

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

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The Legislature sat at 10:00 a.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests

Speaker (Watts): The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First, welcome all colleagues here on the floor and the staff of the Assembly and yourself, Mr. Speaker, to Friday, the beginning of the end of our first week of our fall sitting. It's been a very productive week for us when you think that we have now seven bills that have moved to and through second reading, it's a great indication of the collaboration that we enjoy here in this House and thank everyone for their part in that.

I'd like recognize in the gallery a fine number of participants in the 31st annual Rotary Youth Parliament, which will kick off shortly after we complete our work here this afternoon and to recognize the leaders of tomorrow who are here in the gallery and others who will join them to debate their own bills and resolutions and to acknowledge the organizers and leaders who are responsible for the Rotary Youth Parliament.

This is now into its fourth decade and it's a great institution and indeed some of the participants – had a chance to speak with them out in the hall – have participated previously in youth parliament. It's a great institution and something that will ensure that our province has a bright future.

I want to acknowledge the good folks who may be watching or following our proceedings from my district, District 9 York-Oyster Bed, as well as those tuning in by Internet or by EastLink across the province.

I meet folks every day who follow our proceedings and follow them with a real discernment and it's impressive to see just how Islanders look to us to do our work in here.

I was asked yesterday by someone who stopped me and he said: do you mind if I ask

you something and he said: when they ask you those questions in the House do they let you know ahead what they're going to be asking you about –

Ms. Biggar: I wish they did.

Premier MacLauchlan: – and I said: no, I think if they had any opportunity I think they like to their best to surprise you.

His response was: well, God bless you.

So there you go. Now, a couple of events coming up –

Mr. Trivers: No wonder you never (Indistinct)

Premier MacLauchlan: – tonight, a great gathering here at the Delta to support the democratic process in our province. Among those going to the microphone will be the hon. Lawrence MacAulay, who next week on the 21st of November, will celebrate 30 years of continuous service as a Member of Parliament. One of a very small number who ever done that in history and Francis will be there too, to be honoured.

The hon. Dominic LeBlanc will be there as a guest speaker, and he's going to be there whatever the weather is and senator Brain Francis has accepted an invitation to say grace and we look forward to that –

Mr. Myers: Lots of Liberals showing up.

Premier MacLauchlan: – as a great contribution to the advancement of democracy in our province and we will be at St. Joachim's Hall –

Mr. Myers: Right after (Indistinct)

Premier MacLauchlan: – in Vernon River tomorrow night; the same enthusiasm and the same good intentions, and the same great contribution to democracy.

Mr. Myers: Yeah, he doesn't know if he's a Liberal or not –

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Myers: He can't decide (Indistinct) supporting new leadership of any one of them.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: [Laughter]

Mr. Myers: You should be worried about Denny King (Indistinct) doesn't like him.

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

It's certainly a pleasure for me to rise in the Legislature today and again, bring greetings on behalf of the official opposition and especially to welcome the rotary youth parliamentarians here with us today. It's a program that I always enjoy every year and I was going through the agenda and am very intrigued over some of the bills and resolutions that you're planning to debate over the weekend. I'd like to also specially thank the Rotary clubs here on PEI for hosting this yearly event.

As the Premier said, these are our future leaders, and I encourage all members of the Legislative Assembly – I know that we have some inclement weather coming in – but if you have an opportunity to come in and view the proceedings and listen, it's a great learning experience, as I well know. Some of the topics they're going to be discussing are very pertinent to today and these young people, I feel, have a key message for us who are here. I thank you again for that.

I'd also like to recognize one of my constituents who have joined us in the gallery today. That would be Dr. Trevor Jane, who I'll be speaking a little more about in a few moments.

I also just like to remind everyone in the Stratford and area that this coming Sunday is the annual food drive for the food bank, and so I ask all residents of the Stratford and area to be as generous as they can. I know that the component that I look after every year, the close to 60 apartment buildings, I started that process last Monday by placing the boxes in all of the apartment buildings. I know that usually it takes about two truckloads to take to the food bank from the generosity of the residents in the apartments

and the condo buildings in Stratford. I appreciate their kindness and their generosity and I look forward to seeing those results again this Sunday.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, hon. leader.

The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

Welcome everybody back to conclude the first week of our deliberations here in the House. Of course, I want to also particularly welcome all of the participants in this year's Rotary Youth Parliament – 31st youth parliament. I didn't live on the Island back then, but members before me have said: the leaders of the future. In reality, that's true because the hon. member who sits to my right, back in 1986 participated in the Rotary Youth Parliament and was the Speaker of the House in that year, so it's not just something we say, it's the reality that can happen.

You are here, of course, to participate in some incredibly interesting bills; I was reading through the bills on cannabis management, on pesticide management, voting age – excellent idea, women's health, public transit, electric vehicles, mental health and on and on and on. A list of bills and motions, which is very impressive; we were sent it last week and I read through them. I'm sure you will have very vigorous and informed debate; you've had lots of time to prepare for that. I look forward to dropping in and seeing some of that and joining you for lunch tomorrow. I hope you have a wonderful weekend.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I too, would like to welcome everybody here today. A special welcome to Joe Byrne, leader of the NDP with us today, and also to the youth parliament attendees here today, it's great to see you here. As a proud Rotarian, I'm really proud of the Rotary club

for their involvement for this. And Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank you and this Assembly for continuing on this great tradition; it is just absolutely wonderful.

I want to – West Royalty is going to be well represented. I'm going to be here tomorrow, and look forward to meeting and helping you people through your deliberations tomorrow and West Royalty-Springvale will be well represented, because both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition is from West Royalty-Springvale. So, the same great representation for West Royalty-Springvale will continue.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Next, I'll call on the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald, who by the way, I overlooked yesterday, and I apologize to you, hon. member.

Mr. LaVie: Double time today.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Speaker: (Indistinct) yeah, double time today.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

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

Perhaps you'll give me a little leeway today, then –

Mr. Myers: He was (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: – I wanted to just wish a happy Friday morning to all the colleagues here in the House, I'm sure we will have a great debate today.

I wanted to welcome everyone from District 18 Rustico- Emerald, who is watching. I especially wanted to wish a happy 90th birthday to Keith Rackham. Keith Rackham is an avid gardener at Rosewood Residence, where he is now, but he is from Wheatly River, he lived there for many, many years. He has been a prize-winning horticulturalist since 1937. In 1937, he won the Wheatly River School Fair 1st prize for Sheaf of

Wheat Oats and Sheaf of 100 heads of barley. He is still gardening today at Rosewood and really contributing a lot there, so I wanted to wish him a happy 90th.

I wanted to wish a happy belated 33rd birthday to Anna Keenan. Anna Keenan, of course, is a constituent of mine; our political beliefs don't always align, but I love her passion –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: – and I love the fact that she does put time and effort into politics –

Ms. Biggar: I think she's winning you over.

Mr. Myers: Vice versa.

Mr. Trivers: I also wanted to welcome everybody in here in the gallery today; it is great to see –

Mr. R. Brown: Just move your chair right over.

Mr. Trivers: – everyone. In terms of youth parliament, I think it really is fantastic. I thank the Rotary groups for what they do in putting this on. My mother was a Rotarian and president of a Rotary club, back in Blind River, Ontario, at one point. Of course, I was a parliamentarian as well – a youth parliamentarian – in the Northern Ontario Regional Parliament, in the Ontario youth parliament. It's a fantastic program and all it can do is build you up for great things to come, and I am very impressed to hear the issues and bills that you are bringing to the floor.

Lastly, I wanted to talk about the PC fall dinner – the Progressive Conservative fall dinner that's happening tonight, it's a fundraising dinner. There is still time for the members across the floor to get your tickets –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct).

Mr. Trivers: – and you can come and see me if you like –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: – you can buy them online. Stop by, you know, you'll get some good ideas.

So, I wanted to thank Suzi Deblois, who had really been the driving force behind this dinner and all of the ticket sellers, like Jeannie Pitts for example, who recently put in a lot of hours and made things happen.

I've been co-chair in really a name only for this dinner tonight, as I really have not contributed my fair amount, but I wanted to thank all of the ticket sellers. I look forward to having a great PC fall dinner tonight, even if the weather doesn't cooperate.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: I'll call on the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

Certainly, I'd like to begin today by welcoming all of the students into the gallery, who will be participating in the Rotary Youth Parliamentary over the weekend. I look forward to having an opportunity to come in and see the good work and all of the action that will be going off of the floor of the Legislature, so it's good to have you in today.

I also, too, would like to welcome any viewers that are viewing in today from the Sherwood area. It's a good community, a great bunch of neighbours that I have out there. They often give me a call with some advice, and I really appreciate that they do take an interest in what's going on the floor of the Legislature.

As well, I'd like to draw some attention to the Sherwood Parkdale Hockey Association Early Bird Tournament that's on this weekend. There is nothing like throwing that excitement into the volunteers and the organizers when a storm is on the way during your hockey tournament. I wish them all well, that they get everything pulled off the way they're supposed to. It's always a lot of work in a hockey tournament.

I'd also like to welcome to the gallery today, Dr. Trevor Jane, I see who's in the gallery today. Dr. Jane is a very busy physician on Prince Edward Island. He does some shifts over in our ED department at the QEH, he's involved, at both Holland College and UPEI in instructing other health professionals on Prince Edward Island and he has a very long and open career with the military.

Obviously, he is going to be recognized here today, but Dr. Jane did recently receive the Military Merit Award, which is equivalent of the Order of Canada for all Canadians –

An Hon. Member: Wow.

Mr. Mitchell: – so it is really great to have Dr. Jane in the House today. It's nice to see him here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Thank you, minister.

The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. Myers: Oh here we go.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Souris fire department has been starting generators probably for the last 30 years for the senior citizens in their area and it was no problem in doing it, it's just that the regulations kind of held us back. It had to be a certain temperature below zero for a certain amount of time and we had to wait for a phone call to go out and start these generators and with the cell service on rural PEI that just wasn't working.

For the last seven years I've been asked after the Department of Family and Human Services to put in a propane generator where they start automatically, you don't have to worry about it. What we were up against is we're usually having the snow storms in 2:00 a.m. where you couldn't find gas or couldn't get gas for these generators and seniors were freezing and stuff.

So, I just want to thank the minister of today for making it happen, that she is installing propane generators across PEI for our seniors.

I worked hard with the ministers before her and they wouldn't make it happen so I'm glad that the minister of today is putting in propane generators for our senior citizens right across PEI so they don't freeze during these power outages.

Mr. Myers: That's a good minister; she used to be a Tory I think.

Mr. LaVie: Our power outages are getting more frequently. The temperatures are dropping so it's great –

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: – some of these generators – I spoke to the minister yesterday, some of these generators are up and running and for the seniors that are up and running, they should be up and running she says they should be up and running before the holidays.

Hopefully our Maritime Electric can keep our power on until these generators are all up and running across PEI.

Mr. R. Brown: There's a seat over here for you, come on over.

Mr. Myers: Why, are you leaving again?

Mr. R. Brown: Good one, you never know.

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

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to rise to note that school will be closing a little bit early today in the Public Schools Branch due to inclement weather so if anybody's got children, 11:30 a.m. I believe is the pick-up time and certainly to advise everybody to travel safe in light of that.

I'd also like to welcome Dr. Jain, my brother is a colleague of Dr. Jain's at the emergency department and I've heard a lot about you, Dr. Jain. You're a legend in that world and we're thankful to have your services here on Prince Edward Island.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Myers: Well thank you, Mr. Speaker and I too want to welcome the youth Rotarian parliament members to the assembly here today. It's always a good event, hopefully the weather holds up.

On the topic of the weather, I know this will be our second weather pattern that we're going to experience this week. Travelling home the other night, I know for anybody who travelled any distance, the weather made the travelling tricky and talking to some people out around the communities there were a lot of rigs in the ditches and there was a lot of towing going on.

So, I hope that everyone out there takes their time if they have to travel at all this evening. Take your time and get where you're going and drive to stay alive and also, hopefully the department can get their act together. I know there were two school busses stuck on the ice up in the Leader of the Third Party's district this morning and it looked like there wasn't any sand down so hopefully we can get those things rectified. I mean it is November and we know full well that these weather patterns are coming in so hopefully the minister will look into things going on in her department to make sure that the roads are sanded for when the busses go home early this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Another great day in Prince Edward Island. The capital budget is coming down today. People are going to be very impressed with this government's agenda.

Ms. Biggar: How do you know?

Mr. R. Brown: I had a little glimpse one day.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: I want to tell people I was down around the hotel this morning where the Liberal function there is tonight, the

parking lot's filling up, all 1,200 seats are going to be full. Not like the Conservatives with 12 seats full so I recommend that anybody going to the dinner tonight to get there early because it's going to be another fantastic one –

Mr. Myers: The last supper.

[Laughter]

Mr. R. Brown: – another fantastic dinner, another fantastic dinner – no you guys are the last supper.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

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

Ms. Mundy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the Member from Souris-Elmira for his kind words today as well and I also want to give him a shout out.

In this House, a lot of us members, we work very closely together and I know when we're in here it doesn't often come across as that.

I will give a shout out to the member because he doesn't only wait until Question Period to ask me questions, if there is something burning in his gut he picks up the phone and he calls me immediately and we work together to solve the issues. So I do want to thank him for advocating for the seniors on Prince Edward Island to get those –

Mr. R. Brown: He is a senior.

Ms. Mundy: – propane generators up and going.

