avoid the needle; that's three months ago.

She started eating properly and dieting and exercise and she's after losing 17 pounds. I'm very proud of her for doing that.

Actually, she avoided the needle and he took her off some of her diabetes medicine and planning on taking her off of more medicine. When you do eat healthier, it is more expensive to eat healthier.

Education for people across Prince Edward Island is big. We've got to educate people. We've got to – we do educate, but we got to educate more. We've got to drive it home. We've got to drive it home that we can beat these medications.

I'm probably a bad example, the way I eat, and I'll admit it.

Mr. Myers: I'll second that.

Mr. LaVie: I eat on the fly, Mr. Speaker. I eat on the run. I eat when I can.

Mr. Myers: Lots of cake.

Mr. LaVie: And a lot of the times it's not healthy eating, and you know it's –

An Hon. Member: Lobster, lobster, lobster.

Mr. LaVie: No, I don't eat much lobster. It's too expensive.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LaVie: I can't afford it, Mr. Speaker.

No, and seriously, like this is serious.

Mr. J. Brown: No vegetables on the burgers, (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: What we need, we need more to push more education to eat healthier.

I had a friend one time – this might be a little off subject, but it's the same principle as eating healthy – he managed a store in Summerside. I won't name the store because I don't want to divulge the individual's name. He managed a store up in Summerside, and he was busy. He ate out a lot – like McDonalds or Tim Hortons or Wendy's – and he had arthritis. Twenty years ago, he couldn't write his name.

So I got to know this gentleman well over the last couple of years, and today that gentleman can walk from Summerside to Souris. What he did, he changed his diet. He ate healthy, he drank lots of water, he just changed his diet. Today he could walk from Summerside to Souris. Twenty years ago, he couldn't write his name; just by changing his diet. That's big.

When we hear stories like that and we do promote healthy eating, we got to do more promotion of healthy eating. We got to get that issue out there more and more and more, and the more you talk about it, the more you speak about it, people will get it. People will get the healthy eating part.

I know it's working for my wife. Actually, it's kind of working for me. When she eats healthy, I got to eat healthy. I don't cook. I don't stand here and say I'm the best cook in the household, because I'm not. I don't expect her to cook a meal for her and a special one for me. So healthy eating is a big part of diabetes.

The cost – when you're talking insulin pumps for people over the age of 18 – the cost shouldn't even be a factor. When we're talking someone's health, dollars shouldn't be the issue. There are many adults with type 1 diabetes in our province whose health would benefit greatly by being able to utilize an insulin pump.

Many of us in here probably have family members with type 1 diabetes, and the cost of insulin pumps and the various supplies necessary for its operation is a cost prohibitive to many adult diabetics. Here is a pilot project, another pilot program by this government. It's great that we do pilot

projects, but when the pilot project is over we can't just stop there.

We hear it from Islanders right across Prince Edward Island: insulin pumps. They can't afford their insulin pumps. We know a pilot project is going to work. We know that. When it comes to somebody's health, dollars shouldn't make the difference, not when it's somebody's health. As members of the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island, we should be obligated to look after people's health. Health care should be number one on Prince Edward Island. We should be looking after health.

Many Islanders who cannot afford to purchase this equipment suffer unnecessary hospitalization and reoccurring health problems that could be curtailed had they been utilizing an insulin pump. Expansion of the insulin pump program to include adults over the age of 18 would greatly improve the health care of Islanders suffering from the disease and result in less cost to the overall health system.

When you put the money out for insulin pumps to Islanders over the age of 18, you'd save on the other end when these Islanders with diabetes are hospitalized and that gets expensive. An ambulance drive that you charge, this government charges Islanders to be transferred by ambulance from Tignish, Summerside or Charlottetown, or from Souris to Charlottetown or Summerside, this cost, that's a cost for the individual. It's expenses like that we could be avoiding with providing insulin pumps to people with people with diabetes type 1.

We urge the PEI government to expand coverage for insulin pump program to include the adult population in our province. We owe it to these people. What we need is a health program set up for all Islanders; for all Islanders, and we have to promote it. We do – we have to go another step forward to get people eating healthier. We have to take that further step, one more step to get people eating healthier across our province. When we do that, it's not only diabetes; there are lots of ailments out there that are bothering people from eating unhealthy. This is just one step that we can avoid that and we can keep them out of the health care system. Keep them out of their doctor's

office. Keep them out of our hospitals. Keep them out of our ambulances.

We're doing some in our schools, but let's take it a step farther. Let's push it a step harder. Let's really, really push it and promote it; and the more we talk about it, the more it's talked about, the more it's promoted, it'll catch on. We do it, but we only take it to a certain point. That's as far as we go with it. Let's take it that extra step. Let's go that step farther.

Even my own district, I can notice it. There's more Participaction in my area, there's more people out walking in my area, there's more people out running. I see people walking with their babies in the stroller. I see people jogging with babies in the stroller. That's not an easy job.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: No, people are actually doing it now. I see a difference in my own district, especially.

Let's really promote that. Let's put out programs or pamphlets of local people doing that, like jogging on the side of the sidewalk with their kids in the strollers. Let's get a picture of that because that's going beyond. I know when my mother was a stay-at-home mom, she didn't put us in the stroller and go up and down the street and jog, you know, really.

Mr. Aylward: They didn't have strollers back then.

Mr. LaVie: In those days, not that long ago, but in those days they didn't actually do that. We did our own Participaction. We were outside playing; it's a different world today. It's a different world.

When you see the younger generation out participating with their kids in the stroller, that's dedication. They could be home. I know my mom used to sit home in the afternoon when we were in school or whatever. She watched the *Days of our Lives* or *Another World*; I think it was back in those days. I didn't watch much of it.

What I'm saying is: Let's push for Participaction right across PEI, in our school system, in the younger schools, in the

younger grades. That's where we need it. You've got to start in the younger grades.

The former minister of education, and I don't know if it's in our school system now, but in our cafeterias in the school they tried to have all healthy food in the school. I don't know if they still do it yet – if it's all healthy, healthy foods. I know the kids kind of shied away from it, but if we put it in the school, leave it in the school, it will catch on.

I know my wife and I, we go to the Cavendish Beach Music Festival and –

Ms. Biggar: Are those free tickets?

Mr. LaVie: – big crowd.

Pardon?

Ms. Biggar: Are those free tickets?

Mr. LaVie: No. I'll let you know, minister of transportation, these are not free tickets. I do not take a free ride from anybody.

Mr. Myers: Grant Palmer's got them all.

Mr. LaVie: Grant Palmer passes them out and Grant will –

Ms. Biggar: We don't get them.

Mr. LaVie: Grant knows I'm not voting for him. I don't get a ticket. I don't take a free ride. I pay my way.

When I do go up there, there are all kinds of vendors up there. You can get hot dogs. You can get French fries with gravy. You can get pizza. You can get ice cream. You can get cotton candy. All of these vendors, there are lines and lines and waiting lines for 20 minutes, 25, up to an hour. There's one vendor there and it's all healthy eating; vegetables – and they are done up in nice little packages, all vegetables and whatever you want; not one person at the stand. It's funny. It's funny how we're programmed how to eat.

Getting back to the insulin pumps, these people cannot afford their insulin pumps. People with type 1 diabetes deserve insulin pumps. There are two things I want this government to do.

I want you to provide these people with type 1 diabetes with their insulin pumps, and I want you to expand on a program on healthy eating. You do it, but I want you to take it a step further. I want you to go further with it. You do it, but you're not taking it far enough. The message is not getting out there. You should see it yourselves, when the message is not getting out there, you've got to take it that next further.

You're in the position, to the health minister; you're in that position to take it to a step further to get people eating healthier on Prince Edward Island. You're in that position. You've got the money. You've got \$600,000, so he says. You've got \$600,000 with the cooked books –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: I hope you still have those oven mitts to carry that book.

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: No.

Seriously though, I'd like to see a healthy eating program. You have it, but it's not working. You've got to take it a step further. I see it working in my own household. You can see it –

Mr. R. Brown: Where?

Mr. LaVie: – on myself and on my wife. She is doing great. I am so proud of her after losing 17 pounds, dropping her medication – some medication for her diabetes. I see it working in my own household, but her hand was forced into it. Her hand was forced when she was offered the needle for diabetes. She didn't want to take the needle, so she went and ate healthy and exercised. I know it does work, but her hand was forced to it.

We can take this healthy eating a step further. I know you do it. The education minister tries in the schools, but he has got to take it a step further. The health minister, you have got to take it that step further. You've got to take it a step – we just don't want a shake of a head or a pilot program; we want it to go the step further because it can work. I have seen it work, and it will

work if we can get people to eat healthier here on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. R. Brown: Here we go.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) get the facts.

Ms. Biggar: Here are the real facts.

Mr. Henderson: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Henderson: Yeah, I was so prepared for this.

Anyway, the reality is that we all have to be prepared for the outcomes of diabetes. Diabetes is an infliction that hits, actually, about 14,000 Islanders that are living currently with diabetes in this province. It's a significant number, and like the hon. Member from Souris-Elmira noted earlier, that there are a lot of contributing factors to diabetes, but some of the issues that affect diabetes are healthy lifestyles and choices of good, healthy food and to look at exercise, and basically good choices in everyday living.

We, in this province here, since I have become minister, I inherited the situation where we have a diabetes strategy in this province. It was developed here in 2014 and we are now in our last year of our diabetes strategy in the province and this was a huge step forward for this province in helping Islanders manage their diabetes and improve the quality of life, as the Member from Souris-Elmira, so eloquently noted about his wife. I think that's a real contribution to her healthy lifestyles and the issues that were pertaining to healthy living.

Since this provincial strategy was released in 2014, approximately 6,300 Islanders have accessed the services offered by the provincial diabetes program. A significant number of Islanders are taking –

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Henderson: – part in that.

We, as a government, recognize the impacts that diabetes has and are committed to ensuring that Islanders have access to the necessary services and supports to live effectively with diabetes. We do continue to make great strides in improving access to services and supports, including the subsidization of insulin and oral diabetes medications, to which in the 2015-2016 budget, was \$2.1 million; some significant dollars there.

Blood glucose test strips and urine testing materials are provided. Insulin Pump Program for children and youth, which is what this particular motion speaks more specifically to and I'll speak to that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Henderson: The other issues that we've done is to talk about wellness and childhood obesity initiatives and it was mentioned, I think, earlier here that we contributed over \$200,000 to the breakfast program recently to help children in the school system, once again, eat healthy and understand the importance of good nutrition when it comes to a healthy outcome.

In July, 2015, we partnered with Island optometrists to deliver the province-wide access to diabetic retinopathy testing. Since then, approximately 7,500 Islanders have accessed this particular program which provides early assessment and appropriate referral to treatment for diabetic retinopathy – one of the leading causes of blindness.

In the last year, I've had the opportunity to have spectacles on my forehead. When I went to get my eyes tested, that was one of the things that they tested me for and I didn't really quite understand it all and there was just sort of a flash of light and an optometrist can then identify the impacts of that and it has – the early onset of diabetes could be happening. Then if that be the case, then you might be referred to an ophthalmologist to try to review those things in a little more detail.

Another big accomplishment that we've done recently is a nurse practitioner was also hired to support Islanders with complex

diabetes cases, as well as Islander with diabetes who do not have a primary care provider. That's important – I think there's about 6,000 Islanders currently that are on the patient registry. If they happened to have a diabetes-related illness, they can actually go to this nurse practitioner and get immediate care to help them, once again, improve their healthy outcome.

With proper health care supports, Islanders living with diabetes can maintain a healthy lifestyle. Certainly, as a government, we've recognized the impacts of diabetes and are committed to ensure Islanders have access to the necessary services and supports.

Diabetes represents a growing population on Prince Edward Island and on our health care system, in acquiring and needing those services. In fact, actually diabetes has increased on Prince Edward Island from 2005 by 40% to 2015. In 2005 – 2006, the diabetes prevalence rate in Islanders 20 years and older was 7.8%. In 2014 – 2015, the prevalence is actually 10.5% – approximately 14,000 Islanders. Those numbers are rising at a very rapid rate and by 2020, it's expected that 12.75% of Islanders are going to be impacted by diabetes. Just on average – just to give you an idea of these kinds of numbers – 860 new cases of diabetes are diagnosed on Prince Edward Island each year. It's a significant number.

I'll speak a little more to this particular motion. We have a current Insulin Pump Program and it provides coverage to assist the cost of the pump, the pump, and supplies for children and youth under the age of 19, who are medically qualified. Approximately \$234,000 are provided each year to assist with the insulin pump, pump supplies, test strips for children and youth living with type 1 diabetes. Health PEI is currently reviewing this particular program and including the funding criteria and identifying what more can be done to improve the program, particularly to low income Islanders.

As becoming minister, it's one of those subjects that – we've met with the – annually – the Diabetes Association usually invites all the MLAs out to a dinner and basically gives us updates on the facts around diabetes and we, as minister, certainly are taking their recommendations

to heart and we are working on trying to make sure that we can at least be comparable to other Maritime Provinces in the services that we are delivering people with diabetes in this province.

I'm hopeful that we'll certainly be continuing to work on those, but everybody is quite aware that resources can be a challenge, especially in our portfolio of health care and I can – when the hon. Minister of Finance tabled the Budget, we seen a significant increase to the department of health and wellness' budget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Henderson: I believe about 5.8%, probably the largest increase in health care. That is actually going to now start to free up some resources for us to deal with some of these types of issues that we're talking about here. So, I'm really looking forward to some of the outcomes that will happen in being more preventative in our health care approach, as well as dealing with some of these issues like diabetes.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest an amendment to this motion and it will be seconded by the honourable Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

Therefore it be resolved that this Legislative Assembly urge the PEI government to expand the coverage for the insulin pump program.

I want to add in 'as resources permit' to include the adult population of our province.

I have copies of the motion amendment here. But in general terms, we support the themes of their motion just resources are always a challenge.

Mr. MacKay: You start working province pro bono.

Speaker: Would the seconder of the amendment like to speak to the amendment?

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

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

I think the amendment is a great amendment and I think the resolution calls for action and the amendment is a call to action for the insulin program.

I sat in this Legislature for a number of years and I sat in opposition for a number of years when the previous conservative government rejected the calls on diabetic strips for a number of years.

I was proud to be part of one of the first decisions the new government made when it came into power was diabetic strips for people that require diabetic strips.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. R. Brown: I'm proud to be part of a government that provides insulin pumps to children because we know it's important. I'm proud to be a member of a government, that for years, we fought for a breakfast program in the public school system and the previous administration, for some reason, didn't believe it was an important issue. I remember one debate where we were talking about the breakfast program. I'm bringing up the breakfast program because the Member from Souris-Elmira brings up very good points about the breakfast program and how important it is to a lot of children on Prince Edward Island.

I remember during the debates on a breakfast program in our public school system for children, some of the government members of the day were discussing: Do we really need it? If we do have it, why don't we just give it to the kids that need it? What they wanted to do at the time was have an income test for the kids that were going to school and they were the only ones that would be allowed in the breakfast program and no one else would be. It isolated the children of families of less means into one room. We just couldn't support that and that's why we fought for a universal breakfast program for all children on PEI, because we don't think that it's fair to be isolating one group of citizens from another group of citizens.

We are making progress in the health care file and we are making progress on a lot of issues that are here on Prince Edward Island. Would we like to do it all at once? Of course we'd like to do it all at once, but you have to

be fiscally prudent and you have to schedule these things properly. That's why, with the Catastrophic Drug Program, when additional monies came along out of the health care system, we introduced the strata – somebody else say it.

An Hon. Member: Catastrophic.

