

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Colin LaVie

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First Session of the Sixty-sixth General Assembly

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MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS.....	16
RESOLUTIONS OF SYMPATHY.....	21
PETER DOUCETTE.....	21
GEORGE MCMAHON.....	22
MOTION OF CONDOLENCE	22
JOSH AND OLIVER UNDERHAY.....	22
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS.....	24
TYNE VALLEY-SHERBROOKE (Stewart Memorial Hospital Foundation).....	24
MERMAID-STRATFORD (Bike Week-June 15-22).....	24
CHARLOTTETOWN-BELVEDERE (Pride Month)	25
ORAL QUESTIONS	25
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Collaboration within political process)	26
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (End of heckling in Legislature).....	26
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Requirement of ministers to answering of questions)	27
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Timeframe for answering of questions)	27
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Timeline for ombudsperson office).....	28
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Long-term vision of government)	29
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Addressing climate change).....	29
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Tasks of minister responsible for climate change).....	30
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Report on global warming).....	30
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Current climate strategy actions)	31
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Ensuring a stable climate)	31
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT (Impacts of climate change)	31
CHARLOTTETOWN-WINSLOE (Response to historic report on Indigenous women)	32
CORNWALL-MEADOWBANK (Reduction of small business tax)	33
CORNWALL-MEADOWBANK (Election promises).....	34
CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK (Goals of district advisory councils).....	35
CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK (Representation of teachers on DAC)	35

CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK (Future of school governance).....	35
MONTAGUE-KILMUIR (Open access to adoption records)	36
MONTAGUE-KILMUIR (Amendment to Adoption Act)	36
MONTAGUE-KILMUIR (Include a veto option in Adoption Act).....	36
SUMMERSIDE-SOUTH DRIVE (New policy on contracting legal services).....	37
SUMMERSIDE-SOUTH DRIVE (Providing of legal advice to government)	37
 STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS	 38
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING (Congratulations to Graduates)	38
PREMIER (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – Final Report).....	40
FINANCE (Public Service Week)	41
 TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....	 42
 REPORTS BY COMMITTEES (Special Committee on Committees)	 43
 INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS.....	 44
BILL 2 – Government Reorganization Act	44
BILL 5 – An Act to Amend the Regulated Health Professions Act.....	45
 GOVERNMENT MOTIONS	 45
RESPONSE TO THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE	45
MONTAGUE-KILMUIR	45
MORELL-DONAGH	47
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	51
CHARLOTTETOWN-WINSLOE	56
SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT	58
 ORDERS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT	 60
PRIVATE MEMBERS BILLS	60
BILL 100 – An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act	60
BILL 101 – Government Advertising Standards Act	61
BILL 102 – An Act to Amend the Climate Leadership Act.....	61
BILL 104 – An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act.....	61
 MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT	 62
MOTION 13 – Ending the Practice of Heckling.....	62
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	62
CHARLOTTETOWN-BELVEDERE	64
STATUS OF WOMEN	65
PREMIER	66
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	67
MOTION 14 – Improving the Sexual Health Curriculum	67
CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK	68
CHARLOTTETOWN-BELVEDERE	70
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING	71
HEALTH AND WELLNESS	73
CHARLOTTETOWN-WINSLOE	74
MERMAID-STRATFORD	74
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION	74
CHARLOTTETOWN-VICTORIA PARK	75
MOTION 12 – Pets in Public Housing.....	76
CHARLOTTETOWN-BELVEDERE	76

SUMMERSIDE-WILMOT	78
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING	78
MOTION 1 – Referral of Childhood vaccination to appropriate Standing Committee	79
CHARLOTTETOWN-WEST ROYALTY	79
O’LEARY-INVERNESS	81
ORDERS OF THE DAY (GOVERNMENT).....	83
MOTION 16 – Honouring the 75th Anniversary of D-Day and the Normandy Landings.....	83
MONTAGUE-KILMUIR.....	83
MORELL-DONAGH	84
FISHERIES AND COMMUNITIES	86
ADJOURNED.....	87

The Legislature sat at 2:00 p.m.

Matters of Privilege and Recognition of
Guests

Speaker: I will call upon the hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It certainly is a great honour to be up here today to welcome everybody to the new session of this Legislative Assembly.

I want to welcome all the Legislative staff, the security staff, our Pages, the members of the media who are here, and also the members who have joined us in the public gallery. It's very important that you're here.

I want to say a special shout-out to all of the new MLAs, including me, that are here. It is exciting for us to be here.

It is an exciting day for us all, but it's also a very monumental day, because it is the first time in the history of our province where three parties have to work together to conduct business on a day-to-day basis, and there are more people on that side of the House than there are on this side of the House. So, it's important that we recognize that.

I would also like to take the time to say hi to the electors of District 15 Hunter River-Brackley, who were very gracious to put me here as their member and I'm very appreciative of that. I want to say hi to all Islanders, particularly the farmers and fishers who are working so diligently these days driving the economy of Prince Edward Island.

I want to call upon all members of this Legislature to be gracious, to be courteous, and to remember that we're doing the business of the people of Prince Edward Island in this House and may we always be mindful of that.

I do look forward to the debate going forward.

Final to that, Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome you to this chair. It's a great

privilege to see you, my longtime friend, sitting in that chair.

So, thank you very much.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

I would also like to welcome everybody back to the Legislature, those who are returning and the new members, and of course, everybody present here in the gallery.

There is something very special about a place like our provincial Legislature, steeped as it is in almost two centuries of tradition, that a place like that is continually renewing itself. The joining of the very old with the brand new reminds us all that change, even in a place like this – a venerable institution like our provincial Legislature – is a constant.

I want to welcome you, Mr. Speaker, our new Speaker. To the clerks, the rest of the Legislative staff, the Pages, of course, and again, I want to welcome back colleagues from previous sessions, also, particularly to the new members of this Legislature. Of course, most of those new members sit alongside me in this corner of the House and that's one of the many new features of this new session of this new General Assembly, the 66th of our esteemed province.

Not only are the members of the official opposition, many of them new, but this is the first time not only in this province's history but in the history of this country, in the history of Canada, that the official opposition is comprised of Green Party members. So I want to welcome all of my colleagues in this corner of the House with a special welcome.

I'd like to welcome everybody in the gallery today.

I really look forward to what I believe will be a really critical, pivotal session in this Legislature as many profound events, climatic, social and economic hurdle relentlessly towards our little province here with unrelenting speed and force.

Just last night in Ottawa, in our national Parliament, they passed a motion declaring a climate emergency. As the province that is most susceptible, most vulnerable to sea level rise, of course and increased storms, it's my deepest hope that this Parliament will approach that particular issue with a vigour and the immediacy that it so clearly deserves.

I hope, above all, that we do all of our work here in this Legislature with the respect and the civility, which were the hallmarks of the recent campaign that we all came through and which, I believe, all Islander's hope will become the constant and the steadfast tone in this House.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It certainly is a great pleasure for me to rise to the floor of the House today, to first of all welcome all visitors into the Gallery. I see Lorne Yeo over there who is a very frequent visitor, good to have you back on the first day with Question Period, Lorne.

I, too, would like to welcome all back to this Assembly today, all the staff, all the security staff, all the Pages and a warm welcome to you, Mr. Speaker, taking your chair for the first time, or the third time, I guess, in as many days. It's great to have everybody back and I know we rely heavy on the resources of all of you on a daily basis, so thank you for helping us out and guiding us when we need that helping hand.

Also, I'd like to welcome as well all new members who are on the floor of the Legislature for the first time, for the first Question Period today. I know it's an interesting time, I'm sure there's butterflies in the bellies but that will go away over time and as one of the, I guess, the veteran members of the House, we'd like to welcome you and make you feel as comfortable as you can.

Also, I do want to wish all the best to our fisher's and farmer's who are out working in the seas and working on their land to – in

some cases, a bit of a slow start in our agriculture side, but wishing them all well in getting their crops in and that everything goes well for them. As well to all Islanders that may be viewing in from home today. We have a lot of Islander's who are very passionate about this Legislature and watch in on a regular basis.

But I also need to mention in reference, a very great group of people, my Tim Horton's advisors out on St. Peter's Road who have – now that they know my new role that I'm in, offer me lots of suggestions how I can handle myself as third party leader on the floor of the Legislature, so thank you to all of those.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries and Communities.

Mr. Fox: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Welcome everybody in the gallery here today. Shout out to Tom Sherry, who I just noticed walking in from District 19 and I would like to also say hello to Dakota Williams, (Indistinct) Williams our Page here today who is here from Kinkora High School. I would like to thank very much the residents and voters in District 19 for putting me back in this chair, I really appreciate that and I don't take that job very lightly. Welcome to all our new members in the House, I wish you all well and I know we will work together and that will continue into the future.

I want to give a shout out to the family and the members of the Canadian Armed Forces and the members of the Artillery Family for the loss of Bombardier Patrick Labrie, who succumbed to an accident in the last 24 hours while serving in Bulgaria with our Armed Forces. This story strikes home for me because I was a member of the Artillery Member years ago and hold their thoughts with me.

Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Myers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, want to welcome everybody back here today. I am enjoying my new seat so far, I'm tucked right in beside you, Mr. Speaker, who I was first elected with in 2011 and I congratulate you on your new role and I'm looking forward to it.

I want to thank Mallory and Dean who helped me out getting back here for a third time and they chaired my campaign and to all those who helped me this time. We had a really big team, a lot of new people, a lot of really young faces and it was great to see the young people we were able to draw into being interested in what we were doing for this election.

I want to say hi to my mom who watches everyday as usual, I'm sure she's watching along at home and I want to thank all the staff at TIE who have welcomed me in here in the last month. Amazing staff, doing great work over there and I look forward to working with them in the coming months.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Education, and Lifelong Learning and Culture, Environment, Water and Climate Change.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It really is truly a pleasure to rise here at the 66th session and to welcome all of my colleagues here. Looking forward to a great session, welcome to everyone in the gallery and of course, welcome to everyone who's watching from District 18 Rustico-Emerald. Thank you so much for allowing me the privilege of serving you again.

I wanted to say a special thank you to my campaign chairs, Tara MacLellan, Ryan Williams and Maverick Cider.

I wanted to recognize Paul Blacquiere who won Bus Driver of the Year this year for PEI. He happens to drive the school bus that my children ride on.

It's a good reminder to everyone to watch for school busses when you're out on the roads, especially in those hours in the mornings and afternoons – that bus was almost hit twice last week.

I want to think Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy is going to take immediate action to get speed radar signs up and also, move the speed limit signs so that we can make sure that our roads are safe for our children.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture.

Ms. MacKay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good afternoon everyone in the gallery and all my colleagues. I'm certainly looking forward to working with everyone. I think we're in great times right now with a minority government.

I do feel it's going to be new to all of us but I am looking forward to seeing some good things happen out of it.

I want to give a big shout-out to my district. My district has been tremendous towards me to give me the privilege to be back here again and represent them. I'm very humbled and honoured.

You're only as good as your team and the team I had around me – I couldn't ask for more. They worked hard for me each day, in and out to get me here. I certainly appreciate all the work they have done.

Also, being in this new role as a minister it's been pretty overwhelming, but I do want to take the time to thank the staff. The staff has been absolutely tremendous and through my department – very knowledgeable and they've been a big help to me, so thank you for everything.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Land, Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm so proud to be here today for the 66th Assembly of the Legislature, it's a great honour. I want to welcome everyone, the old and new – I'm really new at this and I'm looking forward to it.

I want to thank the people of District 8 for their confidence in me.

I want to say hi to the farmers who are out there putting their crops in and making hay right now and also to my family and friends who are watching.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Social Development and Housing.

Mr. Hudson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is, it's certainly a great pleasure, honour and privilege to be able to rise here today. I want to thank the great people in District 26 Alberton-Bloomfield for having put their trust in me to be their representative in this great institution that we have.

I also want to thank the Premier for the honour to serve at the Cabinet table.

Also, it has, it's been a tremendous learning experience, a fairly steep curve, I would have to say, but the staff that I have in Social Development and Housing have been a tremendous asset and I just wanted to give a shout-out to them.

I also want to state that I look forward to working with all the members of the Legislature, it is unique times, if you like, in that, yes, we do have a minority government but I think that we do always have to remember the reason that we are here – and that reason is for the great people of Prince Edward Island.

I'd also like to recognize the Pages for the work that they do here. Although she is not here today, I'd like to mention Emily Maxfield from West Prince. It's great to have a Page from the western part of the Island in addition to the other Pages – and recognize your grandparents who are next-door neighbours to me, great neighbours.

Finally, I would just like to give a shout-out as well to our farmers and fishers, they drive the economy. Certainly in the western part of the province anyway, the majority of the crop is in and as my dad would say: it's a great hay day out there today.

With that, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Sherbrook.

