

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

Hansard, Published by Order of the Legislature

Second Session of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly

Friday, 21 April 2017

|  |      |
|--|------|
| MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS .....                               | 3118 |
| STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS .....  | 3123 |
| WEST ROYALTY-SPRINGVALE (CPL Scott Stevenson) .....                                | 3123 |
| CHARLOTTETOWN-BRIGHTON (Doug Harvey) .....   | 3124 |
| KENSINGTON-MALPEQUE (PEI Harness Racing Industry) .....                            | 3124 |
| ORAL QUESTIONS .....   | 3124 |
| LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Service from Premier's Department to Public) .....       | 3124 |
| RUSTICO-EMERALD (Public Trustee and Client Assets) .....                           | 3126 |
| RUSTICO-EMERALD (Public Trustee Financial Statements) .....                        | 3126 |
| RUSTICO-EMERALD (Public Trustee and Public Money) .....                            | 3127 |
| RUSTICO-EMERALD (Assets of Deceased Islanders) .....                               | 3127 |
| SOURIS-ELMIRA (Dollars Spent to Party Ad Agency) .....                             | 3128 |
| SOURIS-ELMIRA (Untendered Money Paid to Ad Agency) .....                           | 3129 |
| SOURIS-ELMIRA (Money Paid to Ad Agency for Website) .....                          | 3130 |
| SOURIS-ELMIRA (Cost of Design re: Budget Cover Book) .....                         | 3131 |
| LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (Creation of New Department-RRD) .....                   | 3131 |
| LEADER OF THE THIRD PARTY (PEI and New Rural Secretariat) .....                    | 3132 |
| TIGNISH-PALMER ROAD (Promotion of New Stompin' Tom Centre) .....                   | 3132 |
| CHARLOTTETOWN-LEWIS POINT (Needs-based Grants for Low-income Students) .....       | 3134 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Operating Agreement with Mill River) .....                  | 3135 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Reimbursement of Staff Wages at Mill River) .....           | 3135 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Number of Gold Rounds Sold as Package by Rodd's) .....      | 3136 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Revenue Made From Running Golf Course) .....                | 3136 |
| GEORGETOWN-ST. PETERS (Mill River and Government Money) .....                      | 3138 |
| STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS .....  | 3138 |
| HEALTH AND WELLNESS (Organ and Tissue Donation) .....                              | 3138 |
| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM (Forestry.io) .....                               | 3140 |
| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM (Tronos and Aerospace Industry) .....             | 3141 |
| EDUCATION, EARLY LEARNING AND CULTURE (New Investment in Student Well-being) ..... | 3142 |

|   |      |
|---|------|
| TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....                         | 3144 |
| INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS.....             | 3144 |
| BILL 73 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act..... | 3144 |
| ORDERS OF THE DAY (GOVERNMENT) .....              | 3145 |
| ESTIMATES .....                                   | 3145 |
| HEALTH AND WELLNESS.....                          | 3145 |
| HEALTH PEI.....                                   | 3167 |
| ADJOURNED.....                                    | 3170 |

The Legislature sat at 10:00 a.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of  
Guests

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

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

Good morning, everyone. Welcome colleagues here to the House and our visitors to the gallery; those watching from home or by television or Internet; of course, the good citizens of my District 9 York-Oyster Bed.

I want to wish great luck and success to the Charlottetown Islanders, who begin tonight their third round of the play-offs at the Eastlink Centre. They're on home ice against the Blainville-Boisbriand Armada. They're getting along great and I hope that will continue.

Tomorrow is Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, a reminder and an opportunity to remind ourselves of our duties of environmental protection and stewardship, and, in our case, leadership. That happens to fall together with the first ever Green Expo that will take place at the new School of Sustainable Design Engineering at UPEI; an opportunity in this province for people to expose and to work together and to consider how we can grow our efforts in green and clean technology.

Tomorrow is also Record Store Day. Lots of ways to celebrate what that represents in terms of those, who are in the business; the people, Meghann and Pat Deighan at Back Alley; there are a number of other places in the province, probably more than anybody quite would realize where the vinyl is on offer and what that represents.

And to recognize that we actually have an enterprise in the province that is producing vinyl records, which is not something that is taking place everywhere these days, Kaneshii Vinyl Press, and a lot of people making music. So, recognize all of the efforts together that enable us to have a Record Store Day and to have record stores.

Finally, to wish our colleagues here and you and our staff in the Legislature a great weekend, and in particular, to send our best

wishes to Chuck Bachmanek, who suffered a mild heart attack yesterday. I understand he's doing pretty well, and wish him a good recuperation and look forward to seeing him back in good health.

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 hope you have a good weekend everybody else in the Legislative Assembly has a good weekend.

As the Premier said, tomorrow is Earth Day on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and our environment is something we should all strive to preserve and protect, something I believe very strongly in. With climate change it's now more important than ever to take notice and to take action to protect our environment.

Tomorrow, is the starting of the Atlantic Green Expo at UPEI. With that they have some keynote speakers; Peter Childs will be speaking and also the hon. David MacDonald on Earth Day.

With that, we've, in my house have made a major change in the last month. We have now completed and turned our whole house from electric heating and cut back our propane heating and also have gotten rid of domestic water heater, which is electric and gone to a complete biomass system put on by Energy365, a new company here on PEI.

We have seen a significant change in the way we are now heating our house into a more green solution and I hope everybody takes advantage of that.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I'd like to start by recognizing Peter Meggs and Darragh Mogan and it reminds me of the concert that, Darragh is the conductor of the Canada Remembers Chorus. Many hon. members of this House attended; a delightful concert to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vimy. Thank you for thank you for that lovely evening.

As the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have already mentioned, tomorrow is Earth Day. A date that was started, got its origins in the 1960s probably with the publication of Rachel Carson's seminal book *Silent Spring*, which recognized the connection between human behaviour and the impact it has on the natural world.

The first Earth Day was in 1970. Last year, on Earth Day, 2016, we signed the Paris Agreement; 120 countries, including Canada of course, and the US and China signed on to the Paris Agreement.

A year later, that agreement – like the future of our world – hangs in the balance, and I think Earth Day is a good time to encourage Islanders to get out, appreciate this beautiful province in which we live, and also this wonderful world that we inhabit.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Ms. Casey:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

It's a pleasure for me to rise today and welcome my dear, dear friend. Andrea Greenan is in the gallery with us today. Andrea was the former president of the Charlottetown-Lewis Point Liberal association. She's a longtime nurse at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and as a longtime resident of Charlottetown she's also now a new resident of Rustico, so Charlottetown-Lewis-Point's loss is Rustico-Emerald's gain and I know she would make a formidable candidate in the next election.

I would also like to wish a great day to all those watching from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, especially those from Hunt Court,

Charlotte Court and 501 Queen. I always appreciate their advice and their wisdom.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment.

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

Surely it is wonderful to stand today on a beautiful day in Prince Edward Island and welcome all that may be viewing in from home today; as well, to welcome everybody to our gallery.

My good friend Wayne MacMillan is in the gallery today. Wayne and I spend a lot of time together, and I'm looking forward to spending some time with him in the near future as we travel over the Island and look at some sights and the weather is improving to do that in the very near future.

Peter Meggs, councillor from Cornwall who I often have a lot of conversations with, it's good to see him here today.

Andrea Greenan, who is on the far side; I certainly haven't seen a lot of Andrea since she moved to the Rustico area but we have lots of great ties and she's nursed many, many of my family members back to great health; and I, too, would support her candidacy in that Rustico area as well. She would do a super job, there's no doubt about that.

I certainly wouldn't be doing my job as minister of the environment, although it's been referenced several times today, Earth Day of course is tomorrow; 195 countries around the world recognizing Earth Day, 47 years we've been recognizing it here as mentioned by the Leader of the Third Party, and yes it is indeed a time where Islanders can take some time to think about how they can make their daily lives greener. Whether it be reduction of water usage, electricity usage, or just how we recycle our waste. It's a great time just to reflect on all of that and how we can make the environment of our Island, our beautiful Island, that much better.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you.

The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

I too want to welcome those to the gallery, as well as those that are watching back home in O'Leary-Inverness. The Premier mentioned tomorrow being national Record Store Day, and as an avid collector I had the opportunity actually to take a quick peek at some of Back Alley Discs' special yesterday and I'd like to inform the House I picked up, actually, four albums.

A couple was Ritchie Oakley, a former Maritime performer, and Matt Minglewood, were two that I picked up, but I did happen to notice that there was a couple of other albums there that maybe the Member from Evangeline-Miscouche would be interested in. There was an Eddie Arsenault record there, a well known Island fiddler, as well as a couple of Stompin' Tom there for maybe Tignish-Palmer Road if the new Stompin' Tom museum is looking for some albums to add to their collection.

Also recognizing Earth Day: In the riding of O'Leary-Inverness, I have four exceptional watershed groups that really do a lot of great work in promoting sound environmental stewardship; and I have to acknowledge my own home one, the Lot 11 watershed group, the Harmony watershed, West Point, as well as Trout Unlimited.

I also want to wish best wishes for tonight for Adam McQuaid and the Boston Bruins who are possibly facing elimination to the Ottawa Senators and I see Peter Meggs here with an Ottawa Senators logo on. I'm wishing that Adam McQuaid will be playing tonight. I think it's maybe a game time decision, but hopefully he'll be back and get them into another game or two and hopefully win that series.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Minister of Rural and Regional Development.

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

Pleasure to rise and welcome all the folks in the public gallery today, and all the good people that are home watching on the TV or the internet.

I'd like to say I'm very proud to be the Member from Alberton-Roseville, very proud of our Pee wee Regals. They didn't finish in first place, but they did in all of our hearts of course. I'd like to offer my congratulations to the Glace Bay, Nova Scotia team. They're the unofficial winners.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the people that voted. I know a lot of you voted during here in the Legislature as well as right across the province that's come out and supported the Regals. There are no losers in this contest. There are a lot of winners.

Everybody wins, right from the people that received the food from the Caring Cupboard that was collected by the Regals, right up to the great sense of community that I'm sure everybody's experienced, not only in my district but right across the province because it was a lot of people that supported this contest right across Prince Edward Island.

That makes me very proud. We always come together here in Prince Edward Island. Whether it's a medical benefit or a hospital fundraiser, we support each other and that's what's great about living in this great province of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you, Minister.

The hon. Member from West Royalty-Springvale.

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

I'd like to welcome, say hello to everybody out in West Royalty-Springvale and welcome everybody here to the gallery today, especially Peter and Darragh and Andrea. It's good to see you all here today.

I'd like to compliment Darragh on the wonderful concert he held last week as Canada Remembers for the 150, and I want everybody to know that I was up at three o'clock in The morning pulling Edmonton

through and I'll be pulling Toronto through tonight and probably –

**An Hon. Member:** Doing something for Boston?

**Mr. Dumville:** Sorry, can't help you there.

**Mr. LaVie:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. Dumville:** But I will give a good kudos to Adam McQuaid, our hometown boy.

Anyway, I hope everybody's enjoying our Canadian teams and what they're accomplishing this year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

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

It's a pleasure to rise today and welcome everyone that may be watching from District 18 Rustico-Emerald and everyone in the gallery, especially Andrea Greenan all the way here from the great community of North Rustico. It's fantastic to see her here. We have a lot of interaction. She's a great a constituent and I'd like to remind the members from across that right now it doesn't really matter what sign you do have on your lawn. We still have a secret ballot in our elections, so I just wanted to remind you of that.

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

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Also Mr. Speaker –

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

**An Hon. Member:** (Indistinct) Tory leader –

**Mr. Trivers:** I did want to acknowledge that the Atlantic Green Expo is starting today and I just wanted to read: "the first expo in Atlantic Canada dedicated to clean technology, green living, and healthy lifestyles."

I think that it's imperative that locally-produced clean energy is implemented in this province, not just for our environment but for our economy.

Lastly, unfortunately today on my way in I came across a fairly bad car accident at the Hunter River intersection, Hunter River and Route 13, and I wanted to recognize our first responders once again for the fantastic work they do and I wanted to urge the government to provide them with them as much support as they can possibly give.

I also wanted to urge the minister of transportation to make sure she has a plan not just for Hunter River and that intersection but for all of Route 2 which has become a major thoroughfare in the province but is also a place where so many people have their homes and businesses. I think the idea of an infrastructure summit might bring that to light.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Aylward:** You can learn more about it on [bradtrivers.com](http://bradtrivers.com).

**Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

It's also a pleasure for me to rise in the House today and bring greetings to everyone that is here with us today or that might be tuning in via the Internet or on EastLink.

Many individuals have already spoken about Earth Day, so I'm not going to go into great detail but I would be remiss if I didn't put a shout-out to the tremendous work over in Stratford-Kinlock area by the Stratford Area Watershed Improvement Group. They're true heroes as far as the environment goes, enhancing the wonderful community that I live in.

Also, on CBC this morning I listened to a very interesting story. Wayne MacKinnon actually was interviewed and he spoke about the recreational fishery that's taking place right now.

It's important that all anglers respect the fishery and do not overfish. There are concerns right now that, in particular, the smelt stocks are being decreased because there is overfishing there.

I would just ask all recreational fishers to be respectful of the stocks to ensure that it's protected and that there's lots of fish there for the next person to come along, and the next generations, as well.

I'd also like to send out birthday greetings to a couple of my constituents: Carol Gaudet McCardle, Maura Farmer, and Randy Myers, who actually turns 50 today. It's great to see another person join the 50 club over in Stratford.

And last, but not least, I know the Premier had just mentioned with regards to one of our staff, Chuck, who had suffered a heart attack here on Wednesday evening, but I also wanted to send out best wishes and a speedy recovery, not to just Chuck, but also to another one of our staff, Shane Carr, that has been suffering a bit of an illness as well.

With that, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

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

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

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

I'd also like to rise today to give a shout out to Meghann and Pat Deighan and wish them well, not just in relation to their record store, but also the Trailside, which is ramping up for another big summer. Meghann and Pat are two of the hardest working people I have ever come across. They both work two jobs and have a young child, as well, so I have some idea of how tough that can be, and they make it look seamless.

I'd also like to give a shout out to Andrea Greenan and welcome her here today, and to Peter Meggs and Darragh Mogan, welcome today as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I'd like to welcome everyone here in the gallery today, most especially Andrea Greenan, a good friend despite her afflictions and her affiliations. We've always had a great relationship and lots of fun, and a big shoutout to District 4, everyone in Belfast-Murray River.

Tomorrow being Earth Day, I want to recognize the work that's being done in Belfast to create a watershed and look to help from government to make sure that that happens. It's very important for our area to have a watershed.

Also, there are two plays happening in my district. The Belfast Players are going to perform *The Raccoon Valley Players present 'Stan of Green Labels'*. It's Saturday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

The Murray Players are going to present *Love and the Crabapple Cove WI*, and it's tonight at 7:00 p.m., Saturday at 7:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. at Murray Harbour.