Mr. R. Brown: Drug Program.

What's important, and I commend the member from Souris who talked on the breakfast program, because we put in an initial \$200,000 towards the program and some people in government wanted it to go to administration. I'm proud to say that the Treasury Board and the Treasury Board chairman insisted that \$200,000 was allocated; \$200,000 of that money would go to the program and not to administration. So, I'm pretty proud of the chairman of Treasury Board for forcing that to go directly to the program instead of administration.

It's important that we have a robust breakfast program on Prince Edward Island because that's an opportunity for government to start educating children on the causes of diabetes, the causes of bad healthy eating, and that's why I supported the breakfast program so adamantly.

I'll be supporting this motion because I think it's a motion –

An Hon. Member: It's an amendment.

Mr. R. Brown: Amendment now. It's amendment motion.

An Hon. Member: Whatever.

Mr. R. Brown: Whatever. Let me just get my book out. Give me 20 minutes to read it.

Thanks very much.

Anyway, I'll be supporting the motion because I think it's important and I hope all members support the amendment to the motion because it is a budgetary item. We've seen in the past that the Premier is committed to – and the government is committed. I think we're all committed too – as monies becomes available put those monies back into programs that are

beneficial to Islanders. That's what's most important. Do we go bankrupt doing it? No, Mr. Speaker, we do it prudently.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Next speaking to the amendment will be the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm proud of this motion that the Member from Stratford-Kinlock has put forward. I somewhat like the amendment to the motion.

I'd like to speak to a young guy that I coached this year. His name is Maxwell MacFarlane. He has diabetes and he needs an insulin pump. It's expensive. Many of the members have already talked about it already.

Whereas this amendment talks: "as resources permit."

I'd like to amend the amendment to where it says: "expand coverage for the insulin pump program as resources permit or when the budget is balanced to include the adult population of our province."

That is seconded by the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters. You don't have any copies of that –

Mr. MacEwen: I have one copy, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. LaVie: He's shaking his head.

An Hon. Member: Takes me (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: Shaking his head.

Ms. Compton: No money.

An Hon. Member: The Budget's going down (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: No, they know it's not going to balance so they don't want (Indistinct)

Speaker: Are you all done, hon. member?

We'll ask the seconder of the amendment to the amendment to speak to the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Myers: Thank you.

The line is to – we're going to add to it. After the amendment that you made we're going to add: "or when the budget is balanced to include the adult population of our province."

If our Budget is truly balanced then there is no reason why you would avoid that clause.

The insulin pump thing is a very important issue to me. Those who are around prior to the last election will recall that we fought, over here, hard to have insulin pumps included in the program. Robert Ghiz, the premier at the time, saw fit to agree on it. He actually, he did scoop the health minister right in Question Period.

It's kind of a funny story because in the old Legislature the gallery was above us. It was full that day because we had it full with parents and children who were looking for help on an insulin pump.

My set of questions was all about insulin pumps. My first question was: When are you going to fund the insulin pumps? And Robert Ghiz got up and says: Right away. I'm like; there goes my whole Question Period, but –

Ms. Compton: It was worth it.

Mr. Myers: It was worth it.

Not only did I scramble for the rest of Question Period to come up with enough questions to fill the time, but we were actually able to lead the charge on doing some good on that. It's something that I'm still really proud that we were able to be a part of.

Robert Ghiz saw fit to make this happen. The Premier, today, I'm calling on you to stand up and speak to this motion, Premier. I know you're itching to get up there. I see you're furiously taking notes. Watching it to get you up and speak on this motion and tell us that you support Islanders who have diabetes. That you understand how hard it is

that the cost associated with this; how limiting it is on the finances of a home.

You know by 2020, this province is going to have 18,000 people with diabetes. The estimated cost of diabetes would be \$81 million by 2020, which isn't too far away. That's three years away.

The estimated annual out-of-pocket expenses for type 1 diabetes is \$1,564. It's \$3,036 for type 2 diabetes. It's a large expenditure to bring into a household.

I think that this province, given the apparent shape that our books are in, if you believe the Budget is balanced, which I don't, I think it's important that government finds a way to do it.

I call on the Premier to show leadership today. I call on the Premier to stand on this amendment to the amendment and tell this House that he supports what the Member from Morell-Mermaid just took forward here in the House. That he understands that Robert Ghiz was able to do it in a time of fiscal uncertainty. Was that what Wes used to say? Troubled times. Troubled waters.

Ms. Compton: Troubled waters.

Mr. Myers: Wes Sheridan used to say.

At that time of great uncertainty that Wes Sheridan had brought upon this province, Robert Ghiz still saw a way to find money to make that happen.

If Wes Sheridan and Robert Ghiz could make this happen, certainly our Premier, the Premier of Prince Edward Island and the finance minister who have –

Ms. Compton: Surplus (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: – brought this part so far down in the polls; a Premier who is trailing his party by so many points, needs good news. He needs good news, and you guys all know it.

Mr. Roach: You can't take advice from the third man.

Mr. Myers: It's very clear that if this government, at least wants to live up to the

standards of Wes Sheridan and Robert Ghiz –

Mr. MacKay: We'll trade you. We'll take Hal back.

Mr. Perry: I'm not going back.

Mr. Roach: He doesn't want to go third place.

Mr. R. Brown: He (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: You (Indistinct) leader (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: The leader would go to the party.

Mr. Myers: Listen, you guys over there shouldn't be talking about leaders. There's so many knives in so many backs over there you'd need a surgeon to take them back out. That's why there's a big bump in the health care funding –

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: – to remove all those knives over there that you guys have got in the Premier's back –

An Hon. Member: That's not a nice thing to say.

Mr. Myers: – you're going to need 10 surgeons to bring forward.

You know what? This motion isn't about this: the lack of leadership that is so apparent over there by this Premier.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: This motion is about doing the right thing for people who can't afford insulin pumps. That's what this motion is all about.

Do you know what? That's what the amendment was about and that's what the amendment to the amendment is about. We're all on the same page here, folks.

All we're looking for is a little bit of leadership from the Premier. I know you guys are too, I get it. Here's an opportunity.

This is a great opportunity, and all we added – we're not even removing what you guys put in: "as resources permit", leave that in place. Just add: "or when the budget is balanced."

Isn't that the whole purpose of bringing forward a budget? Isn't the whole purpose of financial prosperity by government? So that you have the money to put in the places where it's needed the most?

You know, I've watched over the last six years and I've watched the things that government has spent money on. Things like GeoSweep –

An Hon. Member: Wasted money

Mr. Myers: Wasted money on e-gaming, lawyers and lawyers –

Mr. Aylward: 2014.

Mr. Myers: I bet you this government, by the time you fellows leave, will have spent more on lawyers than any government in the history of Prince Edward Island. But you needed them. You guys are always in a mess. If you can find money for lawyers –

Ms. Biggar: Thank you –

An Hon. Member: We're going (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: – for the –

Ms. Biggar: – six more years.

Mr. Myers: – mistakes that you made –

Ms. Biggar: Thank you.

Mr. Myers: – if you can find money for lawyers for the mistakes that you made, then you can find money to help people with diabetes.

Mr. Roach: Lots of money there after Rossiter left. Don't be talking.

Ms. Compton: We have got to reach back there? Reaching back.

Mr. Myers: I don't know how far back you're going there, like –

Mr. Roach: It's not that far back.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct) back.

Mr. Myers: It's not –

Mr. Roach: Not that far back.

Mr. Myers: – that far back for you. It's a long way back for us.

Mr. MacEwen: I wasn't even born then.

Mr. Myers: Yeah. The member from Kensington was in diapers.

Ms. Compton: We're being positive here. He's saying good balanced Budget.

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: The member from Kensington was driving a tricycle in the period you're talking about.

Mr. R. Brown: Must have been a big tricycle.

Mr. Myers: You're going back pretty far.

An Hon. Member: Grade 8.

Mr. Myers: Anyway, there is a great opportunity here for government to do the right thing, and do the right thing by Islanders. Do the right thing by Islanders who have diabetes.

You know –

An Hon. Member: I was in the soapbox derby (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: Don't get me going on that.

An Hon. Member: Change again this year.

An Hon. Member: Broke up this winter.

Mr. Myers: Yeah.

An Hon. Member: Like everything.

Mr. Myers: Yeah, there are going to be 10 soapbox derbies in District 2 this summer. That's how we're getting pavement.

Mr. Roach: You know where the soapbox is.

Mr. Myers: Back to the insulin pumps.

If you believe in fake balance, which I don't, then you'll vote for this. There's no reason to not vote for this if you guys believe that the Budget is balanced.

Ms. Compton: We're being positive.

Mr. Myers: We're being positive. This is a chance for us to all be positive about a positive motion, because the minister of health wasn't opposed to anything else that was in it. He just wanted to add his resources bit. I understand that. He's got a budget envelope and he's got to take care of it, and that's acceptable.

But the finance minister with his fake balanced budget or his fake surplus –

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: If he believes so much in this, if he believes so much in a fake balance, then he can stand in the House and he can tell Islanders that everyone should vote for this, because it's the right thing to do.

Mr. Roach: Ron MacKinley told him.

Mr. Myers: Balanced Budget. I don't know why Ronnie MacKinley is friendlier to me than he is with you fellows these days. You could probably tell me why that is.

An Hon. Member: Where do you think we're getting all (Indistinct)

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) the amendment.

Mr. Myers: Anyways, it's the Premier that we need. It's the Premier that we need to his feet here. It's the Premier who we want to hear from. It's the Premier that Islanders want to hear from.

Premier, I wanted you to your feet on our amendment to the amendment, and I want you to tell Islanders, Premier, right now – I know – I want you to tell Islanders right now, Premier, that you support this amendment to the amendment, that you believe that you've balanced the Budget,

and you believe by getting to your feet that this is the right thing to do.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct) leadership.

An Hon. Member: Third time (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: No, I'm not (Indistinct) –

Mr. Roach: That was the audition for the play.

Mr. Myers: You couldn't even finish the sentence.

An Hon. Member: But he's uncomfortable with it.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Speaker: Okay members, now speaking to the amendment to the amendment, will be the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Henderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's great to have a great discussion here on the floor of this Legislature regarding the important issues around diabetes, diabetes prevention, insulin pumps, an insulin pump program for children and youth, some of the great things that we are doing with this particular subject.

I think it's important that the House understands a little bit about the complexities. Not many might understand the role that a Minister of Health and Wellness has to play in this province, and we are – well, we have, I think 36% of the total provincial Budget is in our department on a tune of close \$650 million. I know the hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture would understand the complexities and challenges of it.

On the surface, the amendment to the amendment that they're mentioning here might sound rather innocuous, but one of the challenges that I would see on it when in this particular fiscal year, we do have a significant increase in our Budget this year, but we also have significant demands on our Budget. We have lots of challenges, and I

think that the problem I have with their amendment to the amendment is, that you're asking our department to pick and choose the priorities as they come (Indistinct)

Are you asking us to pick and choose over diabetes, over long-term care commitments, maybe? Are you asking us to make a commitment over smoking cessation, something we're looking at as a very preventative measure that can impact Islanders –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) Mill River.

Mr. Henderson: – and the overall health of them?

Ms. Biggar: More support for mental health?

Mr. Henderson: Mental health is another, as the hon. member mentioned earlier. These are some challenges that are coming on as well.

I can well assure this House –

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) parents?

Mr. Henderson: – that the budget envelope that the Minister of Finance –

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) for grandparents.

Mr. Henderson: – gives our department will be spent. That's just a reality that we're dealing with. And when we have that ability to spend those dollars, these are the types of investments we would want to make. We would have wanted to make them into some of the challenges with people, like diabetes.

Other issues that we're faced with – and things can happen very quickly and unexpectedly –

Mr. Roach: - hundred and twenty (Indistinct) –

Mr. Henderson: – is repatriating services here to Prince Edward Island. We have a lot of Islanders –

Mr. Henderson: – that have to go off-Island –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. Henderson: – to get certain services, specialty services, and when that happens, I don't know when maybe Moncton or Halifax might make some changes in the services that they may be providing, and that's going to impact our overall budget.

I don't want to be picking and choosing between dollars for a certain service over there for other services.

Mr. Myers: Oh (Indistinct) priorities.

Mr. Henderson: We talked about dialysis here earlier. We've already repatriated the peritoneal dialysis to the province. There's going to be –

An Hon. Member: Going to be a bill for that.

Mr. Henderson: We've got huge transplants that are coming – that are forthcoming. These are the types of issues that they're going to be faced. I can think of others.

Nurse practitioners, we're looking at improving our complement of nurse practitioners in this province. We've made it in the speech to the – the Budget speech that hon. Minister of Finance identified, flu vaccines, to make universal flu vaccines.

Mr. R. Brown: Great.

Mr. Henderson: These are big choices that happened –

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Henderson: – in our department. So, I think it's really important that we want to try to allow what the first amendment, which basically states that: “where resources permit” and let's leave it at that, and I can assure Islanders that we'll do everything we can as we see as our budgets unfold, and we'll be making the appropriate announcements to deal with the appropriate issue that we're dealing with at the time, and I think that's where I feel it should be left.

Therefore, for that, I will not be supporting the amendment to the amendment to the motion, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: Ah, you don't believe in the Budget either. You don't believe the Budget's balanced either.

Speaker: Also speaking to the amendment to the amendment will be the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

Mr. R. Brown: Thank you –

Mr. Myers: Oh, balance doesn't make balance.

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

You know there's negotiations going on all the time –

Mr. Myers: How's your wrist?

Mr. R. Brown: Oh great, another 3,000 any time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. R. Brown: There are continuous negotiations going on all the time with the federal government. I know that intergovernmental – the minister of health and other ministers are working extremely hard to get more money out of the federal government.

These are programs that should be national in scope. Although I agree with the motion as amended by us, but I don't agree with the motion that is amended by the amendment to the amendment, and I'll not be supporting it, because when resources become available, a great, good Liberal government always puts those resources to where they're needed most –

Mr. Myers: Right in Tim Banks' pocket.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. R. Brown: A great Liberal government will always put the additional resources found within budgets to where they're needed most –

Mr. Myers: Yeah, like Don McDougall.

Mr. R. Brown: – and we will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Now speaking to the amendment to the amendment, the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wanted to rise – I do like the amendment to the amendment, or when the Budget is balanced, by virtue of the fact that it does show that when the resources are available as in a balanced budget then you should put them towards something as important as this.

At the same time, I just wanted to point out to the hon. members across the floor, especially to the Minister of Health and Wellness, that the seconder of this motion, the Member from Kensington-Malpeque, has done his research, and in fact, there is a report that he talked about from the Canadian Diabetes Association. I just pulled it up on our great mobile computers –

Mr. R. Brown: Bradtrivers.com.

Mr. Trivers: It's entitled, *The Economic Benefit of Public Funding of Insulin Pumps in Prince Edward Island*.

So, if the members from across would do their research, if the Minister of Health and Wellness would do the research, if he would listen to the experts in his department and the experts at the Canadian Diabetes Association, he would see that they have key report findings summarized directly in this report for him to look at that shows that the province would save money by implementing funding for insulin pumps for type 1 diabetes in adults.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trivers: So this is not a decision about trying to manage our resources properly –

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) on the Internet.

Mr. Trivers: – this is simply a decision about doing the right, common-sense thing, listening to the people who've done the calculations, they've done the reports, they've given the reports to you, they know what needs to be done, they're the experts, listen to them, and you'll understand the province can save money by following this (Indistinct) Mr. Speaker –

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: There's the leader.

Mr. Trivers: Please.

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) soapbox.