Ms. Altass: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a pleasure and an honour to rise in the House today and to have the opportunity to work with my colleagues here in the Legislature.

I want to say hello to the people of Prince Edward Island and my deepest thanks to the people of District 23 Tyne Valley-Sherbrook for entrusting me with this responsibility.

I'd also like to welcome Thelma Phillips who is here today from District 23 as a representative of the Stewart Memorial Hospital Foundation. Thank you for coming today and I hope you enjoy the proceedings.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance and Status of Women.

Ms. Compton: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to welcome everyone here today in the gallery and watching at home; all of my colleagues, both new and I'll say, experienced.

It's a privilege to be here today and it's definitely an historic sitting of the Legislature.

I'd like to give a big shoutout to District 4; all of my team that helped me get here again, especially Bethany McCarthy, who was my campaign chair, and she's out fishing on the water. She might be in by now, but she has her own fleet and works very hard in our community and really, all the farmers and fishers and tourism operators who are all very busy this time of year.

I want to thank, also, my staff who are really working hard to ensure that we have a budget in place, and one that all Islanders will appreciate. Again, thanks to all the staff who really are making me feel welcome. I look forward to the session.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness.

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

I, too, want to welcome some of those to the gallery, as well as to thank the people of O'Leary-Inverness for electing me to, actually, my fourth term here. This is my fourth opportunity to partake in welcoming of a new Speaker, so I welcome you, Mr. Speaker.

I was told earlier on, there only actually has been about 136 people who have actually been elected to this Legislature over history for their fourth term, so I take that as some special acknowledgement and I really want to thank the Rob 25 team in O'Leary-Inverness for pulling that off for me.

I also want to acknowledge a couple of people that are in the gallery and I know the hon. Member from Member from Tyne Valley-Sherbrooke identified that she was from District 23, but it's actually Thelma Phillips and I believe she's actually from the riding of Alberton-Bloomfield.

So anyway, Thelma is a great community person and she was a former constituent under the old riding boundaries of O'Leary-Inverness. Thelma is a really good advocate for her community. She participates and volunteers in lots of different events and I do acknowledge the work that she does on the Lot 11 watershed, as well as what she does with the Stewart Memorial Manor ladies auxiliary. She does great work with that and I thank her for that.

Her mother is actually a customer of mine in Henderson's you-pick blueberries. She's in her 90s, I'm hoping she'll be back in the field again this year and I hope there's lots of blueberries for her to pick there. The one thing about her mother, Vivian she will, after the season is all over, she'll arrive at my doorstep with a nice bunch of hot blueberry muffins for providing the blueberries for her, so that's great.

I also want to acknowledge Cynthia King, who is a former MLA in the Legislature here and we shared an office in the Government Members Office at one time and I wish her all the best, too.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Deagle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's a pleasure to rise today – my first time in the Legislature.

I'd like to welcome everyone to the gallery, as well as fellow members, new members and as the finance minister said, experienced members.

I'm looking forward to a productive session and I think it's, like many have said, it's a unique situation and I'm looking forward to getting down to the business of the Legislature.

I'd like to thank my campaign team in District 3 who put a huge effort behind me, and they believed in me – they worked every day; as well as the support of my family.

I'd also like to thank the fellow candidates that ran against me: Daphne Griffin and John Allen MacLean, and Billy Cann. It takes a lot of courage to put your name on the ballot, so congratulations to them as well.

I'm looking forward to the session.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Cornwall-Meadowbank.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and congratulations to you.

Also, a big thank you to the Legislative Assembly staff; I mean, this is all new to you as well and you've done a tremendous job.

Congratulations to the Pages. I know some of them are graduating this week, as Ryan and I will be attending the Bluefield graduation together.

District 16, the residents of Cornwall-Meadowbank have put their trust in me once again and I certainly appreciate that. My team – I can't say enough about it. They've rose to the occasion this time and in the last election.

Last night, I had a very interesting dinner that was somewhat of an interest in relevance to politics, and it was a meeting with a Doctor Ian MacDonald who is from Washington, DC, formerly from Florida. He's the director of the White House drug abuse policy. He's published numerous articles and he assisted the general surgeon and acting assistant. That doesn't sound like much, but he was the right hand to Ronald Reagan when he was President.

He was in the White House every morning for briefings with Colin Powell and it was a very interesting meeting. If he's watching today, I welcome him to Prince Edward Island and I hope he keeps coming back.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Mermaid-Stratford.

Ms. Beaton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am honoured to rise today. I'd like to welcome a few people in the gallery, a couple of my constituents, Stephanie Farrar and Cynthia King for joining today.

I'd also like to welcome my dad who was a huge supporter for me over the last number of months; many of us all know him from being very active in walking the streets with me. I just wanted to welcome him here today and I want to thank my residents of Mermaid-Stratford for giving me the honour to be here today

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As always, it's an honour to rise in the Legislature and welcome everyone here today. I'd certainly like to welcome everyone to the gallery. I'd like to welcome you and congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your role.

You said last fall that you'd be over on that side this time when we got here – you almost made it over there, you're in the

middle of the room. Congratulations once again.

Also, to all the staff, the new Premier, to all new MLA's and seasoned MLA's. As I said, it's certainly a pleasure to be here and I want to thank everyone in Evangeline-Miscouche for putting their trust in me for a fourth term in this Legislature, it's an honour to be here.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: I would just like to stand too – I got tripped halfway over, I didn't make it, didn't recover yet.

I'd just like to welcome everyone in the gallery also. There's one special guest in the gallery I'd like to welcome and that is my daughter Natasha. Natasha LaVie is with us today and she wants to see actually how hard I do work.

I'd like to welcome you Natasha and Natasha's taking me out to supper this evening for Father's Day.

Thank you.

I'd like to call on the hon. Premier.

Resolutions of Sympathy

Premier King: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to read a resolution of sympathy for the late Peter Doucette and I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition the following resolution of sympathy.

WHEREAS Mr. Peter Doucette, a former member of the Legislative Assembly for Third Kings passed away on January 4th, 2019;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House recognize the contributions made by the late member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Peter Doucette.

I'd just like to say that when I began my career in the media, Peter Doucette was the elected member for what was then, the third district of Kings in the Montague area. He was elected twice, he was an outgoing individual, he was a lot of fun, he was a hard worker, he was a community minded individual.

As a member of the media, he always returned the call that you made to him, which I always really respected and learned a lot from.

He had that really outgoing spirit that is certainly missed. On a personal note, he worked with my late father at the Georgetown shipyard. He was very very instrumental in starting the very successful Artisans on Main project that started in Montague and now it's expanding throughout the Three Rivers area.

He was the life partner and soul mate of one of my high school mates Jackie Bourgeois and I certainly wanted to extend my sympathies to the extended family of Peter Doucette and to thank him very much for his wonderful service to the people of Prince Edward Island.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: I have a further resolution sympathy for the late George McMahon and I move, seconded by the hon. Leader of the Opposition to read the following resolution of sympathy.

WHEREAS the hon. George McMahon, a former member of the Legislative Assembly for Fifth Prince and a Justice of the Supreme Court of Prince Edward Island passed away on January 25th, 2019;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House recognize the contributions made by the late member of this Legislative Assembly the hon. George McMahon.

Just to add my voice again, a former minister of highways was George, really fun guy to be around. When I worked with former premier Binns, one of my fun jobs I got to do around Christmastime was to bring a lot of these former members together and I used to have a lot of laughs and had a lot of enjoyment from individuals like the now late George McMahon and the late Prowse Chappell and so many others.

He was a wonderful individual, another community-minded individual, and I am really proud and honoured to stand here to pay tribute to his contributions to the Legislature of Prince Edward Island.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Mr. Speaker, with unanimous consent of the House, that the motion of condolence for Josh and Oliver Underhay be now read.

Clerk: The hon. Leader of the Opposition moves, seconded by the hon. Premier and also by the Leader of the Third Party, the following motion:

WHEREAS Islanders were shocked and deeply saddened by the loss of Josh and Oliver Underhay;

AND WHEREAS Josh was a teacher, musician, activist, and politician who touched the lives of everyone who knew him, with his kindness, humour and boundless energy;

AND WHEREAS Oliver was taken at such a young age, he will leave an emptiness that can never be filled for his family, friends and loved ones;

AND WHEREAS their family, their school communities, and all who knew them need the support of all Islanders to make it through this difficult time;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly honour and remember Josh and Oliver Underhay and those that continue to mourn during this time of tragedy.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge Government to work with community groups in the development of this new curriculum.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

With your indulgence, I would like to recognize some special guests who are with us in the gallery today.

Josh's wife, Karri Shea, is here. Josh's son Linden, Josh's mother Sally, and Josh's brother, Mitchell, are all with us this afternoon.

Josh was the sort of person that all people should strive to be. That was one particularly clear and succinct note from so many beautiful messages that were written in memory of Josh Underhay.

Josh was a unique character, larger than life: bigger than I knew, and partly due to his sparkling personality, and partly because of the unspeakable tragic circumstances of his death, the entire Island went into mourning after Josh and his son Oliver died on Good Friday, a few days prior to the recent election.

Some lights shine brighter than others. Josh's was a brilliantly bright beacon illuminating a road less travelled; a path of hope and kindness for a better future. I keep a mounted copy of this statement made by Josh on my desk:

If I am elected, I will dedicate myself to serving Islanders. I will listen. I will follow the evidence, and balance the freedom of the individual with the need to work as a community, and take care of each other. I will work for a diverse and accepting society that respects the dignity of the person and the rights of everybody.

It's quite literally impossible to capture the full breadth and depth of the spirit of Josh in words; he was a uniquely kind and principled and gentle and radiant and intelligent and so full of life. Indeed, he was so full of life that he was the person furthest from death that I have ever known. That is one of the things that makes this absence so farfetched, so tender, so absolutely shocking.

Island artist Tara MacLean wrote this about Josh:

The thing about death is that it concentrates everyone on the vision and the heart of the individual who has left us. We go back through our notes, our letters, and messages to glean what it was our beloved was trying to tell us. Then their message to the world becomes fortified like never before. Josh's voice will now be clearer than ever. His

vision was of a better world, a world where we all care about the planet and each other – and not just care, but do something about the state of things. He was a man of action, of love, of music, of personal responsibility and of global awareness. And his loved ones, through their grieving, will carry this powerful message with a strength and conviction they did not know was possible.

Because death teaches us how to fully live. And to fully live we must salvage what is left of our ravaged planet. We must love one another fiercely. There is no compromise. There is no surrender. Josh may have died, but his hope remains. Josh may have died, but he hasn't left. He is just getting started, and now we are all of his instruments.

So, Ms. Speaker, let us all be an instrument that plays joyfully and that blends sympathetically with other voices. If we do that, we shall create an Island symphony that the rest of the world will listen to, and we will all dance together with joy towards a better tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: I have nothing more to add than my friend, the Leader of the Opposition just so eloquently stated. But on behalf of all Islanders, please accept our sympathies.

Thank you for the wonderful life of Josh and Oliver.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And it is indeed a privilege to stand in support of this motion and to take a moment to make a few brief comments on the passing of Josh and his young son, Oliver.

We, all on the floor of this Legislature, know that Josh was a very, very passionate person. He was very passionate about his family. He was very passionate about his career and his students. He was very passionate about biking, and he was also very passionate about his politics.

I had the privilege on several occasions of meeting with Josh when we opened up the bike trails in Bonshaw and Josh was there. When we were talking about the new trail across the Hillsborough Bridge and Josh was at that.

But the time that I enjoyed most being with Josh was when he invited me into his class to speak to his students. Not only me, but all parties were invited by Josh into talk to his students and you could see firsthand the respect and the love that his students had for Josh as being their teacher.

This tragic accident that took both Josh and his son is absolutely heartbreaking. I send my deepest condolences to the family. As the Leader of the Opposition said, he was a man of action and there's no question about that. He certainly was. He was an all around good person and he was accepted by everyone in his community.

Josh's memory, and Oliver's, memory will live on forever.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Anyone else want to speak to the motion?

Shall it carry? Carried.

Statements by Members

Speaker: The hon. Member from Tyne Valley-Sherbrook.

Stewart Memorial Hospital Foundation

Ms. Altass: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm rising today to highlight the incredible work of the volunteers of the Stewart Memorial Hospital Foundation.

The strength and resiliency of the broader Tyne Valley community comprised of 22 surrounding communities is exemplified by the longstanding Stewart Memorial Hospital Foundation. The history of the foundation goes back to 1949 when community members came together to raise funds to open the Stewart Memorial Hospital.

Shifting from a board to a foundation in 1995, the foundation raised funds to

purchase equipment for the hospital and continued in this role while the building converted to a manor in 2013. The opening of the new manor in Tyne Valley has provided an opportunity to repurpose the Stewart Memorial Hospital building.