I also want to give a shout out to him as a first responder as a firefighter and to the entire Souris fire department for working very, very closely with my department over the last few years to make sure that in the event of emergencies that the seniors in those areas are taken care of so please pass along my thanks to your colleagues in the fire department.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. J. Brown: We'll get the Pages to just take your desk over.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: Working together.

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

Ms. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good morning everyone. I too would like to welcome Dr. Jain to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you for your service to our country and we are glad you are here. Congratulations on the very prestigious Order of Military Merit.

Also I, like everyone else, would like to welcome the Rotary youth parliamentarians and look forward to whoever is sitting in the Charlottetown-Lewis Point seat; I always leave a little note in my desk for the Rotary youth parliamentarian to encourage them to follow the rules.

Mr. Speaker, I know you and I are trying to give the most authentic experience to the Rotary youth parliamentarians so I'd like to thank the legislative staff, the teachers and the Rotarians, our Sergeant-at-Arms and everybody who will be making sure this experience is very authentic for the young parliamentarians and I just hope they know we also have a lot of fun in here too, so have a great day.

Statements by Members

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Major Trevor Jain – Order of Military Merit

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

Today it is an honour for me to rise in the Legislature and recognize Major Trevor Jain who received the Order of Military Merit, officer level from Governor General Julie Payette this past week.

Of the 26,000 people serving in the Canadian Army, only five are honoured and only one from PEI.

On top of being a reservist, Trevor is also an attending emergency physician at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, program director of the Bachelor of Science and Paramedicine course at UPEI and medical director for paramedicine programs at Holland College.

Major Jain is also a member of the 36th Brigade which looks after PEI and Nova Scotia.

Trevor was nominated by the soldiers in his brigade based on his outstanding military service.

Last year, Trevor received a call from Lieutenant Colonel asking him to hold for the Army Commander, Lieutenant General, Paul Wynnk.

At first, Trevor couldn't believe that he was calling him and when he told him, he definitely could not believe. Lieutenant General Paul Wynnk said to Trevor: I just want to let you know that you are one of my top five and I've invested you into the Order of Military Merit.

As you imagine, Trevor was very shocked and surprised, but also humbled. But, it is not the first time Trevor has been decorated for his service. He received the meritorious service medal, military division from the Governor General in 1999 for his efforts following the Swissair crash off Nova Scotia.

Trevor has recently returned from a mission in Iraq as part of Operation Impact which was his fifth deployment. On his recent deployment he worked as a trauma team leader doing damage control, resuscitation of special force members that were continuing operations fighting ISIS.

He received a military commendation for education and training of Canadian Armed Forces medics.

I want to congratulate Major Jain on the great honour he has received and a heartfelt thank you for your service to our country.

Trevor resides in Stratford with his wife, Kara, and children, Sydney and Natasha. It is an honour for me to have Trevor as a constituent in my district, but even more of a privilege to call him a friend.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you Trevor.

[Applause]

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale.

Debate on Bills

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last year, my colleague, the Leader of the Third Party stood in this Legislature and addressed concerns he had about how this Legislature handled second reading of bills.

He said: It is often apparent from the questions asked that some members have not read the legislation and are ill-prepared to contribute to a meaningful debate during Committee of the Whole. I think this issue could be addressed, in part, if the sponsors of legislation provided detailed research and briefing documents, including full jurisdictional scans and public feedback well in advance of second reading.

Since that time the handling of second reading for bills has become even rushed. We are four days into the fall sitting and we have already passed eight bills. Government has established a pattern of introducing legislation one day and immediately debating it the next.

For example, last night we were briefed by Blair Barbour on the *Police Act* immediately before the Legislature sat as that was the only time available. He had to interrupt his briefing halfway through because it was time to debate the bill.

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct)

Ms. Bell: Today we were informed that three more bills that were only tabled yesterday afternoon will be debated this morning. This may lead to speedy passage but it does not result in good governance.

PEI is one of the few parliamentary jurisdictions where every piece of legislation is debated in Committee of the Whole. Most other jurisdictions send legislation to standing committees where a diverse range of witnesses can be called and informed debate conducted.

The Third Party has long advocated for more rigorous review of bills, but we continue to be stymied by a government who seem determined to push through their agenda with little debate.

It is disappointing how our Premier who came in on the slogan: Let's work together. Our primary duty as legislators is to work together, to discuss, debate and pass good legislation that addresses the needs and concerns of Islanders.

We have the time, resources and the means to do so; we just need the commitment to good governance from all in the house.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

100th year of 4-H/National 4-H Month

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

November is national 4-H month and this year marks the 100th year anniversary here on Prince Edward Island.

4-H is one of PEI's longest-running youth organizations for young people aged 9-21 years. PEI 4-H is a family orientated, community based, youth organization which provides opportunities for leadership and life skills while promoting agricultural awareness.

PEI has over 500 members, over 300 leaders who belong to one of over 20 clubs. Members enroll in projects, give back the community, make new friends and have lots of fun.

Through real life situations 4-H members help develop life skills such as communication, citizenship, decision making, leadership, interpersonal relations and community and global awareness. 4-H

is Canada's largest out-of school-education program.

The 4-H classroom takes place around your kitchen table, outdoors, in front of a computer screen or within your community, province and beyond.

It is a world of hands on projects and demonstrations and skills for leadership development, 4-H teaches pride and workmanship. 4-H volunteers are actually called leaders and for good reason, 4-H is an organization built around leadership. By providing 4-Hers with mentors and role models who lead by example, it gives them the opportunity to enjoy meaningful, positive experiences that build confidence, positive self identity, self-esteem and a sense of achievement.

When everyone in today's world is busy and over extended, it just makes good sense to belong to an organization that involves the entire family and brings you closer to your neighbours.

I've had the wonderful opportunity to be a leader for close to 20 years, and a past president of the PEI 4-H council.

In closing, I want to extend my well-wishes to all who are involved with 4-H program here on Prince Edward Island and enjoy 4-H month.

Thank you.

[Applause]

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

Point of Privilege

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

I rise on a Point of Privilege further to Charlottetown-Parkdale's statement a moment ago.

Yesterday late morning, I received an email from the Office of the Third Party asking for a briefing in relation to the *Police Act*, a bill that we indicated when we were on the floor here last night had been in development for approximately a year and a half, that's endured a great deal of consultation, that

everybody – and the hon. Leader of the Third Party mentioned last night through the course of debate on the bill that he was very well aware that it was being developed and that he had been expecting it for quite some time.

So, no surprise to anybody. The email was sent. I actually didn't see it until after Question Period here yesterday. I went immediately over to the hon. Leader of the Third Party and offered the briefing, and I find it to be mean-spirited for the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale to stand here today and say that it's not fair to offer a briefing when the briefing was offered within hours of it having been sent right before the House was open.

I'll say this is not the first time that this has happened. We saw this happen last spring with the referendum legislation as well, so you can't win with this group and I find it totally unfair and I find it to be a breach of my privilege as a member of this Legislature that honestly puts a best effort forward; to be engaging with that party; to provide every opportunity to allow them to ask questions about the bill –

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct)

Mr. J. Brown: – and we saw the bill pass unanimously at the end of the night last night, as the list was exhausted.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. R. Brown: Great job.

Speaker: Hon. minister, I'll be taking that under advisement.

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

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

Ms. Mundy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale made claims in Question Period directed to me concerning the social assistant shelter rate that I would like to correct for the House.

The fact is that this 6% rate increase as part of the Poverty Reduction Action Plan will not be a 1.25% per year rate increase spread over five years as the opposition member said yesterday in the House.

In fact, and to be clear of the facts for the House, the 6% will take effect in three weeks, which is December.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Mundy: This 6% shelter rate increase is above and beyond the 3% increase my department made this past June.

So everyone is clear, that would be a 9% total increase in 2018. And going forward, my department intends to review all social assistance rates annually, including shelter, to support the most vulnerable.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Questions by Members

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

Higher than planned project costs have delayed work on a project to upgrade the waste treatment between Stratford and Charlottetown.

In May 2017, the province committed over \$4.7 million to this project.

Waste water treatment project

Question to the Premier: Does the province still support this project?

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As was announced last year when the Leader of the Opposition attended the announcement, actually, that we were going to be and have made a commitment to support the sewage treatment plans from

Stratford over to Charlottetown, as was reported in the media.

It was the decision of the Stratford council to delay that project this year due to higher-than-expected tender costs. We are there as a funding partner when they are ready to proceed.

Mr. R. Brown: Great.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

I'd like to thank the Premier for that response.

This project will be a step forward on environmental sustainability and regional cooperation, something that I certainly support.

Originally, the province committed to funding 25% of the project.

Cost sharing for waste water treatment project

Question to the Premier: Will that 25% cost sharing remain now that the project costs have risen?

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

Mr. Myers: You only get him when he saves her, remember?

Ms. Biggar: Mr. Speaker, as was reported by the Stratford council, they are working within their budget that they see fit, that they can afford as a community, and we are there as a funding partner as we have already indicated and were there the day the Leader of the Opposition attended when we got together as two communities and three governments to announce that commitment to that community to address a very serious potential future problem around sewage. We are there to help as a funding partner.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

Again, I'd like to thank the Premier for that answer.

Stratford residents have waited a long time to see this work done. They have been more than patient and they want to see this issue resolved as quickly as possible.

Again, I ask the Premier: With the risen costs for the completion of this project, is the province still standing by their 25% commitment to this project?

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

Ms. Biggar: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure how many times I can say: Yes, we are a funding partner.

But, we are a funding partner. We look forward to –

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct) 25%?

Ms. Biggar: – working, continuing with the work on that project with the Stratford community.

Leader of the Opposition: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: Under the agreement that's in place, we will respect and work with the community as was already reported.

Leader of the Opposition: That sounds like a 'no' to 25%.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This summer I attended the no pipe rally in Pictou. There were thousands of Maritimers there and many, many Islanders. Actually, that morning the ferry was full going over.

Since that time, there have been a lot of developments, I guess you'd say, about this really crucial decision they're making over across the Strait.

Premier communication with federal minister re: Northern Pulp

Question to the Premier: When was the last time you spoke to the federal minister of environment about this issue?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I wrote to the hon. Catherine McKenna back in the spring when this issue was on everyone's minds. I wrote at the same time to the premier of Nova Scotia, the hon. Stephen McNeil, very clearly on the record in terms of Prince Edward Island's concerns, our government's concerns, my personal concern about this matter and they're well aware of those.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

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

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) not punching above your weight there.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is a huge, huge issue for us here across the Strait and it's imperative that we have a federal review on this issue.

We know the Nova Scotia government has invested \$6 million into the plan for the pipe; a huge conflict of interest, a glaring conflict of interest.

Premier communication with Nova Scotia premier re: Northern Pulp

Premier, have you spoken to premier McNeil about this conflict?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I have written premier McNeil, and indeed we have spoken on this very point and our clear view that the matter should be addressed from an environmental assessment perspective through the federal jurisdiction and the federal process.

The premier of Nova Scotia is well aware of Prince Edward Island's position on this matter, as are all of the relevant sectors and actors in Prince Edward Island. I can say I've heard on numerous occasions from the fishermen's association, for example, that they sincerely appreciate the strong stand that the province has taken on this matter and that stand continues. We fully support all of the efforts that are made to ensure that that pipe does not proceed without a full assessment.

Indeed, the key line in my letter –

Mr. Myers: So you're not against it. You're for it (Indistinct)

Premier MacLauchlan: The key line in my letter to both, minister McKenna and premier McNeil is: We do not support the proposal as submitted.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is crucial to our fishery. I hear it over and over again; I will not stop talking about it. I will keep pushing, because we need to ensure that the province is on board and thoroughly engaged and on a regular basis with the federal department and the minister of environment.

Can you tell me if you have had a response from the federal minister of environment about your concerns and the provinces concerns, Premier?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I did have a response from minister McKenna. To the best of my recollection, I tabled it in this House during the spring sitting. But if the hon. member didn't realize that, I would be happy to table it again at the first of the week.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There have been a lot of developments since the summer, and since we have sat in the spring, so again, I am pushing you, Premier, to interact with the feds, not just in the summer, but now – again.

Extra steps to ensure no pipe in Strait

We are looking at what's going to happen next, there has been a delay. Can you tell me what extra steps your government and you, Premier, are willing to take to ensure there is no pipe in the Strait?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, it is timely that the question comes up.

I will be seeing this afternoon the hon. Dominic LeBlanc, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, who has been appoint, in fact, since the spring that the hon. member refers to with that responsibility and I indeed will be picking this up with the minister –

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Premier MacLauchlan: – the federal government is fully aware, and this matter has been made clear. The federal government is fully aware of the Province of Prince Edward Island and our government is fully supportive and clear that we are asking for the federal environmental assessment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We know that by law, the pipe is to be in the Strait by 2020. That's only 14 months away, and there were new developments just in the very recent news about the fact that they have to put the pipe somewhere else– and now it's going to go close to the ferry terminal or to the ferry in Caribou.

Possible pipe near ferry terminal

Premier, are you comfortable with or happy with the idea of visitors of PEI coming

through basically a dead zone in the Northumberland Strait, when they come to visit this beautiful province?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I think the question speaks for itself. Of course, I'm not in – no expectations whatsoever that the Province of Prince Edward Island or visitors or the people in the fishery would have any intention of being supportive of such a proposal.

The proposal has not been put forward, I think that's exactly where this matter stands, that Northern Pulp has in fact been, I might say stymied and I'm not, to tell you the truth, opposed to that. In the various sets they've taken to try to meet the deadline referred to by the hon. member and I think that's exactly where this matter stands.