Also, Red Shores on Saturday at 6:00 p.m., the first racing card of the season. I'm looking forward to all of those events.

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 House here today, especially people in the gallery.

But another great story out of the university's engineering sustainable department again; another great project that the students and the faculty came up with, palliative care – they went to the palliative care centre. They had some troubles out there with some mechanical apparatuses, lifting people from the beds into the tubs, and again, another great story from the University of Prince Edward Island and their students. They've come up with a model and

with the (Indistinct) innovation that further improves the health care of people in the palliative care centre.

So again, I want to thank the students and the faculty of the UPEI engineering department. They're doing a great job, not only for the students, but for the people of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Roach:** Yes sir.

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

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

It's a pleasure to rise today and welcome everyone to the gallery on such a wonderful day.

I'd also just like to pass on that I'm looking forward to speaking on behalf of the Premier and the province at the Industry Engagement Day, Student Design Expo, Atlantic Green Expo at the University of Prince Edward Island later this afternoon.

I'd also like to mention something that I should have mentioned earlier in the week. The Arsenault's Fish Mart Red Wings were successful in beating the Kensington Vipers on Tuesday evening to capture the Island Junior Hockey League B Division, and it's the first time ever, and I want to congratulate them and the hard work of the coaches. I'd also like to commend the owner of the team, Robert Arsenault, for all his dedication and hard work he puts towards the team. He's a wonderful, community-minded individual in the area, and he does a lot, and I wish them all the best in the Don Johnson Cup later on in Fredericton.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Statements by Members

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

#### **Cpl. Scott Stevenson at Special Olympics in Austria**

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

I would like to acknowledge a member of the law enforcement community who took part in the Torch Run for Special Olympics in Austria. Cpl. Scott Stevenson was on the final leg team that saw the Olympic torch go from Greece to Austria. Scott is a 30 year veteran of the RCMP.

This is the second time he was part of the group that brought the Flame of Hope torch into the stadium and lit the commencement flame. Scott also participated in the Torch Run in 2004 Special Olympics National Winter games that took place here in Charlottetown.

Scott spent almost two weeks in Austria running with his team into communities in Austria to share the good news about the Special Olympics and bring awareness to the World Winter Games. There is a total of 88 runners plus 10 Special Olympics athletes that will run approximately 110 kilometres through 46 cities and towns to share their message. He has been a member of the provincial Torch Committee for over 20 years.

The committee has many fundraising events to benefit Special Olympics such as the polar plunge, 'the world's largest truck convoy', and the torch run night at the Charlottetown Islanders game, and the fun run on Victoria Day. Roger Steadman of the committee is very hopeful that they are well on their way to a record finishing fundraising year. People are encouraged to donate online to this great cause and watch the donations grow on their website.

I invite all my colleagues in the House to join me in commending Corporal Scott Stevenson and the Provincial Law Enforcement Torch Committee on another successful year of raising awareness and donations for Special Olympics.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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



### **Downtown Charlottetown Incorporated President's Award**

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

It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to congratulate Doug Harvey on being awarded the Downtown Charlottetown Incorporated President's Award.

This award is presented to recognize people or businesses who have demonstrated outstanding efforts in downtown Charlottetown.

Doug has started three different quality-dining operations here in town since his arrival in Prince Edward Island over 40 years ago. In 1974 his first venture was set to be opened in the Revere Hotel on Kent Street. However, the night before the official opening of the pub, the hotel was engulfed in flames and was totally demolished. This unfortunate incident did not stop Doug. The Hearth and Cricket at the Dundee Arms became his first location just six months later. It was then followed by the Merchantman in 1994, and later the Pilot House opened in 2002.

Doug always chose to create restaurants that had character to add to the overall dining experience of his patrons. His current location, the Pilot House, is located in a heritage building that housed Roger's Hardware since 1896.

Mr. Speaker, I hope everyone in the House today will join me in congratulating Doug Harvey on this award, and I wish Doug and his wife, Judy, continuing success.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **PEI harness racing industry**

**Mr. MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and recognize the harness racing industry here on Prince Edward Island.

Harness racing is part of the Island way. It's been around for well over 100 years. The impact of harness racing has on our Island is

significant. It contributes millions of dollars to the Island economy, creating spinoffs in Island communities and creating hundreds of jobs.

You can often find hundreds of Islanders at the race track during the summer taking in the local entertainment. Prince Edward is home to some of the nicest facilities in North America.

This year marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of horse racing in Canada and coincides with Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This means it will be an exciting summer for Harness Racing in PEI, as we get set to host the World Driving Championship.

The fourth leg of the World Driving Championship will be held in Quebec before the drivers head to Prince Edward Island and Red Shores Racetrack at Charlottetown Driving Park for the fifth and final leg of the championship on Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. Delegates at the World Trotting Conference will be able to take in all of the action of the final leg which is one of the major highlights of Old Home Week.

This will be a major event for PEI that will attract thousands of people to Prince Edward Island. Tomorrow, racing will return for the summer as it kicks off in Charlottetown and will make its return to Summerside next month.

I want to wish all breeders, trainers, and horse owners all the best this year. It will prove to be an exciting and successful year in the harness racing industry.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

### Questions by Members

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

### **Service from Premier's department to public**

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

Two years in a row the Auditor General has reviewed parts of the Premier's own department to deal with vulnerable Islanders. Two years in a row the AG has found major issues with how the public is served by this Premier's department.

Question to the Premier: Why does this keep on happening to your department?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General has her annual cycle of studies and audits and reports. We cooperate fully with those. It's always welcome when you're in government to get the advice of the Auditor General. In particular, where there are recommendations to improve service, to improve systems in ways that can be beneficial to the Prince Edward Islanders that we serve and we welcome that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I have to question the Premier's leadership then.

In last year's AG report it was the maintenance enforcement, an office that directly impacts the well-being of Island children. Major problems were found with how this service was managed.

Question to the Premier: When the AG found big problems in maintenance enforcement last year did you check around your department to find out if this was an isolated incident or not?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and in turn with the great leadership of the

deputy minister in our department and directors and officials, we are continuously looking for ways that we can improve service; where there are lessons to be learned; where there are additional resources required. Indeed, that's a continuous part of the work that we do.

You can see that in the response to maintenance enforcement. Indeed, you can see it in other parts of the work that we do at justice and public safety.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Speaker, this is not the deputy minister's department. This is the Premier's department.

The AG certainly did check around. This year the auditor found over 300 vulnerable Islanders, who depend on the Public Trustee program aren't being well served either.

Question to the Premier: Why does this tired Liberal government continue to fail and protect our most vulnerable people on PEI?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, to be clear, when the Auditor General looks at areas where she might conduct an audit as part of her regular work and as part of her annual review, indeed, government is part of that conversation.

We were well aware and indeed, welcomed the work of the Auditor General to take a look at what we do in the Office of the Public Trustee, recognizing the importance of that service and the way in which it is important to the lives of the 300 Islanders mentioned in the question.

We welcome that work and are acting on the Auditor General's advice, and indeed, acted in anticipation of it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **Public Trustee and client assets**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, the Public Trustee administers the estates of PEI residents who have died leaving assets within the province when there is no one in a representative capacity.

In this year's report the Auditor General found that: the process to administer and safeguard client's assets is inadequate. There are significant internal control weaknesses and missing support documentation for money spent.

This is a question for the Premier. Premier, you are the minister responsible: Why are you treating our most vulnerable Islanders this way?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the Public Trustee is one of the longest standing services, aspects of the PEI public service, going back to the early years of government for the very reasons that are implied in the question and implied in our commitment to work with the Auditor General, receive her advice, and to act on that advice.

Or, as I said previously: To anticipate areas where we know that there is an opportunity to offer better service. One of them is, indeed, to do with documentation. Steps had been taken to put in place a more robust information technology to deal with those documents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, also was stated by the auditor: Public reporting is an essential component of transparency and accountability. The Public Trustee office has

no goals or performance measures of any kind.

This office held close to \$9.5 million in assets on behalf of these vulnerable Islanders in 2014.

Question for the Premier: Premier, why did government not provide the auditor with the assets figure for 2015 or 2016? What is this government trying to hide?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's Report has those figures, so I'm under the understanding that there was full cooperation with the Auditor General, which generally happens. It certainly was the case with the Public Trustee and the leadership of that group and of the Department of Justice and Public Safety and others who could help with her work.

I'm pleased to say, that she was able to conduct a complete audit and to provide advice. It's advice that we're taking and working on.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **Public Trustee financial statements**

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

It's a requirement by law that the Office of the Auditor General performs an annual audit of the Public Trustee's financial statements. Yet, the March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014 audited financial statements were completed only this winter, and they are still working on the 2015 and 2016 financial statements to get them to the auditor.

But, a bigger problem is the Public Trustee's audited financial statements have not been publicly available since 2011. This is six fiscal years and counting.

Question for the Premier: Premier, what exactly is this government hiding from Islanders?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms. Biggar:** Oh, scared.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, there is no reason to be other than open and transparent when it comes to this work. Indeed, to conduct and offer the services of the Office of the Public Trustee on the most efficient terms, and open and transparent terms, that's our commitment. There is no question, whatsoever, of anything being hidden.

One area, though, that was brought to light by the Auditor General's work is the need for additional staff in that office.

I'm pleased to say that this year's Estimates include a provision for an additional staff member to an office that currently has just under two FTEs to bring up, to in effect, increase by 50% the staff in that office, and to include an added allocation of \$86,000.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **Public Trustee and public money**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the 2015 and 2016 financial statements are not with the auditor.

When a client dies the *Public Trustee Act* requires that, "...until an executor or administrator is appointed, the Public Trustee shall continue to conserve the estate of the person."

The act further states that: All property held of a deceased person that is not claimed within five years of the date of death shall be converted into cash and paid to the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. LaVie:** Oh!

**Mr. Trivers:** Premier: How much money has this government made off with from deceased Islanders through the Office of the Public Trustee?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Mr. LaVie:** Balancing the books.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, let's remember that we're dealing here with vulnerable Islanders who don't have someone else to look after their affairs, which is why the Public Trustee has existed from the inception of that office going back many decades.

I think it's incumbent on us, in government, and in this House, not to add to any anxiety that people have, what the work of that office has done under law. That's exactly as the question said, and it doesn't help anyone to suggest that anyone's making off with their money –

**Mr. Myers:** Don't question the Premier on it.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – this is the operation of law and it's the work and the honest work and the open and transparent work –

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

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – of the Public Trustee that serve vulnerable Islanders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **Assets of deceased Islanders**

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, it's seven years going on eight without audited statements. Clearly there is something wrong, and it's been since 2011 that there's been any publicly published statements of this money.

What the auditor found when the 2014 books were finally given to her two months ago was shocking. In 2014, the assets of 72

deceased Islanders with a value of \$545,000 were converted into cash and paid to the finance minister.

**Premier:** Why is this government profiteering off of vulnerable, deceased Islanders who you are supposed to be protecting?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, that transfer of funds – anyone who read the Auditor General’s report would know it – takes place under the operation of law where people pass away and there aren’t beneficiaries. There’s nothing more to it than that, and I don’t think it helps anyone, and certainly not vulnerable Islanders, to imply that there’s anything else to it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, the last publicly available audited books are from 2009-2010. That can’t be disputed. They appear to show over \$900,000 being disposed from this office back to the province. In 2014, it was \$545,000.

The auditor has also found this office has no documented policy for seeking out and contacting heirs when a client dies. Rather, it appears this government sits on the assets for five years, then converts them to cash to pay to the finance minister.

**Premier:** How much has this government pocketed from deceased Islanders over your tired Liberal government’s 10 years in power?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Auditor General pointed out that there is no policy that lays out how those steps would be taken is not to say that that office fails to take steps to contact

beneficiaries, and that’s a very highly qualified and hard working team, a small team in that office, and indeed it’s a team that has been working with the guidance of the Auditor General and with the benefit of the work of her report, as well as in anticipation of ways in which that service can be improved to add staff, to enhance the information technology, and indeed to look at ways in which the legislation can be updated, and that’s something – that work is underway and will be brought to this House at a further sitting.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Dollars spent to party ad agency**

**Mr. LaVie:** Mr. Speaker, in the last election this Liberal government spent over \$800,000 on ads. That’s more than all other parties combined on the whole election.

**Question to the Premier:** Premier, why has your tired Liberal government spent over \$1.3 million of taxpayers’ dollars to your party ad agency?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms. Biggar:** It’s nothing to do with the House.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** That’s a pretty big number, Mr. Speaker, and it’s one I had not heard before, and I assume the Member from Souris-Elmira has some source or documentation to –

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – support it.

**Ms. Biggar:** Table it.

**Mr. Myers:** Yeah, it’s (Indistinct) yes.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Only took you two years to figure that out.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** We do indeed have robust elections in this province, and it's an opportunity to inform Islanders of our platform and of what they can expect if we form a government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. LaVie:** Well Mr. Speaker, between 2009 and 2016 your tired Liberal government spent over \$1.3 million to Results Marketing, your party ad agency.

Question to the Premier: You spent over \$800,000 to your ad agency in the last election. Why did you have to feed them another \$1.3 million of taxpayers' money?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, several points on this. One, it sounds to me like I'm being asked here about the affairs of the Liberal Party of Prince Edward Island, which I didn't realize would be the normal course of business for Question Period. Two –

**Mr. LaVie:** Using taxpayers' money.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – what the Liberal party does is with funds that it raises from donors, and it may indeed be that the tired people are the ones asking the question. It sounds like things aren't going too badly for the Liberal party by the numbers –

**Mr. Myers:** Knives are in your back though.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – that the member is using.

**Mr. Myers:** The knives are in your back. They're polling you. It's over.

**Mr. LaVie:** (Indistinct)

**Premier MacLauchlan:** And let me remind the House that I presented to this House in a statement in December a letter to the leaders of the other parties, inviting an exploration and an updating of our laws regarding campaign financing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Maybe it is a challenge to ask questions related to the Budget.

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

**Untendered money paid to ad agency**

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

Mr. Speaker, \$1.3 million is a lot of money. That's a pretty big fee. That's taxpayers of Prince Edward Island, that's their money.

Question to the Premier: Why was over \$1 million of this windfall for your Liberal party ad agency untendered?