When the new manor was announced the foundation got to work commissioning a building audit, conducting a needs assessment in collaboration with the Dalhousie School of Nursing, and creating a well articulated business plan to transition the original space into a community care facility. The economic impacts of the local community would be significant, creating at least 14 full-time equivalent jobs, as well as short-term opportunities during the renovation period.

This facility would fill a gap in service for seniors in the area who must leave their communities and family support systems to receive level-one-to-three support. The foundation is also open to innovative solutions, such as a multi-purpose facility that could meet other care needs.

The foundation has received financial contributions from donors, as well as the provincial government to develop this plan, making this a shining example of what community can accomplish when empowered to do so.

We have heard from all sides of this House as well as in the throne speech, that we must draw on community-based groups and their leaderships in order to address the complex challenges that we face today, in building strong vibrant communities.

I look forward to supporting next steps for this community-based initiative.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Mermaid-Stratford.

Bike Week-June 15-22

Ms. Beaton: It is a pleasure to rise to recognize that the City of Charlottetown has partnered with several organizations to declare this week, June 15-22, Bike Week. I would like to recognize this great initiative to encourage active transportation. Friday June 21st is bike to work and school day and it is being held in honour of Josh and Oliver

Underhay and Josh's advocacy for all things cycling.

Cycling to school is a passion for many elementary aged children in Stratford. So much so, that the amazing Home and School Association of Stratford Elementary is working hard to provide three additional bike racks needed to accommodate all those bikes that are parked there every day. There is a major shift in cycling once Stratford youth reach intermediate and high school ages. Not because the love of cycling is gone away, it is because it is not safe for the Stratford residents to cycle across the Hillsborough Bridge, which is required as these schools are located in Charlottetown.

Josh's journey as a committed advocate for safe, active transportation began the first day he biked across the Hillsborough Bridge with Oliver. Although many Stratford residents would love to participate, they will not ride their bikes to work or school on Friday, because even the most experienced cyclers refer to a bike ride across the Hillsborough Bridge as (Indistinct) dangerous and taking their lives into their own hands.

The previous government committed that the Hillsborough Bridge will be getting a safe, dedicated corridor for pedestrians and cyclists. I implore this government, to honour that commitment.

Speaker: The member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Pride Month

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

June is Pride Month and we celebrate Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intro-sex and Asexual people around the world. It is the month when we recognize the strides made by the LGBTQ community to achieve equal rights and to remember those who paved the way.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York that saw the beginning of the modern day, LGBTQ rights movement. Now more than ever, it is important to remember, that what is today a celebration, with parades and rainbow flags on almost every corner, started with

rebellion, protests and organized resistance against injustice and inequality.

Here on Prince Edward Island we have remarkable organizations doing great and important work in community education and support. Including, Peers Alliance, PFLag, Pride P.E.I. and the P.E.I. Transgender Network. These organizations provide a wide range of outreach, health and education services, mentoring, navigation and advocacy, and they do so with limited resources, but with huge hearts. Despite the great strides that have been made for acceptance and inclusion, the LGBTQ community, still face many persistent barriers, particularly in inclusionary health care services.

There is still a lot of progress to be made in PEI, in Canada and beyond. The fight for equality, inclusion and respect continues, but I was reminded of the impact of progress achieved as I saw the pictures of high school proms across the province, with so many same sex couples, proudly posing with friends and family. Society can change, and for the better, when it includes everyone with joy.

Pride celebrations on Prince Edward Island, include the Pride Festival from July 20th-31st, with the now annual Pride Parade on July 27th. I look forward to seeing friends and colleagues there again this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Responses to Questions Taken as Notice

Questions by Members

Speaker: Now for our first question, I'll ask for the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

Since our recent election, the Premier and indeed many members of this Legislature from all sides, myself included, have talked a great deal about the desire to instill a more cooperative and respectful politics in this House and to make this Legislature and government work for all Islanders.

The Premier's election platform stated; an intent to, and I quote: "Foster a spirit of collaboration, inclusiveness, and respect

within the political process and specifically here within the Legislative Assembly.”

Collaboration within political process

Question to the Premier: How do you envision accomplishing these goals?

Premier King: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much to the Leader of the Opposition for the first question. It’s a very important question and it’s one that, I believe, he and I and members of the other party have actually been delivering on.

I think where I see collaboration and cooperation is what we have been demonstrating so far since we have actually been put in this position and that is to talk with individuals from all parties to make sure the issues of concerns to all of Prince Edward Island are shared and reflected in the business of the people of Prince Edward Island and that is what we do here. This, at the end of the day, is the business of the people of Prince Edward Island.

I think that to-date the Speech From the Throne that was delivered on Friday was an impressive document, and it was impressive, mainly because for the first time in the history of this province all three parties had input and collaboration into the creation and delivery of that document. I hope that begins the process of how we work together.

I believe the world is our oyster when it comes to working together, and I really look forward to listening, more importantly, to hearing others and to make sure what we’re putting forward is in the best interest of Prince Edward Islanders.

Thank you very much.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

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

The Premier, of course, may be new to this House so it may be a little shocking for him to learn that it’s not always been so lovey-dovey in here, Mr. Premier.

One of the less endearing practices of this House and one that is distinctly not respectful is that of heckling other members while they speak during debate and particularly during Question Period.

Golden sound of silence, Mr. Speaker.

End of heckling in Legislature

Will the Premier join me in calling for an end to the practice of heckling in this Legislature?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much for the question. This is an issue that the, now Leader of the Opposition and my friend and former dentist have talked about many times over the past number of years.

Absolutely, I think it’s very important that the business of the people of Prince Edward Island is reflected in what the quality of the individuals of the province of Prince Edward Island want to see within this government.

I have absolutely, full intention to support the motion being put forward and we have talked about it in our own caucus every time that we have met. We will be courteous, we will be honest, we will be fair, and we will bring a different decorum to this Legislature.

Yes, I have absolutely full intention of making sure that we remove heckling from this Legislature.

Let’s show the people of Prince Edward Island the very best of this because we are serving the very best and that is the people of Prince Edward Island.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition: Of course, I’m absolutely delighted to hear that from the Premier and not surprised by his personal commitment to respectful debate because that’s how we conducted the election campaign. But I’m anxious to see how the rest of government caucus also behaves in this House.

Question to the Premier: Has your caucus agreed to follow your lead to end the practice of heckling in this Legislature?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

That's an important question because, yes, I am the Premier, I am the leader of this party, but this party is made up of individuals from all across Prince Edward Island and I am not committing to the style of leadership that makes my way the only way.

We have discussed this in our caucus; we have discussed this at length. The individuals who are in this caucus believe, as we do – all of the members of this House – that this House is the House of the people, and it requires decorum and it requires us to act professionally. It requires us to act personally in a way that is reflective of the people of Prince Edward Island.

So, yes, I have no doubt that everyone in this caucus will be respectful of debate in this House and will absolutely adhere to the highest standards that we put forward.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

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

Requirement of ministers to answering of questions

The Premier's election platform made a commitment to and I quote: "Require ministers to answer questions promptly, directly, and succinctly during Oral Question Period, and if they can't answer, they must provide answers within a reasonable time."

A question to the Premier: Have you directly communicated this important priority to all of your ministers?

Speaker: Hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It's almost as if the Leader of the Opposition was sitting in the actual caucus, because it is

something that we do talk about quite frequently.

Part of the development of that piece of document – that platform that the leader is reading from was actually generated by the people of Prince Edward Island; much like the opposition party's document was as well.

Those words mean a lot to us and yes we are actually very, very serious about that. We believe Question Period is a serious place to be. The questions that are being asked by the members of the opposition and members of the government caucus are important questions and they deserve important answers.

As you have articulated in your lead up to the question, many of us are very new in our portfolios. Some of the answers to the questions you may ask we may not have right now, but we have committed to making sure that we get back with the answers if not today, certainly by the beginning of day tomorrow to make sure those questions are answered fully and we can have the spirited debate that Islanders are expecting us to have in this Legislature.

Thank you.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

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

Well so far, so good.

A follow-up to the Premier on that; the reference in that, the last section of that platform commitment was that responses will be taken back in a reasonable time.

I think you may have sort of answered this in your previous answer, but I'd like to ask you again.

Timeframe for answering of questions

When we make a request of ministers in Oral Question Period, and we are instructed that they will get back to us in a reasonable time, are we talking about hours or days or weeks or what timeframe are we looking at?

Speaker: Hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, I did allude to the first answer to the question.

I think that with the technology that we have, one of the great perks that you have in government as a minister is that you have ministerial staff that actually watches the Legislature and they can know immediately if and when something is needed.

So it would be our intention if it's at all possible to make sure that gets back immediately. By that, I mean within the session of the hourly session of when it's asked, but if it's a little bit more of a complicated answer, I would suggest that certainly by the beginning of Question Period tomorrow.

It would be the intention of this government, and we hope to be held to the standard, that you don't have to ask the question twice to get the answer that you need. So that would be the standard that we're trying to set forward. I know all of our ministers are trying to work hard to meet that standard.

So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

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

The Premier's platform promised to create a provincial ombudsperson office. The last PC government in which the Premier – should we forget, was a political staffer, voted down an NDP bill to create just such an office of the provincial ombudsperson.

I'd be much reassured if the Premier's commitment in the platform, if he could provide some details as to what his plan is.

Timeline for ombudsperson office

A question to the Premier: What is your timeline for creating the provincial ombuds office?

Speaker: Hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

A great asset to somebody in the political life is to have a background that you can look back on to leverage. A great weakness of that is people get to look back and say; you didn't do this or you should have done that.

I was a political staffer for the former premier, Pat Binns, who was a mentor of mine and is a big fan of mine and I, of his. I think a lot has changed since that documentation would have been tabled here in the Legislature. In fact, it would have been tabled next door. Here we are in the Coles Building in this temporary Chamber.

I think it's important for the people of Prince Edward Island that an office of an ombudsperson gets put in place. One of the things I hope our standing committees can provide a lot of guidance on as we move forward, is to develop that position, to create the policies around how such a position would be implemented.

I think it's very, very important and I would hope that that committee can get to work as quickly as possible.

Absolutely, it's in our platform. It's something that we stand by. It's something that we want to work toward, but I believe it's something we need all members of this Legislature to make sure we get right so that the people of Prince Edward Island can be proud of it.

So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

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

Unfortunately, I did not hear a particular specific timeframe there. I will be looking for that from you, Premier.

After listening to last week's throne speech, I find myself in agreement in much of the vision that the Premier outlined in the government's mandate.

In our platform, we included 10-year goals and also a 25-year vision of this province –

in all areas from housing to healthcare, from poverty to education, from economic development to agriculture.

Critically, we also had some very detailed policies and every one of those areas and all others that would have been implemented in the first mandate, in order to create the foundation that you need in order to reach that vision.

Long-term vision of government

Question to the Premier: In the absence of any sort of any immediate plan in the throne speech, how do you expect to make your long term vision a reality?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

I think it speaks to the collaborative nature of this Legislature and how we've conducted ourselves here that the opposition party's platform when it was released, received a lot of the same views that the throne speech did and that it lacks specifics, it was high on vision et cetera.

I think what has to happen here is that we all have to work together. I have a vision for what Prince Edward Island – what I would like it to be, so does every other member of this Legislature. What do we have to do to work together to build that future? I believe that is exactly why we are here.

It's the soon-to-be 26 members of this House that represent the 140 some thousand Islanders that also need to have a say in that.

That is why our throne speech is broad in vision, it's because the vision has to be not just ours, but that which reflects all of Prince Edward Island and I want the input of the opposition parties in our vision. I want to know what you think is the best solution going forward because, as I have said and you've heard me say it a million times, I don't own all the good ideas. I don't care about getting all the credit. I want to make sure we put forward good legislation for the people of Prince Edward Island.

So the timelines, we have to get to work now. We have absolutely no idea how long this Legislature will actually sit, let's get to work now, let's roll up our sleeves, find the solutions to these problems, build on the vision that we've articulated in the Speech From the Throne.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There is a lot of language in the throne speech in addressing climate change, which I very much appreciate, but the targets and timelines are absent.

Addressing climate change

Question to the Premier: Could you be specific on what you mean by addressing climate change?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much for the question.

For specifics, what I believe is Prince Edward Island knows better than most the impacts of a changing climate. I think we live it every day; therefore we have to be at the cutting edge of how we deal with that change in climate.

In terms of specifics, we talk about reaching the carbon neutral society, and we've talked about reaching a carbon neutral society – doing it in conjunction with Islanders, with solutions that include incentives for Islanders to continue some of the great work that they have done.

That's what we have been talking about when it comes to climate change but yes, the opposition party has also been very adamant about how we go about that. I'm looking forward to their input on how we develop policies to make sure address climate change in a meaningful way for all of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Since it is the most pressing issue of our time, I was pleased to see climate change explicitly named within a portfolio. I really hope we can look forward to seeing that matched with substantive action.