Mr. Trivers: Please, listen, do your job, get your head out of the sand, and implement this.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: Good job.

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) off that soapbox.

Mr. Myers: Let's hear it from the Premier next. Hop up.

Speaker: Okay.

An Hon. Member: You just did.

Mr. Myers: Hop up.

Speaker: Next speaking to the amendment to the amendment, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

There's been certainly some interesting debate go on this afternoon, back and forth between the two sides.

It wasn't my intent to put this motion forward to see amendments and amendments to amendments and so on and so forth.

I want to remind all the members in the Legislative Assembly that we're invited every year to a dinner at the Confederation Centre that's hosted by the Canadian

Diabetes Association. Jake Reid facilitates this event, and when we attend that dinner we're seated –

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: When we attend that dinner, we are seated with Islanders, average every-day Islanders. We're seated with every-day average Islanders who have diabetes, diabetes in their life every day. We hear their stories. We hear the advocacy work that Jake and these individuals do. We hear every year their top priorities. We heard that with regards to the insulin pump program, that after much discussion, much debate here in the Legislative Assembly, the former premier Robert Ghiz, did scoop the then health minister and announced it here in the Legislative Assembly, which was a great thing.

But, we're hearing from the experts within the diabetes association. We're hearing from average, every-day Islanders that are telling us, they are telling legislative members, that this is what is needed. The hon. member beside me spoke just a few moments ago with regards to what could take place, and what will take place, if such a program is put in place because, essentially, if individuals have the insulin pump, not just young people up to the age of 18, but all Islanders that have diabetes and could benefit from such a pump, that their outcome, their health, their lives would be better. Thus, reducing overall healthcare costs to Prince Edward Island.

In that vein, I just want to remind all members here that this isn't just a motion that came forward because we wanted to bring forward a motion. We brought this motion forward because this is what Islanders suffering from diabetes are asking for. It can be very costly to an individual.

As I said in my opening statements when I moved the original motion before it amended and re-amended, that it can cost upward to \$7,000 for an insulin pump. That's a heck of a lot of money, but if in the end it's going to reduce the overall healthcare costs and the budget for this government and this health minister, then I see no reason why, at the very least, we couldn't look into the cost benefits of this. It just makes sense to me.

The Member from Souris-Elmira spoke passionately about what it means in his very own household. He talked about the experience of his wife and the difference it has made for her in her everyday life. Any individual out there in PEI that has diabetes and you sit down and talk to them, they will tell you the same thing. If they have it, it's accessible. We're not saying, *carte blanche*; everybody with diabetes would be eligible for this. It could be another one of those programs that is means-tested.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Well, it's a discussion here. It's a debate.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Thank you.

An Hon. Member: Compromise. We'll work together.

Mr. Aylward: Exactly.

Rather than just outright, flatly saying no, let's talk about it. We had a great motion on the floor the other evening with regards to support for grandparents raising grandchildren. The minister herself got up and stated that it is her intention to have a pilot project in before the end of her mandate, which I believe is probably going to be in 2018 sometime.

An Hon. Member: Oh.

Mr. Aylward: At that time, I looked at the budget. I looked at the budget address, I listened to what the finance minister said the previous week when he brought in the Budget, that he was going to have a \$600,000 surplus, so I proudly stood that day and said: Minister, I just found you \$600,000, you're welcome.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: If that's what it's going to take, is a member of the opposition to go through your Budget to actually find the money to support this program then that's what we'll do. But, when we sit back and we look at initiatives that this government has done such as e-gaming, \$1.5 million and counting. Who knows where it's going to

end up, especially with the \$50 million lawsuit on the books right now against this government.

An Hon. Member: Oh.

Mr. Aylward: With GeoSweep, which is well over \$8 million cost to the taxpayers of Prince Edward Island –

Mr. R. Brown: That's ALC's fault.

Mr. Aylward: It's not ALC's fault.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Then if you look at this latest venture that this government is getting involved with in regards to the Mill River sweetheart deal, I think we're at approximately \$10.9 million there. Again, we see a government – now the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park talks about a great Liberal government and when the money is there they'll put the money where it should go to.

Mr. R. Brown: Yeah, you've got our philosophy down.

Mr. Aylward: Well, I think your philosophy, what I have seen over the last six years, is flawed and greatly flawed because I have seen millions of dollars spent on GeoSweep. I have seen millions of dollars spent on e-gaming. I have seen millions of dollars, again with a \$50 million lawsuit hanging over your heads.

Mr. MacKay: Hundreds of dollars at Dairy Queen.

Mr. Aylward: There you go.

Mr. Myers: Yeah (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Over and over again.

If your priorities would –

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: If your priorities were truly –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) buckets of chicken.

An Hon. Member: KFC.

Mr. Aylward: If your priorities were truly pure –

An Hon. Member: KFC.

Mr. Aylward: – and you supported the average Islander, you would know that an insulin pump program for Islanders suffering from diabetes is the right thing to do. You can continue to vote against our motions. You can continue to amend these motions, but you know – I like to believe that you know down deep in your heart that this motion is the right thing to do and if you want to do the –

Mr. J. Brown: Is it money for grandparents or is it insulin pumps (Indistinct)

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Chair?

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct) motion yesterday (Indistinct) 600,000 yesterday –

Speaker: Go ahead, hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct) priority yesterday was grandparents (Indistinct)

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Chair, I'm sorry. I'm embarrassed for everybody in this Legislative Assembly. There is a very important motion on the floor right now for debate and there is very obtrusive comments being made. There is a complete lack of respect for the individual that is standing right now talking about a motion, talking about diabetes, talking about average Islanders.

At this point in time, I'm going to sit down. I'm going to relinquish the floor, but I do implore all members of this Legislative Assembly to do the right thing and to vote for the amended, amended motion and I would like to hear from the Premier as well, his thought on this.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: That's you, Mitchell.

Speaker: Next speaking to the amendment to the amendment, the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

I had no intention of getting up to speak again and I'm a newcomer to this House. The Green Party is a newcomer to this House and I'm not going to stand here and pretend that governing is easy. I know governing is difficult, and sometimes I sit in this House and I'm amused by the (Indistinct) that gets thrown from one side to the other. Sometimes I'm alarmed; sometimes I'm ashamed. But the game of blame that: You guys did it worse than we did so what's the problem, or no you guys did it worse. That goes on perpetually and again, I'm not standing up here to defend or attack anybody at all. I'm just standing here to say I recognize that governing is difficult, and that good governance is about choosing the right priorities.

The motion – the amendment to the amendment to the motion is really what we're talking about here. Let's be clear. We're talking about the priorities of government and as has been pointed out by several people who have spoken to both the initial amendment and the amendment to the amendment, there are all kinds of places that we could spend money; all kinds of places. We have the grandparents as parents here. We spoke about kidney disease earlier. Mental health was mentioned by the minister, the school food – you could go on and on and list hundreds and thousands of worthy places where we could spend money.

Governing is about making those tough choices. Again, I'm not casting aspersions on any administration, current or previous, but I think good governance has to flow from a set of values. I think if we're governing without a foundation of solid values from which we're making decisions, then mistakes happen. Clearly mistakes in governance have happened in the past – the money has not been spent well. I don't think

anybody would – and no government gets it right. I understand that. There's no perfect government that has gone through its mandate and spent money in the most efficient and effective way, but I would hope that all governments strive to do that.

And I would hope that a Green government, should we ever arrive here on Prince Edward Island, would govern from a solid foundation of principles and values which would inform every decision we made, not just the spending decisions, not the way that we spend tax dollars, but every decision we make and every part of our behaviour in government.

The Green principles would look at governance for the long term. It may well cost us more. For example, we're talking about insulin pumps at the moment, that was the origin of this debate – let's not forget that. The upfront costs of insulin pumps are high. But, as the member just stated, research shows that the long-term benefits offer cost savings to the health care system.

There are all kinds of areas where governments could spend money up front, knowing that it's a cost to the current administration and also recognizing that the benefits that will accrue from that spending may not be seen for 10 years, or 20 years, or 2 generations down the road. That should not stop the decision to make the right decision – the right priorities and to spend the money where it needs to be done.

In health care, that, I believe, comes down to prevention. This is a small part of a preventive package that we could spend – a government could choose to spend, which would cost money now, but would save in the long term. We can talk about any aspect of governance and come up with principles that could do that. Transportation – we could invest enormously in electrifying our transit system; we could buy electric busses – the minister knows exactly how much that's going to cost us.

But it will take a long time for the benefits of that to accrue and the nature of governance – where we don't look to the long term, but we just look to the next term in office and we're more concerned – or I say 'we' – the administrations of the past have been more concerned with getting

elected and reelected rather than always making the right decisions. That's one of the foundations of the problems that we are faced with governance just now.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct) energy strategy.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I would also like –

Yes, the energy strategy, absolutely.

Ms. Biggar: Ten years.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: It would cost an enormous amount of money for us to, for example, take ownership over the infrastructure of our electric grid here on Prince Edward Island and to create a disbursed energy production system where every house can produce its own electricity. That's a massive investment, but the savings down the road – not for this administration, but for the future administrations and our children would be enormous. Those are the sorts of investments we should be making.

I think Islanders are wise enough to look at government and say: Well we realize if you spend money wisely now, knowing that that investment is going to have long-term benefits for this island, for my children, for my community, for the health of the soil and the water, or whatever of Prince Edward Island, they will support that spending. But for us to stand here today and argue over the minutia of the meaning of a few words is wrong.

Really, the amendment could read – and it currently reads: “as resources permit or when the budget is balanced”, but we could spend the excess money that comes in on a million different things, as I've said earlier.

That's not good governance. Good governance is having a long-term plan, governing from a set of values that are going to create a better society for all Islanders. That's what we should be doing.

Really, the amendment, I could amend the – I'm not suggesting this, Mr. Speaker, by the way.

Mr. R. Brown: Oh no. Go ahead.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: No, no, I'm not going to do it. Really we could – the amendment could be:

Therefore be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly urge the Prince Edward Island government to expand coverage for the insulin pump program as the will to allocate resources permits.

I mean, that's where it comes from. It's the will to do it.

I think both of these amendments are actually redundant. I think we can have the will to allocate resources if government is willing to do that. That's what we're talking about here. It's about priorities and it's about making choices of good governance – and again, governance that flows from a solid and immovable set of values and principles. That's been the problem, I believe, in governance on Prince Edward Island, and in other jurisdictions for far too long – that we're not governing from a solid set of principles.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Speaking to the amendment to the amendment will be the hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very proud to rise to speak to the amendment to the amendment for Motion No. 92. I think it's a very good motion. It's a motion that I think touches everybody in this Legislature. I don't think that any one individual can get up and stand in this House and say that it's more important to them than the person sitting next to them, because I'm sure it's important to each and every person in here. There's not one person, I'll bet you, in this Legislature that doesn't know somebody that's not affected with diabetes and that's the truth.

I'll sit on a level playing field – that every one of us in here had the same concern for this as the person sitting next to you. This government, over the last number of years, has been challenged with a number of different things related to health and I think one only needs to look at the size of the budget and how it's grown over the last 10,

11 years in health – many, many more services that are provided.

I could stand here – any one of us could stand here tonight and say, we could take this and say: we could exchange diabetes for heart and stroke; we could exchange diabetes for cancer. We could exchange for so many different – multiple sclerosis, transplants, more drugs in the formulae, all of these things are important.

As the minister of finance, there's nothing I'd like better than to be able to turn around to the minister of health and say: Minister of Health, there's another \$5 million that we found in the budget. Put it where it's needed the most. You have the staff, you have the resources, they do the research, they know where it should go. So, to just stand up and say: The Minister of Finance has a few extra dollars in the budget this year – little tiny surplus – go on, spend it over there. Well, you know what? We have a huge staff behind that minister that recommends to us and provides us great guidance and they have done so over the number of years.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Roach: Do I still have the floor, Mr. Speaker, or does Dot Com have it?

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: The disrespect from you.

Speaker: Okay, the hon. minister does have the floor.

Mr. Roach: I think the body of this motion is good –

Mr. Myers: Speaking to the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Roach: I am speaking –

Mr. Trivers: I can tell you how to save money in your department, too.

Mr. R. Brown: Ah come on. Would you have some respect (Indistinct)?

Speaker: Hon. members, can you be quiet for two minutes?

Mr. Roach: You know, Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance, I take my job seriously. I've done the best that I –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: Books are cooked.

Mr. R. Brown: Oh, that's not – (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) it doesn't bother me if you look at me angry.

Mr. Roach: I'm not looking at you angry, I just – you're just showing us all exactly what you are.

Speaker: Hon. members, where do you think you are anyway? Let's have some respect. You're not acting like you're in the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island. I've said this before a long time ago. Now to be honest with you, today in this House was pretty near a write-off and I'm ashamed of it. I'm ashamed of the people that are in here that are acting the way you are. Now let's have some civility in this House.

Go ahead hon. minister.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was appointed to this portfolio two years ago. I take my job very seriously. I'm very proud that, through strong fiscal management, that we were able to reach a balanced budget with a very small surplus and I count on the work that's done and the preparation that's done before we ever get to announcing that budget. That's the staff getting together with each and every one of the ministers' departments and going through their priorities and what's important to them in the next year.

An Hon. Member: Call the hour.

Speaker: The hour has been called.

This House will recess until 7:00 p.m. this evening.

The Legislature recessed until 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: You may be seated, members.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of Guests (II)

Speaker: I'll call on the hon. Premier for recognition of guests.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of all hon. members, I'm pleased to recognize Peter Rukavina. He's been the head of the Home and School; a great contributor as a member of the Learning Partners Advisory Council and blogger extraordinaire. His son Oliver; a student at Colonel Gray, also a blogger and contributor to the social media, and with them they've got Ethan.

I'm told that Ethan is the first dog who has attended in the gallery. He doesn't have a visitor's pass, but he's very welcome.

Mr. R. Brown: That's a good one!

Premier MacLauchlan: We also have Fred Osbourne, who is been the chair of the English Language School Board, and the president of the Maritime Christian College and a great contributor to our province, as well.

Welcome.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. McIsaac: I'd like to welcome the Rukavinas and Fred Osbourne, as well.

Orders of the Day Government

Mr. McIsaac: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Premier, that the 1st order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: Order No. 1, Consideration of the Estimates, in Committee.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

I will now call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point to come and Chair the Committee of the Whole House.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests (III)

Speaker: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

If I could indulge the hon. members, as well, there is one other individual I'd like to recognize in the gallery this evening. We have newly transplanted gentleman that moved here from Ontario, Mr. Craig Davidson. I'd like to welcome him here to the Legislative Assembly. I'm sure you'll see him here many times in the future.

Craig, good to see you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. members we are on page 43. We have been discussing the estimates for Innovation PEI. Under the section Programs it has been read. We were under discussion.

Is there any further discussion on this section?

Oh, sorry, getting ahead of myself here.

Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism would you care to take a stranger onto the floor?

Mr. MacDonald: Sure.

Chair: Permission to take a stranger on the floor?

Some Hon. Members: Granted.

Chair: We'll wait until –

Mr. Myers: I don't have any more questions on this. I was (Indistinct)

Chair: Okay.
Good evening. Could you please introduce yourself and your title for the record?

Shannon Burke Director: Shannon Burke, Director of Finance, Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

Chair: Welcome, Shannon.

Mr. MacDonald: Madam Chair, I have handouts that I can provide.

Chair: The minister has handouts from the questions that were asked yesterday that he is going to provide to everybody.