I'm happy to say that the view taken by myself and by our government and by very important players in Prince Edward Island – the fisheries association, the Aboriginal people, have in fact contributed to that situation as it stands and I'm happy for it to stay right there.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Farmers are a big part of our economy here in Prince Edward Island. They need good roads to get their goods to market.

Safe roads for farmers to travel

Question to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries: Do you agree with that statement?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, obviously when farmers are growing crops, the crops are located in all kind of various locations throughout Prince Edward Island on our million-acre farm here and getting that access from the field to the

warehouse or through to the processing plant is imperative.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We know that roads in rural PEI are in rough shape. Some have really broken down over the last 10 years.

Process for road repairs

Question to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries: What is the process for farmers and residents to get these rough roads fixed in their areas?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Henderson: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure there is a process but it is involving the road supervisors within each particular area. I know in my own particular district, farmers, fishers and general residents are always notifying me of a certain particular road they would like to see improved.

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct) MLA.

Mr. Henderson: I work with the road supervisor, plus the department of transportation usually makes a request every year to prioritize roads that need to be repaired.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well there is something wrong with the process. A farmer from up west wanted to see a bad piece of road fixed, not only for himself, but for the residents; he was a spokesperson. The road was broken up so bad that they were driving on the shoulder of the road. With their big machinery, that is dangerous. So, he went to his local MLA, his local MLA passed him onto another local MLA that said it was in this new district.

Mr. Myers: Uh-oh.

Mr. LaVie: And number two MLA sent him back to his first MLA –

Mr. Myers: Oh, no.

Mr. LaVie: – so he didn't know what to do. So he went back to the –

Mr. Myers: I bet they were both Liberals.

Mr. LaVie: – so he did call the transportation minister.

Mr. Myers: I bet they were both Liberals.

Mr. LaVie: Question to the transportation minister: How do residents make sure bad roads don't become political footballs?

Mr. Myers: Oh, good question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: Vote for Tory, I'd say.

Mr. Roach: Vote consensus, right?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Some Hon. Members: [Laughter]

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) shot at you soon.

Mr. Dumville: You're coming around.

Speaker: Okay, from now until the end of Question Period, let's listen to the answers. And I think I've said before in this House – if you don't want to listen to the answer, don't bother asking the question.

The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the opportunity to explain the process that is used in determining what roadwork and what our priorities are on roads.

First of all, we are very pleased with the amount of money we've been able to invest now that we are under a new collective agreement with the feds. Any roads now that have 1,000 cars or more on it are now eligible for 50/50 funding. So we can invest more money –

Mr. Trivers: Whether they need it or not.

Ms. Biggar: – and it depends on how much traffic is on that road.

We talked yesterday about the 48 Road, as minister of transportation, I was glad to put a roundabout down there to protect the area.

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct) put that in that was there before the election.

Ms. Biggar: We work with the residents, we work with the road masters, we work with statistics, and we work with data on making our priorities and our decisions –

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – for the best access to farming, and we will continue to do investments. We did over \$8 million in investments in side roads and paving, and we will continue to do that next year, and even more.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'll tell the minister of transportation how roads get paved.

After getting the run around from local MLAs and government, the resident went to the media.

Mr. Myers: Oh.

Mr. LaVie: He went to the media! Once they did that, all of a sudden, the government earmuffs came off.

Mr. Myers: Oh.

Government action on paving of roads

Mr. LaVie: Question to the transportation minister: Why do residents have to go through such length to get action from the government?

Mr. Myers: Good question, good question.

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I get calls – and I guess I'm not allowed to take any calls according to yesterday or reply to anyone by email.

Mr. Myers: No, they just want you to stay off Twitter, now.

Ms. Biggar: – I'm not allowed to respond to anyone that may call may call the district supervisor –

Mr. LaVie: I wonder why (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – whenever I get approached, I refer that onto my district supervisors –

Mr. LaVie: I wonder why.

Ms. Biggar: – to our –

Mr. LaVie: You should read before you hit send.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: – to our county supervisors to work and identify the priorities and the needs and we will continue to work, based on again, how much traffic, working with local areas, working with municipalities –

Mr. Myers: The Internet's been a blessing for a lot of people; you're just not one of them.

Ms. Biggar: – and together we will make improvements where needed.

Mr. R. Brown: Great job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Response to road repairs via media

Question to the transportation minister: Why is going to CBC the best way to get rural roads fixed on PEI?

Mr. Myers: Good question.

Speaker: The Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We didn't have to go to the CBC. We worked with our federal partners to come up with a new agreement that would – under the Tory government that was in Ottawa wouldn't even let PEI have any kind of leeway to do anything. –

Mr. Myers: You signed it with (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: We now have negotiated a deal with the federal government that recognizes that we need to pave our collector roads and make sure farmers and fishers get their products to market.

Mr. Trivers: You didn't apologize though.

Ms. Biggar: And we're the ones who sat down with Justin Trudeau and the federal government and negotiated a new deal for PEI.

Some Hon. Members: Great.

Mr. Myers: Your sister's a Tory.

An Hon. Member: They all are.

Mr. Myers: They all are.

Mr. R. Brown: They just haven't seen the light yet.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

Mr. LaVie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This was a half a kilometer of road – broken pavement, broken down; half a kilometer.

These people were sent from one MLA to another MLA, to a transportation minister. This is why people go to the media – to get things done. Media are starting to decide who gets roads paved on PEI.

Question to the transportation minister: Why do people only respond – why do you only respond when there is a media crisis or political damage control to be done?

Mr. Myers: Good question.

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We're responding to needs right across Prince Edward Island with our capital budget, with our infrastructure program. We've done the most that's been done in Prince Edward Island long before – since 2007.

In 2015, we have incrementally multiplied the amount of work that we're going to be able to do and have done. We're working to ensure that our products are getting to market in the most efficient way. We are working together to make improvements right across Prince Edward Island.

I guess maybe those MLAs over there, hon. members, forget the work that has been done in their districts and right across this Island. I, as transportation minister, am going to continue to do that.

Mr. Roach: Good work, minister.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

Yesterday during Question Period, the Premier defended an ad placed in *The Guardian* as being nonpartisan and he said: It's only partisan because he doesn't like it – he being me. But even a local journalist stated on Twitter, and I quote: It's hard to see this misleading graphic as anything other than an election ad.

So clearly it's partisan, but it's also misleading. It states inaccurately that, and again I quote from the ad: Over 24 months with all other plans an average household would have incurred a cost of over \$1,000 – suggesting that this government's plan is the only one that is revenue-neutral.

Mr. J. Brown: I guess he's misleading the House, I don't know. I guess he's misleading again.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: However, both the federal backstop and the made for PEI green

plan are also revenue-neutral with every penny collected in tax being returned to Islanders.

Mr. Myers: So just don't take it – problem solved.

Defending of carbon tax ad in *The Guardian*

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Question to the minister: Why would you defend such a misleading ad?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Mr. Trivers: Indefensible.

Premier MacLauchlan: I kept listening beyond the 40-second mark so perhaps I'll return some of the time and simply say, we're going to have a lot of time to debate when the legislation comes to this floor, which is the carbon plan –

Ms. Biggar: Give us some notice when it's coming.

Premier MacLauchlan: – the climate change plan, including the price incentive that is part of our plan. We look forward to talking fully on this floor on that matter.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Yesterday in Question Period, you also claimed that our plan would result in again I quote: Islanders paying in the order of \$47 million in additional taxes; when the Green plan, like yours, will return every penny to Islanders. In fact, 80% of Island households would end up with more money in their pockets.

A question to the Premier: Don't you agree that it would have been much more accurate if your ad had read: with all other plans over 24 months an average household will get more money back in rebates than they spend in carbon taxes?

Mr. Myers: Isn't that what Stalin was doing?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: I kept listening past the 25-second mark and I did note that the question four times referred to me in the second – or sorry with the word you, which I don't think is proper in this House, but I'll give my answer back through you, Mr. Speaker.

We have put forward a plan that is in the best interest to Prince Edward Islanders, that is in the best interest of our climate commitment and it is the best interest of the environment and addressing the issue of climate change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

When we analyze and debate a budget, we look at both the expenditure and the revenue sides, but when it comes to carbon plan our Premier chooses to see only the expenditure side of the ledger. Like the budget that this would create, it's hardly balanced.

Green Party carbon plan

Premier: You seem not to have read our plan. Would you like to stop by our office for a briefing?

Some Hon. Members: [Laughter]

An Hon. Member: Oh.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale offered me a reading list. It sounds like the Leader of the Third Party is kind of following a similar tactic.

Perhaps I could offer them a map that show we have Prince Edward Island which goes from tip-to-tip with Islanders who are doing well and prospering and they do require to move around to live and build great communities and to continue to build our economy. That is our climate change plan – that is our approach to carbon price and we

are proud to bring that forward. It is being supported by Islanders throughout this province.

We're going to debate that on the floor of this House and I look forward to see what opposition members are going to do in response to that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question today is for the Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy: Minister as a resident of Charlottetown and an MLA who represents a Charlottetown city riding, I've seen firsthand the importance that investments in our highways make, like the construction of the Charlottetown Bypass.

Without this bypass, transport trucks and cars would be travelling through our city streets and in our neighbourhoods. I am so pleased with the investment. Additionally, I know that the Maypoint roundabout in Charlottetown-Lewis Point has improved safety and improved the safety leading into Cornwall – one of the fastest growing communities on the Island.

Schedule of Cornwall Trans-Canada project

Minister, would you please tell us if the Cornwall Trans-Canada project is on schedule?

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

An Hon. Member: Let's find out. Let's get the facts.

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. members, we had a lot of discussion yesterday about this project and it's great to be able to make some real accurate facts here on this topic. –

Mr. Myers: You didn't have them yesterday.

Ms. Biggar: First of all, the fact is we are improving environmental projects in that area, building roads unlike the Green Leader doesn't want us – excuse me, I'll call correctly because we don't want to refer to people in the wrong way here. The Leader of the Third Party wishes that there would be no new roads built on this Island, but I'm happy to report that we are ahead of schedule.

We are pleased to respond to the requests that the residents and the school in that area made that we try to do paving ahead of time and that's what we did this fall.

Mr. R. Brown: Great, great.

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

Ms. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Throughout the week it seems the Member from Georgetown-St. Peters repeatedly has trouble getting his facts straight. –

Some Hon. Members: Ooh.

Mr. R. Brown: That's not new.

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Ms. Casey: Transparency and accountability are important principals for any government and I know Island business pride themselves for operating in a professional manner.

Cornwall bypass project procedures

Can the minister tell this House, were all tendering and contract procedures followed on the Cornwall Trans-Canada project.

Mr. Myers: Yeah can you tell us and can you (Indistinct) church parking lots while you're at it.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: You don't want me to help the churches in your area?

An Hon. Member: I'm just asking.

An Hon. Member: Did you pave them?

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct) pave any church parking lots?

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

Ms. Biggar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely, all of the regulations, the requirements of tendering are and have been followed, it's unfortunate that the opposition wish to put out facts that are not presented correctly on this.

General provisions and contract specification manuals allow for contracts to be altered for the quantity or scope of work for an existing project.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: This work that was done, that was talked about was not for round-a-bouts and ramps as the opposition stated yesterday. It was for paving to the Cornwall Road.

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

Ms. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Minister, investments in highways and roads are critically important for our province and I know you know this for the safety of the public and to allow our goods to get to market and in fact, last year PEI exports in September 2018 year to date are of 1.1% and that's more than one billion in exports so far this year.

Cost of Cornwall bypass project

While these are important and needed investments, it's important that Islanders are aware of the facts and again the opposition continue to get their facts wrong –

Mr. LaVie: By two million dollars.

Ms. Casey: – for the Cornwall bypass project is \$75 million, minister is this correct?

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

Ms. Biggar: Actually to correct misinformation that was put out there yesterday, the actual budget for this project was \$65 million, cost shared by the federal government and I'm pleased to report though that we are 10% under budget on this project.

An Hon. Member: Under budget?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Myers: (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Ms. Biggar: That's going to allow us to be able to look at other priorities but we are on target, under budget and on line to have that project completed next year and open to the public.

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

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question today is to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Minister, as we know the striped bass is a recreational fishery here on Prince Edward Island. I grew up in a fishing community. I never heard anything or much of this species in the past.

Number of striped bass in the region

Has your department noticed an increase in the number of striped bass in the region?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Yes we have noticed a significant increase in striped bass in the shores of PEI.

As the hon. member may know is that striped bass has recently been taken off the endangered species list in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and when that happened a recreational fishery has been established between April 15th and October 31st – but it is for only accessing fish of (Indistinct) 50cm to 65cm.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Feed for striped bass

Minister: What does the striped bass feed on because what I'm hearing is they feed on juvenile lobster?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: The striped bass is a predatory fish and they do eat different marine species throughout their lifetime.

They start off at a younger age – they would eat plankton, zooplankton some of those types of things but as they get older they do evolve into eating other fish, also crustaceans and lobster as well, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Perry: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Commercial striped bass fishery

Minister that really concerns me because the lobster fishery is one of our main economic drivers here on Prince Edward Island, so what would it take to establish a commercial striped bass fishery here on PEI?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: That's a really good question, Mr. Speaker.

Right now there currently is a commercial fishery in the Miramichi area, it's with actually the Eel Ground First Nation community and they are allowed to harvest 25,000 fish.