Tasks of minister responsible for climate change

Question to the Premier: Could you define the outcomes your minister responsible for climate change is tasked with working towards?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

It is important that you do point out that for the very first time in the history of this province; there is a department of climate change, so that shows you how seriously that we are taking this issue because it is the issue that Islanders want us to be taking seriously.

The outline and goals I have for the minister in that department are to actually create policies and plans that are concrete in nature that can help us reach the goals to reduce our greenhouse gases. There are targets out there that we have to meet. We are doing a good job in many regards to meet those, but we also have much more work to do.

I'll continue to say, I want to be collaborative in that approach. The opposition party has been very, very strong in this particular area and we look forward for them to be providing guidance to the government in this minority situation to make sure we are addressing these challenges to the point we need.

The minister's phone is always there. His door is always open. He's a very big collaborator; he's very bullish on how he wants to go about this with climate change. I encourage all members of this House to make sure they follow along with his lead. Let's develop something we can all be proud of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Despite the importance of this subject, climate change isn't always well understood by policy makers.

Report on global warming

Question to the Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change: Have you had an opportunity to familiarize yourself with the IPCC's special report on global warming of 1.5 degrees?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for that question.

The member across from Member from Summerside-Wilmot and I, indeed, got to meet – and this is one of the nice things about a collaborative environment. She had pointed out to me that the IPCC document is one of the definitive reports on climate change in the world. Of course that's the first thing I did, was make sure that I was up on that document.

Our commitment is to, based on the existing legislation that was brought in by the former administration, is 1.4 megatons of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030 for the Island.

As the member across pointed out to me, in the IPCC report, in fact it's 1.2 megatons that would be required in order to meet the goals that they set out.

It's something we need to discuss and debate.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will be tabling a summary of that report later today.

Current climate strategy actions

Question to the Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change: Do you have confidence that the actions prescribed in our current climate strategy are enough to guarantee climate stability into the foreseeable future?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That's a really tough one, to guarantee that sort of thing into the future.

I think that the climate change action plan we have is a really good start.

I think although it's going to be really hard to guarantee anything when it comes to climate change, I think that what we need to do is work to change our climate change action plan, to adapt it and to listen to Islanders and listen to world experts and to make sure that we are taking appropriate actions so we reach a level carbon dioxide equivalent emissions that's going to allow us to continue to have a future for our children.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ensuring a stable climate

Question to the Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change: Could you tell this house what is required for us to ensure a stable climate?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This of course is a subject of great debate, I think that there's a fairly decent consensus by scientists around the world that would be born out of the IPCC report and I believe that it's actually born out in the amendment that the member may bring to the *Climate Leadership Act*. In Prince Edward Island if

we were to hit the 1.2 megatons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 2030, that would allow us to meet that target.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The science is clear that the dangers associated with more than 1.5 degrees of warming are substantial and we're likely already in excess of one degree of warming now.

We need to see a drop in greenhouse gas emissions of greenhouse gas emissions of 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, which is only 11 years from now – and we need to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 if we are to have any hope to holding warming to 1.5 degrees.

Impacts of climate change

Question to the Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change: Can you inform the House on the impacts we could expect to see if we exceed 1.5 degrees of warming?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen some excellent articles coming out recently by publications like the Toronto Star that have outlined some of the impacts we're already seeing on the Island. These are our costal erosions, these are raising sea levels, and the impacts are indeed dire. I don't have any numbers that are quantification off the top of my head.

But the other thing is, if we are going to mitigate climate change and truly reduce our levels to those numbers as laid out in the IPCC report, it is going to take tremendous sacrifice by Islanders. That's really the debate we must have and that's the point of view that all members of this house need to bring forward to make sure that we do the will of Islanders on this file.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question today is for the Premier.

Earlier this month the federally and provincially-mandated national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls was released.

The historic report entitled *Reclaiming Power and Place* deserves proper consideration from government.

Response to historic report on Indigenous women

Premier: Could you outline for this House how your government intends to respond to this report?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Thank you very much, Mr. Speak and thank you, to the hon. member, for the question.

I will be reading a House statement, a member statement, following Question Period here on this particular topic.

It is a very serious issue. It's one that I came to know quite well when I served for a number of years with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island. I have seen first-hand the impacts of this on Prince Edward Island and it's a report that I think has been well received across our departments, or across government, and it's our intention to dive into this and to work with all of the Indigenous groups across Prince Edward Island and beyond to make sure the key components of this report are taken seriously and implemented.

This is not something that our society can turn an eye to any longer. This is something we have to take head on and we're prepared to do that as government.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is important that federal and provincial governments respond in an effective and timely manner to this report and as an

appropriate response should also come from this House, which is why the third party has also tabled a motion on this subject asking for further debate at a standing committee in the future.

Premier: Have you had any other communications with your federal and other provincial counterparts on responding to this report?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm glad to hear the news that the third party will be introducing a motion for debate in this House. It's very important that we all have a chance to discuss and learn more about this issue when we move forward on it.

I have had some conversations with some of my counterparts across the country in terms of how we move forward. Our staff in our senior staff and Executive Council and beyond have been working with their counterparts across the country, but also across Prince Edward Island, to make sure that the key elements of this are actually taken seriously and put into action so that we do not ever – that we are never in the situation again where this is repeated.

So yes – I thank the hon. member very much for the question and I look forward to debating this further in the days ahead.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously, the Indigenous community has been widely anticipating this report, Premier.

Premier: Could you give more specifics on how your government has reached out to representatives of our Island Indigenous community for input in regards to your work on this report, please?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

As one of the portfolios that I retained as the Premier of Prince Edward Island is to be the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs in Prince Edward Island, we are setting up some meetings in the days ahead to speak with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy and other Indigenous groups in Prince Edward Island.

The contact that we have had right now since the report has been tabled has been through the senior staff – with a lot of the senior staff from those First Nations representatives, et cetera, going forward. So we're really at the point where we're diving into this and it certainly will be a topic of discussion when I attend the council of the federation meetings in Saskatoon in early July.

There's hard work in this report and it's work that has to be taken seriously, and it's very important that we do that here in Prince Edward Island and our government is very intending to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Cornwall-Meadowbank.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This question is to the Premier as well and since we're on the topic of platform commitments, building on the record of solid economic growth, as the Premier has stated in many of his speeches – and good fiscal management – the PC platform made 120 promises, one of which was to reduce the small business tax rate from 3.5 to 1%. At the Charlottetown and Area Chamber of Commerce annual meeting in May you said and I quote: We will probably phase that in a little bit more than maybe we would have if we had a majority situation. That's part of the give and take we all have to put forward. So, instead of seeing a full point in the budget this year, you'll probably see a half a point.

Reduction of small business tax

Premier: Could you inform the House who you had the give and take conversation with that prompted you to renege on this election promise within days of taking office?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question.

Yes, it is a commitment that we put forward and it's one that we will be phasing in. The give and take that I talk about is that other parties in this Legislature want input and to drive the agenda of things that are important to them, which we are trying to afford the opportunity for them to do so, and those initiatives obviously come at a cost.

If we were to put everything in that we wanted to put in and everything in that the opposition party wanted to put in, and everything in that the third party wanted to put in, we wouldn't be able to maintain a surplus situation.

We made a commitment to remain surplus and that's what we're trying to do. So there is a natural give and take that we have to implement here. All of us are doing that. I think we're doing it very well. We're not all going to be happy and we're not always going to agree, but it's important to the people of Prince Edward Island that we remain in a surplus situation.

If you've attended any of the events that I have been talking about and celebrating for government, I do tip my hat to the former minister across and the former government. We have inherited a healthy situation and it's our intent to be responsible and to stay in that situation.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Cornwall-Meadowbank, your first supplementary.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There was no communication or collaboration with our party in relevance to this, because if you need support to do what you promised in your election campaign, we'll give you that support today.

Why have you chosen to go with the tax reduction of a half point proposed by the official opposition as opposed to what you've promised in your platform?

Mr. Premier, you fully understand the economic growth of this province is based on the back of small and medium enterprise businesses? If they're successful you're going to be successful and if you're successful, that allows us reinvestment into health care, social programs and education.

Mr. Premier: Why have you chosen to go with the tax reduction of the official opposition?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not sure it's fair characterization to say that we've adopted the model of the official opposition. I think it's one of the discussions that we've had internally, as well as to try to accommodate some of the other additions that we have to make to the budget in this minority situation – that it's one of the things that, as government of a minority situation with only 12 members in this Legislature, I wouldn't feel very confident to bring everything I wanted to this budget and to ignore everything everybody else wanted and to have any type of hope that it would be supported here in the Legislature.

As I have said before, and as I have told the members of the CADC and the business community, we certainly appreciate the business community. We think it is the business community that creates jobs, not the Government of Prince Edward Island. We're moving that forward in a way that is responsible. We've moving the small business tax reduction ahead in a responsible manner.

Would I like to get there faster? Absolutely. Would the opposition like to get there faster? They likely would, but you have to make decisions when you get here and the decisions that you have to make are that you have to weigh business, the environment. You have to weigh all of these things, and I think nobody in this House would know better than the Member from Cornwall-Meadowbank as to the weight that goes into those decisions.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Cornwall-Meadowbank, your second supplementary.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, Mr. Premier, it's about \$7 million to reduce it to your election promise.

Election promises

There's 119 promises that you also have – is there any of those that you're also going to renege on in the next coming days, Mr. Premier?

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier King: Well, Mr. Speaker, if he's counted to 119, I would say there will be a lot of promises that are in that platform that we're not going to be able to do the first time – absolutely.

But you know what? You're document's full of them as well and you're not going to get them all done either, and the opposition's document isn't going to get all done this first time.

But, we're in a collaborative environment and we have to be in a collaborative environment. We can't do it all one way. That's not what Islanders voted for here. Islanders said – come into this Legislature. There are three parties, work together. That is exactly what we're doing.

Many things we will agree on, many things we won't – but isn't that the spirit of debate? Isn't that why we're here? We will present a budget after the Speech From the Throne has been concluded and we will have ample time here to sit down and debate that budget and there will be many, many questions as to why this is that and why this isn't here. That's what this Legislature is supposed to do.

But, I'll be very proud to table a budget in this province which will, once again, be in a surplus situation.

Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Bernard: The family of schools district advisory councils, known as DACs, are mandated to help shape an education system

that is focused on and meets the needs of individual learners. They advise the Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning on such matters.

The goals of district advisory councils are to identify education priorities within their own district, engage school community and discussions, foster collaboration amongst school councils, home and school associations and the community.

Goals of district advisory councils

Question to the Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning: Do you agree with the goals of the DAC?

Speaker: The hon. Member of Education and Lifelong Learning.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, It's a very good question. I think it's hard to disagree with the goals of the district advisory council and if that's the question, I would say yes, I do agree with the goals.

I think that there is a lot to be discussed around the district advisory councils, the makeup of the councils. When I met with the home and school federation, for example, they had some good views on that. When I meet with the teacher's federation, they have some distinct views on that and I look forward to discussing the composition and the goals of the district advisory council's with you.

Speaker: The Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

Ms. Bernard: The people who sit on these DACs include; one parent from each school council, home and school association in the family of schools, two students from high schools within the family of schools, a regional director of the PEI Home and School Federation of the Family of School's.

Representation of teachers on DAC

Question to the Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning: What do you think of the

fact that there are no teachers or school administrators on the DAC?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education, and Lifelong Learning.

Mr. Trivers: Thank you Mr., Speaker.

That is a fantastic question because that was one of the items that came up in early conversations with the new deputy minister who is doing a fantastic job with our government as well and the member across, we've met. I don't know if we've approached this subject, exactly, but I have to say that, when I talk to people it's almost unanimous that we probably should have a teacher representative on the district advisory councils.

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

Ms. Bernard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I hear chatter here and there about the return to elected school boards and there was a motion passed by the PEI Home and School Association to bring them back. I would argue there are ways that we could work together to find a more suitable form of governance, such as improving the DACs by giving them greater autonomy and resources by adding teacher's to their membership.

Future of school governance

Question to the Minister: What are your plans for the future of school governance?

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Education, and Lifelong Learning.

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

When it comes to school governance, those are conversations we've just started and I'm really looking forward to more input from the member across. But there is definitely a duplication of effort going on right now, between the district advisory councils and the home and school associations, and also the principal's advisory council.

So, what we need to do is we need to take all of that into account. We have to see how we can efficiently engage communities and teachers, as well as the students and come

up with a governance model that allows us to do what is best, of course, for the children.

Speaker: The member of Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Deagle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Adoption is a very personal and emotional issue for the people involved, the adoptee, the adoptive parents and birth parents. Open adoption records have been the subject of a long conversation in this province that deeply impacts many Islanders.

Open access to adoption records

My question today is for the Minister of Social Development and Housing: What is the current status of government efforts, to allow people to have open access to their adoption records.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Social Development and Housing.