Mr. MacDonald: Madam Chair, I can read off some of the questions just for the record, and then you guys, when I hand them out, can review them: can you bring back the expenditure details from the China trade mission? Was there an RFP for Stantec for work on the fabrication yard? What is the end of the Invesco labour rebate contract? Why would a company receive approval for capital improvements on a property not owned for the development fund? How much would the legal fees from Carr, Stevenson & MacKay on the Mill River transaction? Small business program listing. And one correction of information discussed during Budget; emphasis is still on operation on Prince Edward Island, but employment is not large enough to qualify for a labour rebate.

If there is anything else, we'll –

Chair: That will be circulated when the copies are made.

Mr. MacDonald: There is another one.

Chair: Oh, wait. Sorry, there is one more.

Mr. MacDonald: Also, we also have a dated transactional copy of information relevant to the Mill River transactions from

the beginning to the end to the sale. I'll present that, as well.

Chair: Thank you.

Anything else before we start?

Mr. MacDonald: That's it.

Chair: Thank you.
The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters did you have a question?

Mr. Myers: I did, it was a follow-up to stuff that I had asked for two days ago. I asked for the individuals who had travelled to China.

Mr. MacDonald: Did we not give the companies?

Mr. Myers: No. I was looking for the actual individuals. The companies were in a press release.

Mr. MacDonald: Can we bring that back to you, the individuals?

Mr. Myers: Yeah.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, you may recall last year during budget estimates we talked about the need for a public washroom down at the North Rustico harbour and in fact, there's a restaurant, On the Dock Eatery, that has volunteered to clean and maintain a facility that is at the – there's a museum there, there is their eatery – it's very much open to the public. In exchange, they would really like it if the province helped them out with some money just to pump out the facility because there are no septic beds.

Chair: Does this pertain to this section?

Mr. Trivers: Yes. Yeah, it does.

Chair: Okay.

Mr. Trivers: I wanted to ask you, minister, if you think they could apply through one of the grant programs for the money to make that happen.

Mr. MacDonald: Sure, yeah.

Mr. Trivers: Yeah? Can you recommend which program?

Mr. MacDonald: Like I said last night, I think if you go in to and talk to one of the economic development officers then they'll likely direct them to an appropriate program that it may fit into.

Mr. Trivers: Okay.

Mr. MacDonald: I think that's your best bet.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: That's (Indistinct)

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

My question is about the angel fund that was just announced yesterday.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Where would we find that in this budget?

Mr. MacDonald: That's through IIDI so it wouldn't be in this budget.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay, we haven't gotten to that yet?

Mr. MacDonald: No.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) IIDI (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Innovation PEI and Tourism PEI.

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) IIDI (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Or FPEI.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party has the floor.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

Looking through the list of recipients here for the (Indistinct) tab 10 of the handout – by the way, just while we’re doing this and Peter Rukavina is in the House tonight and I remember last year a discussion about open data and how much easier it would be for us all if we could access this in one place rather than flipping between a Budget book and my online notes and this.

Has there been any progress made in making this –

Mr. MacDonald: Actually, there has to some extent. I think through the Atlantic –

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: – Atlantic Growth Strategy, that there actually is a committee formed at that level that is actually looking at open data and seeing what we can do as four Atlantic Provinces. It’s actually something that’s, yes. I think it’s a great idea actually.

Chair: Thanks.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

Chair: Do you have further questions?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yes, I do.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: It’s in handout 10 – the trade assistance list that is the large list and I see there’s a lot in there, of course, pertaining to the China trade mission of March of this year, but I see on the second page there is a line item for \$34,000 for the Premier’s mission to China from 2014. I’m just wondering why that’s showing up now.

Leader of the Opposition: Send that to Robert.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: It’s under Innovation PEI. There is a whole list of Innovation PEI.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah. We’re not sure. It may have been a typo, but we can definitely find out for you.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

I would also like to ask about the Advanced Marine Fund. I know we have an aerospace fund and we now have a cluster of aerospace businesses in Slemon Park. The Advanced Marine Fund seems to only have one recipient and that is Aspin Kemp. Are you hoping that this is going to grow into a cluster also?

Mr. MacDonald: Actually, we do have a small cluster of marine tech companies on Prince Edward Island right now; Babcock Canada Inc. and AutoCanada and Aspin Kemp –

Dr. Bevan-Baker: They’re the only recipient of this fund, though.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah, and it might be the other ones might not –

Shannon Burke Director: This is the first year (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: It comes down to the size of the company and the number of employees.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: That’s all for now.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Shall the section carry? Carried.

Hon. members, before we move on and for the purpose of the people who are watching us in the gallery tonight and those who are watching at us at home, especially Oliver, and welcome him to the gallery, what we’re doing now in the House is we are going through the Budget and the Budget Estimates and we’re discussing the Budget Estimates for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

We go through that line by line and all of the members of the House have an opportunity to ask the minister responsible for the department questions on what his budget pertains. That’s basically what we’re doing here in the House tonight. We will move on to BIO|FOOD|TECH on the bottom of page 43.

Mr. Aylward: Chair? I'm sorry. Just before we (Indistinct) can I just have one housekeeping question?

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

Yesterday I had asked with regards to the Mill River deal whether or not there was any stipulation within the agreement with Mr. MacDougall and his company, and the province, that would prohibit carving up this property and selling it for private lots, particularly around the Mill River area, and the minister was going to get back to me on that.

Chair: Minister?

Mr. MacDonald: Basically, in the agreement there is a 20-year, if you want to call it a moratorium, of existing – what its being used for now, that's what it will be used for for 20 years. It will be utilized as a roofed accommodations, campground, golf course. That's in the agreement for 20 years.

Chair: Thank you, Chair.

Chair: BIOFOODTECH

General

“Appropriations support a portion of the costs necessary to provide innovation and technical support to the food and bioscience industry. The costs include the BioFoodTech facility, equipment, operational and maintenance costs, and salaries for a core level of staffing. The facility enhances the level of services provided through fee-for-service, royalty and equity arrangements with private sector clients.” Operations: 800,000.

Total General: 800,000.

Total BIOFOODTECH: 800,000.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

I've had the opportunity to go out and tour this facility several times and I think that they do tremendous work out there and as

we're promoting PEI as food Island and various other taglines, I'm just wondering with that – and I mean we have Canada's Smartest Kitchen and so on and so forth, is there potential with the, hopefully, growth around manufacturing around food products here in PEI and specialty items, are we looking at all at enhancing what we have at this valuable site to potentially grow that as well?

Mr. MacDonald: Yes, actually we are. We're looking at Canada's Smartest Kitchen, working closely with them. Possibly even moving to one location and utilizing all of the facilities into one to enhance Canada's Food Island because it is something, obviously, that is important to us.

So yes, we are; most definitely.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. MacDonald: And the culinary (Indistinct)

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, minister.

That raises some interesting questions then, and I guess we'll probably have to wait for the Capital Budget in the fall, but if we're looking at consolidating these two entities, potentially, at one site, where would you be looking to do that at?

Mr. MacDonald: That hasn't been decided yet, but I think it's important that they work closely together because we hear it from individuals saying, they're utilizing both facilities at the same – just different types at different levels and I think it's really important, and to bring the cost down even further for the industry that is utilizing it. It's expensive to run tests and things like that on new food products, and that's what we hear, so we have to find ways to make it cheaper for industry to get their product to market.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair. I noticed there is tremendous work that's being done out at the university, whether it's at the BIO|FOOD|TECH centre or whether

it's at the NRC and so on and so forth, with regards to incubators. Is there an opportunity to market the resources that we have here on PEI to our neighbouring provinces to try and bring some of that in, and thus create additional revenue?

Mr. MacDonald: I believe the BIO|FOOD|TECH actually does take in business from other provinces, quite honestly, into Prince Edward Island already. So, yes most definitely to even expand that, I think that's –

I think we have a niche here with the facilities that we have. I think we have to kind of exploit them to some extent, if that's the right term to use, but I think there's an opportunity for Canada's Smartest Kitchen, Bio Food Tech, the Culinary Institute of Canada, UPEI, and the post-secondaries.

Mr. Aylward: Okay, that's fine for now, Chair. I might have more.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, thank you for the handout we just received back here. The first question you have on here is the expenditure details for the China trade mission. I think it was about \$134,000 or \$135,000, and you do have it broken down by promotion, transportation, business receptions, officials program, B2B consultant, and total IPEI.

I guess I was thinking for something detailed, like line items. I wasn't thinking just summaries. I know in this document, there's the overall price. This one you're broken down by six things. I'm looking for the detailed, itemized – obviously, there's numbers that add up to this. I'm wondering can I get an actual – the itemized expenditures for the China trade mission.

Mr. MacDonald: You mean by vendor, or –

Mr. MacEwen: Pardon?

Mr. MacDonald: What do you mean by – like itemized, every expenditure in that 135 –

Mr. MacEwen: Yeah, well – so you'd have a spreadsheet, minister, that would add up to these amounts here. That's what I'm looking for is that spreadsheet.

Ms. Biggar: Every tax.

Mr. MacEwen: Pardon?

Ms. Biggar: With every tax in.

Chair: We're not going to have debate across the floor.

Mr. MacEwen: Sorry, I'll go through the Chair.

Chair: Thanks.

Mr. MacEwen: The minister had weighed in, so I was trying to –

Chair: Sure, would you like me to ask her?

Mr. R. Brown: Well, she is the minister of transportation.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, do you have a –

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Chair: No? Okay.

Ms. Biggar: Seeking clarification, Madam Chair, actually.

An Hon. Member: Should go through the Chair.

Chair: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

Yes, I would like the itemized –

Shannon Burke Director: So by vendor?

Mr. MacEwen: There's a spreadsheet that we just press print on that adds up to all this, so that's what I'm looking for.

Shannon Burke Director: So you're looking for the ledger detail? Or –

Mr. MacEwen: I'm sorry, I can't hear.

Mr. MacDonald: The ledger detail.

Shannon Burke Director: So by payment?

An Hon. Member: The ledger (Indistinct)

Mr. MacEwen: Yes.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah.

Shannon Burke Director: Okay.

Mr. MacDonald: And a further note on that China mission where we're on it, we already had a company sign a million dollar deal, so it's kind of –

Mr. MacEwen: That's awesome.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah and there's a couple more pending, so it's good.

Mr. MacEwen: Chair?

Chair: Hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid, before you start your next question, could you stand your microphone straight up? Thanks.

The floor is yours.

Mr. MacEwen: No, I guess I'm good.

Chair: You're good?

Mr. MacEwen: Oh sorry, yeah, I know what my question was.

Is that like tomorrow we can have that, or tonight?

Mr. MacDonald: Well, I don't think we'll be able to get it to you tonight, but –

Mr. MacEwen: But tomorrow?

Mr. MacDonald: – we should be able to, either tomorrow or the first of the week.

Mr. MacEwen: My only concern is if we happen to get through this Budget tonight and we pass it, it's been past experience that we don't get some of that information back, but you'll commit to giving that –

Mr. MacDonald: I can assure you that we'll get you –

Mr. MacEwen: I much appreciate that.

Thank you, minister.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

I'm also referring to this handout that we just got, which I realize is the previous section –

Chair: Yeah, no worries.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I asked yesterday for a breakdown of the business expansion and product development grants that were given out.

I think that might have been either, I may have misspoken or it may be misconstrued, but I have the small business program listing here, but I was actually looking for the dollar amounts and to whom they were given.

Shannon Burke Director: Okay, so they would – each one of those programs is listed in the handout, so yeah, I guess it – yeah, you have the dollar amounts. I guess you would have to match them up, but we could do that for you and bring it back.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I would really appreciate that, just because it's doubled since last year and I wanted to know why that was.

Thank you.

Shannon Burke Director: Sorry, are you looking (Indistinct) budget?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I'm looking for the names attached to the dollars, where that 9,120,000 went to.

Shannon Burke Director: So the 9 million is actually the 2017-2018 budget; it hasn't been spent yet.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Oh yes, sorry, the 4 million from last year, yes.

Chair: Are you good, hon. member?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yes, I am.

Chair: Thank you.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Total Innovation PEI: 39,561,900.
Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. MacDonald: Excuse me, Chair?

Chair: Yes.

Mr. MacDonald: I have list delivered to me now of the names of the companies, and can I present that –

An Hon. Member: Carry it. Carry it.

Mr. MacDonald: – and have a copy of it, too?

Chair: Yeah, absolutely. (Indistinct) – he explained that, minister.

Mr. MacDonald: I have a list here now of – it was just delivered to me – of the companies that attended the China mission and the names of the owners, so I could give copies to you.

Chair: Thank you.

I'll give that to Ryan – oh, sorry. Just give it to Ryan.

Mr. MacEwen: That's the kind of (Indistinct)

Chair: Hon. members, we are now on page 45.

Mr. MacEwen: Chair (Indistinct)

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, when you say you are tabling the companies and the owners of the companies, is that the people that actually went on the trip, because the member from Georgetown was actually asking who went on the trip, so will you still be bringing that back?

Mr. MacDonald: We can bring that back, yeah.

Mr. MacEwen: I just wanted clarification for the member.

Mr. MacDonald: Sure.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you.

Chair: The top of page 45, Tourism PEI – minister, are you ready? Shannon, are you ready?

Mr. MacDonald: Ah, give us a second.

Chair: Okay.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

Just before we get into the section specifically on tourism, is there any specific handouts for this section that we could receive?

Chair: I think the minister – they're just getting set up here before we go. We'll ask him.

Mr. Aylward: It's just, it's a lot easier if you get them in advance so that we're not scrambling and –

Mr. MacDonald: So, there's handouts on this section.

Mr. Aylward: – trying to –

Chair: So they're going to have to be copied?

Mr. MacDonald: How many (Indistinct) –

Chair: Ryan, there's four sections, but there's copies of each section; four documents for everybody.

Hon. members, there will be four documents coming to you, and the Clerk is just going to have a copy.

Tourism PEI

Corporate Services

General Administration
“Appropriations provided for records management, reception services and office administration.” Administration: 17,500;

Debt: 45,000; Equipment: 17,000; Materials, Supplies and Services: 26,500; Professional Services: 27,000; Salaries: 282,800; Travel and Training: 9,000; Total General Administration 424,800.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair. Again, I think this has been raised many times before, and I'll raise it again. I don't think it's appropriate for us to be going through these particular sections while we're still waiting for handouts and to be able to provide the Members of the Legislative Assembly the detail around some of these numbers.

Chair: I think you now have them in your hand.

Mr. Aylward: I have one in my hand, Madam Chair, but there's many handouts that are coming –

Chair: Okay, well, we'll –

Mr. Aylward: – from what I can see.

I guess, Chair, my concern is that, as we're going through these departments section by section and we're receiving these handouts, that we're not given the opportunity to review the handouts in any amount of detail to formulate specific questions, or in-depth questions around some of these expenditures, and that's essentially what we're here to do during Budget Estimates.

Chair: Sure, thank you.

Hon. members, we're just going to wait a few minutes before we get into the estimates, until the handouts are given to all the members.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair, I appreciate that.

Mr. Trivers: Chair, can I get on the list, please?

Chair: Absolutely.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you.

Chair, while you're waiting, do you mind if I recognize someone in the gallery?

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests (IV)

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald has the floor for recognition.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Chair.

I just wanted to recognize Darren Creamer that has come into the gallery. He's a hardworking guy over there in District 8, I believe, and it's great to see you here tonight. If you have any input and questions for Budget Estimates, I'm sure you'll make sure that we know what they are.

Thank you, Chair.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

We've received so far three handouts for this section. I'm just wondering how many handouts in total are there?

Chair: Four.

Mr. Aylward: Four. Okay, so there is one more to come.