There is a process should that be at a point at time when they think there should be a commercial fishery and that is actually, DFO does a stock assessment to determine what the a viable fishery would entail and they would also determine what the quote would be.

What I can say here is that Prince Edward Island would like to get its fair share of particular quota for a commercial fishery for either commercial fishers or for our First Nation fishers.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Malpeque harbour in my district is one of the busiest in the province, with many people earning their living through fishing lobsters and mussels.

Channel dredging is a major ongoing issue at the harbour with the mussel boat getting stuck and another one sinking just this August. Thankfully, no one has been killed yet.

Solution to dredging in Malpeque harbour

Question to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries: What is the province doing to help come up with a long-term solution to the dredging issues in Malpeque harbour?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Mr. Speaker, also a very good question and it's been a question that our department has been working on in collaboration with our federal counterparts.

As you know, Small Craft and Harbours in this province are responsible for the dredging of our harbours and I would say that we only have five dredges actually in the Maritimes.

Recently, I will say that I have brought the issue to forefront with Minister Wilkinson and have also met with parliamentary assistant to fisheries, Sean Casey.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The harbour gets dredged in the spring for lobster season but (Indistinct) quickly so dredging is only a temporary solution at best.

DFO did a study on long-term solutions and one of the options considered was bypassing the need to constantly dredge the channel by relocating the harbour.

Relocation of Malpeque harbour

Question to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries: Do you agree that something like this could improve safety for our fishers and shell fishers working on the water?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to look at the DFO study and they have looked at two particular locations that could be possibilities to establish another harbour, when you look at the logistics of dredging a harbour.

When you look at the logistics of dredging a harbour I think we've allocated over half a million dollars a year to dredge in that particular harbour and in my discussions with parliamentary assistant of fisheries, Sean Casey, we've brought him up to speed on that particular issue and I do agree that our mussel industry is a very valuable industry and DFO needs to take a little more credence into the value that it has to this province.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Kensington-Malpeque.

Mr. MacKay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When those mussel boats ran aground and sank this summer, tens of thousands of dollars of product and equipment were lost. Fishers are telling me that they worry more than just fish and equipment could be lost.

Safety of fishers

Question to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries: Will you lobby the federal government and our Liberal MP's to get this solution moving forward for the safety of our fishers as soon as possible?

An Hon. Member: Good.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Agreed, Mr. Speaker.

Our harbours are seeing massive changes due to whether it's climate change or very strong weather conditions.

I know in Malpeque harbour they can dredge that harbour and probably within a few weeks it will be filled back in again. I remember the same issue with my own riding in West Point and we'd really want to reiterate to the minister and to his parliamentary assistant the importance of having a timely dredging and to try to come up with solutions that make sense

In fact, last Friday I met with the fishers, both mussel fishers and the lobster fishers in the Malpeque area and we met with the parliamentary assistant, Sean Casey, so we'll do our best, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, we all know meeting with Sean Casey is a useless task to get anything done.

Ms. Biggar: Ouch.

Mr. Myers: In Brudenell, the shellfishing industry in Brudenell is a really part of the shellfishing industry down in my end of the Island and I've heard a lot of concerns recently about the river.

Question to the minister: Can you confirm that every summer the Brudenell River shuts down shellfishing?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

I'm starting to think I'm minister of health again here with all of these questions.

The hon. member is correct in saying the Brudenell River is under a conditional management plan and at times, it can be shut down based on testing that's done by the communities, land and environment with decisions made by the department of environment – the federal department of environment, I should say.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Shellfish industry closures

Question again to the minister: Can you explain how those closures to the shellfish industry are determined?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Mr. Speaker, many of our rivers are under what's called the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and in that particular case, communities, land and environment, actually in contract with the federal department of environment, does testing of water samples throughout our river systems and then that information is decided by Environment Canada to what the classification, whether a river should be determined – or parts of the river should be determined prohibited, conditional or open for harvest of shellfish, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So the curious thing from the perspective of the shellfishers out there is that they have a feeling that the shellfishery closes down every year right about the time that the golf course opens up.

Shellfishery closure/golf course opening

Question to the minister: Can you please look into this matter with your staff and confirm that the river isn't actually being closed down because of the golf course, or that it is?

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) river has been open almost all summer for fishing (Indistinct)

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Mr. Speaker, obviously when it comes to every river system, like I said before, it is based on water samples that determine what the bacteria counts would be in any particular river system and it's really

based on the science of the counts that they receive. It's not about what goes on within the land part of it.

Although, once again, we see when water temperatures increase things like that can have factors and it is the department of Environment Canada that determines where the lines would be, to what designation or classification a certain section of a river would be, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again from the perspective of the shellfishers in that area, they are curious as to whether or not it's being unduly influenced by, perhaps either the golf course on one side or the million dollar mansions on the other side of which the Member from Montague-Kilmuir has.

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct)

Mr. Myers: Question to the minister: Can you confirm that the closure of the river isn't being influenced by people like the Member from Montague-Kilmuir who wants to have his view free of fishermen?

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct)

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Mr. Speaker, once again, there would be so many factors that would have an influence on – whether it's nitrate levels, whether it's of bacteria counts within a particular river system.

What I'm trying to say to the House here is there is a process that tests our water, it determines whether there is either bacteria counts or other counts that get to a point that are in excess of safe harvest of our shellfish and they have also implement whether shellfish have to be decontaminated or sanitized in clean water to be sold on the market, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Point of Privilege

Mr. Myers: Point of Privilege, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise on a Point of Privilege and it's in reference to the rules of Question Period that you outlined earlier in the week.

I know the Leader of the Third Party and the Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point both have taken liberties with the rules, both running long with their questions and having preambles with their follow ups, and my understanding from your rules earlier in the week was that there were to be no preamble with the second two questions. So, I ask if you would look into that for me, please.

Speaker: Hon. member, during Question Period, it's a case of – I try to be as strict as I can. There are times when people will run over and I don't really feel comfortable with cutting everybody off. I have to allow a little bit of leverage.

Mind you, I just – sometimes I feel like there are some members who will maybe just challenge the rules that I put in place. I hope that's not the case.

An Hon. Member: You do a good job.

Speaker: I hope it's not the case, and if I thought that it was, then I would certainly put my foot down or – so as I say, I do allow a little bit of leverage, as long as I don't feel that I've been challenged on the rules by the members.

Ms. Biggar: You're very fair, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: You do a good job.

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

Point of Order

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

I rise on a Point of Order.

Today in Question Period the hon. Leader of the Third Party used the word 'misleading' not once, but twice, in his questions to the

Premier. Yesterday I seem to recall there was a Point of Order raised by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale in relation to exactly that word.

From someone who says that they're doing politics differently, to me this seemed like a crass effort to elicit a reaction by someone from this House and –

Mr. Myers: It worked.

Mr. J. Brown: – I take offence to that.

And it did work. I will say, from somebody who says they're doing politics differently, there seems to be an effort to challenge repeatedly over there the way we do things in here.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Roach: No different (Indistinct)

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture, on that particular Point of Order that you have raised, there is another Point of Order that I still have to deliver a verdict on and I would anticipate that at that time, that ruling will contain the ruling on your Point of Order, and we will certainly get this business of using the word 'misleading' – we will get that straightened out.

Statements by Ministers

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I present herewith a message from Her Honour, the Honourable Antoinette Perry, Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island, which said message is signed by Her Honour.

Speaker: Hon. members, I shall ask the Clerk to read the message from Her Honour, and I would ask all hon. members to please stand while the message is being read.

Clerk: Honourable Francis (Buck) Watts
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province House, Charlottetown

Prince Edward Island

Dear Mr. Speaker,

Her Honour, the Honourable Antoinette Perry, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Prince Edward Island, hereby transmits the Estimates of Capital Revenue and Capital Expenditure required to carry on the public services of the Province for the fiscal year ending March 31st 2020, and also until the passage of the capital estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31st 2021.

In accordance with the provisions of the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the Prince Edward Island Terms of Union, 1873, Her Honour recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Commended by,
Paul T. Ledwell
Clerk of Executive Council and Secretary to Cabinet

Also signed by,
Her Honour Lieutenant Governor
Honourable Antoinette Perry

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Premier.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, by Command of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, I present herewith, the Estimates of Capital Revenue and Capital Expenditure required to carry on the public services of the province for the fiscal year ending 31 March 2020, and also until the passage of the Capital Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31st 2021.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance, that said estimates be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Premier MacLauchlan: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance, that consideration of the Estimates of Capital Revenue and Capital Expenditure in Committee of the Whole House be added to the Orders of the Day until such time as they are dispatched.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Hon. Minister of Finance, just before you take the floor, the hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters does have a document.

Mr. Myers: Tabled document, yes, please.

Speaker: We'll clear that up first.

Tabling of Documents

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

By leave of the House, I beg leave to table an email from the minister of transportation whereby she was interfering with decisions made in the department and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Belfast-Murray River, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Hon. Minister of Finance, you have the floor.

Capital Budget 2019-2020

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a privilege today to rise and make a House statement on the Capital Budget.

I am honoured to rise in the House today to present Prince Edward Island's 2019-2020 Capital Budget.

During the past three years, our government has focused our efforts on building a strong economy while investing in Islanders. Mission accomplished. In 2017-2018, based on strong economic growth across the province, we recorded the first operating surplus in a decade. We are on track towards surplus again in the current year.

At the same time, we have continued to invest significantly in the priorities of Islanders, including healthcare, education, housing and the well-being of our families.

None of this economic strength would be possible without the support and hard work of people across the province – the people who truly are the mighty people of the Island.

This Capital Budget will commit \$156.6 million in the next year, for further improvements in the infrastructure needed to serve Islanders, support our communities, and build a strong foundation for the future success of our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: This record level of capital investment continues our plan to modernize the infrastructure that is needed by Islanders to succeed in communities from tip to tip in our great province.

In 2018-19 significant investments were made in long-term and acute care facilities, schools and highways.

In the current year we will finish construction on the Riverview and Tyne Valley manors, at a total cost of \$24 million. This completes the manor replacement program resulting in a public system that ensures our seniors can live with the dignity and comfort they deserve.

We also have improved health services provided in our acute care hospitals, with the addition of facilities for the peritoneal and post-renal transplant program and the Women's Wellness Centre at Prince County Hospital, together an investment of \$8.6 million.

The MRI at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is also being replaced; an investment of \$4 million, and a new linear accelerator was purchased for the Cancer Treatment Centre, at a total project cost of over \$7 million.

Upgrades to the water filtration system for the dialysis unit and renovations to the Western Hospital are currently underway with a cost of \$700,000, and renovations to the Kings County Memorial Hospital Lab will cost \$800,000.

In total, over \$38 million will be invested this year to improve healthcare facilities for Islanders.

Our investments in education have been keeping pace. We are also pleased to see the completion of *Ecole La-Belle-Cloche* in Rollo Bay, at a total cost of \$9.2 million, and the \$24.9 million renovations of Three Oaks Senior High School in Summerside.

Work is well underway on the commitment to add classrooms to Stratford Elementary and Lucy Maud Montgomery Elementary schools to alleviate population pressures at those schools.

To improve the safety of Islanders on our highways we have made investments of over \$40 million in bridges and roads across Prince Edward Island. Eleven bridge structures were rehabilitated and seven have been fully replaced. This includes upgrading to the Hillsborough Bridge and the replacement of the Murray Harbour Bridge.

There also was a total of 139 kilometers of highway improved during the past year to assist the travelling public and to help get our products more efficiently to markets. Improvements were made to a number of intersections by adding turning lanes and roundabouts to improve the safety and traffic flow of our Island roads, a key feature of our road enhancement strategy.

These investments over the past year in our capital infrastructure will improve the lives of Islanders and the productivity for our communities and key economic sectors for years to come.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: Our 2019-2020 Capital Budget sets out a plan to invest \$156.6 million in new infrastructure that will benefit our children in schools.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: Our family and friends in need of healthcare and housing, and all Islanders as they go about their daily lives.

The commitments outlined here represent the largest ever capital development expansion in our province, and recognize that the investments we are making now in critical infrastructure will serve Islanders in this and future generations to come.

The main priorities contained in this Capital Budget are for schools, mental health and addiction services, and housing and transportation infrastructure.

This capital plan will commit forward spending of \$111 million and investment of

\$25.2 million in the next year for capital additions in education.

Funding commitments include: \$19.1 million to start construction on a new elementary school in Sherwood; \$38 million to construct a new secondary school in Stratford; \$4.7 million for new classrooms in West Royalty; and \$8.9 million to complete improvements to *Ecole-sur-Mer* in Summerside.

These commitments are in addition to funding to complete the additional classrooms at the Stratford Elementary School, at a total cost of \$5 million, and at Lucy Maud Montgomery Elementary School, at a total cost of \$5.6 million.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: This budget also allocates over two million dollars to improve technology in the classrooms.

The capital plan for the next year will include the purchase of twenty new school buses in accordance with the replacement schedule, at a cost of \$2.1 million.

In addition, our government will commence a comprehensive school infrastructure review to determine which of our schools will require renovation or replacement over the next few years.

This will include schools in both the Public Schools Branch and the French Language School Board. The estimated cost of the review is \$500,000 and will be funded from the Operating Budget of the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: As a government, we have placed priority in building and encouraging the construction of the supply of housing in all parts of Prince Edward Island. We have identified and are working with partners in all sectors across the province to get more housing available for Islanders, and to ensure that this housing meets the economic means of our residents.

In accordance with the Housing Action Plan this Capital Budget will commit \$16.8 million toward the construction of new affordable housing units over the next two

years. These units will provide much needed supply in all parts of the province.