Mr. Hudson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

It certainly is, as you pointed out, it's certainly an emotional issue. It's one that – and I do give credit to the former government, the former administration for the consultation that they had carried out on this very matter. With regard to the hon. member's question, we will be bringing forward legislation on the opening of adoption records.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir, your first supplementary.

Mr. Deagle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are many practical reasons why people are looking for access to their adoption records. After public consultation of stake holders last year, the former government announced plans to amend the *Adoption Act*.

Amendment to *Adoption Act*

Supplementary question for the Minister of Social Development and Housing: When does government plan to amend the *Adoption Act* to allow for open adoption records?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Social Development and Housing.

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

This is, it's an item, an issue if you like, that I have had detailed talks with the ones in my department on. With that, we are committed to bring forward this legislation in the fall sitting of this year.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-South Drive, your second supplementary.

Mr. Howard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I understand that this is a complex issue and governments desire to be responsible and not act in haste, but for the parties involved, the adult adoptees, the adoptive parents and the birth parents, the issue is much simpler and much more personal.

In the *Adoption Act* review, government proposed changing the law to allow both, a veto option and a no contact preference. Most provinces have open adoption records, with a no contact option but not a veto.

Include a veto option in *Adoption Act*

Supplementary question for the Minister of Social Development and Housing: Will you reconsider any plans to include a veto option in changes to the *Adoption Act*?

Speaker: The Minister of Social Development and Housing.

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

I do thank the hon. member for that comment, he is absolutely right and it is one of the reasons that we will not be bringing forward this legislation until the fall sitting.

At the end of the day, we want to make sure that we have this legislation right and that we take into consideration and feedback all of these issues, items and suggestions and to

be able to work in consultation, not only with the hon. member, all of our caucus and all of the caucus' across the way here, whether it's the opposition caucus or the third party caucus.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-South Drive.

Mr. Howard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Over the past few years, the current Leader of the Opposition has repeatedly requested that government develop a policy on the procurement of outside legal services.

In section 13.04 of the Treasury Board policy and procedures manual, which sets policy for the selection of contractors, legal services are explicitly exempt. Two of the fundamental principles of good governance are spending public money wisely and upholding the rule of law. This exemption from Treasury Board serves neither of those two principles.

New policy on contracting legal services

The question to the Minister of Justice: Is your department working on a new policy to ensure stricter oversight on contracting outside legal services?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Attorney General.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. member that's a great question and yes we are looking into drafting new policies and it's going to take a little bit of time but we are working on it as we speak.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-South Drive.

Mr. Howard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Providing of legal advice to government

A question for the Minister of Justice: Do you believe that as Attorney General you have unique responsibility to uphold the law and provide legal advice to the government?

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Public Safety, and Attorney General.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, hon. member, yes I do. As the Attorney General, the law is important and I'm in an outreach of the government at arm's length to advise the government on all issues involving the legal system.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member of Summerside-South Drive.

Mr. Howard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It will always be necessary to hire outside council. There are many instances where government lawyers may lack the specific expertise needed or may be in conflict where there are simply not enough resources to respond to all the demands. Individual departments do not have the expertise to establish when in it is advisable to contract outside, if the price is reasonable or if the advice received is of high quality.

A question for the Attorney General: Do you think that every contract for legal services should be abetted and approved by legal experts in the department of justice?

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

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, hon. member that is a great question too. It's very important that the legal expertise is qualified and that we can't always have the right people, but this legislation, or the act that we are going to follow is going to review that and we're going to make improvements on it as we speak, so thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-South Drive, final question.

Mr. Howard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In 2017, the current Leader of the Opposition tabled the Nova Scotia policy that requires the minister of justice to approve all contracts for legal services and sets out when outside advice can be sought.

A question for the minister of justice: Are you familiar with the Nova Scotia policy, and, if so, do you think it will provide a good model?

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

Mr. Thompson: Ms. Speaker and hon. member, I am not familiar with that model, but I will be briefed on it and I will have an answer back to you in the morning.

Thank you.

[End of Question Period]

Recognition of Guests II

Speaker: I would like to call on the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness for recognition of guests.

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

It is certainly an honour for me to rise here in the Legislative Assembly again for this, my third term, for that I do thank the residents of Stratford-Keppoch for this great honour, and their faith and support in me to bring me back here to be their voice in the Legislative Assembly.

I would also like to congratulate you. We were seatmates for close to eight years, and I have always had nothing but the utmost respect for you and I know that you are going to do a tremendous job as Speaker of this House.

I would also like to recognize the new members that have joined us here in the Legislative Assembly, and, of course, the returning members. It is not lost on me to note that we actually have a little bit of a change in the makeup of what we call the deanship of the Legislative Assembly. We now have co-deans that are taking over that responsibility. So I congratulate those two gentlemen.

I would also like to congratulate all the staff for the tremendous work that they have been doing to prepare all members, not only the new members to get ready for this sitting of the Legislative Assembly. I thank the

security staff, and of course our Pages that have joined us again.

I had a very, very special visit by one of my constituents Sunday afternoon – a gentleman by the name of Mr. Buzz Gay. Buzz, from time to time, will drop up or summons me to come down to his house to talk about a very important topic of one or the other that might pertain to the residents of Stratford. I just wanted to thank Buzz, again, for his sage advice and his support over the years.

I also rise today to wish Mr. Buzz Gay all the best on today being the celebration of his 96th birthday, something that we should all aspire to.

I would also like to recognize the leader of the NDP party that is here in the House today in the gallery, Mr. Joe Byrne.

Last but not least, I would also like to thank all of the tremendous, dedicated staff that works in Health PEI and Health and Wellness for being so welcoming to me as a new minister and for their support and guidance as I get up to speed on my portfolio. I look forward to meeting all of these individuals over the next while and working alongside them.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Statements by Ministers

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning.

Congratulations to Graduates

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

Graduation season is upon us, and I am honoured this year, as Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning, to offer congratulations to more than 1,400 English and French students who've earned a Prince Edward Island Senior High School Graduation Certificate in 2019.

Throughout April and May, the Welcome to Kindergarten Program introduced nearly 1,500 new learners to the public school system, while at the same time, high school students were preparing for final exams.

We are fortunate to have so many excellent teachers and staff who have worked throughout the year to teach, encourage and support everyone to the very youngest, to those preparing for the next chapter in life.

I also want to acknowledge the parents, caregivers, and all who have been there for the students along the way. I hope you share in their pride. It is well deserved.

Students, it is important to continue your educational pursuits, whether it is striving towards a university degree, or learning a skilled trade, all are valuable and valued.

To the students, if you need help, please reach out to our department. We have many programs and services available from financial support through bursaries and loans, to resources for continuing education.

I am sure my colleagues will join me in congratulating our 2019 high school graduates and wishing each and every one success in their lifelong learning and future careers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

Ms. Bernard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, would like to bounce off what the minister said in congratulating the students graduating from our Island high schools this year. It's a very exciting and scary time.

I can remember myself going back there, and as exciting as it was, there was always that fear of what was to come next. Did I work hard enough and where am I going?

So just a reminder to all the Grade 12 students who have worked so hard: congratulations. Remember to breathe, and just trust that everything you've done so far and everything you will do – you are in the right place and just keep going.

Also, to teachers, EAs, counselors, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, admin, parents for all of your hard work, this is your celebration, too.

A big congratulations to everyone.

I would have some students that I would have taught who are graduating this year. So if I taught you, a little special shout out to you.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly, I am pleased to rise in support of this statement, as well. Obviously, it is an exciting, exciting time for high school graduates over the coming days and week or so, that all of the celebrations of graduation will be occurring.

I had the opportunity this morning to be at Charlottetown Rural to give my little donation for a bursary that I have been putting forward for the last number of – I guess dozen years, probably.

The school was abuzz with students finishing up their exams with the graduates who had their prom last night; some were still back around in the halls today, and very excited about next Monday's graduation.

To all the grads, I wish them all well from all across Prince Edward Island. Also, too, I wish them to have a safe grad. Obviously, it is a concerning time for parents and friends of graduates to ensure that they are having a good time, but having it responsibly.

So I do hope that does continue to all – not only to the students, but to the teachers, to all staff at all schools – thank you for all you do for our Island students. Obviously, this comes – you are dedicated to your professions, and I thank you for the work you do.

I'm sure that every graduating student right now is thinking about graduation, but right after that will be thinking about where they are going in the fall for university. I wish them all the well on all of that and look forward dealing with them perhaps with some summer work this summer, as well.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – Final Report

Premier King: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

June 3rd was an important day for Indigenous Peoples of Prince Edward Island and Canada. That's the day The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry was released to all Canadians.

This report is substantial, it's exhaustive, it's the culmination of a lot of work, and most of all it represents an important part of the healing process.

On our first official day of this session, it's important that together as a Legislative Assembly, we recognize this, and to let the Indigenous community of PEI and all Islanders know that our government was supportive throughout the inquiry providing culturally appropriate supports through victim services to victims, survivors, families, and the community with our community partners.

We will remain supportive of the Indigenous community.

We have all seen this report. It's big, and that means we have a lot of work to do. A lot of discussions have to take place amongst ourselves as a province, but also with our Federal and community partners, including the Indigenous community.

This will take time, and we will commit to taking the time that is required because that is the right thing to do. We want to honour the families and all of the work that has gone into this report. We want to work collaboratively with the Indigenous community and to hear from them what is most important to them and which needs are most pressing.

As we plan our next steps as a province, it's important that we have input from those whose lives will be impacted by the decisions we make. As the adage goes; nothing about us, without us.

The actions we will take for this report and for our work on reconciliation are going to

be based on collaboration first and foremost, but should also be the ones that fosters change, meaningful and lasting change.

We all have a role to play in how we move forward together as a province and as a country with the First Nations. We must all share a common vision for safe, healthy Island and Indigenous communities, a place that we can all proudly call home.

As government, we are committed to working on making this a reality.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

I'm very glad to hear the Premier is going to embark on meaningful consultation with First Nations here on Prince Edward Island.

This recently released report on the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls is a searing indictment of how our country has abandoned this most vulnerable and marginalized population.

The report talks of poverty, it talks of lack of housing, and poor access to health care and education. It talks of limited employment opportunities and an inadequate cultural support. All of those things have led to what the report quite starkly, and I believe appropriately, calls genocide.

It talks particularly of how Indigenous women have been displaced from their traditional role in Native communities and in governance, and that their status has been diminished. And that, I think, has led in part to the vulnerabilities and the exposures to violence that they have suffered over generations.

All jurisdictions in Canada, including us here in Prince Edward Island, have to work together. We have to unlearn some old views and some habits, and we have to learn some new truths and new ways of living together in a strengthened Canadian community.

I believe we need a fundamental shift, and that shift has to begin with dignity for all Indigenous peoples. It means respect; it means an end to policies of assimilation, and strong support for health and education, both on and off the reserve.

Most particularly, I think it means an end to poverty here in Canada, and we will do that with a guaranteed livable income. It must be a priority for all governments to empower Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people to ensure an end to the horrors that this report talks about. We have to invest in healing and empowering women to move forward.

These recommendations in this report, we have to enact them to send clear signals that we, this generation, find this situation absolutely intolerable.

My hope is that this report will help us to realize that the issues affecting Indigenous people across this country are complex, very complex, and they cannot be addressed without full recognition of the terrible violence, the violence of centuries and the assaults upon First Nation's traditional cultures and practices.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Third Party.

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

Certainly, I do appreciate the Premier bringing forward this statement today.

Obviously, some of the questions that I asked earlier during Question Period were in regards to the same issue, and I know all Indigenous communities on Prince Edward Island would be very pleased to hear that there is a significant amount of work going on, Mr. Premier, as we speak.

Obviously, this report has been ongoing for a number of years and to hear that it will become more clear in the coming weeks is very pleasing to hear. That you are going to have involvement from those in the Indigenous community and other Islanders to be part of solutions that will come out of

the report are very encouraging to hear as well.

It is important that we all confront this. It's a challenge for every Canadian, so we have to do our parts.

As I mentioned earlier though in Question Period, we will be as third party, putting forward a resolution in the coming days that will ask that work on this report can also go to standing committee, so that all Islanders may be able to come and voice their concerns and opinions on that. We look forward to much discussion on it, not only on the floor of the Legislature, but also at a standing committee, as well across the street.

Thank you for your work involved to date, Mr. Premier and I look forward to following along on work in the coming days.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Public Service Week

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last week we celebrated Prince Edward Island's Public Service Week, a chance to acknowledge and show our appreciation for the dedicated members of the civil service. Highlights of the week included: a taste of the Island event, a formalwear day, long-term service awards, and the ever popular Children's Wish Foundation barbecue featuring diversity entertainment.

I want to thank the organizing committee for putting together such a great week and I know it was enjoyed by all who participated.

It was a bonus for me to have the civil service and the Public Service Commission as part of my portfolio. I have always known about the important work the civil service does, but in my new role, I now get to see that firsthand every day.