An Hon. Member: Five.

Chair: Five.

Mr. Aylward: Five. Okay, so we're just over 50% there.

Thank you.

Shannon Burke Director: Sorry, it is four.

Chair: Ryan is writing as fast as he can.

Mr. Aylward: No, that's fine.

I feel for you, Ryan. Again, if these were provided further in advance that you wouldn't be under the pressure to write as fast as you have to write.

Chair: I've just been told there's only four.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock requested we wait until we get all the handouts.

Mr. Clerk, could you just list off what documents that people should have. Do you have a microphone there? Do you want to come into the microphone?

The documents that you should have received for Tourism PEI: Strategy and Evaluation Grants 2016-2017; Tourism PEI: Official Languages Grants 2016-2017; Out of Province Travel 2016-2017; Salary 2016-2017 Forecast; Tourism PEI Professional Services 2016-2017 Forecast.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

My first section under general administration corporate services would pertain to the professional services.

Obviously, everybody should understand why I'm asking this question. We had a fairly significant spike in expenses there; \$400,000 for consultants.

I'm just wondering if we could have an explanation of why we went from \$27,000 to \$427,000.

Mr. MacDonald: That's the management fee paid to Mill River.

Mr. Aylward: I'm sorry?

Mr. MacDonald: The management fee paid to Mill River.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: The management fee paid to Mill River to the company that took over, that received the sweetheart deal?

Mr. MacDonald: Basically, \$400,000 was a normal loss for Mill River, which we contribute every year, which you're fully aware of. That was continued and it went into the management fee.

When he took over the property that was part of the package was that they're showing

a loss of \$400,000 each year. We continued that up until April of this year.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Is there a detailed expense report for the losses that would cover that \$400,000? Or is that just a blank cheque written to the new owner of this property?

Mr. Myers: Blank cheque.

Mr. Trivers: Based on the previous year's losses.

Mr. MacDonald: Basically, under the management contract that he would incur the expenses and we paid him. If I remember correctly, actually, there was more than \$400,000 in losses last year, but we only paid him the \$400,000.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Again, I ask is there a detailed breakdown with regards to those losses incurred last year or did we just receive a piece of paper saying, hey, you know what? I think I lost \$400,000 this year. Can you send me a cheque for that?

Mr. MacDonald: I think that was part of the negotiations that he assumed taking it over last year that there was going to be a \$400,000 loss. It was consistent for a number of years with the Rodd's management.

Part of the negotiation was will you reimburse me the \$400,000 if I incur those losses? If I don't, then it wouldn't have went through. He actually incurred more than \$400,000 in losses the first year in management.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Why would that be listed under a consultant's fee?

Mr. MacDonald: A management fee would be a professional fee.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: I guess I understand slightly where you're coming from as far as a management fee because last summer Rodd Royalty – or sorry, Rodd Hotels and Resorts still managed the resort itself. The golf course was still owned by the taxpayers of PEI.

Again, I guess what I'd ask for is a detailed breakdown of the \$400,000 or \$400,000 plus of what the taxpayers of Prince Edward Island paid for under these expenses.

Mr. MacDonald: I can check for you, certainly, and try to bring it back.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair. Has the government, you department, just, essentially, written X amount of post-dated cheques in the amount of \$400,000 to Mr. McDougall?

Mr. MacDonald: No. This was a management contract of 2016-2017. Now that he has purchased this would be – you won't see the \$400,000 going in management fees.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Moving forward to 2017-2018, we have the professional services brought back to \$27,000. I assume that's because Mr. McDougall now has until the courts have finished with the judicial review that the Mi'kmaq Confederacy has asked for because of the failure of duty to consult.

But, until that time, Mr. McDougall has presumed ownership of this property. Moving forward, where will these losses, because you've already established that the losses would be paid for X amount of years to Mr. McDougall.

Where will these losses be recorded under?

Shannon Burke Director: Because they're in the form of grant, they'll be paid under the strategy and evaluation grant.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

In future years do you anticipate the losses to exceed \$400,000 or presumably, could we expect to see a reporting of losses double, triple, quadruple, this amount from Mr. McDougall that the taxpayers will be on the hook to pay?

Mr. MacDonald: If he exceeds it – he's in an operating grant right, of 1.6 million so –

Shannon Burke Director: Over six years.

Mr. MacDonald: Over six years so there is no – that's the 400,000 is set in that operating grant.

It's been losing anywhere between, well, up to 550,000 a year.

Shannon Burke Director: It actually decreases over the next six years. I'm trying to get my hands on the numbers here, but it starts out at 400 and then it decreases –

Mr. MacDonald: It goes to three.

Shannon Burke Director: It goes down to 200 and then to nothing. The total amount over six years is 1.6 as was announced.

Mr. Aylward: I'm fine for now, but –

Chair: Thank you.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Aylward: – hey, I'd love to sign on to a deal like that.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Chair.

I'm looking at page 3 of the professional services grants for the 2016-2017 forecast.

I was just curious. I noticed that for BookPEI you had the \$312,245 in license/billings.

What is the status of BookPEI, and how many people are – how many businesses are using it (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Where are you? Are you on to –

Mr. Trivers: Professional Services handout.

Mr. MacDonald: Under Corporate Services?

Mr. Trivers: Page 3 of 4.

Mr. MacDonald: We're not that far yet.

Chair: Can you hold that question, hon. member, until we get to the section?

Mr. Trivers: Yes I can. (Indistinct) Chair.

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

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct)

Chair: Oh, sorry. I thought you were done.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: One thing, and I don't believe this was asked yet, when you look at the salaries line, under General Administration, it jumps up \$100,000. Perhaps it's in one of the handouts, but are you adding staff?

Mr. MacDonald: It includes two positions and one summer co-op person. It's including the new CEO salary moving over from IPEI.

Mr. Trivers: So you've got an additional co-op student and a CEO moving over.

Mr. MacDonald: And she was moved in the middle of the year, so that's part of her salary was moved with that – so, between the three of them – actually four.

Shannon Burke Director: It was moved from savings. We had savings in the department under the deputy minister and minister's offices – there were salary savings, so they were transferred over here.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: I'm just trying to follow this, Chair.

So to be clear, the CEO from Innovation PEI moved to the Tourism PEI department –

Mr. MacDonald: Cheryl Paynter, yes.

Mr. Trivers: Cheryl Paynter? She's an additional staff resource in this department?

Mr. MacDonald: That's correct.

Mr. Trivers: Was there no executive staff member there already?

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. It includes two positions in 2016-2017, three positions in 2017-2018 and also includes a co-op summer student.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Does one of the handouts have a breakdown of the employees on this?

Shannon Burke Director: Yes. There's a salary handout.

Mr. Trivers: There's a salary handout. Do we have that yet?

Mr. MacDonald: Yes.

Shannon Burke Director: You should.

Mr. Trivers: Oh yes. Okay.

Thank you, Chair.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

I just wanted to touch on the management fee again here. You guys paid Don McDougall a management fee for last year, but you also paid all the employees who worked there. For the green fees that were collected at the golf course, who got the money?

Mr. MacDonald: The term of the management – he collected all the revenue from operations, we paid the expenses and those expenses were reimbursed by Don

McDougall. Staff remained employees of the province. Don McDougall reimbursed Tourism PEI for the cost of the employees. The province provided Don McDougall a management fee of 400,000 – equal to annual operating losses for the past number of years.

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

Mr. Myers: Did he break even when it was all said and done?

Mr. MacDonald: No, actually, I think there was a greater loss than the 400,000 –

Mr. Myers: Okay.

Mr. MacDonald: – last year.

Total golf rounds at Mill River were 15 and I think you heard me says this before, and the year before they were 15,575, so there's a hundred and some rounds there total (Indistinct) something similar.

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

Mr. Myers: What were the rounds again in Mill River last year?

Mr. MacDonald: 15,402, compared with 15,575 and 15.

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

Mr. Myers: Would that be roughly a million dollars of green fees?

Mr. MacDonald: I don't think a million dollars; 600 times – what is it \$100, \$120 a round?

Mr. Myers: No. Not up there.

Mr. MacDonald: \$80?

Mr. Myers: It was \$65 tops, probably.

Mr. MacDonald: I don't know.

Mr. Myers: I don't think – they're not an \$80 – it wasn't an \$80 price point up there, but –

Chair: Do you have another question?

Mr. Myers: That's kind of what – I'm on the same scene here.

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

Mr. Myers: What were the costs of operation from your perspective – what you guys had into it as far as employees –

Mr. MacDonald: As far as employees?

Mr. Myers: Yeah. What did he have to reimburse you, I guess?

Mr. MacDonald: I don't know. It was the same number of employees – it's the same each and every year, so I guess we'd have to go back to last year and see exactly what it cost us as government. There was no change in employees under the management.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

I'm just trying to figure it out because my understanding golf was up last year by – I think you talked about it in the fall, actually. I think you had an announcement –

Mr. MacDonald: Lost money at two golf courses: Dunderave and Mill River.

Mr. Myers: Less money?

Mr. MacDonald: Yes.

Mr. Myers: Dunderave and Mill River, okay.

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

Mr. Myers: Could you bring back, then, what it cost you fellows to run the golf course in Mill River last year. Basically, what did you get reimbursed from Don McDougall?

Mr. MacDonald: For 2015-2016, right?

Mr. Myers: Yes, last summer. Also, could you bring back the projected revenues from the rounds of golf? Could you show you lost

money? I guess is basically what I'm trying to do – you could show me the financial sheet where – what it cost you fellows, how many rounds, what they were charged out?

Okay, just one more on that.

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

Mr. Myers: My last question in this section is: Do you have any idea – because I know for last summer season, the Rodd company had advertised in the winter because they thought they were going to operate, so they had advertised and they had sold packages. Their packages would be rooms and X number of rounds of golf – I don't really know how it works.

I know in Brudenell, you can come stay at Brudenell and golf one course the next day and golf the other course the next day and they have a price of \$300 and something per person based on double occupancy. Could you come back and let us know how many of the total rounds in Mill River last year were sold as part of a Rodd package? You would have that because it would be billed out separately.

Mr. MacDonald: Do we have that?

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: We may be able to find it as we move forward here. We may have it. If we don't, we will.

Mr. Myers: I don't have anything else in that section, but if you can find it that'd be fantastic.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

I'd like to carry on in this vein and I want to go back to the contract that you've signed with Mr. McDougall and the declining coverage of the projected losses for Mill River. So this year it was a 400,000. Am I correct?

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah. We've been subsidizing it 400,000 plus for the past number of years.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Sure.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: We're aware that – if I add up the salaries, which I've just done and these are just the people employed at Mill River Golf Club, which are specified in this handout, I get 478,000 – that's just the salaries of the people working at the Mill River Golf Club.

Now we all know that Mr. McDougall is not going to pay them the rates that they got – he's made that quite clear publicly. So, assuming the golf course, under this new management and at lower wage scales for the workers who work there, actually breaks even or makes a profit during the time of our contract – are we still obligated to pay those projected losses?

Mr. MacDonald: I believe so under the contract of the management, yes.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Even if the golf course becomes profitable, we're still going to cover the losses in that contract?

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Wow.

Mr. MacDonald: It's a grant – 1.6 million over six years.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Shall it carry?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Question on that, Chair.

Can you explain that again to me, Minister, how that works?

Mr. MacDonald: It's a grant.

Leader of the Opposition: It's a grant.

Mr. MacDonald: Right? 1.6. It's got nothing to do with – it's not performance-based grant. It's a grant. That was part of the 7.6 – it's 1.6 over six years.

Leader of the Opposition: Why wouldn't you have put a performance clause in there or something where it's diminishing if the profits are – if he's viable?

Mr. MacDonald: Well, you could look at that two ways. He could put it back in say: Well if I continue to – if I lose more, are you going to pay me more? It has lost money for the past number of years, so based on history. If he turns it around, that's great, maybe he'll have to hire more people to work at it, so on and so forth. It could work both ways.

Leader of the Opposition: Okay. I could see that.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Don't let Matt MacKay hear that.

Chair: Oh, Freudian slip.

Leader of the Opposition: So a question with that: Did we do any analysis on what the hon. member said, that Mr. McDougall did state that he would not pay the same wages that government was paying in the past? Did we do any analysis on how much money that was going to take out of the economy of up there, or how the effect was going to be on families?

Mr. MacDonald: I can assure you that I sit in caucus with a number of ministers from the area, and the important thing for us, we're dealing with the collective bargaining agreement and we're following that. Twenty-one of the 39 casual staff have signed up for seasonal hiring, 32 of the 48 casual and permanent staff have been offered positions with the new owners, 10 are awaiting interviews, six are either retiring or have not shown any interest. So we're on a good track right now with those.

We're obviously very concerned when that happens in any area, so we'll stay on that. We have human resource working with them pretty much on a daily basis and working with Mr. McDougall. So far, so good.

Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Minister.

Chair: Thank you.

Shall the section carry again? Carried.

Thank you.

Parks Administration

“Appropriations provided for the management and regional administration of provincial parks.”

Administration: 15,800; Materials, Supplies and Services: 37,900; Salaries: 291,900; Travel and Training: 13,000.

Total Parks Administration: 358,600.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Parks Operations

“Appropriations provided for the operation, maintenance and upgrading of provincial parks.”

Revenue: (1,010,000); Administration: 70,000; Equipment: 21,000; Materials, Supplies and Services: 855,300; Professional Services: 27,300; Salaries: 1,772,300; Travel and Training: 52,000.

Total Parks Operations: 1,787,900.

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: Question from the Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: So over the last couple of years, Minister, I do thank you for what we've been able to put back into Chelton park. One thing I've noted, or seen, is there seems to be a real problem with some of the equipment that's put back in the parks.

Tractor lawnmowers, okay? We're talking about little ride-on lawnmowers that the park's staff use to go around and pick up the garbage, empty the garbage cans and do a little maintenance like that, but yet they're using machines that are from back in the late 1970s and early 1980s and they're robbing from one machine to another.

I know in one case they actually – I've actually blew a gasket on a Saturday because they were trying down there to get things going. They had big events going.

They were robbing parts off three machines and they were told they weren't allowed to touch one machine because some guy wasn't allowed to take the starter off and then on and on.

So why are we not – what's our long term plan to replace some of these old machines at these parks?

Mr. MacDonald: Well I mean, each year we reinvest. We've done quite a bit at Chelton park, I believe in the last year. We've done quite a bit in Red Point. Cabot had a lot of work done. Each year we try to reinvest.

I know when our government took over we asked for a maintenance plan and each year they'll go out. They'll be out here now in the next little while seeing what damage winter has done to the parks –

Leader of the Opposition: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: – and –

Leader of the Opposition: But I'm talking –

Mr. MacDonald: – that's where they start and then they continue down.

Leader of the Opposition: But I'm looking at –

Chair: Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: I'm looking at that equipment line; you've only got \$21,000 allotted here. You can't fix much equipment across parks operation for \$21,000, the amount of parks we have.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah. There's still some though in materials, supplies and services that we could utilize out of there as well. If there's something that's really bad, usually the staff will come to us and say: You know what, it's time. And we'll try to find the money to do it if it's getting critical.

Leader of the Opposition: Can I get a commitment –

Chair: Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Can I get a commitment –

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct) lawnmower.

Leader of the Opposition: – to have a new lawnmower, or whatever, put into Chelton park?

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Leader of the Opposition: I'll tell you how bad – this is how bad it got last year. The RCMP actually had phone calls. They thought there was somebody down there shooting because of the noise this machine was making backfiring and going on. Talk about Souris-Elmira wanting an ambulance, I just want a lawnmower.