With assistance from the Federal Social Infrastructure Fund, 32 new seniors units will be constructed in the Summerside area and 20 new transitional units for victims of family violence will be constructed in Charlottetown.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: These capital investments add to the series of commitments our government has made in housing.

We will, in collaboration with communities across the province, continue to find innovative and immediate solutions to address housing needs.

In the 2019-2020 Capital Budget, we will allocate \$30.9 million to capital improvements in our healthcare system in the upcoming year and a forward commitment of \$162 million over the next five years.

The largest investment will be for mental health and addiction facilities and services, with a commitment of \$100 million over the next five years to build a province-wide, an advanced and modern series of facilities that meet the needs of Islanders struggling with the effects of mental health and addictions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: A new dedicated mental health and addictions emergency department and acute stabilization unit providing dedicated and timely access to trained mental health and addictions clinicians. A new structured housing unit and adult day treatment program site, providing care for patients with complex needs as they transition from hospital to the community and day treatment for patients who do not require hospitalization.

Four community access centres/hubs in communities across PEI, providing collaborative community-based mental health and addiction services; treatments, rehabilitation and supports to Islanders closer to their homes.

A new provincial acute mental health and addictions hospital, to support all in-patient

mental health care for children, adults, seniors, forensic cases, as well as in-patient addiction care for adults.

New mental health residential services providing long-term housing with community mental health supports for individuals living with mental illness; new e-mental health solutions supporting real-time access to information, resources, tools and supports for Islanders and health care providers.

These new services and facilities will provide Islanders with immediate, responsive and sensitive care when and where they need it most.

When it comes to healthcare, I can't extend enough thanks to the foundations that support each of our hospitals.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: With the generous support of the foundations, \$5.4 million additional investment will be spent on hospital equipment in 2019-2020.

In the next year, we also have allocated \$7.2 million for the replacement of the picture archiving and communication system, which is used to store diagnostic images throughout the province. The system was first developed in 2003 and has now reached the end of its useful life.

Investing in safer highways

Prince Edward Island is the most rural jurisdiction in Canada, with vibrant communities, industry and workplaces located across our province. The safe and secure travel of people and goods is a matter of importance to everyone.

The Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy will invest \$56 million in the next year to improve approximately 145 kilometers of highway and replace six bridge structures, including the Searletown bridge.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: Work will also continue on the Trans-Canada Highway extension project to redirect the thousands of cars and

tractor trailers currently passing through the their town.

The project will satisfy the request by the Cornwall town council, on behalf of its businesses and residents, for this new route as a means to improve public safety and assist economic growth in the town and area. The project is expected to be open to traffic in October of 2019.

The department is constructing a new highway maintenance depot in the community of Brackley to consolidate operations and provide a centralized location near the bypass highway. This facility is expected to be completed in early 2020.

Prince Edward Islanders should be proud of our collective record of addressing climate change.

We know this is a real issue for the people of this province and that we collectively have to continue to do what we can in all areas where emissions are having an impact on climate in our own backyard.

In 2019-2020, \$730,000 will be invested to improve our supply of electric vehicle charging stations. Six level-three fast chargers and 12 level-two chargers will be installed across the province. It is expected that each fast charger will be paired with a level-two charger to create six public charging stations. These services will help facilitate the switch to e-vehicles.

Additionally, the province is a leader in encouraging the switch to biomass heating in public buildings and will continue this effort. Specifically, we have issued a request for proposals to develop biomass heat installations in 20 more buildings. These will include schools, government buildings and social and senior housing. Funding will be provided for these installations as necessary. Energy assessments also will be conducted on government buildings to prioritize initiatives to maximize energy savings.

The elimination of traffic lights by installing roundabouts at strategic intersections will help reduce carbon emissions caused by needless idling of vehicles. The Trans-Canada Highway extension will eliminate six traffic lights for vehicles as they bypass Cornwall.

New vehicles will be acquired for air and water monitoring across the province, with new positions already having been added to implement the requirements under the *Water Act*.

Propane boilers are being installed in the Georgetown and Englewood schools over the next few months. It is expected that these boilers will result in an annual reduction of greenhouse gases of 69.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: In conclusion, the Capital Budget presented today – which we will debate further in the days ahead – represents a significant investment in the people and communities of Prince Edward Island. It addresses the areas of greatest priority for Islanders including education, health care, housing, safe highways and climate action.

More than anything, the budget invests in these priorities now and for many future generations to come. The critical infrastructure that will be put in place with these commitments puts us, as a province, in a position to thrive. And not just thrive as a province, but thrive as communities, families and individuals.

It is my distinct pleasure as Minister of Finance to be able to table the 2019-2020 Capital Budget in the House today.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Speaker: Responding to the minister's presentation of the Capital Budget will be the hon. Member from Rustico-Emerald.

Mr. LaVie: Here's the truth.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I did get a Page to bring me a copy of this Capital Budget and the thing that stuck out to me immediately was the cover of this budget.

We've got some sort of medical device plugged into a wall. The whole cover seems to be centered on that plug and here we have a machine – there's no staff around it.

There's no patient connected to it. The machine isn't even turned on.

Mr. Murphy: Pretty good if that's all you can find (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: Really, it's kind of like this budget. I can see why they chose this for the cover.

It holds a lot of promise, but will it actually be put to use? It doesn't even work. Or, is it just for show?

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: It's not hard to tell that this government is posturing for an election year. It's very clear.

An Hon. Member: No.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: We've been inundated with good news announcements over the last few weeks.

Mr. Roach: (Indistinct) been saying that for two years (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: Of course, during a polling period –

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: Let me just give you an example.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: These are announcements. We don't know when things are going to actually happen with this government. It's a lot of posturing.

Mr. LaVie: Can't handle the truth.

Mr. Trivers: For example, the 2018 PEI poverty reduction plan, let's use that as an example of a good announcement that we had recently – a good news announcement, pardon me.

When I add it up, there are about 41 action items in that plan. Well, 26 of those are really just about talk with no concrete actions attached to them. Only 10 of the 41

have a timeline that puts them pre-election. And, a full 31 of the 41 action items in the 2018 PEI poverty reduction plan of which there was such fanfare, a full 31 of the 41 are actually scheduled to occur post-election. All 41 have no measurable actions to evaluate whether or not they've been achieved.

This is the way this government likes to do business. They're in the business of trying to posture and actually pretend they're going to do things. If they were serious about actually taking action, they would have done things long before now.

So, we've got this election capital budget. We've got spending –

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct)

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: This truly –

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: This truly is a magical Minister of Finance, so much better than the previous minister of finance. All you have to do is just look at past capital budgets.

I dug up the fall 2016 capital budget. It was \$77 million for this year – the estimate was \$77 million –

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: That's a full \$80 million less than what the total expenditure is right now.

This is a truly magical Minister of Finance.

In 2017, they were adjusted again and was a full \$48 million less than what we're seeing today in the 2018 capital budget.

What a tremendous Minister of Finance.

Mr. J. Brown: Reinvesting in Islanders.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trivers: So much better than the old minister of finance.

This Minister of Finance is almost magical. He estimated a \$600,000 surplus and came up with \$75 million. Holy cow. How does that happen?

Mr. R. Brown: Good management, a good Premier.

Mr. Trivers: Amazing.

And just in time for an election year. It's incredible how that works.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: I think maybe that Minister of Finance should just be made premier and we'd solve all of the problems in the province in one year. No problem.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) when Wes Sheridan was in (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: I know that may be some foreshadowing.

Mr. LaVie: Sheridan (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: Mr. Speaker –

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) cooked the books.

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: It's pretty clear –

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) cooked the books.

Mr. J. Brown: (Indistinct)

Mr. LaVie: Cooked the books.

Mr. Trivers: It's pretty clear that this government is really playing politics with the numbers in the capital budget here –

Mr. LaVie: You cooked the books.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. J. Brown: Come on, shame.

Mr. Trivers: Really, Mr. Speaker.

On a serious note, we talked about the PEI poverty reduction plan they came up with. They're playing politics with the well-being of Islanders.

Mr. LaVie: Shame.

Mr. Trivers: We need action from this government. These are things that should have been done long ago and, frankly, I hope that what we see on paper is going to come true, but we don't know.

So much of what's being promised is way out in the future, after the next election. We know what the government's track record is on election promises.

Mr. R. Brown: Good.

Mr. Trivers: They said they weren't going to raise the HST, they raised it 1%.

Mr. LaVie: Oh, shame.

Mr. Trivers: They said they weren't going to eliminate elected school boards, and that's exactly what they did.

Mr. LaVie: Oh, shame.

Mr. Trivers: We know that this government does not have a good record on election promises.

So this is an election document, this is a bunch of election promises. Most of them are out in the future so I'm just saying to public: Please don't be fooled again by this government.

Mr. J. Brown: You need to get a new speech; you had this one last year.

Mr. Trivers: Now, in particular, if you look at the transportation budget – this is the one where you can really see what's going on here.

If you look at the numbers over the years for transportation capital budget, you know it's \$50 million in 2016, \$53 million in 2017, you know? Then suddenly in 2018 it jumps up to \$72 million.

An Hon. Member: Right on.

Mr. Trivers: It really is an election year. Guess what? In 2019, it's back down to \$50 million again.

So, this is an election budget.

Premier MacLauchlan: You didn't even see the (Indistinct)

Mr. Trivers: I think it's something that looking at the future; it's mostly post-election actions. I just beg –

Mr. LaVie: You cooked the books. Hope you had your oven mitts on.

Mr. Trivers: – to the public just please, don't be fooled again by this government in the next election.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. LaVie: (Indistinct) had your oven mitts on? (Indistinct) hot budget.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale.

Mr. LaVie: No you're getting it.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As my hon. colleague said, with the limited time we've had to review this, it's great to hear some of the announcements in a bit more detail and I was also struck, as my colleague was, with the scale of the investment.

Clearly, we know we need to make significant investments in infrastructure that has been underinvested in for so long. What happens when infrastructure is underinvested is that the repair costs are much higher than if they had been addressed when the need was there.

Saying that, it is not only important to recognize the importance of seeing new schools, a new school in Sherwood, as announced in the by-election last year during my campaign, is finally coming, and a new school in Stratford in probably a couple of years down the road are really critical.

But we also want to make sure that we remember that while you are doing a review on the capital requirements of repairs to schools, that that ongoing list is ever growing.

We had requested that list from the government and it is many, many, many,

many pages of urgent and critical infrastructure repairs and renovations for schools.

Mr. Trivers: (Indistinct) after the election.

Ms. Bell: The budget line remains fixed over the five year projection.

So while that review is happening, we really need to see that critical investment so we don't put our students at risk in the schools while we're waiting for those new ones to come.

The increase in expenditure is to be understood giving the timing of our announcements and that need. We are very excited to see a significant commitment to a new model for care for medical health and addictions across the spectrum whether it's from children to seniors, and recognizing that that collaborative community care hub model across the province is the right way to go.

The fact that it's going to take five years to get there is challenging because in the meantime we still have to provide those services, but the fact that the commitment is there is really important, and we celebrate that announcement and look forward to seeing those plans as they come through.

We're also excited to see details about the actual financial commitment to the housing details that we've heard a lot about, but haven't seen a lot of commitment to. Obviously these are pending other funding partners and funding requirement, and we're hopeful that the reason why there isn't any investment beyond the first two years of the five-year outlook is because those other funding partners have yet to be confirmed.

Clearly, with the incredible gap in affordable housing of over 1,300 Islanders on waiting lists right now for social or affordable housing lists, a \$10 million commitment and a \$6 million in the following year is not going to be enough to address that. So, as new additional funding comes forward from other partners, we expect to see that revised and rolled out on a longer term.

That does bring us to ask and to expect some more details in the future, weeks and months

to come, of what proportion of this budget is coming from federal dollars or other cost-sharing sources. We note that the revenue offset on this does bring the actual cost of this capital investment to \$122 million, which is still significantly more than where we were even a few years ago. But, also, what proportion of this comes or is contingent on external funding sources and potentially unsecured funding sources.

Also, how much of this is going to be financed with debt versus that revenue? Because while we can have an operating surplus that we pay against that debt, if we continue to add to it in this, you know, expanded manner, at some point that's going to come to pay.

And finally, there's a small, but important piece to see that that commitment to electric vehicle charging stations though less than \$1 million at \$156 million is a tangible piece of actual investment infrastructure that isn't a windmill and isn't a biomass piece. So, it's really exciting to see that happening, and maybe we could begin to tip the curve in how and where people are using other alternatives to be responsible citizens in terms of their commitment to affecting climate change.

We look forward to reading more details in the days and months to come, and to be able to go into this in more detail over the next few days.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Good job.

Speaker: Thank you, hon. Member from Charlottetown-Parkdale.

Reports by Committees

Introduction of Government Bills

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intitled *Justice of the Peace Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, that

the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *Justice of the Peace Act*, Bill No. 50, read a first time.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety, a brief explanation of what this bill entails.

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

This bill provides a comprehensive regulatory framework for the appointment, remuneration, jurisdiction, and function of justices of the peace. It also sets out a detailed complaints process respecting justices of the peace and processes to be used to review the conduct or fitness of a justice of the peace.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Repeal the Truck Operators' Remuneration Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Family and Human Services, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Repeal the Truck Operators' Remuneration Act*, Bill No. 53, read a first time.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety, could you tell us what this one is about?