Over the last few weeks it has been my pleasure to meet many members of the public service and to learn more about what they do. It is easy to see the dedication they have for their work and the passion they have for assisting their fellow Islanders.

It is also great to see the way the Public Service Commission supports employees in all government departments to help them achieve their mandate in delivering quality programs and services to Islanders.

The work of the civil servants reaches broadly across PEI helping to improve the quality of life of our Island community. Their dedication is highly valued and does not go unnoticed.

I want to personally thank all civil servants for their hard work and dedication, not only during Public Service Week, but every single day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Mermaid-Stratford.

Ms. Beaton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to add my congratulations to the organizers of Public Service Week. This is a wonderful opportunity to really dedicate a full week to celebrate the public servants. Public servants are really the heartbeat of the Island. I grew up as a daughter of a public servant and I got to spend countless hours in public service offices, just really seeing how critical they are to day-to-day business and government.

I think it's also critical that we need to recognize the true contribution through celebration, but also through promoting from within and ensuring that people who work in the public service are actually recognized for their knowledge, kept in their positions and really drawn upon whenever we need to make decisions within government.

I know from my experience of listening to constituents that work in the public service; they know what is working and truly want to service Islander's in the best way possible. They also know what's not working and they should be engaged to find ways the government can operate more efficiently and I really truly hope they had a great week last week. They deserve to be celebrated and we're fortunate to have them.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Cornwall-Meadowbank.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity, obviously, for four years to work alongside tremendous civil servants that work in the public sector and it was a real pleasure. I got to meet many people, made a lot of friends and really seen how things really work in government because I can tell you, you think you know, but until you get in there – and I know these new members will figure that out very quickly and one thing I always said, when I spoke to the public service was; politicians come and go, so we need you more than you need us. I think if you carry that message with you into every meeting that you go into, I think you'll get better results from the public servants and the bureaucrats that you're working alongside.

I think the recognition goes a long way, there are departments and I can tell you that I didn't even know existed. The contribution that they make –for example, Information Technology is one department with over 200 staff. Very interesting to what they do, they make the cogs of government tick and I think there's a lot of unsung heroes in the public sector and I think they need to be recognized more often than not and the contribution they make to Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Presenting and Receiving Petitions

Tabling of Documents

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House I beg leave to table the Nova Scotia Minimum Wage Review Committee Report from November 2018 and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Tyne Valley-Sherbrook, that the said document be now received and do lie on the table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

By leave of the House, I beg leave to table the Samara Centre for Democracy Report, entitled *Cheering or Jeering: members of parliament open up about civility in the House of Commons* and I move seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park.

Ms. Bernard: Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table *Alberta Bounded: Comprehensive Sexual Health Education, Parentism and Gaps in Provincial Legislation and Educational Policy* and I move seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Summerside-South Drive.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table this Nova Scotia policy on document on government hiring of legal services and I move seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carry.

The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

By leave of the House, I beg leave to table the IPCC's Summary Report for Policy Makers and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Summerside-South Drive, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change.

Mr. Trivers: Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I beg leave to table a link to the Toronto Star article on climate change featuring erosion in Prince Edward Island.

The article is actually best viewed online, so I decided not to print it but I'm going to table the written link here, and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture, that the said document be now received and do lie on the Table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

He's honest.

Clerk: Honourable Mr. Speaker and Members, I wish to advise that the Office of the Clerk pursuant to Rule 80(k) received a number of intersessionally tabled documents since the House last met on December 5th, 2018.

Included in these documents are answers to written questions from the 3rd Session of the 65th General Assembly and 17 annual reports.

All documents were circulated to members on receipt and posted on the Assembly's website. A complete listing of these documents will also be included in today's journal of the Legislative Assembly.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Reports by Committee

Speaker: The hon. Member of Morell-Donagh.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As Chair of the Special Committee on Committees, I beg leave to introduce the report of said committee, and I move seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that the same be now received and do lie on the table.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried

Mr. MacEwen: I would request unanimous consent to proceed to moving the motion of adoption for this report as well.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Mr. MacEwen: I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, that the report of the committee be adopted.

As directed by motion of this House on June 13th, the Special Committee on Committees met yesterday, June 17th to consider the appointment of members to the standing committees of this Legislative Assembly. Your committee is pleased to make the following recommendations:

1. Your committee recommends that the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges be composed of the following members: the member from Charlottetown-Belvedere; the Member from Evangeline-Miscouche; the Member from Summerside-Wilmot; the Member from Morell-Donagh; the hon. Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture and the Member from Charlottetown-West Royalty.

2. Your committee recommends that the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges meet to consider the advisability of realigning the mandates of the remaining standing committees under Rule 95.

In addition to reviewing Rule 95, your committee recommends that the Standing Committee on Rules Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges, also consider the advisability of making amendments to Rule 90 (the Committee Membership).

Your committee offers a suggestion to the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges that the number of standing committees, excluding the Standing Committee of Legislative Management, be limited to five or six committees. Those being, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations Private Bills and Privileges and three to four other standing committees that focus on a particular policy areas.

3. Your committee further recommends that the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges hold a public meeting on this topic as well.

I think it was the will of all parties in this Legislature to get this committee meeting quickly, we did that yesterday and we'd like to get the Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges to start meeting as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Introduction of Government Bills

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

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *Government Reorganization Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Do you have an overview minister?

Mr. Thompson: This bill updates the names of government departments and the titles of ministers in various statues that reflect the spring 2019 reorganization of government.

Thank you.

Clerk: Bill No. 2, *Government Reorganization Act*, read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Regulated Health Professions Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Social Development and Housing, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Overview minister?

Mr. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Essentially this bill – the purpose of the administrative amendment is to correct drafting errors and inconsistent phrasing, providing investigative committees with additional powers to obtain information relevant to an investigation, extensive timeframes for discipline matters and further, to find professional misconduct in the reporting requirements of such conduct.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Bill No. 5, *An Act to Amend the Regulated Health Professions Act* read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carry.

Government Motions

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. Premier, that the first order of the day be now read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: Order No. 1, Consideration of the Speech of her Hon. the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the present session.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir.

Mr. Deagle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, friends and all viewers watching on EastLink television or online, it is my great honour to rise today as a newly elected MLA and move the Speech From the Throne.

As I stand here looking out into a crowd of familiar faces, I am reminded again who it is that our government is working for. We are here to reaffirm our commitment to Islanders, building upon the sturdy foundation of past governments.

I cannot stress enough the necessity of collaborative government in the years ahead

and recognizing good ideas, no matter where they come from.

This is something I firmly believe that we are working hard to achieve under the leadership of our new Premier.

We have done well in the past, but there's work yet to do.

We work with the certainty that we can and will do better to make our Island a place of opportunity and inclusion for all. I would like to highlight our government's commitment to a few key issues as outlined in the Speech From the Throne.

In the past, the question of how to increase youth retention on our Island has been raised time and time again. It's easy to look at the beautiful land around us and our warm community and ask ourselves how anyone could ever leave here.

However, we do face challenges. We are facing a province-wide housing crisis, with a vacancy rate of 0.3%. The housing crisis is not only touching our young people, but our elderly and those raising families.

I know, I have a constituent myself who just recently had to go on the senior's housing waiting list who, her husband is in the hospital waiting for a spot in the manor and she's no longer able to afford rent on her own, so she needs the assistance, so the need is there and I'm proud that our government is going to look into that.

The housing pressures being felt by Islanders are happening right across the Island, communities large and small, rural and urban. If our graduates are fortunate enough to immediately enter the workforce, the question of where they will live, is one that hangs over the heads of many. We can try to lure Islander's home, but without affordable housing options, it's hard to make that move. If we can't retain our youth, more of our graduates will seek opportunity elsewhere stagnating, our economy.

Our government has committed to address this by working with the non-profit sector, private developers and communities to put solutions into action. We will strive to make more accessible rental units available and to

make home ownership a more feasible option for all Islanders.

Recently in Montague – actually, we have a number of housing units that are under construction that are opening, which is going to greatly help the need in our area.

With that comes pressures in other areas, whether it's schooling, the hospital. Our consolidated school is overcrowded now, so it's going to increase pressures in that area but, we definitely welcome that initiative which was pushed by the former government, so we welcome that housing and it's definitely needed in our area.

Working with communities, together we can identify the roadblocks to progress and cut the red tape that is slowing down real housing solutions for Islanders. Another area of focus in the throne speech that I was pleased to see, was about climate change. As a 27-year-old, I am also mindful of the challenge that climate change poses to our future. One way we are facing this challenge is to set more aggressive targets and cleaner transportation from our public transit routes, to making communities more biker friendly.

Another way is through the completion of the *Water Act* and its regulation to conserve and protect our ground water resource for the Islander's of tomorrow. Increasing the amount of renewable energy is yet another way that we can help reduce our carbon emissions. Along with lowering our carbon emissions, it is my hope that these measures will also lower costs for Islanders and create new jobs.

The former government created a climate action plan and I want to congratulate the third party for their efforts. Working with the other parties, we will build on that foundation and collaboratively further, to meet the challenge of climate change together.

Going door to door during the recent election, I was reminded yet again, how hard working Islander's are. Listening to people share their stories and hopes with me, I was also reminded how many people are struggling with the high cost of living to get by. I was glad that our campaign platform focused on ways to make life more affordable for more Islanders. Lowering

taxes, cutting red tape, and increasing growth, these are goals that I support.

Being in a minority government now, we will work with the other parties in the House to help advance these goals further.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier in my comments, this is my first time addressing the House as the new MLA for Montague-Kilmuir. That is an honour that I hold very deeply. The people of our district put their faith in me, our Premier and our plan.

When I think about the people who have served our community in this role, like the late Joey Fraser and the late Gilbert Clements, I am truly humbled. Those who have stood in my place before have blazed a path for me to follow.

I commit to working hard every day to try and live up to that faith that the people of Montague-Kilmuir have placed in me. There is much going on in our district to be proud of. Almost 15 years after being announced, the doors to the new Riverview Manor will soon open. This facility, long promised and long delayed, is finally becoming a reality for our seniors. We have great school facilities in our district and our government is working to improve this infrastructure to support a positive learning environment for our students.

Our district is also home to the King's County Memorial Hospital, which provides important health services to the people of King's County. The current facility is almost half a century old and we must be vigilant to make sure this infrastructure is responsive to the evolving health needs of our community.

Standing here today I am mindful of how fortunate I am, I would not be here today without the love and support from my family. I am deeply grateful for them each and every day; I will do my best to make you proud.

We have a new government, with a new plan and a new approach to making government work for the people. I am excited by what the future holds.

With that, I would like to conclude my remarks and move our government Speech From the Throne.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I call on the seconder of the motion, the hon. Member from Morell-Donagh.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Never, ever, in my wildest dreams did I think I would be here seconding the throne speech and honouring you, Mr. Speaker. So first of all congratulations to you as well, you've been a great seat mate for the last four years and a great mentor to myself.

It's with great honour and pleasure that I rise to second the Speech From the Throne. Four years, I've heard a number of Speeches From the Throne in this Legislature and you always wondered if you would get the chance to do this, so I thank our caucus and the Premier for putting his faith in the member from Montague-Kilmuir and myself to do this.

The past few weeks have been undoubtedly some of the, probably some of the busiest, but most rewarding time in my career. I was very honoured when the Premier asked me to serve as the Government House Leader. It comes with probably a few more responsibilities than in the past. We were in a bit of an unprecedented situation being the first true minority government in PEI since the 19th century. Over the past month, I've been very lucky to have the opportunity to meet regularly with my fellow House leaders.

I can't tell you how well it has gone and I really thank the other House leaders for that privilege. We've shared our priorities going into the session and we've tried to reflect them as best as we could in the throne speech and in the budget to come.

We're also talking about ways that we can work together to change the process of how we are governed. I've been impressed by the open and cooperative approach that my fellow House leaders have brought to these discussions. In kind, when they take it back to their caucuses and the feedback that they're getting, we're all in a bit of a different situation as I said in a media interview once. The first step was for the House leaders to gain that trust of each

other, which we did, but you also have to be able to gain the trust of your caucus as well when you're going back and saying: trust us, this is what we need to do. We need to share this information and it's not as common to do. We tried to do that in the last four years and I think we made good grounds and we're going to keep going at that over this mandate.

In some respects were all outside of our comfort zones but I want to publicly acknowledge and thank the other members and House leaders for their continued cooperation, especially going forward in this session. Like every past government, we go in with a list of ideals and problems that we want fixed. However, in a minority government, we find ourselves in a unique position. Islanders want their parties represented here in the Legislative Assembly and they want us to put partisanship behind us, they voted for that, they want us to embrace a more collaborative approach to governance and I think the Premier is leading by example on that.