Mr. MacDonald: That's why you're not getting (Indistinct) – We can take it under advisement and we'll continue to – I hear you.

Chair: Thank you.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

I'm asking the question about the fact that the national park is free of charge this year because of Canada 150. Are you anticipating any negative impact on the – I see the income from the revenue from the provincial parks is pretty much as it was last year so you're not anticipating any negative impact?

Mr. MacDonald: From what I understand, I've been told that it's not in relation to campgrounds. If you're going to camp, you're going to pay. It's just the entrance to the park that you're not paying the ten dollars or whatever.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Right.

But you don't imagine that everybody's going to go up to Brackley and Cavendish and not go to the other parks?

Mr. MacDonald: No, because I think actually Brackley and Cavendish, their occupancy level is very high.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: Last year, going into this year as well.

Premier MacLauchlan: And it's only the admission to the park. (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah. That's what I said, yeah.

Chair: Thank you.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

Chair: Shall the section carry? Carried.

We're now at the top of page 46.

Brookvale

“Appropriations provided for the operation of the Brookvale Ski Park.”

Revenue: (412,500); Administration: 18,200; Equipment: 10,000; Materials, Supplies and Services: 227,400; Professional Services: 3,100; Salaries: 527,800; Travel and Training: 13,100. Total Brookvale: 387,100.

You good?

An Hon. Member: Carry it.

Chair: Carry the section? Thank you.

Golf Courses

“Appropriations provided for operating the provincially-owned golf courses. Budget estimates include direct costs associated with the operation, maintenance and marketing of the courses.”

Revenue: (3,407,700); Administration: 132,600; Debt: 58,000; Equipment: 45,000; Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,471,000; Professional Services: 4,800; Salaries: 2,343,600; Travel and Training: 35,100.

Total Golf Courses: 682,400.

Total Corporate Services: 3,640,800.

Shall the section carry?

We have a question from the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

You mentioned the other day in Question Period that you were buying \$600,000 worth of golf carts for Brudenell?

Mr. MacDonald: Brudenell and Crowbush, I believe. (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: Okay. Do you know how many carts that is?

Mr. MacDonald: Twenty, I believe.

Mr. Myers: Crowbush doesn't need any.

Mr. MacDonald: Twenty.

Mr. Myers: Was it 20? How many –

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

How many golf carts did you have in Mill River?

Mr. MacDonald: That's a good question. I'll have to bring that back to you. I'm not 100% sure.

Mr. Myers: Okay, could you do that?

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you.

Could you also bring back a detailed breakdown of the equipment in Mill River? So all the grass cutters, all the green machines, all the bunker raker machines if they have them – I imagine they do, they have them in Brudenell.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah.

Mr. Myers: Thank you.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

The other question I have is on salaries. Last summer you paid the salaries at Mill River and were reimbursed, and this year you're

projecting to have close to the same amount of salaries. Can you explain that?

Mr. MacDonald: It should be the same as – 2,343,600, is that –

Mr. Myers: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: So it's the same – the same?

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: For the –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: We reimburse for it, right? So we paid it and then they reimbursed us.

Mr. Myers: No, that's not the way you budgeted it, though.

Shannon Burke Director: It would have been netted here.

Mr. R. Brown: But the budget was done before the sale so (Indistinct) –

Shannon Burke Director: Yeah, so your budget is higher –

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Shannon Burke Director: – from 2016, 2017.

Mr. Myers: Okay, now I'm confused here. Hold it now.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you.

But your budget estimate, your budget forecast is what you're coming in at it, but you ran the golf courses last summer or you paid the employees last summer.

Mr. MacDonald: They ran the golf courses and we reimbursed – they reimbursed us for the salaries.

Mr. Myers: But that should show up in revenue.

Shannon Burke Director: It would have been netted against salaries.

Mr. Myers: Pardon me?

Shannon Burke Director: It would have been net against salaries, not in revenues.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

So the number that you got from Don MacDougall doesn't show up as revenue? It shows up – you just take it right off the number?

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you.

The net savings in salaries in Mill River is \$600,000?

Shannon Burke Director: There could be some other things in there. If there was a vacancy during the year, but in theory you would look at the difference between the old budget and the forecast.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

Could we get a breakdown of the costs, the salaries for Mill River?

Shannon Burke Director: We already have that in our list to take back.

Mr. MacDonald: That's on our list to take back to you already.

Mr. Myers: Okay.

Chair: Shall the section carry?

The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, you mentioned there were two golf courses made a profit and two golf courses lost money. Can we have a breakdown of

the four courses and their expenditures and revenues?

Mr. MacDonald: Yes.

Expenditures and revenues, sure. Mill River, just to clarify, I believe it's around \$23,000 they lost. Dundarave lost 350, Brudenell profit at 135.1 and Crowbush had a profit of 110.9.

Mr. MacEwen: The profit was –

Mr. MacDonald: We can get you a breakdown.

Mr. MacEwen: The profit was 110,000? Yeah, a breakdown would be great.

Thank you.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Shall the section carry?

Leader of the Opposition: Chair, if you want to read the title and read the heading –

Chair: And then the total?

Leader of the Opposition: And the total. We're fine with that.

Chair: Okay. Great.

Thank you.

Mr. MacDonald: Are we moving on? Strategy?

Chair: Strategic Initiatives. I'm just going to read the total – they just want me to read the title and the total.

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct) moving right along.

Chair: Strategic Initiatives

Strategy and Evaluation

Total Strategy and Evaluation: 3,297,500.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Regulation and Compliance

Total Regulation and Compliance: 110,200.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

I'm looking at the line item professional services, \$48,000, and I see in the handout that relates to inspection services and water samples. Is that – I asked questions last year about sampling water on the provincial beaches. Is that where that money is going?

Mr. MacDonald: No. That's basically audit samples of roofed accommodations and it's mainly a coliform bacteria sample, as opposed to a chemical. That would be more chemical – would be more done on the shores, but they are – just a further note on that because you may – but we are looking at that and there has been some movement on that so we will be continuing to take a look at that.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Just a follow-up on that.

Thank you, minister, for that update.

So there is nothing budgeted this year for doing water sampling on Island beaches in your department, anyway?

Mr. MacDonald: I'm just reading here as they just gave me a briefing on it. It's through environmental health, and we've been in discussions with them. Under the *Public Health Act*, it doesn't show that regular inspections or water quality assessments are done on cold water (Indistinct)

Health investigates may test the water, (Indistinct) results indicate (Indistinct) –

So they are looking at doing some random tests.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Through –

Mr. MacDonald: It would likely be through –

Dr. Bevan-Baker: – health and wellness?

Mr. MacDonald: – environmental health, which is – yeah, health. It's under (Indistinct) – yeah.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay.

Chair: It's under the hon. minister.

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct) minister.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I will ask that question when we get to that part.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Shall the section carry? Carried.

French Services

“Appropriations provided for the projects under the Federal/Provincial promotion of Official Languages Agreement.” Grants: 138,900.

Oh, sorry.

Wait, I'll read it again.

Total French Services: 138,900.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Total Strategic Initiatives: 3,546,600.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Tourism Marketing Communications

Digital Marketing

Total Digital Marketing: 759,000.

Shall the section carry?

The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

I beg your indulgence – I'm not sure where this would go, but under the Island East initiative of 50 beaches, I'm just wondering who is in charge of, I guess, monitoring and cleanup of those beaches. They are advertised, their signs go up. There are at least – let me see, I counted six or seven in district four and three of them would be – two of them are in a provincial park. One of them is a private park. The rest would be

beaches that are not really manned by anyone.

I'm wondering about cleanup. I'm wondering about fencing, protecting the marram grass, there are parties and they leave –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Are they provincial beaches?

Ms. Compton: Sorry?

Mr. MacDonald: Are they designated provincial beaches?

Ms. Compton: They're under the Island East project, I guess you'd say, but it is called 50 Beaches and they are advertised. I'm just wondering what the province's responsibility is. I know I had a couple of complaints last year and that highways went down to do cleanup at one beach, kind of, which I don't know if that's their –

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct) no.

Ms. Compton: – their department, right?

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: Well, somebody has to do it. Somebody has to do it, and if we're going to advertise or –

Mr. Myers: Only heard it from a friend. It wasn't (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: Only heard from a friend.

Ms. Biggar: No.

Ms. Compton: If someone is going to advertise and it's a government-related group, who is in charge of cleanup?

Mr. MacDonald: A government-related group? Who? We're not –

Ms. Compton: Well, Island East, okay? Which, great, they're advertising. If you go on – it shows Province of Prince Edward Island underneath their advertising.

Someone needs to clean up the mess and it has been brought to my attention. I've got

MacLeod Road Beach; I've got Matching Point Beach. I've got Ponds Road, I've got Beach Point Beach – they are all – there is nobody there and people are partying and using those beaches and there is no –

Mr. MacDonald: Well, if people are partying I would assume the RCMP would be involved.

Ms. Compton: Okay.

Mr. MacDonald: That would be the first part. As far as a cleanup, I mean, if it's really bad I'm sure that if you called the department of TIE or tourism –

Mr. Myers: Transportation.
Ms. Biggar: The environment.

Mr. Myers: Environment. The department of beaches.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: It's going to be –

Chair: The minister has the floor.

Mr. Myers: Local MLA.

Mr. MacDonald: It's going to be your local communities, hopefully, that – I don't think government can be responsible for every beach in PEI because we've got quite a few.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Mr. MacDonald: Plus the liability that would exist with taking recognition of those beaches would –

Ms. Compton: Okay, and a great marketing tool. It's online. We are advertising 50 Beaches, whether it's part of the province's advertising one way or the other, through Island East. They are beaches that are not in any way supervised. We have people driving on the marram grass. We have people leaving garbage. We have people leaving the remnants of a campfire and if you see a sign on the Trans Canada Highway that directs you to a beach and you send a tourist down there and they see mess, they see vandalism – who is responsible, I guess is my question?

I'm not saying that you're responsible, but somebody is and it's part of tourism.

Mr. MacDonald: The access to the beach would be something that would have to be looked at too, who owns the access route to the beach.

Ms. Compton: Well, if they are public roads that go right to the beach?

Mr. MacDonald: I don't have an answer for you, but I can tell you that would be a real challenge, I think, for any government. I think that maybe the government and community maybe work together and put some signage up or something, but to police every beach on PEI –

Ms. Compton: Well –

Mr. MacDonald: – you're going to (Indistinct)

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: They're public roads going to public beaches. There are signs up saying: This is a beach, go and enjoy it.

Ms. Biggar: Government didn't put the signs up.

Ms. Compton: Yes.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: Does the minister want to respond?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, do you have an intervention?

Ms. Biggar: Yes, I do, actually, Madam Chair.

Mr. Aylward: I remind the minister of transportation that she is supposed to be going through the Chair.

Ms. Biggar: The signage that you're referring to, I would get you to verify who installed the signs, because if there is

signage up it would be, perhaps, approved by department of tourism but that does not mean that it then becomes the responsibility. It's the same as if you're a private museum and you have a sign up on the side of the road, it doesn't mean that all of a sudden government is responsible for that private museum.

But in terms of public access, as you know, there is an act that has right-of-way to public beaches for visitors and for Islanders.

I know lots of communities that are very proud of their beaches and take responsibility for ensuring that that area is maintained. They're a great asset to communities.

Thank you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: I'm not denying that they're great access and great assets to our community, but they onus needs to be on somebody if we're going to use them as – advertise through tourism as public beaches that – it just leaves a bad taste, I think, in anyone's mouth from the community.

Who, from the community, if the minister is saying it should be someone in the community who is responsible, who from the community would be responsible?

I guess I'll ask you that. If you're saying it should be someone from the community who is responsible, who should be responsible?

Chair: Are you directing the question to the minister?

Ms. Compton: Well, the minister interjected there so I'm just –

Chair: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Compton: Whoever wants to answer.

Mr. MacDonald: I mean there are parties in fields. There are parties at beaches. There are parties just about everywhere. Kids and driving on dunes and driving through farmers' fields – there is no way government could, obviously, police that or – if there is

an issue with the 50 Beaches being presented by Island East – if there is something there I have no problem taking it up them based on your comments saying, you know, we have concerns; that if you're going to advertise these 50 Beaches what are you doing for liability on a travelling public.

Or, do we put signs up saying enter at your own risk? Or does the community come and put gates up that, after 9:00 p.m. the gates close, if that's a possibility?

I know that happened in district 17 at Rice Point. They put a gate up. The community went out and got a gate and put it up. The gate is closed at night. I believe.

An Hon. Member: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: They have someone from the community. I think there might be a little bit of coordination or collaboration that we –

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) beach.

Mr. MacDonald: Keppoch Beach is another one.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

You're saying there are parties in fields. They do not have signs directing them to that field to use it as public access.

I'm just saying there are at least five in district four that would be beaches that have nobody there manning them. They're in the middle of nowhere. The next day, you go down, and I've heard it from a tourist operator, who was sending someone to that beach saying it was a disgrace.

This is what is being advertised. The mess there, when this tourist went down, it was – it's not good PR for the province or for the Island.

I'm just asking. I don't need anyone to be defensive. I'm just wondering how we deal with that. If there are at least four or five that would go under the municipality of Belfast is the onus on the municipality to say – when they had no say in the signs going up and it advertised as 50 Beaches.

Mr. MacDonald: I would be afraid to take down the signs due to the fact that those accommodations or whatever tourism enterprises would likely be pretty upset with government if we started taking their signs down.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: I would agree with that. But yet there has to be – you know, you as minister would be embarrassed by the mess – that I can list at least three different places where there was a mess left. There is no one to man that. There is no one to pick up the garbage. There is no one to make sure that no one – that someone drives on the marram grass. There are 10 or 20 cars in an area that doesn't have room for parking for five.

It's just an issue that has been brought to me as the MLA and how do we deal with that. I'm bringing it to you as tourism minister. Do you have any suggestions?

Mr. MacDonald: I'll sit down with anybody and discuss any possibilities, or cooperation or collaboration on trying to ensure those beaches are maintained.

I can tell you that if there are 150 beaches on PEI, which likely there is, I'm not sure how government or the taxpayer could be responsible for every beach.

If there is an issue that the law is being broken you can call the RCMP. If there is a safety issue we put up, no swimming. If there are issues as far as bacteria in the water or chemical, that's a responsibility, I think, for us to ensure that the people are aware of that.

I'm not sure monitoring beaches with lifeguards and maintenance people – we wouldn't have much of a tourism budget left.

Chair: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Chair.

I know in our area the watershed group organizes, or initiates, I should say. A lot of people join in, a day when we do the whole

bay. It's quite an extent of shoreline in the kilometres.

Even in the national park, which of course does have supervised beaches and a staff and so on, it's the friends of the park who initiate a clean-up. People go and it's kind of a community activity.

If you take the Women's Institute Roadside Cleanup, which has been underway here for nearly 45 years, some communities do it better than others. It's the community and I think people are proud of it. I think, I would see the 50 beaches promotion, which is excellent material, as an opportunity to boost the community spirit to have an occasional clean-up.

The question of regulating parties gets into a different domain, of course. I know beaches in our area where you go in the morning to walk the dogs or whatever and there is quite a mess sometimes. The users tend to figure out some way to clean it up, but I think, ultimately, you have to, as the minister said call the cops when it gets to the point where you have broken glass and the kind of rowdiness that becomes a public nuisance.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair, and I thank the Premier for that.

First of all, say the broken glass and the bonfire has been cleaned up a number of times by people who live close by.