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

This bill repeals to *Truck Operators' Remuneration Act*, which was originally enacted in 1941 as a means to control wages and rates in the trucking sector during the Second World War.

The department has determined that the act is no longer relevant to the regulation of the

trucking sector, and therefore proposes that it should be repealed.

Thank you.

I have one more too, Mr. Speaker. One more.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Repeal the Uniformity Commissioners Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Repeal the Uniformity Commissioners Act*, Bill No. 54, read a first time.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety, would you like to tell us about this one?

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

This bill repeals the *Uniformity Commissioners Act* which was originally enacted in 1918 to appoint commissioners to attend meetings of what is now known as the Uniform Law Commission of Canada.

The department has determined that the act is no longer required in the context of the commission's current constitution and therefore, proposes that it should be repealed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you hon. minister.

The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I beg lave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Repeal the Physiotherapy Act*, and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Repeal the Physiotherapy Act*, Bill No. 51, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, would you like to give us an explanation as to what –

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This bill will repeal the act in preparation for the transmission to the *Regulated Health Professions Act* and the college of physiotherapists support this change, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Repeal the Emergency Medical Technicians Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Repeal the Emergency Medical Technicians Act*, Bill No. 52, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, an explanation about this one too.

Mr. Mitchell: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Similar to the previous bill, this bill will repeal the act in preparation for the transition to the *Regulated Health Professions Act* as well, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act to Amend the Health Information Act*, Bill No. 56, read a first time.

Speaker: Hon. minister, just give us a brief explanation also about this bill.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The purpose of this bill is to correct several minor administrative amendments identified during the review process. Those amendments will include such things as the modification of definitions and clarification of the application of the act, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, minister.

Government Motions

Orders of the Day (Government)

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

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that the 9th order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 9, *An Act the Securities Act*, Bill No. 47, ordered for second reading.

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

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that the said bill be now read a second time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: *An Act the Securities Act*, Bill No. 47, read a second time.

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

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

I will ask the hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford to come and chair this bill.

Chair (McIsaac): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act the Securities Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

Mr. J. Brown: Mr. Chair, can I bring a friendly stranger to the floor?

Chair: Can I get an answer to this question first?

An Hon. Member: Can we have an overview, please?

Chair: Will do.

Okay, can we allow the stranger to come to the floor?

An Hon. Member: Sure.

An Hon. Member: Granted.

Chair: Good.

Mr. Toombs, can you give us your name and title, please?

Curtis Toombs: Curtis Toombs, Solicitor of Consumer Corporate Financial Services division, justice and public safety.

Chair: Okay, can we have an overview, minister?

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Chair.

This bill amends the *Securities Act* to have enforcement orders from other provinces apply automatically in Prince Edward Island and enhance enforcement powers of self regulatory organizations, otherwise known as SROs.

Really, what this bill does is enhance protection for investors and it also – there's a nation-wide push from the individual provinces to have this sort of legislation passed and Mr. Toombs could provide you with a more specified list, but the bulk of the provinces and territories in the country are, either in the process of doing this, or have passed virtually identical legislation already.

Chair: Questions then; we'll start with the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you, Chair.

Just a few minutes ago we had five or six bills, I think, presented to the House and they sound from the overview that they are truly housekeeping bills, pretty small – I haven't seen them yet of course, but it appears that they won't be substantive bills in terms of their size anyway, and of course we have all weekend to have a look at these.

The bill we are about to commence debate on at 12:02 on Friday morning, we did not receive until around 3:30 p.m. yesterday afternoon. This can hardly be described as a housekeeping bill which – and I know – I'm not sure if it was the minister or the witness last night that described the *An Act to Amend the Police Act* as a housekeeping bill, but that, to my mind, is really stretching that description. It was a big piece of work and I was very thankful for Blair to come and give us the briefing that he did; emphasis on brief because we met at 6:30 – we didn't even get probably a third of the way through the bill before 7:00 p.m. and that was our consternation about the preparation time that we had, and also the opportunity that we had to see the background information, jurisdictional scans, all of those things regarding what was a very important and substantive piece of legislation.

I find myself today at noon with a piece of legislation; I am, to be quite honest, largely unfamiliar with. We had a sitting last night, of course, until 9:00 p.m. My staff has not had time to look at this, to review the bill and if we are here to do you the best work that we with can for Islanders, that's takes time. That takes time.

We need to understand the content of every bill that comes forward. We need to understand the intents of the bills that come forward and I simply have not had an opportunity do that.

I'm at a bit of a loss, I must say, as to why there is this incredible rush in the first week of the legislative sitting. I've never experienced it before in the three years I've been here, that bills that are presented one day are put up for debate within 24 hours; just not giving anybody in this House

sufficient time to do our jobs properly, and I want to do my job properly.

I guess my first question is: Why are we debating this bill today given that it was only tabled yesterday afternoon?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm not sure this is really a question for me, but I will do my best to provide an answer.

I think I already rose on a Point of Privilege in relation to about two thirds of the comments that were just made, so I'll not purport to address them again, other than to say that the rules of the Legislature are pretty clear.

I don't think the hon. Leader of the Third Party is alleging that we are in some way breaching those rules, the rules that he, on numerous occasions has espoused and would have every opportunity as a member of the relevant committee to change if he thought that they were in some way not in order.

I have been impressed by the amount of work that has been done by this Chamber over the course of time since we began our sitting on Tuesday and I suspect heading in, given the pace that we have gone at in other sittings, we probably would not have predicted eight or nine bills, but we have no control how quickly the Chamber passes legislation that we put before it. I'll say all that, to say that's the case.

In terms of the briefing that you referenced, as I said, I think it was 11:30 or 11:37, I think to be exact that we got an e-mail and I'll say this too, nobody came over to ask me as we were coming in the Chamber or at any point between 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. whether we could arrange a briefing prior to that time. I'll tell you bluntly, that in terms of my own circumstances, I wasn't at the briefing last night, as you were aware. My wife is away and I had to go home and feed and bathe my two children and get them to bed for the babysitter. I apologize for that.

But, I will say that I think I did everything that I could, when you indicated you wanted

a briefing, to make one available to you. You asked great questions here last night on the floor. It seemed like you were prepared. I don't know really what more I can say beyond; this is the process that we've all signed up for and we have legislation and work to do. If you want briefings, let us know. We'll do our best to get them for you and do it in a timely fashion.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

I appreciate that, minister, and I think it's important that we look at the timeline of events between, when the bill that we're discussing at the moment, *An Act to Amend the Police Act*, came to the floor. It was tabled on Wednesday in the afternoon. We did not know whether it would be called for debate the following day. We learned yesterday when the House leader called that it was indeed being called for debate, which is when we sent off the e-mail requesting a briefing.

We had no idea we were going to be forced into debating it within 24 hours. That's the concern and we're faced with it again, today, except it's even worse today because we had an evening session yesterday, so we've had less than 24 hours.

You'll have to forgive me, minister, if some of my questions here may seem pedantic or that I may get lost or wander off-topic, because I really don't understand this bill, simply because I haven't – well maybe I don't have the mental acuity to do so, but even if I did, I have not had sufficient time to really delve into this.

So I will be asking a lot of questions and I'm going to insist that we go clause by clause so that we don't miss anything here because I'm entirely unfamiliar.

Chair: Do you have a response to that? I'll begin reading the bill clause by clause.

1. Subsection 1(1) of the *Securities Act* R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. S-3.1, is amended by the addition of the following after clause (vv):

(vv.1) "recognized self-regulatory organization" means a self-regulatory

organization recognized by the Superintendent under Part 7.

Any questions on section one?

Mr. MacEwen: Chair, I think I'm on your list (Indistinct)

Chair: Yes, you are.

We're going – that's right. I had a question from the hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid. We should do that before we get into that, but section one is read. We'll deal with it after questions from the from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

Chair: Sorry about that.

Mr. MacEwen: No, that's no problem.

Minister, there was a significant *Securities Act* on the floor this past spring, right?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

Mr. J. Brown: There was – sorry.

Chair: Mr. Toombs.

Curtis Toombs: That was the, I believe, the *Uniform Securities Transfer Act*. That was not specifically dealing with this legislation that related to property rights of transferring securities such as shares in companies. This relates to securities regulatory matters. That was separate legislation.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you.

We're not amending that then, this is an entirely different piece of legislation?

Curtis Toombs: Correct.

Mr. MacEwen: Chair?

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you.

Minister, where did this come from? Who was the push behind this? Did this come from the department; did it come from an outside lobby? Who's pushing for these changes?

Mr. J. Brown: I'll let Curtis answer that.

Chair: Mr. Toombs.

Curtis Toombs: The amendments reflect similar amendments that have been made in other provinces. Notably Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, as well as Alberta. More recently, there was an amendment in the Northwest Territories, as well. A few other provinces are in the process of doing so, as well.

The specific amendments relating to recognizing enforcement orders in other provinces, those amendments primarily are a result of work that's been done through Canadian Securities Administrators group, which each province and territory is a member of. So the policy rationale behind that particular item comes from within that group that the securities regulators across Canada.

The amendments relating to the enhanced powers for recognized self-regulatory organizations, those also come from work within the Canadian Securities Administrators and reflect changes done in other province. They are also items that have been pushed forward by consumer protection advocates, as well as the self-regulatory organizations themselves.

Essentially, what they do the amendments, in that regard, is they strengthen enforcement powers for those regulatory organizations. There's only two in PEI.

Chair: Minister?

Mr. J. Brown: Thank you, Chair.

I will add to that. They are timely for us, as well. We've had at least one major matter that we've gone through here in the last – is it three or four years, I guess?

Curtis Toombs: Yeah.

Mr. J. Brown: Just winding out now.

It's gone through the criminal court process; the self-regulating entities have gone through it, as well. Now we actually have to go through the process of initiating and rendering an order, even though those two other – in other words the police and the crown and the regulating bodies have already done the same work.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

So, the consumer protection lobbies, so to speak, was there a group that actually came in and met with you over this or did it all come from that national organization?

Curtis Toombs: There were no meetings we had. It was essentially through – they've been lobbying Canadian Securities Administrators as a group.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

So, there has been no private lobby then for you, it's just our representatives at that national organization that are bringing it back here that are saying we should be doing this?

Chair: Mr. Toombs? Minister?

Mr. J. Brown: No, not me hon. member.

I haven't met with anybody on this other than my staff.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you.

So Nova Scotia has brought this in already or are we doing anything different, I guess, than Nova Scotia is doing?

Curtis Toombs: No, the amendments that are in this bill – part of the amendments were enacted by Nova Scotia in 2016 and another portion – the other part of the amendment, has been recently enacted. I think it was in October of earlier this year, but it was introduced and I believe it

received Royal Assent the mid or later in October. It's the same at Nova Scotia.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

You mentioned a couple other jurisdictions that have this in place, too. Has it been tested anywhere? The act – has it stood up? Has anybody had to make amendments to their own legislation since?

Curtis Toombs: No, I am not aware of any amendments to it since.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

I'm good for line by line now.

Speaker: Okay, are there any questions on section one?

Ms. Biggar: Carry the section.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

Just before I get to specific questions on section one, Chair, I just have another general question then on first blush and that's of course that's all I've had a chance to do.

It appears that this may be a response to a specific incident here on Prince Edward Island. Is there any relationship whatsoever between the bill that we have here today, and the response to the accusations that were made regarding the conduct of the superintendent during the e-gaming file?

Chair: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

Mr. J. Brown: Not that I'm aware of. Maybe Curtis would –

Curtis Toombs: No, I'm not aware of anything.

Mr. J. Brown: Just to be clear, this has more to do with the self-regulated organizations that would regulate – if you want the frank direct answer to this, the Morton Dew matter would have had more to

do with it than that. It's not – it came from a national push by the national securities regulatory body.

As you'd likely be aware, there has been a national push to start to bring everybody together – not just on Prince Edward Island. We've seen increased incidences of what would be called 'white collar crime'.

In a lot of ways there had been recent amendments to the Criminal Code. There's been a lot more work together by securities offices and by police agencies. This is all a piece of it.

We found out last Friday or the Friday before that the Supreme Court of Canada has rendered a ruling saying that the national securities regulator can move forward, and I suspect that'll be a further piece of this as well.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks.

So, I take it that has nothing to do with the e-gaming lawsuit whatsoever. Will the passage of this bill affect the ongoing e-gaming lawsuits that are before the courts now?

Curtis Toombs: No, I'm not aware of any relation that would have.

Chair: Leader of the Third Party, are you going into the section –

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I'm going into section one now.

Mr. McIsaac: I think I have overall from Montague-Kilmuir and then I'll come back to you.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Chair.

Just a general question and I'm just trying to, I guess, kind of capture what's been said so far. If I understand this correctly, this act is to amend ours – what we currently, to keep us based on the national meetings, perhaps that you've attended or that have taken place, to keep us in step and up to date with what's taking place across the country?

Curtis Toombs: Yes, that's correct.

Mr. Roach: Thank you.

That's all I have for now, Chair.

Chair: Okay, we'll go back to the Leader of the Third Party on section one.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

So, I'm just wondering if you could give us an update on the national securities regulation. I know you've mentioned it a couple times, but just where are you with that?

Chair: Minister.

Mr. J. Brown: Sorry Chair, thank you.

I just did to the extent that I can. Really it's been four years that it's been four years that it's been before the courts.