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

**Mr. Myers:** Good question, more untendered contracts.

**An Hon. Member:** Could ask the same thing.

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms. Biggar:** All you've got to ask.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, I think the best thing that the hon. member could do would be to write a letter to the executive director or the president of the Liberal party –

**Mr. Myers:** Government (Indistinct) government money.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** And you never know –

**Mr. Myers:** It's government money.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** – if things are –

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

**Speaker:** Order, order!

Okay, hon. member, you're very close to personal attacks, which is not –

**Mr. Myers:** Well, it's disrespectful to the hon. member to (Indistinct)

**Ms. Casey:** Challenging the Chair?

**Mr. Myers:** No, I'm not challenging the Chair –

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

**Speaker:** No, I'm just saying you're very close to personal attack, hon. member, and just watch it from now on.

The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**Mr. LaVie:** Mr. Speaker, over \$1.3 million – that's a lot of taxpayers' dollars, and this Premier spent it. Don't put the blame on your party. It's your government that spent it.

One point three million dollars could give a lot of hurting Islanders a warm bed and a roof over their heads.

**An Hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. LaVie:** Instead, you fed your Liberal party friends.

Question to the Premier: Did you think taxpayers got value for the \$1.3 million your tired Liberal government fed your party ad agency?

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

**Mr. Roach:** Same question four or five times, that's tired.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct) do with the Budget or any (Indistinct)

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Mr. LaVie:** Must be guilty.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Mr. Speaker, first I expect the number that's being used is inflated. Two, if the hon. member would like to know more about this, I'd recommend

that he write to the executive director or the president of the Liberal Party of PEI, and you never know if you get some of the information that you're looking for on that, you might even learn a few things that could be helpful to the conservative party of PEI.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Money paid to ad agency for website**

**Mr. LaVie:** He talks of the conservative party – you spent more money on one election than all parties combined in the last election.

Change – you campaigned on change. There's no change. What change? It's just more of the same tired Liberal talk.

Question to the Premier: How is paying your Liberal party ad agency \$550 to put a website good value for money?

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Premier MacLauchlan:** Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that the money that is spent in the course of an election campaign in this province, whether it's by the parties represented here in the House or by others, is in the main spent through the publications or broadcasters who are able to help Islanders understand what's on offer or what the issues are in an election, so let me say whatever is being implied here – and I think it's frankly not the business of the House, but in any event – what is being implied here about the ad agency doesn't get at the essence of what these transactions are, and that is it's to pay for the value that is given by the print media, the broadcast media, and the avenues by which we inform Islanders. I believe it helps to keep a healthy media in this province and we don't apologize for that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Cost of design re: Budget cover book**

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

This Premier is putting this all in a tailspin – he’s trying to confuse the people. Between 2012 and 2014, your tired Liberal government paid your Liberal Party agency \$49,000 for a better access, better care campaign.

**Mr. Myers:** Yeah, untendered.

**Mr. LaVie:** Question to the Premier: How is paying your Liberal Party ad agency over \$6,000 to design a budget cover book that has nothing inside of it.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Just a cover.

**Mr. LaVie:** You paid over \$6,000 just for the cover. Premier: How is that a good value for your money?

**Mr. Myers:** Good question.

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

**Mr. Myers:** Runs away when (Indistinct).

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

I assure you that any work that that ad agency did with respect to the budget book that came out is not just for one cover on one book, that’s there to provide a number of books that – not only that are available to each and every one in this House –

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

**Mr. Roach:** – it’s also three different types of books that go out when we prepare the budget –

**Mr. Trivers:** I heard it was designed in house, he just sent it back.

**Mr. Roach:** – and send it out. There’s also a number of books out there that are prepared –

**Mr. LaVie:** \$6,000.

**Mr. Roach:** – for the general public and that’s something that’s been done for years and it’s good value for dollar.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Creation of new department-RRD**

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

Government recently created a new department of rural and regional development and while I’m glad to see the increased attention to rural communities, I have to wonder though that with the haste with which this department appeared and the continuing lack of a mandate letter, how well thought out the whole thing was.

A question to the hon. Minister of Rural and Regional Development: Could he please explain the rationale behind the creation of his new department?

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

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

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

Thank you for that question, Green Party leader.

We do have a mandate. I can read some of it here to you. I’ll just be brief because it’s – develop a comprehensive approach to rural and regional development –

**Mr. Trivers:** You know it well; you’ve got to read it.

**Mr. Murphy:** – advance the population strategy building on retention; recruitment and repatriation; work with the minister of economic development; work with the other ministers right across –

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

**Chair:** Members! Go ahead hon. member.



**Mr. Murphy:** – work with other ministers right across government to spur economic development in rural parts of the province; deliver employment investment programs – which I’m sure a lot of you MLAs are familiar with the rural job initiative and economic development agency program; and support small and rural businesses.

Since I’ve been appointed to this portfolio, I have been right across the province. I’ve been in Georgetown several times –

**Mr. Henderson:** He’s been everywhere.

**Mr. Murphy:** I’ve been in Belfast, met with the communities of Montrose, community of St. Louis, community of Miminegash.

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

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

**Speaker:** Okay, that’s good thanks.

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

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

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

I just want to be clear, I checked five minutes before I came upstairs to Question Period today and the mandate letter is, indeed, not published publically – it’s certainly not on the website. I expect the new minister, hope that we do see this new mandate letter soon.

The government website says that the new department will work primarily with the Departments of Workforce and Advanced Learning and Economic Development and Tourism. Surely, if we are to have a holistic vision for rural Prince Edward Island, all of the departments: Health and Wellness, Family and Human Services, education early learning – all of these should be included in the discussion.

A question to the minister: Why does the department’s mandate not include working with all government departments?

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

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

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

Actually, the mandate was published in the press release. I think it goes without saying, that every aspect of government touches rural Prince Edward Island. Rural and urban are so intertwined that it’s hard to function without crossing over each and every department.

**An Hon. Member:** That’s the regional part.

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

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

### PEI and new rural Secretariat

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

Just to be clear, it’s the mandate letter I was referring to, which is not, as far as I can tell, available anywhere.

One of the things mentioned in the description of the new department is the creation of a secretariat. Now rural secretariats, of course, have been implemented in other provinces and federally as Canada – a tool to engage rural citizens and stakeholders, and through that engagement to apply a rural lens to government policy decisions.

A question to the minister: Will PEI’s new rural secretariat follow this same model?

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

**Mr. Murphy:** Yes it will.

**Ms. Biggar:** Good answer.

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

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

### Promotion of new Stompin’ Tom Centre

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

West Prince residents are excited about the new Stompin' Tom Centre and looking forward to the grand opening to take place during the Canada Day weekend. The new centre is an important cultural resource for the area and residents want to ensure that it is sustainable well into the future and that efforts are made to promote it to both visitors and to Islanders.

My question is to the minister responsible for tourism: Can you tell the House today how his department plans to promote this new attraction.

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

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

It is a very exciting time for West Prince. The Stompin' Tom Centre is not just for the West Prince area, but Stompin' Tom is recognized right across this province and right across Canada. There's lots of exciting things, actually, happening in West Prince and we've been in discussion most of this week on some of them. We've partnered in funding on the establishment of the facility. We're considering a funding application to go along with the grand opening – we've been in consultation. We work closely with North Cape Coastal Drive to promote any events in that area and will continue to do so.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, your first supplementary.

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

In Stompin' Tom's words: Get to it and get at it.

Minister: What is your department doing to promote the region of West Prince?

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** Just recently the center is being included in our story ideas pitch to regional, national and international media. There's already been some uptake on it. Social media, obviously, is going to play a

significant role in the advancement of this product when it's completed. We will continue to utilize it and you'll see it throughout the summer on advertising activities.

We have a new initiative that we're perusing right now that Stompin' Tom will be a part of that, but I'll speak to that at a later date.

But I can tell you right now, we're very proud of Stompin' Tom and the West Prince area and we'll continue to promote it the best we can.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Tignish-Palmer Road, your second supplementary.

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

I've heard from visitors to the west that it's quite a gem up there that we have. They were quite disappointed when they stopped at some of the visitor information centres that, when they asked about what was up west, they were told: Really nothing is up west. They were directed other ways. We all know in this House that that's not true. West Prince has a lot to offer.

Minister: What will you do to ensure that your staff, specifically those that work in the visitor information centres, are well informed and will promote tourism in West Prince?

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

**Mr. LaVie:** Work with rural development (Indistinct)

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

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

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

That's not good to hear, obviously, as a minister. Each and every year we take the VIC individuals on a FAM tour and perhaps we can do it more in depth.

There's lots of good things happening in West Prince. Just recently, Moth Lane Brewing is going to be part of the Festival of

Small Halls, we have West Point Lighthouse, we have national wind farm. We have the potato museum.

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** We have Mill River golf. We have Stompin' Tom, the bottle house –

**Mr. LaVie:** Answer the question.

**Mr. MacDonald:** We have all kinds of festivals and events and we have to continue to promote each and every place on PEI.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** Hockeyville.

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

#### **Needs-based grants for low-income students**

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

My question today is directed to the Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning. Recent data from Statistics Canada shows that low-income Islanders are still struggling to access post-secondary education. Needs-based grants are designed to give student financial aid to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. As a result of a presentation from the UPEI Student Union, the Standing Committee on Education and Economic Development recommended that a needs-based grant system be explored to assist low and middle-income Islanders attend post-secondary university.

Could the minister update the House on what your department has done to address this recommendation?

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

**Mr. Gallant:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question, hon. member.

We appreciate that financial barriers exist for low-income students seeking post-secondary education. We provide over \$30

million in financial assistance programs and as mentioned earlier this week, we will soon have more opportunities for those who are eligible for EI to attain training.

Also, through a combination with our federal counterparts, programs offered through the student assistance offices, we are making student eligible with low-incomes that they can receive that \$25,000 in non-repayable assistance towards their education.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Minister, I understand that Ontario and New Brunswick have adopted comprehensive needs-based grant systems that help to cover the costs of education for those from low-income backgrounds.

Minister: Could you tell us if the Ontario and New Brunswick models have been examined by your department?

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

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

Our department has explored the approaches of Ontario and New Brunswick with great interest, and we noticed there have been some challenges in their model and we are closely monitoring the effects of these challenges and see how it affects post-secondary training.

Thank you.

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

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, your second supplementary.

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

Minister, Government of Canada has also expanded the Canada Student Grant

Program and created a fixed-rate contribution system for assessing financial need.

**Minister:** Has the provincial government changed our needs assessment protocols to match the federal program to ensure low-income Islanders have access to financial aid?

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

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

As I had mentioned earlier, we work closely with our federal government and the increase in the Canada Student Grant Program has allowed low and middle-income students in PEI receive more funding and we will continue to work and I look forward to helping students of low income and middle class students to have access to post-secondary education.

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

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

### **Operating agreement with Mill River**

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

Last year, this tired Liberal government signed an operating agreement with Mill River and they agreed to pay the new operators \$400,000 in management fees to run the course on all its properties.

Question to the economic development minister: Who got the revenue from the last year's operation of the forests?

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

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

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

Mill River, obviously I've discussed this several times, through estimates over the past week and prior to that, likely a couple of weeks. I think everybody recognizes the fact that it's a flagship property in West Prince. We just had questions about marketing in West Prince and what entities –

what we're trying to do to achieve success in that area.

Part of the management agreement and part of the whole package was tabled here last night. We've been as transparent as possible with this, and it's obvious that some people disagree with our position across the floor, but I can tell you this deal, based on \$850,000 losses per year to the taxpayers of Prince Edward Island with no capital improvements on the property going forward, is not something that we can sustain.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **Reimbursement of staff wages at Mill River**

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

I hear, and I think all my colleagues very much view Mill River as a flagship property for West Prince, we never suggested that you shut it down. We didn't suggest you give it away, either.

We know that your operator got to keep all the revenue, all the revenue last year from the course to green fees, the food, the pro shop sales, the beer on the course, but they had to reimburse government for the staff wages.

Question to the minister: How much were you reimbursed?

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

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd have to bring that back to the House, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

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

**Number of golf rounds sold as package by Rodd's**

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

The minister has told us on numerous occasions there was over 15,000 rounds in Mill River last year. Could the minister tell the House how many of those 15,000 rounds were sold as part of a package by Rodd's?

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

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

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

I don't have that information at my fingertips as I discussed last night in Estimates, and we could get it for the hon. member.

But there's more important issues here. We're talking about a property that was going to cost \$6.6 million in reinvestments in capital going forward over the next 12 years, which is the length of this contract, and if the hon. member thinks that anybody is going to pursue that as an interest without having other investments in this property, he is absolutely wrong.

This is such an important and integral part of West Prince tourism. With 200 units, 110 of them – 90 of them at Mill River, there's got to be reasons we have to continue to invest in rural PEI.

We can't divide rural PEI. If I took this approach with any other constituency over there in their ridings, I can assure you that they'd be standing up opposite to what we're saying here today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Revenue made from running golf course**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you, and yes, I can assure you that over here if you paid somebody to take a golf course that we

would stand up against it, because we'll stand for Islanders and we'll stand for taxpayers and we'll stand for responsible government any day that you guys won't, which is every day.

Fifteen thousand rounds at \$65 a round works out to about \$1 million, plus you gave them \$400,000 in management fees. That's \$1.4 million, and according to your budget book, the salary savings by not having any of the salaries from the golf course in this year's was \$500,000.

Can you tell me, Mr. Minister: How much money did Don McDougall make last year running the golf course?

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

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

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

Those numbers aren't available at this point in time, but I will tell you this: The year before, we lost \$465,000 ourselves as government – \$465,000 we had to compensate that property to keep it going. Then – that's taxpayers' money, and then on top of that there was over \$300,000 to the Rodd property. Now, we're up to almost \$850,000.

Going forward, \$850,000 over 12 years is approximately \$10 million. There's no capital improvements invested in that property.

Where is that property going to be in 12 years? I can tell you where it's going to be. They're worried about subdividing it – it'll be subdivided because there'd be no other use for it, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

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

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

It's really sad to hear the minister who's responsible for tourism has such little faith in West Prince –

**An Hon. Member:** No.

**Mr. Myers:** And I urge the West Prince MLAs to talk to him, because that golf course has been well run over the years. There's been lots of rounds on it and there's been great staff on it.

I'll do the math for you; \$900,000 is what he made last year, but this year over half of the employees are gone and they've reduced their pay by 33%.

Question again to the minister: Given the fact that he made \$900,000 last year, how much money do you think he'll make this summer?

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

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

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

I find that applaud-able, I guess, to some extent in reference to rural PEI and the investment that we're making in rural PEI. I can tell you right now, 17.9% of my loan portfolio is in tourism and the tourism product from one end of the Island to the other.

We're continuously investing; \$2.3 million in grants in our grant program through Tourism PEI.

I understand the opposition is focused on politics of division – politics of division, urban versus rural. We created a new portfolio to give it more strength. We continuously invest in rural PEI.

The hon. member's own riding has 8% of the lending portfolio.

**Mr. Trivers:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. MacDonald:** Some of his – if he talks about the Kings Playhouse or we talk about Cloggeroo, or – you know, we're investing all the time. This is nothing new.