This is going to require us to acknowledge our own strengths and weaknesses and those of our partners. We each bring something unique to the conversation by talking with one another, focusing on shared goals; we can better balance our strengths and weaknesses for the betterment of Islanders.

Our government, led by our Premier, is strongly focused on people. It has been the mantra. That means when decisions are made that the impact those decisions have on the people of PEI is considered in everything that this government will do. This government is going to be about working in the best interest of all Islanders, not just for the people, but with them.

When discussing how we can best work in the interest of all Islanders, it's important to acknowledge where we failed in the past.

On June 3rd, the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was released. That report indicated a strong need for justice and allyship in combating racism and breaking down barriers.

Our province, of course, is home to the Mi'kmaq and Abegweit First Nations. Two of the three reserves within Abegweit First Nations are located in District 7; that would be in Scotchfort Reserve and the Morell Reserve.

Reconciliation begins at home, and I was encouraged by the commitment in the throne speech to embrace and advance this important cause. I know in our schools and our own communities that has already started with First Nation Leaders that are coming into the schools. With the home and school association they are doing wonderful things.

I was at part of a Indigenous relations, First Nations training session this past year. I didn't know when I signed up for it who would be there, but it was quite nice to know that when I looked around I got to meet a lot of people that were there. A lot of the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning staff were there. They were there. The curriculum people were there, because what they're trying to do is implement that into the schools.

For example, in the Mount Stewart School right now they're doing a good job because it's local, but how do we make that part of the curriculum across PEI about reconciliation. They are doing fantastic work and it was wonderful to see and (Indistinct) part of that.

As another clear indication of the commitment to the reconciliation process, the government has announced that they will recognize and celebrate the Mi'kmaq Treaty Day on October 1st. I think that's a really big decision, and I appreciate the leadership of the Premier on that.

Another area of the throne speech which spoke to me was about climate change, and I know that the Member from Montague-Kilmuir had mentioned this previously as well. The throne speech notes the reality that climate change threatens our coastlines, our crops, and our future generations of Islanders.

Mr. Speaker, as you would know bordering District 7 – District 1 and District 7 cover a significant portion of the North side of PEI, which is feeling the effects of climate

change. For example, Savage Harbour is one area in particular that climate change leaders in PEI recognize is a place in PEI that we have to watch because of the significant loss of coastline that we've been losing there.

It's why I was pleased that the government is committed to building on the foundation of the current five-year climate plan, and work towards a long-term vision of achieving a carbon neutral society. Our current climate action plan and the *Climate Leadership Act* contain clear targets and timelines for reducing greenhouse gases, and I appreciate the work of the previous government on that file.

Fair-minded people can respectfully disagree about the pace and aggressiveness of those targets, but you know what? We have to get there. We do have a greenhouse gas reduction target. We need to get there. We have already heard today about negotiation perhaps, if we're trying to increase that target even more. It is aggressive, but if we work together I hope that this government can put a plan in place to achieve it.

Some say that committing to that long-term vision of a carbon-neutral society for our province is perhaps pie in the sky or it might be too hard to achieve, but I believe we can do it and I know the Premier thinks we can do it.

Mr. Speaker, like you, I've got deep roots in my community and I take great pride in representing the people of Morell-Donagh in the Legislature. I was very proud to see in the throne speech that it was recognized the leadership of Jimmy MacAulay and all those volunteers from St. Peter's in developing a viable and sustainable community hub model.

We have heard those words many times in this Legislature, and we've actually heard the St. Peter's model mentioned many times. Do you know what? That success had to come, and I always say, we cannot forget it, had to come from a pretty tough decision: the closure of a small school in rural PEI.

That process back then was not the best process and I believe the community was dealt a hard a blow at that time. But do you know what? Good, strong rural communities

in PEI, they are resilient and they do bounce back and that's the way that this community in St. Peter's bounced back from a school closure, and turned a negative into a positive.

I know the minister of transportation who used to represent that area is well aware of the strong people and the commitment and the success that they had and I'm extremely proud to represent that area now and continue on the good work of the minister of transportation as well in trying to help them.

It's very admirable that in the throne speech this government commits to championing the development of that model for other communities.

The work of fostering community development can take many, many forms. It can be about maintaining important schools and health facilities, it can be about developing viable housing solutions, it can be about improving recreational infrastructure that improves our health and wellness to bind us closer together. It can be about working to make government programs more responsive to the needs of the people that we are there to help.

Community development can take many forms, and as the MLA from Morell-Donagh, I will work closely with the residents and community groups to pursue opportunities to make our communities strong.

The members that were here before and the new members of our Legislature, will soon to get to know – I make no bones about it, that I believe in that community development funding is key. We pushed the previous government on, and rest assured, I will be pushing the Premier and the cabinet on that as well.

It's something that I am passionate about. We're all community leaders. Typically, before we get into this role, we have all been involved locally in our communities, and we know how important that is to the volunteers.

A couple other priorities that I was really happy to see in this throne speech – it's something else to be able to be part of a government, and, as I said, to work with the

other groups to actually be able to help and put things into a throne speech, or be able to have input and some of the things that we pushed for over the past four years are there.

I mean, as the critic for health this past year, of course I was thrilled about the commitment to the expanded scope of practice within budgetary concerns. Speaking directly to those health care professionals these past number of years, they want it they need it to be done. We have heard it many times about the physicians, they say come talk to us, let's talk to them.

I know the minister of health is already on it and that is key; they want to be part of the solution, and this government is about making them part of that solution. So expanding that scope of practice, I'm extremely happy about. Again, as a private member in this House, we will be pushing our caucus and our government on that as well.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention about the PEI Partnership for Growth. This is a group that got together just before the election, or prior to the election, to push all the parties on their priorities for investment and working alongside the private sector.

It was quite an honour when the Premier called me to ask me to be a part of that group or part of that commission going forward. I know we've already had conversations and I was really happy to see it mentioned in the throne speech.

The partners of that group are getting together this week. I'm excited to go and speak and meet with them to see what their vision is and however we can support them. I appreciate and I thank the Premier for tasking me with that priority and I think it speaks a lot to where we need to go with the province.

Going door to door as many members here – certainly out home in Morell-Donagh, I heard a lot about land issues. Again, you go to the door, you hear these things, you push for it and you hope that it's going to be a priority for government and sure enough, it is a priority for government.

I want to reiterate into the record, this government will work with all parties and all Islanders to ensure the spirit and intent of the *Lands Protection Act* is championed and upheld.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEwen: I can start going through young farmers, we all can, that are so excited about that. Not just young farmers, but experienced farmers that have been there for awhile. We know the associations that are pushing for that. We have all heard it at the doorsteps. I am glad to be part of a government that is going to push for that.

Consulting on the establishment of a land bank that helps keep land in appropriate use across the province. I know that that's something that we want to make happen as soon as possible, but I appreciate that the government is going to do this right and go through that consultative process.

I could talk about lots of great things in this speech. I am proud of the government, I am proud of the Premier, and the work they put into it.

One big one though for rural PEI that I am excited about is the commitment to real Internet in rural PEI, right across PEI. I know there was an announcement right prior to the election on the very eve of an election. I am proud of a government that is going to look at that agreement, is going to make sure that there is a made in PEI solution, is going to make sure that the small providers in PEI as well are included in the discussions, not just called on the way to an announcement. That's the kind of the collaboration and the kind of consultation that we need to see.

Many of the MLAs that live outside of urban regions, or even some that live very close to urban regions, Internet is a way to rejuvenate rural PEI; we're excited to make that happen. I'm excited to see the details.

Again, I tell to my caucus and to Cabinet, that as a private member, I will be holding them to account on that because I can tell you that my constituents hold me to account on that. With that, I am so thankful to the residents and members of District 7.

It is an incredible honour to be elected a second time. I never thought I would be in this row first time, but you know what, they – the people tell you, and the Leader of the Third Party talks about the coffee club in Sherwood. We've all had those people out home. They hold us accountable.

Those conversations at the door are so key. What I try to do is take them, focus on them, bring those ideas to the floor of the Legislature – I hope we did a good job of that the last four years. I'm excited that my constituents have given me the opportunity to do it again.

With that, I know there's other members that would like to speak to this. I appreciate all the work that has gone into it. Again, I thank you to the Leader of the Opposition and the House Leader of the opposition party, to the Leader of the Third Party and the House Leader of the Third Party as well, I appreciate your patience and your collaboration with me and I hope we can keep doing this going forward.

With that, I'll conclude my remarks to second the Speech From the Throne.

Thank you.

Recognition of Guests III

Speaker: The hon. Premier for recognition of guests.

Premier King: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to recognize your lovely daughter. Toby of course from Three Oaks – Mr. Beaton has been watching here – and my good friend Brandon Holmes, who, for many years now, has been the athletic therapist for the Charlottetown Pride Major Midget team. He's a fixture around the MacLauchlan Arena, he's a big fan of UPEI Panthers Hockey, as am I.

We've been through a lot of discussions together about the quality of hockey being played at the MacLauchlan Arena, and I'm just glad you're here today. It's good to see you, and really, really appreciate the opportunity to welcome my good friend Brandon who is one of the finest hockey minds in Prince Edward Island, ladies and gentlemen.

Speaker: I'll ask the Leader of the Opposition.

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

It is indeed a great pleasure to rise this afternoon and respond to the Speech From the Throne.

I'd like to start out by thanking the Premier. Thank you, firstly, for including many of the opposition's priorities in the throne speech, and I suspect that the level of cooperation and the level of consultation that happened in the production of this throne speech has never before happened on this Island. I think I could say that with great confidence.

The reason – well, there are many reasons behind that – but I think I want to specifically point out and commend the House leaders from all three parties, the member from Morell-Donagh, thank you very much for your remarks, but also for your hard work in the production of the throne speech and like you said at the end of your remarks, I hope that this is a sign of things to come.

From our own party, the Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere, who I know has put in hours and hours and hours of work with the other House leaders, and for that I'm deeply indebted and very grateful – and of course the House Leader, from the third party, the Member from Evangeline-Miscouche, thank you for your work on this as well.

I know they've worked tirelessly over the past few weeks, and I think the fruits of their labour are very evident in the throne speech that was delivered here on Friday afternoon.

Personally, I can't imagine three people from this House better tasked with carrying out this hard job; intelligent, honest, great temperament, able to achieve compromise and greater collaboration. Thank you to all three of you.

I have to say, I didn't actually believe that we could achieve that sort of collaboration and consultation without a formal agreement, a confidence and supply agreement, because those types of

agreements have worked really well in other jurisdictions where we have had minority situations. They have allowed minority governments to enjoy stability and productive terms in office.

A couple of weeks ago of course, I presented such an agreement to the Premier and to the leader of the third party so that we could agree on some basic ground rules of what collaboration might look like and what the parameters and the expectations of the various parties in this House were – and I will continue to be open to further discussions on that. But, no matter how impressed we are by the work of the House leaders, we're still very much in the early days of this government and I firmly believe and I still believe that a CASA, a Confidence and Supply Agreement, would provide for this whole House, all sides of this house, greater predictability, greater stability and an ability for us to do good work, regardless of how well things have gone to date.

With or without a CASA, my caucus and I will vigorously pursue our constitutional duty, which of course, is to hold government to account.

The Speech From the Throne is often an inspirational document, and this was no different in that tradition. The Premier laid out his vision.

Indeed, a quick word search through the throne speech reveals that the word 'vision' appears 20 times in the speech – and four times in the margins. I find that especially noteworthy because vision did not appear once, not even once, in the PCs election platform. So suddenly we have a vision, and I'm very grateful for that. I'm not belittling that; I'm just saying that's interesting.

It's clear that this new government is trying to provide an inspirational document that will unify, not only the three parties in this House, but all Islanders in a vision of working together to make the lives of all Islanders better.

The speech states, and I quote: the vision I will outline today is ambitious. It draws on the priorities that have been shared by all parties of this Assembly and in the first six months my new government will put in

place the building blocks that will create a solid foundation to achieve the goals to make this vision a reality – thinking back to the questions I asked this afternoon in the House, I made specific reference to the fact that if we have a bold vision and we want to achieve that, if it's ambitious, we have to first lay the groundwork. We have to lay that foundation on which we build that vision.

I think we can take from this that the Premier does, indeed, have a vision. I think that's very clear, and for the most part it's one that I can support and I share. But once we get past the articulation of that vision, there's actually very little substance in this throne speech.

We do not learn what these building blocks are. We do not know how this foundation is going to be built and it's implied that something truly transformational is going to happen within the first six months of the Premier's administration, but yet, here we are over two months in, and really nothing in this speech to indicate that they actually have a plan to make this vision a reality.

Now you know what, I'm fully aware of what a fine and accomplished storyteller our Premier is, and I've listened with great admiration – both from the audience and on stage – but it's time for our Premier I think, to put aside the role of storyteller and to start putting actions behind his words and actually have a real plan here, and how this vision, very attractive and lovely vision, again, which I can get behind and which I largely support, but we need a plan.