Curtis Toombs: Yeah, the cooperatives securities regulator – I think that's what we're referring to – it has been ongoing for a number of years. There was a constitutional challenge to it brought by Quebec challenging essentially the constitutionality of the initiative itself and that made its way through the Quebec courts and went to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Last Friday, I believe it was, the Supreme Court rendered its decision and upheld the constitutionality of it. So the initiative is now to continue with the process. That involves a number of provinces, not every province, but provinces choosing to join have the ability to do so. Going forward, I expect, there will be more provinces join on now that the Supreme Court has rendered its decision.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

So, again forgive me, I'll be reading my questions here. So when you reference the extra provincial securities regulatory authority in section one, can you explain what a self-regulatory organization is? SRO?

Curtis Toombs: Yes, a self-regulatory organization refers to an organization that's been established and recognized by

securities regulatory, like the provinces or territories, as a group to regulate its members and the members in the two self-regulatory organizations that I'm referring to is the Investment Industry Regulatory of Canada – IRAC as it is commonly kind of referred to as, and they regulate the investment dealers. Then there's the Mutual Fund Dealers Association and they regulate mutual fund dealers.

So those two organizations then fall under the regulation of securities regulators of each province and territory. Those groups regulate the members, they have their own bylaws. They act in accordance with the recognition of the securities regulators themselves.

Chair: Other questions on one?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yes.

Thank you; I really appreciate that explanation on one. Thank you.

So, does it relate to the passport system that most provincial securities regulators use?

Curtis Toombs: Not directly, but there is a bit of a correlation in the sense that the passport system came in 2008 which enables registration throughout Canada. It's done as a way to facilitate doing so quite easily by mutually relying on each province to do their check, if you will, when you do the registration.

In terms of the amendments here, the amendment, for example, to have greater enforcement ability for the self-regulatory organization, that relates to that in the sense that those folks are regulating throughout Canada – their members. Although passport system isn't really relating to that, the registration is done to register as an investment dealer or mutual fund dealer, through the passport system.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay.

Chair: Okay, that good?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: More questions.

Chair: On one?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yes.

Chair: Okay, the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Again, I really appreciate the clarification on that.

So again, related to one, can you explain what the role of the superintendent is in the act?

Chair: Mr. Toombs.

Curtis Toombs: The role in general, you mean?

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yeah.

Curtis Toombs: The superintendent is the equivalent of the security's regulatory authority in other provinces. So for example, if you have a securities commission in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia, the office of the superintendent is the equivalent to Prince Edward Island. That's the statutory decision maker in the *Securities Act*.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Right, okay.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks.

So who does that superintendent report to?

Curtis Toombs: Well, the superintendent position is established through the *Securities Act*, which is then regulated through the ministry of justice.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: So the –

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Sorry Chair.

The superintendent would be overseen and report to the Minister of Justice?

Curtis Toombs: Yeah, so the superintendent would, for example, a securities matter brought before the superintendent, the superintendent would issue a decision and then that wouldn't be appealable to the minister of justice, it would be appealable to the appeal court of PEI. Just as an example.

There wouldn't be an appellant of a decision from the superintendent to the minister, but the superintendent falls under the ministry of justice.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Okay.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thank you.

So how many other jurisdictions have a superintendent of securities that's also a civil servant and that works for government, rather than being an officer in an independent body?

Curtis Toombs: The three territories have a superintendent similar to PEI and Newfoundland does as well. The legislation in each of the three territories and PEI is also identical. They were all adopted around 2008, potentially within a year of each other at the time.

The Newfoundland one is very similar as well, but it has slightly different variances and provisions. They have a superintendent office similar to ours.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Thanks.

So do you think that having the superintendent report to the minister of the Crown creates an inherent conflict? Is there enough distance and separation there? Are you comfortable with the set up that this act would create?

Chair: Mr. Toombs.

Curtis Toombs: Well, the set-up in the act isn't being amended –

Dr. Bevan-Baker: No.

Curtis Toombs: – that's – so, we're clear on that –

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Right.

Curtis Toombs: Are you asking if I'm comfortable with the (Indistinct) –

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Yeah, given that nine of the 10 other provinces have an independent superintendent outside of the civil service.

Curtis Toombs: Well, the – just to be clear, I guess, each province – Nova Scotia has a separate securities commission, but they fall under their – I'm not sure what ministry it is off the top of my head, but it's either justice or – I think it's justice, but it might be finance.

It has a similar, I guess, not completely independent separate agency, like you would in some other provinces like Ontario, for example.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: Did the minister consider moving the function of the securities regulations to a self regulatory body, similar to the Nova Scotia security, for example, or the New Brunswick securities commission, or is that not something you have even considered?

Chair: Mr. Toombs. Minister?

Mr. J. Brown: Back to the update.

We signed onto, I think it's a memorandum in, I think it's 2014, to move towards a federal regulator, or a unified regulator, we'll say. We have been working towards that for four or five years now, with the hope of getting there. But, we need to have others – well we needed the Supreme Court of Canada to determine that we could do that in the first place, and then we need to have others on board to do it as well.

I suspect that will happen more rapidly now than it had previously. We have been looking at partnering with, particularly; New Brunswick should that not have happened. I expect it won't be an issue at this point in time.

The most likely way that will work will be for the federal regulator to have offices – or I shouldn't say again the federal regulator – the national regulator to have offices in each province that would maintain staffing compliments that would enable us to do the functional parts of the day-in and day-out here.

Chair: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Dr. Bevan-Baker: I'm good with the section. Thank you.

Chair: Okay. Before we go to section two, a question from the hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Roach: Thank you, Chair.

I guess by way of looking at section one and two; section one, if I understand that correctly, simply amends 1.1 by adding a new clause? Is that correct?

Curtis Toombs: Yes, that's correct.

Mr. Roach: Which just, I guess, defines recognized self regulatory organization. Is that correct?

Curtis Toombs: That's correct.

Mr. Roach: Thank you.

And section two is simply repealing section 60, and amending that section?

Curtis Toombs: That's correct.

Extend and replace with a similar section below as a 60.1.

Mr. Roach: Okay.

And the Leader of the Third Party mentioned – he was talking about extra provincial security regulator authorities – I believe, I don't know if we've gotten that far yet or not, but – does that in affect by amending the act, put us in the same place where that authority rests with the superintendent? And that would put us in line with where the other provinces that are under this would fall?

Chair: Mr. Toombs.

Curtis Toombs: The specific provision –

Mr. Roach: I guess with the –

Curtis Toombs: Sorry, I wasn't quite sure on your question.

Mr. Roach: – yeah, the amendment to the act really is the new section 60.1?

That puts the superintendent and I guess the securities regulatory authority in Canada have the same effect in this province, that's entered into with the superintendent. That would be the same as every other province?

Curtis Toombs: That's correct.

Mr. Roach: Okay, thank you.

That's all the questions I have for now, Chair.

Chair: Thank you.

We are going to move onto another agenda item, so we are going to pull this bill. We will bring the speaker back

Mr. J. Brown: Mr. Chair, I leave the Speaker take the chair and that the Chair report the bill agreed to without – whoops, sorry.

Some Hon. Members: [Laughter]

Mr. J. Brown: I move the Speaker take the chair and that the Chair report progress and beg leave to sit again.

Chair: What was wrong with the first one?

Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. J. Brown: Figured I have to try.

Chair: Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House having had under consideration the bill to be intituled an *Act to Amend the Securities Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that the 11th order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant (Doiron): Order No. 11, *An Act to Amend the Unsightly Property Act*, Bill No. 30, ordered for second reading.

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

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that the said bill be now read a second time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant: *An Act to Amend the Unsightly Property Act*, Bill No. 30, read a second time.

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

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Lewis Point, that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration the said bill.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Vernon River-Stratford to come and Chair this bill.

Chair (McIsaac): The House is now in a Committee of the Whole House to take into consideration a bill to be intitled *An Act to Amend the Unsightly Property Act*. Is it the pleasure of the committee that the bill be now read clause by clause?

Mr. R. Brown: Yes.

[Laughter]

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Chair: Do you want to bring somebody on?

Mr. R. Brown: Yeah, can I bring a stranger on the floor, please?

Chair: Is that okay?

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

Chair: Great.

Mr. LaVie: I feel sorry for the stranger.

Chair: Do you want it read or do you just questions? It's not a very big –

An Hon. Member: Overview.

Chair: An overview? Okay.

We'll ask the stranger to introduce himself first, and title.

Barry Jackson: Barry Jackson, Environmental Regulatory Coordinator for the Department of Communities, Land and Environment.

Chair: Thank you, Mr. Jackson.

Minister, can we have an overview?

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

The *Unsightly Property Act* is a very important act because Prince Edward Island prides itself upon being the most beautiful province in Canada and in the world and the reason for that is, because residents keep their properties up and maintain in good standing and good order and it's good for the community. It's good for the tourism sector and I think it's good for the Island overall.

This piece of legislation allows the department to identify property owners that are not maintaining their property and a lot of the time, it's residents that have owned properties and then moved away and they forget about the property and it's just left there abandoned most of the time.

This legislation allows the inspectors to issue orders against properties to have them clean up their properties. And they are given a certain amount of time to clean up their properties when the order is issued. The appropriate owner can appeal the order to IRAC and IRAC will either uphold the order or change the order or cancel the order if they don't see that the evidence is in alignment with the objectives of the act.

If IRAC upholds the order, we will go back to the owner of the property and ask the property owner to: You have to clean up the property. Sometimes they just don't want to clean up the property so then we have to issue an order that the province will clean up the property and bill the cleanup charges

back to the property owner, and if they don't pay – do we apply against the property?

Barry Jackson: Not for ownership.

Mr. R. Brown: I know in the City of Charlottetown, when cleanup orders are done in the City of Charlottetown, we make a lean against the property if the city has to clean it and I think we probably really can do that under this act also.

So, it's important that when an order is issued, that we work with the property owner as much as we can in order for them to fulfill the requirements of the order in order to make the property presentable to the public.

Because again, as I said, it's important for Prince Edward Island and for the neighbourhood that take pride in their property, that everybody takes pride in their properties, as I think happens substantially in Prince Edward Island.

We had a case last year, 2017, we issued an order and then we cleaned up the property, and there was a \$12,000 judgment against the person. The act said we must file that within 30 days. It wasn't done because just busy. So, we are changing the legislation to allow us to file that judgment at any time after the work is done, but we still want to continue to work with the people that own the properties in order for them to clean up their properties.

Chair: Thank you very much, minister.

Mr. R. Brown: Thank you.

Chair: My speaking list is now longer than this bill, but anyway.

First, to the Premier.

Mr. R. Brown: (Indistinct) got the securities bill.

Premier MacLauchlan: Thank you, Chair.

I congratulate the minister and department for bringing this bill forward and for the work that's done by the department in situations where property owners, contrary to the general culture in Prince Edward Island, allow their places to get run down to

the point where there would be a concern by neighbours. I wonder if – well, let me just make a general comment about this, if I may, Chair.

I attended last month the annual awards night of the rural beautification society. When you see the work that is done and then represented at those awards throughout our province, and what's been down now – it's 73 years that we've had the rural beautification in Prince Edward Island for communities, for property owners, for farm properties and overall, the culture that we have in our province of people, not just looking after places, but seeking on a regular basis to upgrade and make improvements.

It's something that we all value as Prince Edward Islanders and something I can say in my own case, has been passed on from generation to generation, and I know there are others certainly in this House who've been part of that going back to schools, community halls, our own properties, where you do it not to try to get ahead of anybody, but to try to keep up with the standards of your neighbours and overall in the province.

And then of course, you do need this that is a – what I'll say a fallback – or to deal with the situations where there are concerns.

I'm interested if the minister or his advisor could tell us just what is the process by which the concern brought to the attention of the department if there is an unsightly property?

Chair: Mr. Jackson.

Barry Jackson: Typically, it'll be a phone call or an email through a member of the public that initiates the investigation. We currently have two inspectors with other duties assigned as well, but do have *Unsightly Property Act* inspections under their portfolios.

It's very important for those inspectors to follow the integrity and the criteria of the act that defines what an unsightly or an untidy property is.

Whenever I get the calls or whenever inspectors get the calls, issues like: He hasn't painted his fence this year; he hasn't kept up his grass this year. If those are the

only the issues on the property, those typically kind of more fall in line with what a city bylaw has.

When inspectors get the call, they'll remind the caller that these are the things that we deal with, is things like structures falling down if its foundations collapsed. There are certain definitions and criteria under the act that the inspectors almost use as a check list to determine, yes, this meets all the criteria, it's not just that inspector's opinion.

We will do the inspections. We'll collect photos. The inspector will write up some notes. Usually confer with me on whether or not it meets those criteria and what the next steps are. We then track down the address from the taxation. We have a standard template format letter to send to the property owner to let them know that an inspection occurred and that these are the things that they need to address, and there's a timeline required in that letter to address them.

We then follow up. Sometimes those letters get returned to sender because it's an estate or it's some other matter where the address has been – the letter has been kicked back to us. But in the case where we sometimes on rare occasions, we get acknowledgement of those letters that quite shocked that somebody thought this and they actually address the problems through letters. But, without that interaction with us that they've actually acknowledge the letter and that there is an issue, we then go to the stage of issuing the order.

The order is prescribed right in the act as well, so we'll then give a timeline. There is a minimum timeline of 15 days, depending on the severity of the property we may give longer if it's a large house, large barn or things like that. For somebody, say in Ontario, to coordinate the clean up with an on-Island contractor could be a little bit difficult.