What we're trying to do is create a flagship that will draw more people to the West Prince area and with the surrounding items that I mentioned here earlier on other

questions from members in the House, this is exactly what we need to do to create, to drive that 5% travel that's coming to Prince Edward Island.

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

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

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

We know that last year the operator took in \$1.44 million. We estimate that he probably made about \$900,000.

Question again, to the minister: Does that mean in your opinion, do you believe that that means the operator finished in the black, not in the red?

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

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** Obviously, with the questioning my opinion doesn't matter. I'm glad to hear him say it was an estimate because the numbers he's firing around, I have – there is no concrete value to them. It's all a guess.

It is that divide thing again. We are a government that's charging ahead. We are aggressive. We are somewhat risk-taking. We're going to promote Prince Edward Island right across the Island. We're saying taxpayers' money in the long run on this deal.

We've been told for numbers of times that: Get out of the golf business. You shouldn't be in the golf business.

I gave the numbers last night in Estimates. Which golf courses make money, which ones don't; this was obviously one that doesn't. \$850,000 a year over 12 years is over \$10 million –

**An Hon. Member:** Big money.

**Mr. MacDonald:** – with no capital improvements.

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

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

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

Now, I find it very funny that the minister is accusing me of trying to divide. If I recall on that announcement the minister for rural development didn't show up for it. The Member from Tignish-Palmer Road didn't show up for it, Bobby Morrissey didn't show up for your announcement. You guys are dividing. It has nothing to do with what we're doing; it sounds like those fellows aren't even on board with your big scheme over there.

All along you've tried to justify this sweetheart deal to Islanders. You know what? When we did budgeted estimates last night, it dawned on me: Don McDougall made \$900,000 last summer. \$900,000 and he paid you \$500,000. He still had \$400,000

**Ms. Biggar:** Question!

**Mr. Myers:** – after his was done.

**Ms. Biggar:** Question!

**Mr. Myers:** Do I have the floor, Mr. Speaker?

**Speaker:** You do, hon. member.

### **Mill River and government money**

**Mr. Myers:** Thank you.

Question to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism: How can you justify these fire sale prices to Islanders when the operator cleared enough to buy the resort last summer and pocket \$400,000 to boot?

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

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

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

You know it's easy to stand up and to say whatever comes to mind –

**Mr. Myers:** Oh! It's coming back.

**Mr. MacDonald:** – to throw out figures with no relevant concrete information to back them up.

I can tell you –

**Mr. Myers:** You won't give us any.

**Mr. MacDonald:** If you look at this establishment over a number of years and you look at it last year, it had, obviously, significant losses. This is the first year –

**Mr. Trivers:** Give us the numbers.

**Mr. MacDonald:** – that this property has been open year-round in a long time.

Next time the hon. member is up west, and if Burger Love is still on, tell him to go in and try it because there is line up every night.

**An Hon. Member:** Yes.

**Mr. MacDonald:** We're already seeing an economic spin-off –

**Ms. Biggar:** Yes.

**Mr. MacDonald:** – relevant to Mill River.

Sooner or later there will be –

**Mr. Myers:** Free golf course with every burger.

**Mr. MacDonald:** – there will be a flag on this property. Every time we see a flag come to Prince Edward Island it gives us a world of opportunity to capture even additional markets.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** Good job.

### Statements by Ministers

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

### **Intent to Donate Registry for Organ and Tissue Donation**

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

Organ and tissue donation saves many lives across our country each and every day. Right now we have 27 Islanders who are waiting for an organ transplant.

In the gallery today I'd like to welcome Cathy Binnette, who was a kidney recipient, as well as Angela Carpenter, our Provincial Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplant Manager. Thank you both for joining us here today and, Cathy, thank you for sharing your personal story.

Angela and her team have been working very hard to make improvements to the organ and tissue donation program.

Today, I'm very happy to announce that we have a new interactive online version of the Intent to Donate Registry. This new online registry will allow Islanders to directly register their wishes into the secure online system themselves.

The registry will be then linked to a new provincial health card, rather than one person's driver licence or a voluntary ID. This is a tremendous step forward and is consistent with what is happening in other jurisdictions.

We hope that the new interactive version of the online registry will make it easier for individuals to make their wishes known. It is very important for Islanders to take the time to register their wishes and have the discussion with their families so they are not left making the decision during a very difficult time. It will certainly make it easier for health care providers to access the information and reconfirm a patient's intent.

This is a positive initiative. Organ and tissue donation is life saving, and I encourage all members of this House to take the time to register online and make their wishes known.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

I applaud the minister's statement here today with regards to the interactive online registration. I think it's key. It's very important. I don't think there's an individual here in the Legislative Assembly, or the many people in the gallery today, that have not known someone that, particularly around dialysis and kidney transplant, would benefit from this life-saving gift.

In addition to the statement by the minister, I think education is still key – education to all Islanders. I know myself, I have the little indicator on my driver's license that I am a donor if the time should ever come, but it is incumbent upon us, and all Islanders, to talk with our families to let them know what our intentions are because, unfortunately, if there was a serious accident or occurrence that happened, it is an extremely emotional time for the family when a loved one is on the verge of potentially passing.

I implore everyone to do have this discussion with your loved ones so that your intentions are known.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I welcome this announcement. Over 90% of Canadians support the idea of organ donation; however, less than 20% of Canadians actually have made that pledge and have done it.

We need to close that gap because every year far too many people die waiting for organ transplants. The list of Canadians waiting for organ transplants increases by about 1,600 every year which translates to about eight or 10 Islanders every year added to that lists who are not receiving the organs – the life-saving organs they need.

One person who dies who has properly prepared to donate their tissues and organs can save up to eight lives and can affect over 75 people, so the potential we have by increasing the base of donors is enormous.



I welcome this announcement. Anything we can do to make it easier for Islanders to make their wishes known and therefore help the lives of other Islanders is a great thing.

Thank you.

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

### **Forestry.io**

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

A point in regards to the statement, I would also like to recognize Scott Gallant and Jordan Patterson from Forestry.io in the gallery.

Forestry.io is a small, local company doing absolutely amazing things in the IT world. Not only that, they are also taking advantage of a relatively new form of investment financing that I'm very interested in seeing here.

Scott Gallant and Jordan Patterson from Forestry.io have developed a platform for users of a new kind of website that's more secure and easier to use for owners. The company is a graduate of the Startup Zone. It was accepted into the very prestigious IT accelerator – Techstars in New York City – last year, and through that experience they were introduced to AngelList syndicates, a new way for emerging companies to tap into private sector seed investment as they grow their company.

They are preparing to commercialize their product and they just received some incredible news in the form of new investment. I'm very pleased to say Forestry.io was very recently successful in attracting over \$700,000 in new investment through one of the world's best known AngelList syndicates. That's an incredible investment for a small but growing company like this one.

Earlier this week, we announced our agreement with Island Capital Partners, a new private sector angel investment group. This is a significant achievement for our province that will support our entrepreneurs and create prosperity for our province.

AngelList syndicates are a little different. They are groups of investors who follow a lead investor and have the opportunity to make investments alongside the lead. Mr. Speaker, this kind of private-sector investment could provide huge benefit to emerging companies here on the Island just like Forestry.io.

I encourage our business community to have a look at the possible benefits of these types of angel and seed investment. I also want to congratulate Forestry.io, Scott and Jordan, on their recent success and their incredibly bright future on our mighty island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I would echo the minister's congratulations. It's great to see startup companies be able to pull it off here on Prince Edward Island. I know that for a long time in the east we've been asking for the same type of help. I know the Startup Zone is in downtown Charlottetown and I know that the minister has talked about it numerous times here of the success. He actually talked, maybe yesterday, about it expanding into the second floor of the building that they're in. It's certainly something that could be used in the King's County area.

We have the same type of entrepreneurs down there that would love to have the same opportunities. I don't know if Tim Banks needs to buy a building down there for it to happen, or what, but I encourage the minister to continue the program that he has and look to some of the outer areas because when you look at this day in age, you can have young companies right here in Charlottetown doing business anywhere in the world. Really, Charlottetown's no closer to the rest of the world than Georgetown is.

Thank you.

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

**Ms. Biggar:** So is Montague (Indistinct)

**Mr. Myers:** You just love me talking or what?

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

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

I would join the minister in celebrating this announcement. We talked the other day about the mobility of companies and how it's very difficult to attract and keep companies in – anywhere in the world these days, but when it comes to IT – the corollary of that is true. If you provide a place that has access to a great work force – which we do here on Prince Edward Island, and if – and this is a big if – if we have access to reliable, true high-speed Internet across this province, then companies like Forestry.io can set up anywhere on PEI.

I know the Startup Zone here in Charlottetown has been a tremendous success, but the other ones on the Island – Montague and elsewhere – lie empty. I think that's a shame. I'd love to see this sort of entrepreneurship and the jobs and the wealth that will flow from it being disbursed across the Island.

I welcome the announcement and I look forward to many more Forestry.io's in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

### **Tronos and aerospace industry**

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

Prince Edward Island's aerospace industry is a key economic driver, a major employer, and an emerging force on the world stage. The industry represents over 1,300 jobs in our province, adds approximately \$150 million to our GDP, and provides over \$76 million in annual salaries to Islanders.

The strength of aerospace in Prince Edward Island is something a lot of people from off Island would be surprised with. The success of the industry is a testament of the Island's tremendous workforce, the positive economic climate, and the imagination and

dedication of our entrepreneurial community. We do a lot relative to our size, which is why aerospace is a perfect example of why we are the Mighty Island.

This afternoon I will be attending an event with our federal counterparts to announce another major expansion for one of our anchor aerospace companies. The expansion will allow this company to diversify the products and services it offers, hire more staff, and make an even greater contribution to the provincial economy. This company is very innovative and the management team has done a tremendous job identifying opportunities and growing this company.

I'd like to invite all members of the Legislature, and everyone viewing today's proceedings to join me this afternoon at 2:00 p.m. at 190 Maple Hills Avenue in the Charlottetown Airport Industrial Park for this very exciting announcement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Certainly a great announcement, Minister. Anytime we, on Prince Edward Island, expand and build business and create more jobs is great for the economy, great for the Island and great for all Islanders. I certainly welcome the announcements the today. Hopefully there's many more to come and congratulations, Minister.

Thank you.

Also, I missed the name of the company was –

**Ms. Biggar:** Tronos

**Mr. MacKay:** Tronos?

Tronos, I believe, as I remember, they established in 2001. I think they're all over the world right now. I believe they're in Europe, Middle East, Asia, so to have Tronos here on Prince Edward Island is certainly a huge win for Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** They were brought here by the Binns' government.

**Ms. Biggar:** Something positive (Indistinct)

**Speaker:** Ministerial statement now will be from the hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

### **New investments in student well-being**

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

When a child is dealing with problems at home with mental health or other challenges it's hard for the child to do his best in school.

Educators have always strived to meet the needs of the whole child, but they can't do it alone. We have heard this repeatedly from principals, the district advisory councils and throughout the school review, and we are responding.

Our new education and health budgets contain significant new investments to support the well-being of children and youth. Our Student Well-being Initiative will begin this fall in Westisle and Montague.

Through new investments of \$700,000 this year and annual investments of more than \$5 million when it's fully implemented in 2019, core school health teams will be based in the school setting where children are.

The core teams will be led by mental health therapists, who screen and assign cases and provide clinical coordination. Two school nurses will support students in need while working to reduce the stigma of mental health and increase the focus on prevention and promotion.

Two youth workers will work with students at school and in home on behaviour, addictions, relationships and other issues. School counselors will support the teams by working with struggling students and connecting them with appropriate services.

Two new occupational therapists will help students to participate of the full breadth of school activities from paying attention in class, to holding a pencil or musical instrument to concentrating on the task at hand. All these professionals will work closely with principals, teachers and staff who work with children every day. As the teams are rolled out they will reflect the unique needs of each family of schools.

Next week, renowned Dr. Stan Kutcher, will be meeting with our educators on mental health literacy and student well-being. Dr. Kutcher is very interested in working with us and we look forward to how he may help us further support student well-being programs in our schools.

I want to commend school staff that is working on the ground level to promote wellness and build positive school cultures. Particularly, the Director of Student Services, Julie Gaudet, from the Public School Branch, which has a very powerful influence on learning.

I'm confident that their work, along with these new resources will make a real difference for Island students and teachers in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** Responding to the minister's statement, the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

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

Anytime that we can put extra supports in the classrooms for the students I think it's a good thing. When it comes to well-being; when it comes to mental health; when it comes to addictions problems, I think those are all important things to attack.

One of the things that I was looking for in this announcement that I didn't see was the earlier interventions and the school psychology wait that happens at the younger grades. It's frustrating for parents who are waiting.

I know you take some of the smaller schools like Cardigan, for example, where they have a guidance counselor one out of six days, and no access to a school psychologist, it's a real – it's really hard for the parents to get – sometimes you're waiting two and three years before you get the information that you need to put into the classroom. Then, there is a transition struggle between what the psychologist says and the implementation of it.

I think where government can really help, along with these – I'm not knocking, this is a good announcement, but I think we need a lot in the early intervention part, too. We need to streamline the process, so not only can a young person get to see a school psychologist when they need it.

The wait shouldn't be – the French school board doesn't wait a year. They don't sit out a whole school year doing that. It should happen immediately, and it should be streamlined to make sure that what the school psychologist says gets implemented in the classroom right away and that every school has a proper complement of school counselors to make sure that the well-being are – I think that will go along quite well with some of the later – stuff that sounds like, you know, targeted some of the older kids, where there is no question at all, there's also help needed.

I'm a big fan of lower on the stigmatism that goes along with mental health issues. I think it's an important step for Prince Edward Island. It's an important step for our school system.

I have, of course, I have kids of my own. I have coached sports for a number of years. I still do. It's amazing how perceptive kids are of the world that they are in. When you see how, you know, when I talk to my own kids and I see how they view the world so much more openly than my generation would have at the same age. I don't – I think you're going to be able to make those steps when it comes to the stigma attached to mental health issues.

The young people are already there. They're very worldly. They spend a lot – maybe too much time on the Internet sometimes, but they are picking up some smart stuff off of there, too.

While I think this is a good announcement, I think it helps, I do urge you to look at some of those lower – you know the issues that are there. I know school psychologists aren't just waiting on the corner to be hired, I get all that –

**Mr. Currie:** It's okay to say it's okay.

**Mr. Myers:** I did. It's okay. It's a half-good announcement. What I'm saying, it's half-good. The part that we announced was good and for me that's good –

**Mr. J. Brown:** (Indistinct) big (Indistinct)

**Ms. Compton:** It's good.

**Mr. Myers:** – for me that's good –

**Mr. J. Brown:** (Indistinct) working the (Indistinct)

**Mr. Myers:** – the part that you announced was good. The part that you didn't announce probably needs some work, but I'll give you time to work –

**Mr. Currie:** We're going to get a picture outside –

**Mr. Myers:** Let's get a picture together.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Speaker:** Also responding to the minister –

**Mr. Aylward:** (Indistinct) work on Fridays.

**Mr. Currie:** The only reason (Indistinct)

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

I want to be part of this picture too, so give me a chance to say something here.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** As with so many educational issues I look to Sweden of a model for how we could be doing it differently.