I'd also like to, maybe, thank you for bringing up the watershed groups because as the Minister of Communities, Land and Environment realizes, the Belfast area is one of the only areas on PEI that does not have a watershed group and is lobbying hard to ensure that we do that.

Maybe you can have a word with the minister –

An Hon. Member: These are estimates.

Ms. Compton: – he's been working hard, as well. I appreciate that. We have a group who is really interested in having a watershed group in that area. It's the only area on PEI, and it's a huge area, that does not have a

watershed group. The onus could be put on that group, maybe, but it is an issue.

As the MLA, I wanted to bring it up because constituents are concerned. We're proud of our beaches. We want people to use them, but when you go down and see a mess it's very discouraging.

Chair: Shall the section carry?

Mr. Aylward: Chair?

Chair: Oh, sorry, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, I did have you on the list, I just my book slid underneath.

Mr. Aylward: That's fine, Chair.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

My question would be, first and foremost: Can the minister explain, a little more in detail, exactly what Integrated Tourism Solution is?

Mr. MacDonald: The BookPEI, you're talking –

Mr. Aylward: Under digital marketing, Integrated Tourism Solution.

Mr. MacDonald: It's a reservation system.

Mr. Aylward: Okay. Is that a user-pay?

Mr. MacDonald: User-pay, yeah –

Mr. Aylward: So –

Mr. MacDonald: – \$100 for one to four units and \$150 for five plus (Indistinct)

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Then, would the user-pay, would that revenue be reflected in the top line under revenue?

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

We're collecting revenue approximately under \$40,000, but the expense to the taxpayer is, for example, just shy of a half a million dollars last year.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah, it's not just – it's also where we get all our statistical information from. It's a system that's used – we're likely one of the only provinces (Indistinct) maybe there is only one other one that can tell you by the end of August, you see the reports that go in –

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: – say, our occupancy reporting RDR. There was one just came out yesterday from the hotel association, which you may be familiar with from your past –

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: So it's used, not just for booking.

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: The other thing I think is important on this one too is, and I know the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald might have mentioned how many people are using this, how many businesses.

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: I think it's not necessarily the number of businesses but the number of units that are in those businesses because some units, if you look at Rustico motel and cottages. They have 24 units. I think they have four on BookPEI.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Integrated Tourism Solution, is that owned by the department of tourism? Is that contracted out? Is that a private company that owns that?

Mr. MacDonald: It's under a private company that we pay through the system.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

Who is that private company, or the name of the company and the owner of the company? Are they on-Island, off-Island?

Mr. MacDonald: It's on-Island. Dico Reijers, and I'm just trying to –

Mr. Aylward: Who?

Mr. MacDonald: Dico Reijers.

Mr. Aylward: Dico Reijers.

Mr. MacDonald: This has been in place for a number of years. I'll be quite honest with you; everybody is likely thinking, why aren't we using TripAdvisor, why aren't we using Expedia?

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: If you go to a small operation, and for the cost they're paying, it's really good for what they're – the bang they're getting for their buck, and I think it's been in place for a number of years, and we've looked at other systems, so it's going to – we'll continue using it, but I can eventually see it likely leading itself onto the larger systems.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

So, when you mean larger systems –

Mr. MacDonald: TripAdvisor, Expedia –

Mr. Aylward: TripAdvisor, Expedia –

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah, but they're very expensive.

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: If you take a two-room B&B, it's costly.

Mr. Aylward: Okay.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

But, Expedia and TripAdvisor and all of those companies right now, they're marketing themselves to a lot of the operators on Prince Edward Island like whether it be –

Mr. MacDonald: A lot of the operators use them.

Mr. Aylward: The Delta's, when I was at the university the last couple of years I was there, we signed on with them as well.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah.

Mr. Aylward: You're saying eventually the province is going to strengthen the agreement with one of those?

Mr. MacDonald: No, I don't. I think it's an independent decision that may affect a lot of the businesses, as you're well aware. You take a hotel downtown; they could be running eight or nine occupants out of book – a booking agency –

Mr. Aylward: Yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: – right on their system. A small operator can't sit at the computer all day and run eight different booking – it just, because it's a one-man show.

Mr. Aylward: Yeah, they can't control the yield management.

Mr. MacDonald: Exactly. So, BookPEI is basically an easy entity for that.

Mr. Aylward: Okay. Chair?

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

My other question on this section would be around salaries, so –

We had forecast, or estimated, 182,200 for 2016-2017, and it looks like we're upping that by just over \$100,000, and when I look

at your handout for salaries, I can't ascertain exactly what the increase is there.

Mr. MacDonald: It's basically three positions plus three casuals during the summer, and I think there was a new hire in social media.

Mr. Aylward: So, the new hire –

Mr. MacDonald: And it did – yeah.

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct) we have a vacancy, (Indistinct) –

Mr. MacDonald: Oh, okay.

Shannon Burke Director: – and manager, too, so (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Okay.
There was one position that was vacant during the year that the Rotary filled, but there were also a dedicated CRM position that was added as well, so social media and CRM are an increased.

Mr. Aylward: Yeah, Chair?

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Sorry, CRM?

Mr. MacDonald: Recording – it's a CRM, basically, is a – what's the (Indistinct) for CRM?

Mr. Trivers: Client relationship –

Mr. MacDonald: Peter –

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct) relationship, yeah.

Mr. MacDonald: What is it?

Shannon Burke Director: Client relationship –

Mr. Trivers: Client relationship –

Mr. MacDonald: Client relationship – thank you – management.

Mr. Aylward: Is that correct, Mr. Rukavina?

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, do you have another question?

Mr. Aylward: No, that's fine, Chair.

Thank you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Chair.

Just some quick questions. Are there plans, then? Can you confirm that you're phasing out BookPEI?

Mr. MacDonald: No, there's no plans.

Mr. Trivers: There are no plans.

Mr. MacDonald: I think, eventually, what will happen is the users that are using it will automatically switch, and government will have to look at it and see if it's feasible to operate, because it is a big cost to government.

Mr. Aylward: That's an application that might – youth might find under bradtrivers.com, eventually.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Who provides your website hosting?

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: Which one is it?

Mr. Trivers: I just noticed, Chair, that, you know, \$43,000 a year for website hosting is fairly substantial.

Mr. MacDonald: VERB.

Mr. Trivers: Okay.

Mr. MacDonald: V-E-R-B.

Mr. Trivers: V-E-R-B? VERB?

Mr. MacDonald: V-E-R-B.

Mr. Trivers: Would you know where they're located?

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

An Hon. Member: No.

Mr. Trivers: I can look –

Mr. MacDonald: No, I'm not 100% sure.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, do you have another question?

Mr. Trivers: Yes, just – the SugarCRM system, I know that's an open-source piece of software, which is great. I like to see that.

The \$55,000 a year, is that a maintenance charge for supporting maintenance? Is there a person hired there?

Mr. MacDonald: I think that's just a maintenance charge.

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

The CRM, basically, it's hosted externally. Is that – is that what you're asking? What was your question, sorry?

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Yeah, what's the \$55,000 for, for the CRM, since it's open-source?

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah, it's hosted externally, responsible for literature request, a newsletter list, and outbound marketing list. It does a little more than just host.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Who hosts it?

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct) solutions.

Mr. MacDonald: Solutions – (Indistinct) – where is it?

Shannon Burke Director: Solutions Metrix.

Mr. MacDonald: Solutions Metrix, I think it is.

Mr. Trivers: Where are they located? Do you know?

Mr. MacDonald: I can't tell you, hon. member. I'll have to bring it back to you. I don't know.

Mr. Trivers: Okay, that's good.

Chair: That's it? Good.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Visitor Services

“Appropriations provided for tourism information, travel counseling and Visitor Information Centre activities.”
Administration: 43,400; Materials, Supplies and Services: 20,700; Professional Services: 19,500; Salaries: 684,400; Travel and Training: 27,600.

Total Visitor Services: 795,600.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

The top of page 48.

Advertising and Public Relations – oh, sorry.

Advertising and Public Relations

Total Advertising and Public Relations: 3,541,100.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Media Relations/Editorial

Total Media Relations/Editorial: 332,800.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Fulfillment

Total Fulfillment: 413,800.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Publications

Total Publications: 411,000.

Shall the section carry?

Chair – the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

I know we've been steadily on the downgrade as far as producing the visitors guide. Can you tell me how many visitor guides we're printing now, annually, both French and English?

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

Shannon Burke Director: (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: 120 English, and 30 French.

Mr. Aylward: 120,000 English and 30 French?

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah.

Mr. Aylward: Any idea what the cost was with the reprint due to the photo on the cover a couple of years ago?

An Hon. Member: What's that?

Mr. MacDonald: That really good PR story that –

Mr. Aylward: Yeah, no, exactly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Aylward: But, I mean it did cost (Indistinct) –

Mr. MacDonald: I tried to convince the staff to do another one.

Mr. Aylward: Yeah, no, exactly. I thought it was great.

But what was the cost to reprint that?

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

Shannon Burke Director: It was a couple of years ago.

Mr. MacDonald: I have no – it was a couple of years ago. I don't know that offhand.

Mr. Aylward: I thought you knew everything. Of course they had to reprint it.

Mr. R. Brown: No, they didn't.

Mr. Aylward: Yes, they did. Yes, they did.

Mr. MacDonald: I don't think they did. I think they changed it on the web and stuff like that, but I don't think they did reprint it.

Mr. Aylward: I don't know. I don't know; the one with the tent.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Chair: Any further questions, the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock?

Mr. Aylward: No, that's fine Chair.

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct)

Chair: Great. Shall the section carry? Carried.

Travel/Trade Sales

Total Travel/Trade Sales: 541,800.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Total Tourism Marketing Communications: 6,795,100.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Total Tourism PEI: 13,982,500.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Thank you. Thank you, minister.

Mr. MacDonald: (Indistinct) carry publication (Indistinct)?

Chair: The Clerk would tell me. Did I carry – I carried all the sections, have I? Did I carry Publications?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: Yes, indeed you did, Madam Chair, and –

Chair: I carried the –

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: – you carried the totals (Indistinct)

Mr. MacDonald: It happened so fast (Indistinct)

Chair: No, I'm good. No, you don't – good.
Thank you, minister. Thank you, Shannon.

Shannon Burke Director: Good luck.

Chair: Hon. members, we're now moving to Health and Wellness.

We'll call the Minister of Health and Wellness to the floor.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Leader of the Opposition: Actually, minister, I do have a couple of specific questions for you.

Chair: Hon. members, the Department of Health and Wellness budget, page 88. Permission to bring a stranger to the floor?

An Hon. Member: Granted.

Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Aylward: Chair?

Mr. Henderson: I'd like to bring Kevin Barnes.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

Again, just a request, if we could receive any and all of the handouts in advance before we get going in this section –

Chair: Sure, thank you.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much. I appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Chair: No problem. –

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

Again, just a request: If we could receive any and all of the handouts in advance before we get going in this section.

Thank you very much. I appreciate your co-operation in this matter.

Chair: No problem.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Chair: Could you state your name and your title for the record?

Kevin Barnes Director: Kevin Barnes, Director of Finance and Corporate Management with the Department of Health and Wellness.

Chair: Great. Welcome, Kevin.

Leader of the Opposition: So what happens when – (Indistinct)

Mr. Henderson: What's that?

Leader of the Opposition: What happens when (Indistinct)

Mr. Henderson: No, this is health and wellness. Health PEI is who you're referring to. We have other – we'll be here for a while. You'll get to know everybody quite intimately and personally by the time this is done, I'm sure.

Mr. Aylward: Can I get you a more comfortable chair?

Mr. Henderson: Yes. It's a bit wobbly.

Mr. Aylward: (Indistinct) a recliner?

Mr. Henderson: Yeah.

Chair: Hon. members, there has been a request to wait to start until the handouts are handed out.

Mr. Trivers: Minister? Chair?

Maybe the minister can talk about his increase in –

Chair: I think there has been a request before we start, hon. member, until the handouts are handed out.

Mr. Trivers: I was thinking maybe the minister wants to just talk about his increase

in Net Ministry Expenditure while we're getting the handouts?

Chair: No.

An Hon. Member: Ready?

Mr. Aylward: I don't think we have all the handouts yet. That's why we'd love to have these a little further in advance, then we wouldn't have delays (Indistinct)

Chair: Hon members, you should have four handouts.

Mr. Aylward: Chair, I have – can I read them off to you, Chair?

Chair: Actually, I'm going to ask the Clerk to pass me the handouts so I could read the ones that you should have in front of you.

Thank you Madam Clerk.

Chair: Yes. I'll give them right back to you.

The handouts that you should have in your possession are: 2017-2018 Budget Estimates Employee Salaries Supplementary Schedule; 2017-2018 Budget Estimates Grants Supplementary Schedule; 2017-2018 Budget Estimates Professional Services Supplementary Schedule; 2017-2018 Budget Estimates Deputy Minister Travel, Supplementary Schedule.

Mr. Aylward: Chair?

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Chair.

I have three handouts. The one I'm missing is the last one. I'm not sure –

Chair: Which one are you missing, hon. Minister?

Mr. Aylward: The fourth one that you read off – the deputy minister's –

Chair: Thank you.

Here it comes.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Brandon.

Chair: The first section, on the top of page 88:

Minister's/Deputy Minister's Office

Minister's/Deputy Minister's Office

“Appropriations provided for the administration of the Minister's and the Deputy Minister's offices.” Administration: 22,700; Equipment: 1,500; Materials, Supplies and Services: 8,000; Salaries: 308,200; Travel and Training: 25,200.

Total Minister's/Deputy Minister's Office: 365,600.

Total Minister's/Deputy Minister's Office: 365,600.

Do we have any questions?

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock and then the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you very much, Chair.

I'm just wondering if the increase in salaries could be explained. Was there a vacant position? Because obviously it was estimated to be 323, forecast 256 and then estimated again to be 308?

Mr. Henderson: As you might be aware, last year we went through a number of different deputies to get to the deputy that we're at now.

So, I believe we had – obviously Michael Mayne had left and went to become CEO of Health PEI and we had – Kevin filled in for a while, as well as Dr. Heather Morrison.

Mr. Aylward: Oh, I had forgotten about Heather.

Mr. Henderson: So she was basically seconded to kind of do both jobs, I guess, for a period of time. I think Deputy Critchley started around July.

Kevin Barnes Director: July, yes.

Mr. Henderson: Something like that. So, that would be the main reason.

Mr. Aylward: All right.

Thank you, Minister.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: I'm curious why the deputy minister needs two executive assistants?

Mr. Henderson: One is mine, actually and the other would be hers. Like there's a pile of stuff comes into our office –

Leader of the Opposition: I can understand. Okay then. That would make sense.

Mr. Henderson: Yeah. Sandra would be mine and Carlene –

Leader of the Opposition: So, who is the deputy minister now?

Mr. Henderson: Dr. Kim Critchley.

Leader of the Opposition: And what is, actually, Michael Mayne's title?

Mr. Henderson: He's the CEO of Health PEI. So, I guess, to start off just to explain a little bit. What we're doing here now is the health department budget – Health and Wellness. The Health PEI is more the operational component of our department, so that'll be another statements and we'll have a different financial officer here at that point in time. We focus mostly around the policy, sport, some of those – environmental health, some of those types of issues.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: We always hear that there's shortage of nurses. We know there is probably 60 nurses short in Prince County alone in and we have – in Health PEI. And we're always – we hear those numbers constantly – of shortages in the frontline services.

Have we ever taken a look at why we need such a management team within Health PEI, Health and Wellness? Why are we not

looking to consolidate that and put more frontline services down at the bottom?