Then once that order, say, has failed to meet the timelines, we can either determine on our list of priorities whether it's one that the department is going to actually go in and do the cleanup work, or if it's a case where we can possibly go to enforcement – there has been cases where we know somebody is living on the Island. We know they have acknowledged the order, they've got other

properties that are well kept, we know that there are resources and means there to clean up the property; we have taken some of these matters to court because on the day they fail to clean up by the deadline on the order, it is a summary offence. There have been a few cases where we've actually gone in through the court process as well too, for a charge of failure to comply with an order.

Premier MacLauchlan: If I may just have the opportunity to ask Mr. Jackson a further question; a lot of people who get out around the country do see, in some cases, farm buildings that may be past their best-before-date.

And I know one of my constituents who is not one for letting things grow up under his feet, Parker Jewell, I went to see him on his 90th birthday and he said to me: Wade, there's one thing I wouldn't mind seeing done and maybe the government can do something about it, and that's to get out through the country and do something about falling down barns.

I'd be interested if you could, Mr. Jackson or the minister, tell us whether the powers under the *Unsightly Property Act* are something that do lend themselves to addressing those concerns.

Chair: Mr. Jackson.

Barry Jackson: Of farm yards and barns, that's actually one that we don't get that often in terms of complaints.

Some see them as more idealistic, maybe photographic or whatever, but farm yards – we don't get a lot of complaint on the collapsed barns. It would be an interesting initiative to be able to offer the service of clean up. I mean, these are wooden structures with steel roofs with no other real issues in them.

I have talked with different people over the years of: Wouldn't it be nice to have a service of remediation if there's a potential fuel source there. There's a biomass. There's a tub grinder. There are things like that that you could do, that when these things are left to fall down from, like you said, 90-year-old constituents, they're very expensive structures to demolish because of the size of them. There are other means that it would be

nice to explore to have these properties cleaned up.

Chair: We're going to –

Premier MacLauchlan: I just have one point I want to make in case it gets – it's a quick one. I don't want it left to anyone's room to suppose that Parker Jewell himself had any buildings that were other than in the top condition (Indistinct)

An Hon. Member: (Indistinct)

Barry Jackson: Right.

Chair: Okay.

Barry Jackson: But, it's honestly – farm yards and barns are not typically ones that we get a lot of unless there are other issues; the house's well, there's washing machines strewn on the property or things like that, but typically just the barn on the hill kind of thing falling down, we don't get a lot of complaints from those through this process.

Chair: Okay, we're going to go to – I have an awful long list here and we don't have much time. Do you mind if we go to two questions max each and then we'll go around?

The hon. Member from Georgetown-St. Peters.

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Chair.

I've had some issues brought to me, as I'm sure everybody has here in the past about different properties and stuff, but, one of the ones that had come to me on a number of occasions had to do with a piling up of buoys, like they are mussel buoys. There would be a 30-foot high pile and when they called the department they weren't satisfied that they got any result or help.

So is that considered unsightly? I don't even know about the mussel fishery to know if those are reused or not, I 100% don't know.

Barry Jackson: I am aware of a few complaints about unsightly, in regards to fishing gear, lobster traps would be another one that we get on occasion.

Really, some of the other ones may come through department of health, or concerns about rodents or vermin, stuff like that on site. We have done some joint inspections of ones that were reported unsightly to us with other fishing gear stored on the property.

I mean from our perspective, if that's part of the fisherman's business and the fisherman's operation, we're not going to jump in and label these properties where they're storing fishing gear – especially if they're actively involved in fishing as suddenly an unsightly property.

Now, boats – dilapidated boats, things like that – yes we have dealt with in the past but those were guys that were hoarding these boats for motors or for other hobbies, they weren't active fishermen.

Fishing gear, if it is something that's part of their industry, typically not involved as an unsightly property.

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, what do we do or what's the process when the unsightly property is a government-owned property?

I understand up east in a municipality, the province has taken over a spot and there have been a few emails from the municipality and nothing is being done.

What's the process when it's actually a government property that's unsightly?

Chair: Mr. minister?

Mr. R. Brown: Well if the Province of Prince Edward Island expects individual property owners to maintain and clean their properties, the government should lead the way and do that.

If we have a complaint in on a government property we will execute the necessary documents in order for it to be cleaned up.

Where is that one again?

Chair: The hon. Member from Morell-Mermaid.

Mr. MacEwen: Up east. I believe the hon. member up there will follow up but I think they would like some action up east.

My second question: is the phrasing of the term following 30 days, are we concerned that following 30 days could be 300 days?

Mr. R. Brown: We want to work with the properties owners not just when we can, but when the property owner doesn't want to work with the province, we will reissue the order as soon as possible and if we didn't do it within 30 days, they got to get their cleanup for free basically and this way we get all the estimates done and work done and then issue the order for compensation.

It's just a matter of making sure – let's say we're going to clean up a property and the person who cleaned it up didn't get us the bill before 30 days, we could potentially lose the case and I'm a firm believer that people who are issued these – and also it's a safety issue too.

We all know what happened out on Mount Edward Road with the dilapidated building there, a couple kids got in it. When people complain: You're putting pressure on me to clean up my property, to fix up my property – well if some young people get into it or some people get into those facilities and a fire is happening and loss of life, that's a major thing that a society should make sure doesn't happen.

Plus, you can see in California now half the state is burning because people are out in their backyard burning or starting campfires – it's no different if somebody starts a big barn on fire that could spread across the Island pretty quick.

So its safety issue as well.

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

Ms. Biggar: First of all, I want to thank your department for the assistance to the village of Tyne Valley with the cleanup of a structure that had burned and was right in the middle of the village and the council had requested numerous times but anyway I want to thank you as the department for that assistance.

I guess, some of the things I've had happen are people to come to me and they're afraid to make a complaint because you have to put it in writing and it's my understanding that's happened a couple of times that when a complaint was made against someone and the person who had the complaint laid against them wanted to know who laid the complaint, then it made for quite a bit of hot topics.

Is there a protection or requirement to protect the identity much like if you call into tips?

Barry Jackson: No.

We get anonymous calls all the time. We don't have to have the complainant writing it, it could just be a phone call to an inspector.

But what we have found sometimes is that there is a history between neighbours and we'll caution the person making the complaints – especially if it is a neighbour over across the road kind of thing – if there is a past history once an inspector comes on the property, starts taking photographs stuff like that, it's kind of out in the open.

But no, we do not reveal who lodged the complaints but suddenly, they'll start looking and they may know –

Ms. Biggar: To figure out.

Barry Jackson: It all just sort of depends on that past history between neighbours.

Mr. R. Brown: They're fighting on a Friday night and the inspectors show up Monday morning.

Ms. Biggar: Yeah.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy, I'll give you one more and then we'll come back to you if we have time.

Ms. Biggar: Sure.

This relates to the procedure if you're in an incorporated area as opposed to a non-incorporated area because I know in dealing with the village of Tyne-Valley they went through all the process that they could but if

you're in an area that has no incorporated body to kind of push the agenda, I guess getting the assistance to make sure that is carried through is a concern.

Mr. R. Brown: And that's the reason for this act is that for unincorporated areas, incorporated areas can choose to put a bylaw in, as most do. The City of Charlottetown has a very tough one and rightfully so because you want to promote your city, or you want to promote your community for tourism but just as a good community.

We all owe a responsibility to our community that we live in, in order to make our community the best it can be. So this kind of legislation is for unincorporated areas and places that don't have a bylaw.

Chair: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: Thanks Mr. Chair.

I did have two questions but since the hon. Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy just asked the first one I had, I don't have to repeat that.

I guess one of my issues is that we've seen a number of cases in my region where fires have occurred – the building half burns down. Then there's another fire that occurs maybe a couple of months later that three quarters is burnt down.

Is there anything about a situation where these fire departments can, when a building –

Mr. R. Brown: Good point.

Mr. Henderson: – it's already been burnt once, to let the thing burn and clean it up? It would just be, I think the Lewis Motel would be an example of that, I can think of the shopping basket store, McNeills Mills and Alan Boyle's house there in Ellerslie

Ms. Biggar: (Indistinct)

Mr. Henderson: – Bideford there like three or four times.

It's a hazard to the fire departments as well as just makes the sight of the property even

more unsightly so maybe you could respond to that.

Chair: Minister of CLE.

Mr. R. Brown: Me?

Chair: Yeah. That's you.

[Laughter]

Mr. R. Brown: You're right some of these buildings – I stand to be corrected, fire departments did have the ability to go out and practice on an old building, there's more restrictions on it now.

I think it's time to revisit that to just to make sure that it's both a practice for them and gets rid of a problem. I think there are some issues around further restrictions –

Ms. Biggar: Asphalt shingles (Indistinct)

Chair: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Mr. Henderson: It's even a safety factor to be in the fire department to be in a rushed situation on a property that's like I say, burnt two or three times and it's just a nuisance to everybody.

Mr. R. Brown: That's a good point.

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

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, minister for bringing this bill forward.

I have just a few questions and we all know that when people come to our Island they're impressed about how clean our Island is and things like that and we all know that most people look after their properties but from time to time, there'll be a property next door to a house or a business that gets neglected.

It seems to take an awful long time to get through the process, so is this going to speed that up and will there be extra funds where you can do more a year?

I'll give you an example, I got a phone call a couple weeks ago where there was house

that burnt, but the foundation still there and lumber still in it and it's a safety issue plus it becomes a home for critters.

So is there any movement on that front?

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

Mr. R. Brown: Thank you.

There are budget restraints we have, but I'm a believer that if we go after a property owner, clean up the property, and we issue out for payment, that that payment should be put back into the fund in order to continue on doing further instead of just going into general revenue.

Chair: Minister, you have one more question.

Mr. Gallant: So if their property was identified, you'd have somebody go check it, put a 30 day notice on it. After 30 days you could go in and remove it and put it against the taxes?

Mr. R. Brown: Yeah.

Mr. Gallant: So it would happen that fast?

Mr. R. Brown: He has an appeal period that he can appeal to IRAC and then IRAC will take a look whether it is unsightly or not. I question even going to IRAC, I have to admit because this is an unnecessary step, I believe.

There's always an appeal process, but if the inspectors we have on Prince Edward Island in the neighbourhood, I think it's pretty clear that the property is dilapidated and should be fixed.

Mr. Gallant: So bar any interference after the 30 days, you could go in and tear it down?

Mr. R. Brown: Sure, and if they don't want to tear it down then we can tear it down and send them a bill and then make a lean against the property.

Mr. Gallant: Great.

Chair: Great, thank you.

We're going to go to the hon. West Royalty-Springvale.

Mr. Dumville: Thank you, Chair.

Ministers, I'm assuming this act only applies to non-municipal areas. Do you have any clout with the local municipality in terms of – I'm getting an awful lot of complaints in regards to some people maybe from the immigrant investor program – they're buying big homes, taking off and leaving them vacant, and I'm getting a lot of complaints in that area.

If you'd take that message to your counterpart, I'd greatly appreciate it.

Mr. R. Brown: In Charlottetown?

Mr. Dumville: Yes.

Mr. R. Brown: Yes, okay. I'll be seeing him.

Mr. Dumville: The other thought that the Premier was mentioning getting rid of some old barns, and I was thinking of the phrase 'this old house', what are we going to do with the artist community? They'll have nothing to paint going forward, minister.

An Hon. Member: Graffiti guys.

Mr. Dumville: Graffiti guys. I'm thinking the Henry Purdys.

Mr. R. Brown: I'm sure that the properties that we're looking are complaint based – our system is, but also if the inspectors or our people out around and they see properties, they bring them in. We'll review and if there's an artistic heritage we'll try to work with the owner.

Mr. Dumville: A little history, yeah.

Mr. R. Brown: But again, it's a safety issue. Plus you live in a community, you should be participating in your community, and you should contribute to keeping your community clean and the standards up.

Mr. Dumville: Completely understand, minister.

Thank you.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, I wonder if you could just comment a little bit. I know there are a number of derelict properties that I have been called about. It's been going on since I got elected, so that's three-and-a-half years ago now. There doesn't seem to be anything being done at all. I understand – I think I understand the process, but where are we missing? What's the gap here that nothing is being done; because there are properties that nothing is being done?

Mr. R. Brown: I agree and there are budget constraints. I'll be asking the province if we do issue orders, we do the clean-up, and the bill comes to the province – when we do get the money back it goes back into a fund in order to continue (Indistinct) instead of just going into general revenue.

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

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Chair.

So, there is a list?

Mr. R. Brown: There's definitely a list.

Ms. Compton: Can we find out where properties are on that list?

Mr. R. Brown: List of complaints?

Barry Jackson: A list of properties requesting inspection or?

Ms. Compton: No, that need to be something done with. There's been no action and obviously it's not going to happen by the homeowner and you know the province is going to be left holding the bag, so to speak.

Can we find out where they are on a list? I've got one in particular that I keep getting calls on and there doesn't seem to be anything being done.

Barry Jackson: We do a –

Ms. Biggar: Call the hour.

Chair: The hour has been called.

Mr. MacEwen: Carry the bill.

Chair: The hour has been called.

Mr. Trivers: Extend the hour, carry the bill.

Some Hon. Members: (Indistinct)

Mr. R. Brown: Mr. 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.

Do we do anymore, Joey?

Chair: Mr. Speaker, as Chair of a Committee of the Whole House, having under consideration the bill to intituled *An Act to Amend the Unsightly Property Act*, I beg leave to report that the committee has made some progress and begs leave to sit again. I move that the report of the committee be adopted.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning.

Mr. Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Montague-Kilmuir, that this House adjourn until Tuesday, November 20th at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Enjoy your weekend.

An Hon. Member: You too.

The Legislature adjourned