They put an enormous amount of funding and resources into early intervention. When

they see young children who are struggling with anxiety or stress or mental health issues, and they deal with it early on. By that I mean very early on when the kids are four, five, six-years-old.

Through that early intervention and a large expenditure of funds, I should say, they avoid problems down the road. Not just educational problems, but health problems, a whole gamut of things.

It's sort of what we were talking about yesterday with investing in the right places that may cost you money up front, but it's going to save society a lot of money going forward.

I welcome this announcement. It's a good start. Another thing with the model of education in Sweden is that they do not put pressure on the children at a young age to perform. They do not actually participate in those sorts of examinations at a young age.

They allow children to learn by having fun. Some of the anxieties related to school, and we have all seen young children who are pressed, pushed to perform in a certain way, which may not – all kids are different and they all have different interests and attributes.

Again, the Swedish model allows for that freedom for children to express themselves, not feel the pressure of work. When there is reduced anxiety there will also be reduced incidents of mental health.

While I welcome this announcement, like the hon. member with whom I will be having my picture taken with shortly, it's a good start, but there is much to be done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Myers:** High-five.

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

**Mr. Currie:** Friday high-fives.

**Ms. Mundy:** Group hugs.

**Mr. Currie:** Group hugs.

**Mr. Myers:** I'll get you on Facebook Live we'll call it forward Tories live at five.

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

#### Tabling of Documents

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table the fiscal year 2009-2010 Public Trustee financial statements, the last ones that were made public back in 2011 and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Stratford-Kinlock, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

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

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

**Mr. Aylward:** Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table the Economic Benefit of Public Funding of Insulin Pumps on Prince Edward Island, a document that was produced by the Canadian Diabetes Association and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Rustico-Emerald, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

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

Reports by Committees

#### Introduction of Government Bills

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Premier, that the same be now received and read a first time.

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

**Clerk:** *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, Bill No. 73, read a first time.

**Speaker:** Hon. minister, a brief explanation.

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

This bill proposes to amend the *Income Tax Act* to raise the basic spousal and equivalent to spouse amounts by 2%, effective for the

2017 taxation year, and it preserves the provisional education amounts.

Both of these measures were outlined in the recent 2017 provincial Budget.

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

Government Motions

Orders of the Day (Government)

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

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

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

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

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

**Ms. Mundy:** 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 call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point to come and Chair the Committee of the Whole.

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay, can I have permission to bring –

**Chair (Casey):** Oh, well I have to bring us into Committee. Sorry.

**Mr. Henderson:** Oh.

**Chair:** I have to bang the gavel.

The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to further consider the grant of supply to Her Majesty.

Hon. members, we are on page 89, Health Recruitment and Retention. We're discussing the Department of Health and Wellness estimates. Health Recruitment and Retention has been read, but not carried yet.

Permission to take a stranger onto the floor?

**Mr. Aylward:** Granted.

**Chair:** Thank you.

(Indistinct) a few minutes to set up?

**Mr. Henderson:** We're like the department of pack mules here, we carry more stuff.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct) more trees.

**Mr. Aylward:** (Indistinct) didn't put them online like we asked (Indistinct) in advance that they were all online, we wouldn't have to do this to the poor trees.

**Chair:** Welcome.

Could you state your name and your title for the record?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Sure, Kevin Barnes, Director of Finance and Corporate Management with the Department of Health & Wellness.

**Chair:** Welcome, Kevin.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Thank you.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, we're ready to roll.

**Chair:** Okay, perfect.

Shall that section carry?

**Mr. Aylward:** Chair?

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock, and then the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you.

I just want to get an update from the minister on how we're looking with regards to recruitment and retention here on PEI, because we know lots of stories about doctors, particularly in rural areas, that have a billing number and they're practicing, things seem to be going along fairly smoothly, and then all of a sudden they leave for various reasons.

And I understand there's a lot of competition for doctors.

Just, if you could give us a bit of an update on where we're at with the level of physicians.

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, I can just – I can give you the update, I guess.

This specific year, we've actually added 16 new physicians to our complement, and we have, right now, five pending, people who have been given offers, but we're in negotiations with, so that would be potentially 21 in the past year, and I think for vacancies right now, we have currently 17 vacancies.

I would say that the reality is that we do seem to have challenges in the rural areas. It tends to be an issue, and the other tends to be specialists. In my term as minister, those would be the ones that I would see as the most predominant challenges that we have in recruiting.

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

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

The minister just made a comment there about specialists, and I guess that's where I'd like to sort of move onto; in particular, child psychiatry.

I know that currently on the Health PEI website under job opportunities, there's a listing there for a child psychiatrist, and it's been there for quite an extensive period of time. Can you give us an update with regards to any potential recruitment there?

**Mr. Henderson:** In psychiatry right now, we have two fulltime equivalency vacancies, and we have had somebody that's had a site visit recently, and another site visit coming on later this week, so, you know, we say that there's – it's promising, but you know.

Once again, my responsibilities are minister, until you have somebody signed and actually here, I try not to get too far ahead of myself in assuming that we're going to get somebody. So, promising is what it is, hopeful.

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

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

That gives us a little bit of an update, and potentially a glimmer of hope for child psychiatry, because right now, as you're fully aware, as I'm fully aware, right now we have Skype.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, we have a tele-psychiatry program with Dr. Kiesselbach out of Ontario, and he's a specialist in child psychiatry, and it provides a service. It's not ideal, but it seems to be working as best as having nobody.

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

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

You mention the doctor from Ontario, I believe Ottawa –

**Mr. Henderson:** I'm not sure the location, but Kiesselbach, I believe is the name.

**Mr. Aylward:** There was also a child psychiatrist at the IWK that was seeing some young people here on PEI via Skype.

Is that no longer happening?

**Mr. Henderson:** I don't know. Do you have any background on that?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** I'm really not sure.

**Mr. Henderson:** As, once again, in the province we have resources that we can consult with other physicians anywhere in Canada. This Dr. Keisselbach situation is more of an immediate arrangement. It allows us to do some sort of a tele-health program in psychiatry. It fills the need for now.

I guess there is really nothing preventing any doctor who would ask a referral to go online with another physician somewhere else.

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

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

The minister just made an interesting statement there that it fills a need.

Is it your impression that a young person, a pre-teen potentially that is need of seeing a psychiatrist due to mental health issues, whatever they may be, that seeing a psychiatrist via Skype several provinces away is filling the need?

Is that –

**Mr. Henderson:** It fills –

**Mr. Aylward:** – what you think?

**Mr. Henderson:** – the need based on the opportunity to, at least, have access to services.

Once again, you'd love to have a myriad of specialist services here in the province, but just once again sometimes the realities are that either we can't attract a physician into those particular positions or we don't have the volume to attract a physician. There are a number of factors that go into that.

Ultimately, it fills a need. Is it an ideal need? No. You would like to have face-to-face contact in any particular physician situation.

But, technologies are advancing and you're seeing many more types of issues that we're dealing with almost nationally or internationally broad services.

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

I don't disagree that technology is advancing, but I still would have to strongly state that there would be absolutely nothing that would replace a face-to-face, one-on-one between the patients and the psychiatrist or the medical specialist – whoever that may be, but particularly around psychiatry.

Chair?

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

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

Wonder if the minister could update us, as well, on the various vacancies around child psychology. I know we're currently short at

least one child psychologist, and again, that position has been vacant for an extended period of time.

**Mr. Henderson:** Child psychologists – that'd be more of a Health PEI issue, but at the moment I don't see anything here on my list of child psychologists.

I know there's two full-time equivalency vacancies in child psychiatry and one in family physician for Addiction Services. One oncologist, one gastroenterologist – I have a list of what our actual vacancies are at the moment of the 17.

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

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

I think psychology comes under a different tab.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah. That would be on Health PEI. I'll know more –

**Mr. Aylward:** But, it would still fall under recruitment and retention, I would think, if we're trying to recruit psychologists here, especially specialists around child psychology.

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, I know we have child psychology here, but I don't – do you have more detail on that?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** You're correct, hon. member, in the sense that the recruitment and retention secretariat would look at a broad range of health professionals, not only physicians, and would have – or be active in the area of psychology as well. Specifically, I believe that position of child psychologist continues to be vacant and I know there's work underway with respect to that in terms of recruitment efforts. I'm not sure, exactly, the progress – if there are candidates identified, but we could find that out.

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you.

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

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



There's another position that's been vacant for quite some time now, too, and I'm just trying to – I believe it's around psychology with regards to specialization in addictions. I'm wondering if you could update us on where we are with that position.

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, Dr. Rhonda Matters sort of heads our psychology team up – once again, I'm not sure the specific vacancies in that (Indistinct) – we may a little more when we get to Health PEI and that, but – once again, we're always continuing to recruit for if there are vacancies in that particular file.

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

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

So, what exactly is Dr. Rhonda Matters' title or position or responsibilities right now?

**Mr. Henderson:** She's the head of the behavioural support team with our child psychologists – or our psychology team.

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

I'm going to move right on from Dr. Rhonda Matters because I don't want to get bogged down to that.

Currently, I believe, there's – if you go all across Prince Edward Island – there's vacancies in the range of about 50 nursing positions.

**Mr. Henderson:** (Indistinct) yeah that's probably (Indistinct)

**Mr. Aylward:** It actually could be slightly higher than that because I've heard as many as 70 nursing positions.

What is being done to fill those positions?

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, as I said last night, we just implemented the new nursing strategy. It was released here recently and in that strategy we were looking at transferring the number of positions over to more full-time positions – change the amount of classified components of that. Maybe there's some positions that were 40%, you might be able to make two of them into an 80%

position. So, we're in that process right now to do some review.

We've had a lot of consultations with the nursing profession and I've also had the opportunity to speak at the nursing student graduates and those initiatives hopefully will start to see some dividends in filling some of those vacancies. The other challenges with the nursing profession that we do tend to have maternity leaves – there's a lot of different challenges there. The 24-hours-a-day component of the profession tends to be a challenge for some individuals.

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

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

I know what you're referring to as far as the needs go, but I guess I'm just wondering how closely you're working with the school of nursing here at UPEI to ensure that we're supporting those graduates coming out.

**Mr. Henderson:** Very much so.

The reality is that my new deputy was the former dean at the School of Nursing at UPEI –

**Mr. Aylward:** Yes. I'm familiar with him.

**Mr. Henderson:** – and so there's a strong emphasis on the nursing profession – the fact that we've created a new, collaborative model of care – we're starting to see some good dividends there in breaking down some of the duties that different people do.

I think you're going to see us really emphasize more focus on nursing practitioners as we move forward, especially in some of the vacancy positions that we're having difficulty attracting physicians. I think we're up to 19 nurse practitioners now within the system and we're looking at increasing that as we move forward. I think we'll see some improvements in our nursing recruitment in the near future.

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

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

I'm glad you brought up the nurse practitioners because I see a huge role that these individuals can play in the delivery of our health care system here on PEI. In particular, out in the rural areas where we do have an issue with recruiting doctors to those areas.

Could you give a little bit of explanation or what you're doing directly with the School of Nursing to grow the nurse practitioner's program out there so that we can get and secure more nurse practitioners in our health care system here on PEI?

**Mr. Henderson:** Just the program we have, the Nursing Student Program is one component of getting RNs and LPNs into the system where they're getting some work, they're getting some experience, they're building confidence in their responsibilities and as we move forward, that should pay off some dividends.

So that would be one component and then, once again, with the department of recruitment and retention, we're continually trying to have the people out there to go to the expos and – where students would be available – to keep in contact with all the Island students wherever school that they go to.

I've had the opportunity to host some receptions for physicians that are in medical school. We're just continually trying to keep track. Like I said, we are having some successes, but once again, demands continue to increase and now we make the necessary actions as we move forward.

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

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

When you start talking about medical students and hosting receptions for them and things like that, can you update the House as far as medical school at Dalhousie and at MUN? Where we're at as far as seats go?

**Mr. Henderson:** As far as I know, all of them – we have students in those particular positions. Like I say, I met a number of them at Christmas time where we hosted a reception.

Once again, we track constantly. Some of the challenges tend to be – sometimes the partners or spouses have professions that are also difficult to approve to here. PEI is a great opportunity for many, others it doesn't work.

Recently, I guess you can use the example of Dr. Naveed in Alberton. She was here, she practices for a while, but her partner has a very unique profession and there are not many opportunities for that in Alberton (Indistinct). So, they decided to go where both of them can get work.

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

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

I've heard over and over again – and I know it can be difficult because we're dealing with different levels of bureaucracy and jurisdiction with regards to the medical profession – but quite often, through our immigration recruitment programs to bring professionals here to PEI.

I go back to an example of a wonderful couple from Sri Lanka that I had met many years ago through Thilak and Hema Tennekone. He was a GP and she was a cancer specialist and I would think: Wow. His dream was to stay here and have a rural practice, which would be phenomenal. Is there any negotiations going on right now to try to make it more accessible that when we do have those professional individuals – medically-trained individuals that come from other parts of the world?

**Mr. Henderson:** I think the Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point has brought this up on many occasions to me.

Once again, when it comes to the issue of licensing and determining the credentials of an individual to practice whatever the medical situation would be is that that is the responsibility of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

They're the ones that approved the licensing. When it comes to international students, they have very strict protocol to follow. From my perspective, as minister, I have to put some faith in them that they are making sure that these individuals meet the

competencies required to deliver us a particular service.

It is, it can be frustrating and we get into this term of doctors. When people have the term doctor in the front of their name, but we have to make sure that that validates a certain level of competency.

It's not my responsibility. I don't issue the licences. I don't pull the licences. It's the college of physicians.

I have had numerous meetings with the college. I have expressed some of the challenges that I see that you're reflecting on and I just put my faith in them that they understand what we're dealing with and that they'll make the appropriate decisions on who is granted a licence here in the province.

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

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

I just want to make a comment first with regards to the Chair and the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point. Thank you for doing that. I know you have been advocating for it, as well, as have I.

But, the frustration level when you see or you hear of individuals that are here. They want to be here, but they're basically hand-tied, unable to practice here. Yet, they're being heavily recruited to other regions and jurisdictions across Canada.

This couple I was speaking about, they were here for four years. They did everything that they could. They did all the right things, but they were still being blocked. Through, negotiations or recruitment, they ended up going to Saskatchewan.