Mr. Henderson: Well actually, we have done that in lots of ways. But we are running into issues around retirements. There's factors that are a little bit beyond our control to a certain degree and recruiting is doing their best to keep up with that.

But if I give you an example of when we shifted some of the issues around Health PEI around having a management team, we've actually pulled in Dr. Tom Dorran, who does both duties. He's on the floor, for say, 40% of the time doing emergency room work and then he's also head of Hospitals Services East. So, we've done a lot of that – Dr. Heather Keizer would be the same thing. We've tried to make sure that our management team reflects a lot about what's actually being on the ground so they can have a really good, cohesive approach to management. It seems to be working out rather well at this point in time. But that's Health PEI, not the Department of Health and Wellness.

Chair: Sure. And hon. members, just a friendly reminder: If we could direct our questions to the section that has been read – and I know there'll be some – the minister would be happy to let you know if your question is appropriate for the section.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

Health Policy and Programs

Health Policy and Programs

“Appropriations provided to support the Department in carrying out its corporate management responsibilities in the areas of planning and evaluation, health policy development and analysis, and legislation.”
Administration: 39,200; Equipment: 5,000; Materials, Supplies and Services: 38,200; Professional Services: 228,900; Salaries: 1,168,600; Travel and Training: 56,800; Grants: 1,645,400.

Total Health Policy and Programs:
3,182,100.

The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River and then the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Ms. Compton: Under professional services, I see a set amount there of 228,900, but only 156,100 was utilized. Is there a reason for that that set amount?

Mr. Henderson: I'll as the director.

Kevin Barnes Director: Sure. That amount is set aside, essentially, to provide for professional services related to particular policy initiatives or directions that we may have from time to time in a departmental level.

What you would see in the past year was a little bit of a relaxation, I guess, in that area. We used more internal staff for some of our policy work. The 228 is essentially more a normal sort of level of expenditure in that area; and as I say, it depends on the nature of the initiatives that are going forward, where the expertise is kind of best provided.

But essentially, as I say, we kind of did more in-house in the past year and we'd expect to kind of return to normal levels in the year ahead.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

It looks like a set amount that would be contracted out. Is that –

Kevin Barnes Director: Yeah, it would be used for consultants or other professional services. Again, it would vary depending on the nature of the area that we're examining or studying in that case.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: So would it be something that would be outside of the scope that could be done internally, or just extra staff that are needed for –

Kevin Barnes Director: No, it's typically expertise that we wouldn't have within house. So we'd be looking at getting that expertise from a third party consultant or a professional.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

Also under Salaries I see that you're projecting \$1,168,600, which is up from what was actually the forecast. So is there a new hire or just increase in salaries or –

Kevin Barnes Director: Once again, if you compare back to the 2016-2017 budget, the numbers budget to budget are relatively consistent. What we had experienced in that section over the past year, we had some prolonged vacancies and we are now back at full complement so we do have those positions staffed but we did have a period of time – I believe there was three long-term vacancies through the course of the year that kind of attributed to that savings.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Under grants, I'm just wondering if you could explain to me what that entails as far as where they would –

Mr. Henderson: It could be Canadian Mental Health Association, UPEI, those types of –

Ms. Compton: Sorry, that's the handout.

Mr. Henderson: (Indistinct)

Ms. Compton: Okay.

Chair: Belfast-Murray River, you good?

Ms. Compton: No, that's good.

Chair: Thank you.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: My questions were asked.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid, did you have a question?

Mr. MacEwen: I did.

Thank you, Chair.

Minister, I know Health PEI will be coming up next. Do you have handouts for Health PEI as well?

Mr. Henderson: Not yet, no. I don't have – my chief financial officer's not here with that.

Mr. MacEwen: Chair?

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you for your indulgence asking this question about Health PEI, but I wondered – I assume you'll probably be up next when we get to estimates – could we have the Health PEI handouts while we're doing Department of Health and Wellness so that we can prepare for them when we're not in the sitting, too?

Mr. Henderson: Yeah, I think that's –

Mr. MacEwen: If they're ready.

An Hon. Member: Might speed things up.

Mr. Henderson: Yeah.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you.

Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Thank you.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

If you could just do that section and then I'll come back.

Chair (Dumville): Okay.

Community Care Facility and Private Nursing Home Inspection

“Appropriations provided for the inspection and licensing of Community Care Facilities and Private Nursing Homes in Prince Edward Island pursuant to the *Community Care Facilities and Nursing Homes Act*.” Administration: 5,700; Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,300; Professional Services: 10,000; Salaries: 421,800; Travel and Training: 11,100.

Total Community Care Facility and Private Nursing Home Inspection: 449,900.

Shall it carry?

Leader of the Opposition: Question.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: That \$10,000, Chair.

Minister, what would that be for and with that, if you could, I just happened to notice it, back on Health Policy and Programs you got 228. Why would we –

Mr. Henderson: That basically is for Legal Counsel for the community care facilities board. As you're aware, we've had a few situations where we had to pull licenses and sometimes we have to be very careful when we do those things.

Leader of the Opposition: So is – currently, Minister, is there any lawsuits against Department of Health and Wellness? Are we engaged in any legal action?

Mr. Henderson: Not aware about Health and Wellness but it's quite common in Health PEI.

Leader of the Opposition: Yeah, okay.

Thank you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, followed by the hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Mr. Trivers: Thanks, Chair.

I apologize. This actually is a question that's probably more about Health Policy and Programs, the section before this.

I was just curious, what type of projects you have underway in Health Policy and Programs that are looking at allowing caregivers to keep people in their homes?

You might recall, Minister, we talked about that at standing committee and everyone seemed to think it was a good idea and I was wondering if you have something that's happening in this department that's looking at that.

Mr. Henderson: Well, we've created a senior policy analyst. Is that in this section, though?

Kevin Barnes Director: That's in this section, yes.

Mr. Henderson: We've created a senior policy analyst. That's Michael Corman. He just started recently but that's part of his duties is to really rethink the whole concept of how we deal with long-term care, how we deal with the home care, what's the best assessment tools, those kinds of things. He started that, I don't know, maybe a couple of months now, something like that.

Mr. Trivers: Just curious, when you're doing that sort of policy planning, I'm assuming there's a lot of brainstorming almost, research, talking to people, putting – during that process, how do you – is there a way to get visibility into that?

This is an area that so many of my constituents and people across the Island have contacted me about. I would love to be able to sort of update them and say: You know, there's someone looking at this is what they're considering now.

Mr. Henderson: Yeah. Well, to start off, we have done some internal documentation or a review of the whole concept. We've taken that information and sort of looked at it and say: Okay, now we've got to, sort of basically, put the boots on the ground to make sure that it's effective. That's what Michael Corman is looking at right at the moment. He's been out touring a lot of our long-term care facilities. He's been out to some of our community care facilities, talked to the home care. He needs to get familiar with Prince Edward Island and how we do things here.

I've had a chance to speak with him. I know he's met with a lot of our other staff. Right now I think it's really a time to just get acknowledged with how things work on Prince Edward Island and then take his skill set and then start looking at how we can make some changes that could be improvements.

Mr. Trivers: So in general, people are very curious about what's going on in health and

how we're improving things and what changes in policy are being planned for and discussed. In fact, I've talked to people who have worked in health for long periods of time, maybe their entire careers, and retired, and sometimes they feel frustrated. They say: Wow, this is so huge and there's just so much and it seems like it is almost so hard to improve.

I was thinking to myself that if there was a way to have sort of a window into the planning and the processes that are going on – like, do you meet with various nonprofit groups and update them on what's going on in their different areas? Even frontline workers, right, to kind of know what's coming down the pike kind of idea. I think it would be really good for –

Mr. Henderson: Well, I guess –

Mr. Trivers: – for morale and for gathering input.

Mr. Henderson: I guess the comment I would have on that: We've done a lot of strategies as you're probably well aware. I mentioned the renal strategy, or, no, our diabetes strategy, we're in year three of that. We've got a wellness strategy, mental health strategy, cancer strategy. There's more.

Mr. Trivers: Right.

Mr. Henderson: There's so many it's hard to kind of recall them all. That gives a window where we're kind of heading and that's part of the process in developing those strategies and they're public documents and we usually put them out with a fair bit of fanfare and that gives us a bit of a guide, to where we're heading as a government and where the department is heading on the policy side of it. These are strategies, it's not the day-to-day operational side of it and that's where Health PEI would kind of be more in the place of taking those strategies and start to work towards implementation.

Yeah, so that gives you some sense of it.

Mr. Trivers: How do you engage the frontline workers that are doing the day-to-day work when you're talking about policy and strategies? Do you have a way to do that? Is there a standard way you do that?

Mr. Henderson: One recent one we just did was the nursing strategy and we certainly engaged the nurses' association or the PEI nurses union. Once again, one of our own nurses, Marion Dowling, was the author of that strategy and you know, those are ways and in that strategy it announces that we are going to be focusing on trying to make more positions, full-time positions up in the – like we had a lot of 40% positions, trying to get those up into a higher number so it maybe keeps people a bit more stable.

I've certainly had the opportunity to meet nursing graduates and hear what some of their issues would be as far as retention into the profession. I think there has been lots of opportunity to engage and get feedback.

Once you do a nursing strategy we're not – we kind of have the strategy so we wouldn't be engaging nurses the next week. It's kind of a work in progress.

Chair: The hon. Member from Belfast-Murray River.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

Under inspections, I'm just wondering what, I guess, the regulations are around dietary inspections?

When the dietician comes, do the homes know that they're coming?

I just heard some comments about the food at some establishments and what's being fed?

Mr. Henderson: I might refer to my colleague here.

Kevin Barnes Director: The dietary inspections are one, I guess, of seven inspections that take place with respect to community care facilities or private nursing homes.

Typically, they're an annual inspection. Again, it depends on what the findings are if there is a need to go back. Typically, they're an annual inspection. Oftentimes, they're on a general rotation. Typically, if (Indistinct) people know they're inspected in June last year that that inspection would take place in June of the current year.

There isn't always – there certainly isn't a requirement to provide advanced notice to facilities when inspectors are coming including the dietary inspectors. In some cases, it's purposeful to make surprise inspections with respective facilities to get a perspective on what's happening there. In some cases, there would be advanced notice to a facility. In other cases, it may be unannounced, essentially.

Mr. Henderson: I think I would add just to that, too, but we also are very cognizant if there is a, you know, either a complaint or an inquiry. Those are the types of things, when we get a call that would commence a follow-up, and to look into that stuff in a little further detail.

Ms. Compton: Chair.

I know this area fairly well. It was another call who was concerned about the food at a particular place. It would be under the discretion whether it was surprise or whether it was – yeah – if they were let know.

Kevin Barnes Director: Yes.

Ms. Compton: Okay, good.

Thank you.

Chair: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

Mr. R. Brown: Thank you.

What section are we under? Is this the whole –

Chair: You're on page 88.

Mr. R. Brown: Yeah.

Chair: Under Community Care Facility and Private Nursing Home Inspection.

Mr. R. Brown: When are we going to release the reports? When are we going to make these reports public?

We make reports public for every restaurant, every bar. When are we going to make these reports public?

Mr. Henderson: We're in the process of that right now. We've made a commitment

that that's something that we would plan on doing. We're probably, I would say, a few months away from getting to that point. There are issues just around the technology to do it, as well as, making sure that we're not causing problems, I guess. Yeah.

Mr. R. Brown: Will the reports that you're going to make public in a couple months, will they include all the reports back-dated since we made the resolution in the House to make them public?

Kevin Barnes Director: I think our intent would be to start on a go-forward basis. Subsequent to that, we would look at going back probably a year, perhaps two if the data is available.

Part of the challenge with respect to making the inspection reports available is our previous system was very much a manual system; paper driven. It was one that was really, in some cases, included resident-related information, which isn't really appropriate for public disclosure.

Our process over the last while has been to convert our inspection checklists, essentially to an automated form, to really look at the information that is captured and disclosed on those to provide some standardization on that. To work with both the community care facilities and private nursing home operators to keep them in the loop in terms of how that process is progressing so that they're aware of the information that will be disclosed when that happens.

As the minister has indicated, we are quite close. We have finished all the technology-related work and the standardization of those checklists now. Inspections that are being done today are using that new technology. We are actually conducting inspections today with the new tool.

Mr. R. Brown: Okay, thank you.

Chair: Total Community Care Facility and Private Nursing Home Inspection: 449,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Chair: I'll call the Deputy Speaker to go resume the Chair.

Chair (Casey): The top of page 89.

Health Recruitment and Retention

"Appropriations provided for workforce planning, and recruitment and retention strategies for physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals." Administration: 9,600. Materials, Supplies and Services: 53,600. Professional Services: 25,000. Salaries: 330,300. Travel and Training: 18,700. Grants: 1,389,100.

Total Health Recruitment and Retention: 1,826,300.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you.

I'm not sure if this is the right section to ask this in, but you recently had a big change in the model of care with nursing over the last couple of years, really.

Mr. Henderson: Right. It's more of a collaborative in its approach.

Mr. Trivers: What happened was, in many cases there were people that they said: Okay, we want to take you out of your position and now have you reapply.

Maybe it wasn't the model of care. It had to do with some changes to the way that staffing had occurred.

Mr. Henderson: Okay.

Mr. Trivers: For example, they took people that were LPNs and replaced them with RNs, I believe –

Mr. Henderson: RCWs, probably.

Mr. Trivers: And RCWs.

There were some people that were at 100% and they were reduced down to 60% for example, these sorts of things.

Mr. Henderson: That would be more Health PEI related.

Are you talking about the recruiting side of that, though?

Mr. Trivers: Yeah –

Mr. Henderson: I mentioned that in the nurse's strategy.

Mr. Trivers: That's why I was asking it here. I have a lady who – her position was reduced down to 60%, but she said: No, I'm going to wait until I'm full-time. I believe the way I understand it, 100% comes up.

In the meantime they continue to recruit in the background, in the way I would understand it, to find it, that 60%.

Anyway, she claims that there was a position that was filled, that she would be eligible for, with somebody else. It's a very detailed situation, but –

Mr. Henderson: It sounds it, but that would probably be a bit more union related, too. Once again, we have protocols that we have to deal with, with our partners in labour.

The one thing that we're looking at as we move forward is to try to increase those positions to be more full-time than we have currently.

There are factors in this, too. Some nurses like 80% positions. They're usually working full-time if they so choose to do that. It's no different to – and we run into maternity leaves, there's a whole lot – it's really complex, I guess, is what I'm trying to say when it comes to the issues.

We do have challenges in recruiting nurses and we wish we didn't have those, but I think we're making some headway and this nursing strategy hopefully will address some of those issues that have been preventing us from having those long-term successes.

Mr. Trivers: Okay.

Mr. Henderson: We are looking for nurses and we've – any of the nursing graduates and the new programs that we have got, which would be under this section from health futures to nursing summer student program, are all parts of what we're trying to do to attract and retain positions. And train internally, within the province.

Chair: The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. Trivers: I know that working night shifts is a tough thing for anybody.

Mr. Henderson: Yeah.

Mr. Trivers: It is necessary in order to provide 24-hour care.

Mr. Henderson: Yeah.

Mr. Trivers: One thing that – I just received a message, this morning, in fact, from a constituent who said she feels that 12-hour shifts are too long –

Mr. Murphy: Call the hour.

Chair: The hour has been called, hon. members.

Mr. Henderson: 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. Henderson: Well, we got our feet wet.

Chair: Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having under consideration the grant of supply to Her Majesty, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. McIsaac: I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Brighton, that this House adjourn until tomorrow, April 21st, at 10:00 a.m.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, at 10:00 a.m.