I'd just, I guess –

**Mr. Henderson:** I go back to saying though –

**Mr. Aylward:** Yes.

**Mr. Henderson:** – no different than pharmacy and these professions are self-regulated professions, legal, lawyers, the list goes on.

They determine the criteria for admittance and to practice in the province. I, myself as minister, I might have concerns in some ways, at the end of the day, I'm not a physician. I don't know what the competency of criteria would be.

They have the knowledge, the background, supports of other colleges across the province. So that's basically where we're at. Beyond that, it's we're talking colleges combining and that's a whole other discussion.

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

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

That would be my request, minister, if at your next FPT meeting you could, perhaps, put that on the agenda so that there could be an open discussion with all of your provincial and federal partners around the colleges and the licensing to see if we could come to some kind of agreement or –

**Mr. Henderson:** We have –

**Mr. Aylward:** – one overall jurisdiction.

**Mr. Henderson:** – (Indistinct) I would say when it comes to even an Atlantic college of physicians. Whether that had any merits.

**Chair:** (Indistinct) great idea.

**Mr. Henderson:** I think that was brought up at one of our legislative committees.

I don't know whether there are merits to that or not. There may be some (Indistinct) but it would be much more helpful if that particular college of that profession was advocating for that versus forcing them (Indistinct) the way I would look at it.

I'm not sure how it works with dentistry, some of those different professions. They have ethics and whether they felt that there's that validity in combining colleges and ways to streamline that.

I know as a province, and as a minister, I would certainly be open to those discussions, but leading those discussions is a whole other thing.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you, Chair, then I'll let you move onto someone else.

I understand, minister, and I'm not trying to say that I want you to strong arm anybody, but until we at least have that dialogue begin and the discussion begin, we're not going to move anywhere.

As the minister responsible for health and wellness here on PEI I would humbly ask you to bring this to your next meeting and have it added to the agenda so at least the discussion can begin.

**Mr. Henderson:** We'll most certainly discuss that here. It may be something I'll bring up with my next discussion with the college of physician for PEI just to get their sense of it.

I would say, that Dr. Moyse and I, we have a good relationship. We have had numerous conversations. I think he understands some of the challenges that I've advocated to him on the frustration I've had regarding licensing and practicing.

I go back to say that it's hard for me as a minister with my background to comprehend what the actual criteria and training levels of competencies would be required.

That's the way the system has been for many years. It's just difficult, I guess, is what I'm saying.

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

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

On this section, I want to start off a question on the sort of unusual line item there, which is a debt that was incurred.

I know it's a small amount of money, \$28,000 in the big scheme of things.

I'm just wondering how that occurred?

**Mr. Henderson:** Generally, we have a number of programs that we do to recruit physicians to say, rural areas or whatever, and sometimes it doesn't quite work out. The challenge then of getting that money

back when the physician has maybe gone or left. That would be the general reality.

I think it was actually – the hon. colleague is saying it was a medical lab technologist, position. Again, we have a number of programs for moving, recruit – to give us an incentive to come to a rural practice.

They come, they get the money, and they don't meet the criteria. I think it's three years that we look at for – and if they leave after a year or a year and a half or whatever it becomes a challenge –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. Henderson:** You know, I'm just saying we have abilities, I suppose –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Sure.

**Mr. Henderson:** – but that gets a little messy, too.

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

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

On those grants that we give to physicians and nurses and other health care workers to attract them to rural areas, of the grant figure there, which is about \$1.4 million.

How much of those incentives to bring rural doctors to open positions there?

**Mr. Henderson:** I would say – I'm just looking here quickly. We have programs here like the physician moving expenses. We have a physician return in service grants. We have a summer employment grant; a Family Medicine Sponsorship Program. There are a number of those. (Indistinct) more –

**Chair:** Hon. members, I don't mind if you take your conversations outside of the room so that we can hear the questions.

Thank you.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

There was a question earlier about the partnership that we have with Memorial and Dalhousie and the doctors there.

The incentives that we offer students who are not fully qualified, would that those grants, as well is that –

**Mr. Henderson:** I guess it does.

Once again, in those particular cases then we have – we're paying for their education, technically and we have the authority to place them at a location of our choosing based on where the needs might be, which do tend to be rural.

I believe we do have two or three that are going to be – that are in that arrangement right at the moment. I think maybe one next year is going to be coming out of that program. Then, we will be able to place them where we choose.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** In that agreement, the contract that you would have with them, for how many years are they obligated to stay in the community in which they're –

**Mr. Henderson:** That's five years.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Five years?

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

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

The salaries in this section of \$330,000, how many people does that represent, the recruiters?

**Mr. Henderson:** I have the list here, but I think about five. I know there is Cathy Sinclair, Sheila MacLean, (Indistinct) Gillis.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Those are all full-time positions?

**Mr. Henderson:** That's correct.

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

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

The grants that we handout right now, I presume, that – I know that we have 17

doctor vacancies now, I don't know whether they are GPs or specialists.

If suddenly we were to fill those 17 vacancies then, what kind of an increase in that budget line would we see?

**Mr. Henderson:** I think one of the realities is we would be continuing because we also have nursing positions.

Then the other issues are that what the reality is, is that we have many of the practicing physicians in the province age can become a factor, too. We have a number that are considering retirement. I would think we'll be continuing to be recruiting for a while.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Okay, thank you, Chair.

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

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

This was a question I think I started asking last night. I had a constituent come to me just this week and say they thought the shift lengths of nurses are too long. It's kind of interesting we have a nurse in the gallery here today. But the 12-hour shifts, they were saying they think that it's too hard for people to maintain their level of service for that long.

They wanted to get an opinion on that, and I wanted to find out as well since we're in this section – Chair, I do appreciate that – of how that might impact the retention and if, you know, you find nurses that are saying: We really would like to do work different shifts than having to choose to go on a 12-hour night shift.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah.

**Mr. Trivers:** Even if it was three shifts of eight hours or if there was a choice to do that. I wonder if you can comment on that.

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, I guess the first issue on that is once again, we have a partnership with the nurses' union in this province and if they have issues that they feel that would help alleviate some of the nursing challenges that we have, I would certainly be open to having those conversations.

I know even locally, I just know in my own community, the hospital in O'Leary, they looked at changing some of their start times of the shifts, when the shifts would – you know, would 7:00 a.m. be a better time or 7:30 a.m., and each manager of those facilities has the opportunity to enter those discussions and if they can work something out that is in agreement to the staff, that's fine.

It's not a hard and fast rule that every shift has to change, but when you get into the bigger facilities it becomes more complex in making that happen.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** So just to confirm: I guess what you're saying is you haven't really heard much complaint on that side of things and you're leaving it to the nurses' union to look after that?

**Mr. Henderson:** Well yeah, exactly, I haven't heard that; but certainly if the nurses' union – I will say we have a great working relationship with Mona O'Shea. I've talked with her on numerous occasions and if she felt that that was something that changing – like I say, if they're talking 12-hour shifts and switching them down to two six-hour shifts or four 24-hour shifts or whatever, I'm open to those things. It seems to be a process that seems reasonable if you're trying to get a 47-hour work week in. You can do that in four days.

I'm saying, I'm open to discussions, should that be something; but I got a feeling that that would be a matter of opinion for every particular individual.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** Yes, Chair.

I may have missed this, but I wanted to find out what the miscellaneous professional services for \$25,000, is for.

**Mr. Henderson:** We have an agreement with an organization that does recruiting for physicians. It's based on them actually finding someone and having us sign them.

What's the name of the organization?

**Mr. Henderson:** It's CanAm Physician Recruiting. That's an organization that we work with and let them know that we have vacancies.

If they are able to find a vacancy, foreign or otherwise that meets the criteria of licensing in this province, then they have a finder's fee.

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

**Mr. Trivers:** I'm just curious why you would put that item in there as miscellaneous.

**Mr. Henderson:** We don't know every year whether they're going to get us anybody, I suppose would be one part of it.

**Mr. Trivers:** Why wouldn't you call it physician recruiting?

**Mr. Henderson:** Maybe I'll refer to the hon. financial officer on that one.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Sorry, hon. member, which item were you asking on?

**Mr. Trivers:** I'm on page 204 of the professional services handout. At the top, health recruitment and retention section. It's \$25,000 in there under code 3099 miscellaneous.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** That reflects, I guess, just an accounting code that we use for that type of service. It doesn't fall into any of the other sort of professional services that are there.

Essentially, that is the nature of the expenditure is for the recruitment.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay, that's all, Chair.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. J. Brown:** Thank you very much, Chair.

Minister, I'm curious about the recruiting process. I'm wondering if you could just outline your recruiting process for physicians on Prince Edward Island.

**Mr. Henderson:** We have a staff complement that is headed up by Cathy Sinclair, previously it was Marney MacKinnon.

They use all the tools that they have possible to try to attract physicians. Once again, we have return for service grants.

We're also trying to attract locums for doctors that go on vacation. We develop site visits if physicians are expressing any interest in coming to Prince Edward Island. We are trying to attract graduates out of all the schools in Canada.

I know, in fact when my daughter graduated McMaster, I brought back all the graduates of medical. We track those particular physicians. Then we have also these supposed headhunter companies that are out there. Once again, if we are able to get somebody through that – it's a big job. It's a big process. It's hopefully staffed accordingly. It's a continual moving parts –

We're always advertising – medical journals would be another example that we're involved with. The other system is word-of-mouth. If one doctor says, I know of another doctor and they might be interested in coming to Prince Edward Island; we're always following up on all of those options.

Another one would be even the locums that come here. We saw that happen in Souris for awhile. A locum came, they expressed an interest. We eventually signed him. In the end it didn't quite work out.

I'm just saying that we're following up on just about every lead possible. Even myself, as minister, if an MLA says they hear of something, or even a constituent, once again, I'll pass that on to that section of our department and they'll follow-up on it.

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

**Mr. J. Brown:** Yeah, and I'm more curious. I know I should say that, that I do recognize that there is a lot of that kind of stuff going on in terms of following leads and all that.

What I'm more curious about though is when somebody is identified, particularly someone from Prince Edward Island, what is the process to ensure that they're getting put – and again, somebody from Prince Edward Island – if there were two people that were applying for a job, one is from Timbuktu and one is from Prince Edward Island, no offence to the one from Timbuktu, but my money would be on the one from –

**Mr. Aylward:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. J. Brown:** Perhaps not, yeah.

But I guess what I'm wondering is, all of the things being equal, do we have anything to dictate that the one from Prince Edward Island gets priority to go into a position?

**Mr. Henderson:** Other than just the regular interview process, there would some sense that, I suppose, an Islander with our Island roots would be more apt to be retained longer and things of that nature, but I don't think you can specifically target somebody from another area with all things being equal.

I would also add that if there is – in other words, if there was one particular vacancy, say, in Charlottetown. We had two individuals. One gets the position. We would certainly try to promote that there are other opportunities in other parts of Prince Edward Island and try to follow-up in trying to get them to look at another location.

We also have physicians that, once they identify that they're considering retirement – I know we had that with a doctor in Summerside. They identified they were considering retirement. They would continue practicing until a placement could be found.

We had a doctor, actually, that lives in my district, come in and took that particular position, and has taken over the whole patient load.

I think we have a Dr. Slysz that we're recruiting for there now with a large patient load. We're trying to work with them to look at a transition with, maybe having two physicians or a physician and a nurse practitioner, take over for that client load.

We're really flexible here in trying to accommodate any particular physician.

Although, like I said before, we don't target specifically to say that that Islander gets dibs on any position. There is, hopefully, a fair and open process. Obviously, Islanders would probably score a little higher during the interviewing process.

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

**Mr. J. Brown:** Yes, so just on that point. Who does the interviews and who decides what the scoring criteria are?

**Mr. Henderson:** It would be the medical director in that particular facility. So, Summerside, it might be Dr. Celliers, Dr. Dorran in QEH, would be one of the people. Our recruiting and retention would set that up.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Right.

**Mr. Henderson:** It's not me, specifically.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Right.

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

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

Do we know how well, or do we track how well we're doing, relative to other provinces at recruiting and retaining our physicians?

**Mr. Henderson:** I think we have the lowest amount of patients without a family doctor in Prince Edward Island as in all of Canada. We're doing well. To note that we only have 17 vacancies of two hundred and some positions in the province speaks well, as well.

When I had the opportunity to go to a number of our federal-provincial meetings that was a comment. When I would say that there are 5% of Islanders don't have a family doctor they're astounded by that. Like, how are you doing that?

We think we have good compensation for (Indistinct) we obviously have a great place to live, to raise a family. We have a

collaborative model of care – so we're doing a lot of the right things that meets – what seems to be of interest in physicians. Not every physician likes what would be considered a rural province or go to rural areas.

You have to find those right matches and I go back to the issue – there are factors around their spouses and their partners. They require work too and most likely many of the physicians that graduate from medical school, their partners are usually fairly well educated as well. They are usually looking for very specific jobs and on a number of occasions our recruiter (Indistinct) contacted DVA to say: Okay, we have a person – spouse with a certain skill set that might be of interest in that particular location. So, there are all those factors that you're trying to do. It's not always just recruiting the doctor – you're trying to find a position for a partner too.

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

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

I'll just give you an example. Say QEH needs somebody, would the recruiting person work with Dr. Dorran to identify somebody that might be a potential and recruit them specifically for that position?

Or, are we saying: We have a position, anybody's welcome, the date will be this, we'll accept however many applications, whoever scores highest on an objective criteria (Indistinct) –

**Mr. Henderson:** Well the first issue – if there is a vacancy, we're advertising and posting what the criteria would be for those particular positions. If, like I say, a colleague says: Actually, I know a doctor that I graduated with, or whatever, might be ideal for that situation. They can make their calls, they can determine whether that's a fit for Prince Edward Island and once again, recruiting would contact them and verify all these types of pieces of information and make sure that they're well aware of what programs that we offer to attract and retain physicians here in this province. I think they

do a relatively good job of that – in a professional manner.



We can't have it just as only hearsay – you have to make sure that you're getting the facts in front of those people. Should a physician decide to come to an area, we arrange site visits to make sure that they're well aware. We work in close proximity with our hospital foundations.

Physicians may want to know what pieces of equipment – if I take the cancer treatment centre – they may want to know that we're making significant investments in the linear accelerators that are in that location. Those are the types of things that may encourage a physician to come to Prince Edward Island.

**Mr. J. Brown:** Thanks, Chair.

Thanks, Minister.

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

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

My question's were along the recruitment as well, but it's been mostly answered. Thank you.

I will ask: Minister, do you have the handouts for the Health PEI?

**Mr. Henderson:** I believe we do here.

**Mr. MacEwen:** I wonder could we get them early because I know we'll be getting into it here eventually just in case anybody wanted to do five minutes of research before they come.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yes.

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

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay. We'll table them through Joey. We can probably continue on discussions –

**Mr. MacEwen:** Yes, absolutely.

**Mr. Henderson:** – while they're doing that step part of it.

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

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

**Mr. Aylward:** I believe I was on the list still.

**Chair:** Hon. member, with all due respect, you were not in your seat when the – you have to be in your seat to ask a question. You were standing over there.

**Mr. Aylward:** But I just went over there to speak to him for a quick moment, but I had indicated to you before that I did have another question on this section.

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

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

Just with regards to recruitment and retention – I realize it's a difficult thing. As a side note to that, which would tie into the compensation package, where are we right now – where is your government right now in negotiations with the doctors in the master agreement?

**Mr. Henderson:** That's a very good question. It's probably at a point in time of a little bit of – we do not have a signed arrangement. My understanding is, is that negotiations are going along quite well and it's in the hands of the medical society at the moment and we are hopeful that they will give their blessings to their negotiators who conclude that arrangement.

I'm going to say I'm hopeful, maybe it's in a month or so, but in general terms with general principles have all been completed. It's just a matter of ratification and finalization (Indistinct).

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

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

Could the minister advise us who the chief negotiator is on behalf of the province? Is it the lawyer from McInnes Cooper in Halifax as well?

**Mr. Henderson:** It's Ian Pickard, yeah.

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

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

So, this is the same person that's negotiating the pharmacist's agreement –

**Mr. Henderson:** It's the same with all three (Indistinct).

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

**Chair:** Hon. members, I can't hear the question.

**Mr. Aylward:** I'm sorry, that last part?

**Mr. Henderson:** Community care.

**Mr. Aylward:** Community care.

**Mr. Henderson:** We have three negotiations ongoing at the moment: The Pharmacy Association, the Medical Society and the Community Care Facilities Association.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay.

Thank you.

**Chair:** Shall it carry?

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

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

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Minister, why are we using a person not from PEI and a person from Halifax from McInnes and Cooper?

**Mr. Henderson:** We have a service agreement with that particular company and they've selected that particular lawyer who's got depth of background in that negotiations, and the fact that we're doing all three negotiations – I'll say same time – it gives validity to that.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Was that out for tender, minister?

**Mr. Henderson:** What's that?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Was that put out for tender?

**Mr. Henderson:** Oh gee. I don't – would it have been?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** I believe that arrangement is province-wide. McInnis Cooper is used with respect to collective bargaining and labour relations for all public sector unions and agreements, not just simply health. I believe that was as the result of a tendering process a few years back – I'm not sure the exact time.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Can we bring back to the House how this tender came about or what was put out there for a tender on this and how long the agreement was for?

**Mr. Henderson:** I don't know. I could check into that, but it might be through the Public Service Commission that – how that works – which is not my department.

**Leader of the Opposition:** If you could check into it, Minister, that'd be great.

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay.

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

**Mr. Henderson:** He's enthusiastic. Health Care Innovation Working Group Secretariat

“Appropriations provided for the administration of the Health Care Innovation Working Group Secretariat established by the Council of the Federation to provide administrative and logistical support. Prince Edward Island is responsible for the administration of the Secretariat. Appropriations are fully-offset by revenue from provincial/territorial contributions.”  
Professional Services: 150,000.

Total Health Care Innovation Working Group Secretariat: 150,000

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

Obviously, my question is on the one line item there that has a budget associated with it, \$150,000. If I go to your handout, it shows me it's for a consultant. Can you give

us some outline on what that consultant's work was for?

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah. I'll refer to my honourable colleague here.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** The budget appropriation in this particular area represents funding that the Province is administering and the department is administering, really on behalf of all the provinces and jurisdictions.

This is, I guess, the final pieces of work that are coming out of the Health Care Innovation Working Group that was established a few years back. Premier Ghiz was instrumental in getting that underway.

Essentially, the provinces and territories provided funding for a number of, sort of, innovative projects and initiatives in this particular area a few years back. In 2015-2016, I believe, PEI assumed the administration of those funds and essentially we have a couple of projects left, really, that we'll be disbursing the monies on in the year ahead. The work is actually undertaken in a couple of the other jurisdictions, we just happen to be managing the remaining pool of money. This is fully offset by revenues from that initiative.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you.

So this consultant – is this a local consultant?

**Mr. Henderson:** No, it's consultations. It's email consultation with health care providers and the other one was integrating virtual and non-virtual care.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** These, I think, were selected or determined in some of the other jurisdictions that had contributed to the working group.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you.

So what you're telling me then is this \$150,000 is just our portion of the overall –

**Kevin Barnes Director:** No. We –

**Mr. Henderson:** It's federal money, we're just administering it.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Yeah, we're administering the pool of money that was collected from the provinces and territories a few years back. The projects that are being undertaken are being undertaken either in other provinces or by consultants selected in other provinces, and essentially we're flowing the money through to fund those initiatives.

As I say, the two projects identified really I think are the remaining projects to be undertaken by the working group. I believe one of the firms is in Ontario. I'm not sure where the second one is.

The results of the study would be reported back to the council (Indistinct) federation and considered there, so in essence, as I say, we're disbursing the monies that we are sort of holding on behalf of the working group.

**Mr. Aylward:** All right, thank you.

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

Total Health Policy and Programs:  
5,608,300.

Shall the total carry? Carried.

The top of page 90.

Chief Public Health Office

“Appropriations provided for administration of the *Public Health Act*, supervision of provincial public health programs, immunization programs, disease surveillance and communicable disease control.” Administration: 30,500. Equipment: 1,900. Materials, Supplies and Services: 1,261,500. Professional Services: 53,600. Salaries: 1,318,200. Travel and Training: 30,400. Grants: 1,600.

Total Chief Public Health Office: 2,697,700.

Question from the hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

My question, I guess, would be directly around the responsibilities of the Chief Public Health Officer herself, Dr. Heather Morrison –

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, Heather Morrison.

**Mr. Aylward:** – who I have a huge amount of respect for, and sometimes I have concerns because I see a lot of different responsibilities being added to her shingle, let's say.

What role does Dr. Heather currently play within health and wellness here on PEI?

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, the Chief Public Health Officer is probably the most powerful person in this province, with authorization –

**Mr. Aylward:** Might want to tell the Premier that.

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, she could indicate policy just around the health and wellness of Islanders and dictate that.

She makes major recommendations to us regarding our immunizations, around vaccines, and makes those recommendations, and we're implementing now a universal influenza immunization program in the province, which is a big, new initiative that hopefully will pay good dividends when it comes to reduced hospital admittances, reduce the wait times at times of the year when things tend to be a bit more prevalent.

She's also, overall, dealing with the environmental health issues, any issues pertaining to our slaughterhouses and some of those things, to make sure that they're all done in a clean and a manner in conjunction with CFIA standards.

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

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

I guess my question more so has to do with is in her responsibility as Chief Public Health Officer here on PEI, is she currently also standing in as acting for any of the

other various responsibilities that have been shouldered to her over the last couple of years?

**Mr. Henderson:** She had to fill in as deputy minister in the department for a period of time, and she also is a practicing doctor in the province so she could be doing shifts at the emergency room, but once again that's in keeping –

**Mr. LaVie:** Don't forget your (Indistinct)

**Mr. Henderson:** – making sure that our administrative staff have a good handle on actual services that are provided right directly to Islanders.

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

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

I'm going to ask this question, because I don't know exactly where it would filter in through, so I figure public health would be a great place to ask it.

What procedures or tracking is in place currently to ensure that we know of the number of suicides that occur here on Prince Edward Island?

**Mr. Henderson:** (Indistinct)

**Kevin Barnes Director:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, okay, actually that would be through the chief coroner's office. They are the ones that track deaths in the province and any correlation to comparables which is – I don't think that's through our department. That's another department.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay. I'll wait, then, until we get to that department.

**Chair:** Are you good?

**Mr. Aylward:** Yeah, thank you.

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

Population Health Assessment and Surveillance

“Appropriations provided for the monitoring and reporting on health status and trends in

the Province. The unit supports evidence-based decision-making and promotes continuous improvement by generating, analyzing and interpreting information. Administration: 4,300. Equipment: 2,400. Materials, Supplies and Services: 600. Professional Services: 16,300. Salaries: 330,100. Travel and Training: 2,100.

Total Population Health Assessment and Surveillance: 355,800.

Shall the section carry? Carried.

#### Health Promotion

“Appropriations provided to support the health and wellness of Islanders and to promote a pro-active process to enable Islanders to increase control over and to improve their health. The unit is responsible for implementing the provincial Wellness Strategy within the Department, across Government and in partnership with non-Government organizations and communities.” Administration: 7,700. Materials, Supplies and Services: 23,000. Professional Services: 12,900. Salaries: 450,200. Travel and Training: 10,800. Grants: 216,500.

Total Health Promotion: 721,100.

The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

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

What's the increase in the salaries?

**Mr. Henderson:** Maybe Kevin – epidemiology?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** We basically, in that particular case, we had a position that it essentially increased its guarantee. It was a part-time position. It's moved to a full-time position based on the workload.

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

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

Where is that position based out of?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** It's based here in Charlottetown.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Is it inappropriate to ask the name of what position that is or who?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** The position title, I can share that with you, is education, early intervention coordinator.

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

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

Who is the coordinator of that?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** The coordinator actually – the person's on a leave at this point in time – but Jennifer Cairns-Burke was that role.

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

**Chair:** Thank you.

Shall the section – oh, sorry.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

I'm just wondering if the department does a sort of ongoing analysis of the long-term savings that are accrued from health promotion. Is that some – I realize that's a difficult thing to do, but is there any attempt to do that at all?

**Mr. Henderson:** I guess all I can say as minister, I have many organizations enter my office with ideas and initiatives that all claim that they will save health dollars down the road, and I'm not disputing that any of them wouldn't, but just when it comes back to the amount of dollars that you can invest into health care promotion or health care reductions, it just – that's the big challenge, and sometimes a challenge to pick which ones, so I use the example of the influenza flu vaccine model.

Once again, we took a lot of evidence based on previous provinces and what they've done. The Chief Public Health Officer did a thorough review of the request, the costs, and got through all the channels of

government to determine that that would be eventually go into the budget and be money that would be announced or in the Budget speech, and now we'll work through the process of doing that.

But, other initiatives we are certainly looking at, when we talked about the diabetes program, I think there's some investments that we would like to make there. Others, smoking cessation would be another example of an initiative that, once again, with the epidemiologist that we have in the department, we have (Indistinct) you might have seen a campaign recently on our low-risk drinking campaigns to try to make sure Islanders are well aware of the risks associated with drinking. Those are the types of things, but to know we're tracking directly. I don't know if we do something specific on that.

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

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

I'm glad to see that the budget has increased from last year, but if you go back two years to 2015 it was actually higher than it is this year, which was 756,000 back then.

I'm wondering what the – how do you determine what the right amount is for health promotion. Where does that come from?

**Mr. Henderson:** I think, ultimately, that the challenge that I have, I had mentioned yesterday in some of comments, was that as minister of health we have people who come in the door with a health care need. We don't deal with budgetary items when people require a service.

It always gets to be that fundamental challenge when you get into a budget. When you go over the budget envelope and you get into special warrants. It's generally frowned upon to do that.

There are situations where we do tend to be taking away, probably, from health promotional issues, or more preventative issues than – because you're dealing with what comes in the door.

It's so unexpected to know what comes in the door from the general public in health care needs that's required.

When we get into lung transplants it could be \$270,000. If someone needs it, they need it. That's going to have an impact on our overall budget.

As much as I would like to focus way more of our resources towards preventative sides of things, I still have to live within a budgetary envelope within reason. It tends to be the one that's easier to reduce, I guess, at the time. If that explains it a bit better.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** It does from a political point of view. Of course, I totally understand that. It still represents just over 1% of the health care budget.

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'm just wondering whether there is any sense within the department that you know, okay, our goal for five years from now, will be that that will be 2% of the budget or 4% of the budget, or whatever. Is there any move in that direction?

**Mr. Henderson:** We have a wellness strategy. In that we're trying to, once again, look at more preventative measures and encourage a healthy lifestyle on Islanders.

This is where we do campaigns like the lower drinking, healthy eating. There are a number of components we try to invest some grants in.

I can think of one in my own area where the O'Leary legion developed a community garden, and had a little bit of support. That was a few hundred dollars or something, to try to teach people how to grow a garden again and understand the importance of healthy eating.

You can do more and more of that, it just becomes those goals and initiatives that we want to implement and encourage Islanders to think about healthy food, healthy lifestyles, and healthy choices. We're just not there, yet.

In my opinion it will be a never ending process of encouraging people to become more healthy in their mindsets and the decisions that they make.

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

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

A final point on this. Have you done a jurisdictional scan to figure out whether 1.2% of a provincial health budget is in line when it comes to spending on prevention and health promotion?

**Mr. Henderson:** Maybe, I'll ask – do you have any input on that?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** It's often difficult to do those types of comparisons across jurisdictions –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yeah, apples and apples.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Yeah, exactly, depending on how services are organized and such.

What I would say is in addition to what's particularly here in this section; I think, certainly, there are contributions in investments in wellness in other aspects of the department, as well as Health PEI.

I know one of the sections coming up is the sport, recreation, physical activity side of things, which certainly has an impact. Some of what we just talked about, the Chief Public Health Office with respect to immunization and those types of initiatives, as well would have kind of an impact there. It is difficult to make those comparisons.

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

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

Environmental Health Services

“Appropriations provided for the services to educate, consult and inspect under the *Public Health Act* in areas such as food protection, accommodations, institutional facilities and slaughterhouses. Inspection services also includes enforcement under the *Tobacco and Electronic Smoking Device Sales and Access Act* and *Smoke-Free Places Act*.” Administration: 16,100.

Equipment: 800. Materials, Supplies and Services: 15,500. Professional Services: 41,800. Salaries: 759,300. Travel and Training: 54,400.

Total Environmental Health Services: 887,900.

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

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

Chair, minister, has the department of this section done any work yet with the anticipated legalization of marijuana and how that's going to affect smoke-free places and so on?

Have we looked at that yet?

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah. We have been prepared. We have legislation ready to go. Right now, we're really awaiting the whole process as it unfolds with the federal government, and marijuana and its uses, its legal uses.

I think the reality is, is it's probably a bit of a wait and see, but we are ready to table legislation and implement legislation when we get more feedback out of the federal government and how it's going to impact Prince Edward Islanders, and the *Smoke-free Places Act*.

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

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

How long have you been working on this legislation?

**Mr. Henderson:** It has been going through the process. It has been basically complete. It's just a matter of whether we table it.

It's hard to table it until you know exactly – I know it has gone through priorities and planning that that committee. It just hasn't been tabled yet. Once again, we're still waiting to see exactly what comes out of the debate in Ottawa right at the moment.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** What all areas will this legislation cover?

**Mr. Henderson:** Basically, it's to replicate that the *Smoke-free Places Act* includes marijuana.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**Mr. Henderson:** Right now, it does not.

It's tobacco products. We made some changes to around electronic smoking devices that are included to that, but we have not added in marijuana.

It would basically be stating the very same thing that we do with tobacco; that you will not be permitting to smoke marijuana within so many feet of a building and you know those types of situations, and hospitals, the list goes on.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** With that, is the province looking at any possible testing for employees that leave the property, then come back into the workplace of Health PEI? How does that work?

**Mr. Henderson:** I have to say, I don't think we have looked at that part of it.

As far as anything, I know the issue around driving that would be under the department of transportation as far as testing that goes there. We don't test people for other issues. If they went out for lunch and had a few drinks and came back.

If somebody was identified as being impaired of some capacity as an employee I think actions would be taken to verify and to make sure that didn't occur. The safety of our patients would be of utmost importance, as well as co-workers.

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

**Leader of the Opposition:** Has there been any conversation regarding that aspect of it in the workplace for the safety of patients and so on?

**Mr. Henderson:** I don't think we have it yet. Once again, until the situation in Ottawa is more clear and we've now implemented our own legislation. I think that would more of a policy as it comes to human resources.

Health PEI may have a bit more of a background on that. I think that would be the same for all employers and workers that may be impaired by the use of marijuana, which probably could be today without that law.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, that's right.

Thank you.

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

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

I'm looking at the salaries line in this section and I see it was quite under spent last year. I assume that's a position that was not filled. Am I right?

**Mr. Henderson:** You might know that one.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** There were actually a few positions that were vacant through the course of the year. I think the hiring is complete.

We did have to do some recruitment for environmental health officers. I think that work is complete. I believe it's back to full complement now, but we did have a prolonged vacancy for, or a couple of prolonged vacancies throughout the year.

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

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

I see that in the budget that it looks as though the salary line is back up to over what it was estimated for last year.

Given that there were some positions unfilled for a portion of last year, was the staff complement able to carry out all of the inspections that they were mandated to do in a proper manner?

**Mr. Henderson:** To my knowledge they were. I'm sure they were maybe a tad overworked. Inspections can be random to a certain degree, and maybe we just didn't do as many.

It is a process where you go with the assumptions that our operations out there are



complying with all rules and regulations. There has to be oversight, but that oversight could come from any complaint that is out there and they can follow-up on it.

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

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

Can I ask if the occupational health and safety salaries fall under this tab?

**Mr. Henderson:** No.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** No? Okay.

**Mr. Henderson:** It would be labour.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'll (Indistinct) thank you.

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

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'm fine.

Thank you, Chair.

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

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

From my previous background, I'm quite familiar with the regulations around fixed-roof accommodations and (Indistinct) establishments and so on and so forth, and the number of seats dictate the number of washroom facilities that you have to have.

Recently I took a tour of Glen Stewart school and I was – and it's been a while since I really thought about the washroom facilities, particularly, at a school for elementary children, but I was taken aback by the number of toilets or urinals in the school in relation to the number of children that are in the school.

Now, I realize that Glen Stewart school and Stratford elementary are both well over capacity right now, but it's somewhat concerning to me that we could shut down an eating establishment if they don't meet the strict guidelines, but yet we're not ensuring that our children are treated in a similar manner.

I'm just wondering if you could comment on that.

**Mr. Henderson:** I don't think we actually do any inspections on the schools, per se, but we – I guess if there's a complaint that was leveled, it would be something we could look into. I know we would deal with the community-care facilities, restaurants, any food-eating establishments that are open to the public.

Kevin, do you have anything to add to that?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** In terms of that type of issue, I guess certainly if a complaint or a concern was raised and brought forward to the Chief Public Health Office with respect to the appropriateness of a sanitary nature of an operation, there could be an investigation and could be orders issued by the Chief Public Health Office with respect to remediation.

I don't believe there's sort of a – in terms of washroom facilities and the adequacy, I'm not sure that that sort of falls as a responsibility of an inspecting of this unit. But certainly, as I say, if there were concerns brought forward from a public health perspective, there's an investigative type of a function.

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

**Mr. Aylward:** Thank you.

I'll look into that further.

**Kevin Barnes Director:** Okay.

**Mr. Aylward:** And thank you for that response.

Chair, my other question – and the Minister of Finance might be able to elaborate on my next question, because he and I had a conversation, just probably about a week or a week-and-a-half ago with regards to e-cigs – e-cigarettes and the juice that is being produced illegally, and essentially the black market. I'm wondering if the minister could follow up with what he did with that information that I provided to him.

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

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

In fact, the same day that I received that information, I brought that back that same day to my department, and the department is following up on that now.

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

Thank you, Chair.

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

Total Chief Public Health Office: 4,662,500.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity

“Appropriations provided for development, implementation, delivery and monitoring of programs and services in the areas of sport, recreation and physical activity.”

Administration: 8,800; Equipment: 2,100;  
Materials, Supplies and Services: 5,500;  
Professional Services: 82,000; Salaries:  
418,300; Travel and Training: 23,700;  
Grants: 1,916,200.

Total Sport, Recreation and Physical  
Activity: 2,456,600.

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

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

Minister, do you have any information on the grants through that department?

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah –

**Mr. MacKay:** Do you have a handout?

**Mr. Henderson:** (Indistinct) would table that, but we – just to give you an idea, that’s the amateur sport program, the community recreation sport program, the sport bilateral funding, provincial organizational sport funding, and our physical activity healthy eating fund.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Is there any programs out there for the new immigrants that come in for physical activity?

**Mr. Henderson:** Well, if – as an example – the newcomers association submitted an application for, physical activity healthy eating fund as an example, they would be able to apply to that like any other organization and whether they get funding or not, it would just depend on the applications.

If they were part of a certain sporting organization that would be another – table tennis is an example. I know I’ve met with a group trying to get a sport going called speed ball, it’s quite popular in certain countries. They could apply for funding to develop that.

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

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

Is there a program that’s called Newfit for Newcomers? Have you heard of that program?

**Mr. Henderson:** Not specifically, but –

**Kevin Barnes Director:** I believe that is something that was initiated by the Newcomers Association, yes. (Indistinct) a direct program of the department but –

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

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

Was there any funding went to the Newfit for Newcomers program?

**Mr. Henderson:** They probably would be if they made an application, like I said before, as an organization.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Could we find out how much the grant was for the Newfit for Newcomers?

**Kevin Barnes Director:** I believe, hon. member, that was in the previous year, but we can bring back the number.

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

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

So, the previous year the Newfit for Newcomers – has there been any request for this upcoming year for the Newfit for Newcomers program?

**Mr. Henderson:** I wouldn't be aware of that at this point. I mean once again, applications can come in – we're always receiving applications. Most types of things like you just mentioned there might be new initiatives. They may not require any more funding once they get, maybe, a certain device or – the program's usually run by volunteers anyway.

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

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

I would like to know, I guess, the previous year and this upcoming year, how much the Newfit for Newcomers program did receive.

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay we'll get that back.

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

**Mr. MacKay:** Who's the contact do you know? If you could also get me the contact for the Newfit for Newcomers – who made the application?

**Mr. Henderson:** Our department – John Morrison would be the one that that the application would go to. He'd be able to find that information.

**Mr. MacKay:** Chair?

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

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

And could we also find out if Gord MacNeilly was part of that Newfit for Newcomers – if he was the instructor for it?

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah. We can find that out.

**Mr. MacKay:** Chair?

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

**Mr. MacKay:** And also –

**Mr. Roach:** He's a good instructor.

**Mr. MacKay:** No doubt about it. No doubt about it.

Also, could we find out if Gord MacNeilly received any grants or funding from anything through your department – Health PEI?

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay, yes.

**Mr. MacKay:** Or anything you're responsible for, minister?

**Mr. Henderson:** Sure, yeah. No problem at all.

**Mr. MacKay:** Thank you.

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

Total Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity: 2,456,600

Shall the total carry?

**Some Hon. Members:** Carried.

**Chair:** Sorry? Kensington-Malpeque, do you have a question?

**Mr. MacKay:** Just before we carry that section, I'm hoping you will honour what you just said you'd bring back.

**Mr. Henderson:** Oh yeah. There's no problem whatsoever. I kept my word on that. And we'll probably be here a while with Health PEI, so.

**Mr. MacKay:** Okay.

Thank you, Chair.

**Chair:** Total Department of Health and Wellness: 13,093,000.

Shall it carry? Carried.

Thank you, Mr. Barnes.

**Mr. Henderson:** Do I have to leave?

**Chair:** No, you can stay here.

**Mr. Henderson:** Thanks, Kev. There you go.

**An Hon. Member:** Good job Mr. Barnes.

**Chair:** Hon. members, we're now going to move on to Health PEI. You can find that on page 93.

Permission to bring a stranger on the floor?  
Granted.

**An Hon. Member:** Stranger?

**Mr. Henderson:** No stranger to this place.

**Mr. Currie:** Now you're going to get it right now. You're going to get it right now.

**Ms. Biggar:** You'll be getting the answers now.

**Mr. LaVie:** Here comes the brains.

**Mr. Currie:** 580-680 million dollar budget. Right here.

**Mr. Henderson:** This lady knows how to manage the (Indistinct).

**Chair:** Thank you. Could you introduce yourself and your title?

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

**Chair:** Hon. members?

Thank you.

Could you introduce yourself for the record.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** Denise Lewis Fleming, Chief Operating Officer for Health PEI.

**Chair:** Welcome back, Denise.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Hon. members, we're on page 93.

Corporate Services

“Appropriations provided for the operation of the office of the Chief Executive Officer and for the provision of corporate services in the areas of planning and evaluation, policy development and analysis.” Administration: 65,500; Equipment: 13,900; Materials, Supplies and Services: 26,600; Professional Services: 310,000; Salaries: 2,024,400. Travel and Training: 73,800.

Total Corporate Services: 2,514,200.

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

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

Not really a question on this particular section as much as I want to verify that the two handouts that we did receive.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** There were three handouts that were provided.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay, I just –

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** The Health PEI employee salary listing for the 2017-2018.

**Mr. Aylward:** Got it.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** Health PEI grants and professional services.

**Mr. Aylward:** Go it.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** For 2017-2018. There was also Health PEI physician fee for service and contract payments.

**Mr. Aylward:** Missing.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** Okay. I'm not sure. You would have to check with the clerk. It came to the floor, so I don't know where it got circulated.

**Mr. Aylward:** Okay, thank you, Denise.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** It's just one report. That report is more relevant later on for the medical affairs file.

**Mr. Aylward:** Chair?

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid had a question.

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

**Chair:** I'll come back to you.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Minister, you have an industrial engineer hired in your department. I'm not sure of the title that I'm looking for here. I can't find the title of her spot, but is that position still –

**Mr. Henderson:** I'll refer to my colleague on that one.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** We do have a systems –

**Mr. MacEwen:** That's it.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** – optimization –

**Mr. MacEwen:** That's it, yeah.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** – engineer. Yes, we do. The position does still exist and it is within Jamie MacDonald's division for their utilization management work.

**Mr. Henderson:** Are you interested or?

**Mr. J. Brown:** Thinking of a move.

**Mr. MacEwen:** No.

**Mr. Henderson:** But you're an engineer aren't you?

**Mr. MacEwen:** I was –

**Mr. MacKay:** No, we have other plans for him.

**Mr. MacEwen:** In that –

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

**Mr. MacEwen:** I was in that department a few years ago, now back in 2003. My first job after I graduated.

How is that, she has been in that – or if it's still she, she been in that position for a few years now. How is her project load and how is that working out?

I know her job is to save time and money for the department.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** There has been a change in that position. The individual you are referring to has actually moved onto another manager's position.

**Mr. MacEwen:** Okay.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** There is an individual in behind that. Their workload, they're currently reviewing it and trying to focus on the priorities with patient flow is what they're working on right now.

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

**Mr. MacEwen:** To say, it has been successful though? I remember asking before, I think it was the minister, or maybe even yourself, talk about there was significant savings that that position is usually able to find on an annual basis.

**Denise Lewis Fleming COO:** With regards to helping with flow of patients and also identifying efficiencies in areas. This upcoming year their focus will be on patient flow. In particular, in around the QEH and the Prince County Hospital.

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

**Mr. MacEwen:** Minister, I think this position has been very successful. Would you consider adding to that area? Not only do they help with projects, not necessarily saving money, but efficiencies, flow all that type of thing –

**Mr. Henderson:** Yeah, I'd be –

**Mr. MacEwen:** I know, previous –

**Mr. Henderson:** – happy –

**Mr. MacEwen:** – projects have saved the department a lot of money.

**Mr. Henderson:** I would be happy to bring that up with the CEO and look at that. I would hope that we're always looking at the options that will be making things more

efficient and get patient flow better. We are, definitely.

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

**Chair:** The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock did you have a question?

**Mr. Aylward:** No, I just was following up on the handout.

Chair, thank you very much.

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

Financial Services

“Appropriations provided for the administration and operation of financial accounting, auditing, materials management, financial reporting systems, financial planning and analysis.” Administration: 959,800. Debt: 246,000. Equipment: 29,100. Materials, Supplies and Services: 261,600. Professional Services: 208,300; Salaries: 6,437,400. Travel and Training: 56,000. Grants: 4,000.

Total Financial Services: 8,202,200.

The hon. Member from Stratford-Kinlock.

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

This might not be the section I should be asking this in; it might be directly attributed to emergency services, long-term care and hospital services east.

From time to time I receive inquiries, complaints from constituents with regards to invoices they receive from hospital stays.

**Mr. Henderson:** Okay, yeah.

**Mr. Aylward:** A lot of the time what takes place is their loved –

**Mr. LaVie:** Call the hour.

**Mr. Aylward:** There are still two minutes left.

**Chair:** Yeah. We have two minutes left.

Thank you.

**Mr. Dumville:** Not by BlackBerry.

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

**Mr. MacEwen:** That’s your problem right there.

**Ms. Biggar:** It’s 1:00 p.m. here.

**Mr. Aylward:** I guess he has to go to his other job. I wonder what Mike Redmond thinks about that.

**Chair:** Do you have another question?

**Mr. Aylward:** Chair, if he wants to call the hour, I can hold off until Tuesday.

**Chair:** Hon. members the hour has been called.

Thank you.

**Mr. Roach:** We have got our own (Indistinct) over here.

**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:** Come on, Denise. We got started anyway.

**Mr. Dumville:** (Indistinct) BlackBerry.

**Ms. Biggar:** (Indistinct)

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

**Chair:** Order!

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.

**Ms. Mundy:** I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture, that this House adjourn until Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.

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

Have a lovely weekend.

The Legislature adjourned until Tuesday,  
April 25<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m.