I think the Speaker once said in this House we need a plan. I seem to remember you saying that perhaps once or twice, Mr. Speaker.

I think back to the previous Premier's first throne speech, and that contained many specific commitments to ensure that the new government's vision could indeed be realized. These weren't little incremental changes. These were big things. They were large and they were truly ambitious – and I'm fraught with controversy, by the way. Not to mention, I'm thinking of things like the new *Water Act*, a huge piece of work which the hon. member, now Leader of the Third Party played a huge role in producing. I'm thinking about the *Municipal*

Government Act, again, a hugely contentious but very important piece of legislation for the well-being of this province – contentious indeed – and bits of work that were there to lay the groundwork for the previous Premier's vision of what this Island could look like.

I see no such bold and ambitious pieces of legislation yet from this administration in order to support the vision.

In the previous administration, aggressive plans to increase population were there – and exports, as well as a range of very specific commitments, very specific commitments to improve government accountability.

Now, the current Speech From the Throne is largely absent from that sort of detail and that sort of concrete commitment. It's very heavy on rhetoric, but very short on detail.

One of the reasons I find that so surprising, and I have to be frank, disappointing, is that the PC election platform actually contained 150 distinct promises and one of my hon. members earlier today referenced that. Yet very few of those promises are actually reflected in the throne speech and the ones that have been included, are really no more sustainably developed than they were when they were written in the platform document.

For example, and the hon. member who preceded me talked a little bit about this.

The PC platform promised to, and again, I quote: "...bring together Internet providers large and small, to design and implement a made in P.E.I. plan to deliver high speed access to all communities across the Island, adhering to CRTC service adjective of 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload for fixed broadband services by 2021..."

Now as a rural MLA, I can tell you, and even in my second term as the representative for District 17 New Haven-Rocky Point, I can tell you there's no more, there is no issue that I hear more about than the deficiencies in rural Internet. I've already had contact from a number of constituents in District 17, we know that this is a huge problem the previous administration tried several times to fix this and it was this sort of tease that it's just around the corner, just

give us a little more time, next time we're going to get it right and they never did.

My fear is that this administration, in inheriting an agreement penned by the previous administration, may fall into the same trap and we've already heard some pretty strong commitments from the other side of this House, that this time we're going to get it right and we're going to include the local ISP's.

We're going to make sure that the funding that is available to the big players and gives them an enormous leg up an advantage on the local ISP's, who are perfectly capable of providing excellent service, competition in the marketplace and good service for Islander's. I will hold my fire on that, but I'm extremely concerned that we're going to fall into the same pattern that we're going to fix this any day now and then 10 years after the original Bell agreement; we're still no further along.

So the particular promise of providing good service to all Islander's from tip to tip is one, of course, that I fully support. And considering the urgency of this issue, I had hoped that after almost two months in government, that the Premier would provide again, some more details in his plan but, actually the throne speech provides less detail than were in the platform.

The Throne Speech says this: "...The recently announced Internet solution for P.E.I. is being reviewed and a made in P.E.I. plan to further enhance Internet availability involving all industry stake holders, including local ISP's is being undertaken. Priority is being given to establishing high speed service across Prince Edward Island..."

Well you know what, that's an incredibly vague statement. Such vagueness makes me worried, it makes me fear that I will spend yet another provincial election night – and by the way I spent the first part at least of election night in the place where my wife and I live, it used to be the renovated church – where the Internet was just so poor, we could not even watch it on the television, we had to turn on the radio and get the results that way. So the problem here, is widespread, it's acute and its affecting people's lives. So I don't want to spend

another election night in my home, unable to see the results of the election, just because our Internet is really so inadequate.

Mr. Speaker, earlier I commended this government for including priorities from the opposition parties in the throne speech and again I want to thank them for that unprecedented level of collaboration. But for the official opposition, our priorities were climate change, housing, poverty elimination and good governance. Those were the four things that we talked about during the campaign, those were the four things that were front and centre in our platform and they will be the four priorities that we continue to carry into this legislative session.

Government states this: "...A long term vision for P.E.I. to achieve a carbon neutral society."

That's what it says in the throne speech but it doesn't provide a timeline at all for that vision. So is it 10 years, is it 20 years, is it 30 years, is it 50 years, is it when half of the Island is underwater. Like what are we talking about there? And the lack of urgency really troubles me, since especially later in the speech, the government compares more immediate pressures such as housing, or long term realities such as climate change.

Now, I don't know about that side of the House, but I can tell you climate change absolutely falls into the category of an urgent issue. The member who preceded me, from Morell-Donagh talked about more aggressive targets, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to 1.2 megatons by 2030. That's not an aggressive target, that's the only target that will allow us to meet the IPCC goals of being carbon neutral by 2050. That's not an aggressive target; that is the only moral option we have. So please don't talk about this being a long term or a non-urgent issue. This is the most urgent issue facing humanity; we are an Island province that is most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, we need to do our bit, we need to be world leaders. We do not need to be (Indistinct) on that.

Throughout the speech some commitments are so vague that they become essentially meaningless. For example, I dearly hope that somebody on the government side can

explain to me what was meant by the phrase, and I quote: "...My government will take an active interest in developing cultural and historical interests of our youth..."

I don't know what that means.

Or by this statement in responding to the housing crisis: "My governments long term vision is one where Islander's can afford home ownership and access programs and supports that make this a reality..." That sounds fine, I'm cool with that, I'm on board with that. But that immediately is followed by this. "...It includes allowing home owners to protect and enhance their investment in their home communities..." Now I don't know what that means, I honestly have no idea what that could mean. The quote goes on, "...It extends equally to affordable housing options for renters and prospective home owners that are plentiful and lead to our overall housing vacancy rate being healthier..."

Now I cannot see how having plentiful renters and prospective home owners will lead to the housing vacancy rate being any healthier. We're already in an absolute crisis situation here, we're at 0.3% in the last report. Things from what I hear on the streets are no better. This is an absolute crisis in this province and we need to deal with it now.

I have difficulty also understanding this intentional vagueness, since there were so many promises in the PC election platform that I would have expected to see in the throne speech. For example, I have a special interest in the area of good governance, it's something that I have been hammering on with the previous administration for the four years that I've been in this House and I hope to see more PC commitments in the throne speech than were there.

In the platform, Islander's were promised this, and the PC platform, Islander's were promised this should a new PC government form.

Firstly, embrace true open government, yahoo.

Secondly, increase the resources available to the auditor general and the information and privacy commissioner. Again, something on

this side of the House that we've been asking for, for years, didn't see that in the throne speech.

Third thing, introduce or support legislation to ban partisan government advertisement. That's something that this, the opposition is bringing forward and actually tonight we will table the *Government Advertising Standards Act* for first reading, very similar to the act that was tabled in the last sitting by the Member from Morrell-Donagh. So I'm hoping, given that it was a commitment in your platform, although we didn't hear about it in the throne speech, that you will be supporting the opposition piece of legislation that will be coming forward tonight.

Another thing, establish an independent provincial ombudsperson. Of course, I asked the Premier about this in Question Period this afternoon. I didn't get a clear timeline on that, but I got a reiteration of this governments commitment that that is something important that they're going to do. So I'm cool with that, we will wait and see but I really hope that, that commitment again that was in the platform, but not in the throne speech, actually becomes a reality.

Finally to separate the roles of the attorney general and the minister of justice, I know there was a series of questions to the attorney general and the minister of justice this afternoon and again, there's a lot of work to be done there, to improve legal services here on Prince Edward Island, provision of legal services and also the separation of the roles of attorney general and the minister of justice, something that we saw in the platform but we did not see in the throne speech.

None of those appear; instead the Premier's section on good governance, actually in my opinion, tries to inappropriately influence the independent functions of this Legislature.

In the speech, government sets out its plan for the realignment of legislative committees. Something I absolutely support and again, something that myself and the Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere have brought up numerous times when we were in the third party sitting in this House.

Under the heading Strengthening Trust and Integrity in our Political System, the Premier describes how he wants legislative committees to be formed, while at the same time he says: It's not the intention of my government to interfere with the establishment or operation of committees of the Legislature.

Well, I have to ask the Premier if it is not his intention to interfere, why does he devote an entire page of the throne speech – again, the throne speech which was devoid of all of those actions that I described earlier in producing good government – why does he devote an entire page of the speech to encouraging, suggesting, recommending, offering suggestions and asking the independent committees to take direction from the Premier's Office? From my perspective that is, in fact, interfering.

First, I want to express my agreement, absolutely, with the intent and the goals behind the Premier's comments. Yes, one of the core functions of the Legislature, and the committees it establishes, is to hold government accountable to the people of Prince Edward Island. In order for us to do this important work, for the legislative branch of government to do this important work, we need a Legislature and committees that can work independent of government, and are free to scrutinize the decisions and the policies of government.

Far too often in the past – and I know my friends on the other side of the House will agree with me because they sat in committees and suffered in the same way that I did – far too often in the past we have seen governments interfere with the work of the Legislature and with its committees, and I know that many of the members and this new government and I will be very keen to avoid the abuses of the past.

For those reasons, we in the official opposition are also keen to see the changes in the committee structure that the Premier describes. I think it's a great idea. I think it's long-overdue. However, it is essential that no matter how much we agree on the desired outcome, we must also continue to respect democratic norms.

The Westminster system, on which this House is built, is built on a strict division of

powers amongst the three branches of government: the judicial, the legislative and the executive. Each of these branches must function independently. That's not just a democratic norm or a nicety, but that is the founding principle of everything that we do in this House.

Committees of the Legislature are creatures of the Legislature. They are not children of government. They take their direction from this Legislative Assembly – from the Legislature, not from Executive Council.

Therefore, when the Premier, as the head of government and the executive branch, tries to inappropriately influence the function of independent legislative committees by encouraging them to act in a particular manner I must gently remind him that such infringements are improper, even if they seem minor.

We are in a new and exciting time, with the first minority government in this Island's memory. It is easy to understand that in his enthusiasm to implement meaningful change – again, something I fully support – the newly-elected Premier has perhaps accidentally overstepped.

In my role as Leader of the Opposition, I will continue to speak out to protect the independence of the legislative branch against any and all attempts from the Premier's Office to usurp our powers.

As much as I have spoken today about what the Speech From the Throne is missing, I will be supporting its passage.

These are early days in the new government, and I hope that I speak for all members of this Legislature when I say I truly hope that the Premier will succeed in his desire to lead a government that I quote: puts people at the heart of our decisions, and that he will be able to bring a new collaborative tone to the Legislature with the help and the support of all sides of this House.

For those of us on the opposition benches one of the best ways that we can support this government is by holding it to account. That does not mean opposing policy for the sake of being oppositional, but it does mean taking government at its word and holding the executive branch to the highest

standards, to the standards that they set out for themselves in the election campaign.

It also means that we must speak up when we believe particular policies may not be in the best interest of Islanders. For example, I have grave concerns about the plan to establish a universal, half-day, community-based pre-kindergarten for all Island four-year olds. I have grave concerns about that. My concerns are twofold.

Firstly, I believe that our early childhood education system is already struggling, and it's struggling because of the former government's refusal to ensure that our ECE teachers get a livable wage. We currently have more pre-school spaces than we have teachers, and not because of a lack of trained educators. Those people are there, but because we simply don't value them enough to pay them an appropriate wage and it's shameful.

When trained teachers, who are entrusted with the well-being and the education of our children must leave their profession because they simply cannot afford to live on the wages they are being offered, can we honestly claim as a society that we then put the needs of our children first? I don't think so. Until we are able to pay our early childhood educators a wage that better reflects the educational requirements and the profoundly important work that they do, it strikes me as simply foolish to try and expand on those programs.

My second concern is that I am not yet convinced that universal kindergarten is actually in the best interests of four-year olds. I believe the education critic, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, will have much more to say on this when she presents her response to the throne speech, but I personally want to see evidence that beginning the formal education process at the age of four will actually benefit our children. I haven't seen that yet.

Although I will support the passage of the throne speech, I do so with some reservations.

I agree whole-heartedly with the government's vision. I remain skeptical that there is a realistic plan to achieve this vision.

In the coming weeks we will learn more about this government's true intentions when it brings forward its first budget. That's when the rubber will really hit the road.

The budget will be a much greater test of the confidence of this Legislature as it will provide clear evidence of government's priorities, far clearer than we saw in the throne speech. The speech is just words – very beautiful words, pretty words, persuasive words – but only words. The budget is action. That's where it happens: the expenditure of public funds. We on the opposition benches will be looking closely to make sure that the actions live up to those lovely words in the throne speech.

Before I close, I want to take the opportunity to thank the citizens of District 17 New Haven-Rocky Point, for once again entrusting me in being their representative in this House. It's an absolute honour and I'm terribly humbled to be here again for another term in office. I'm truly looking forward to, what I think, will be an historic session of this Legislature.

I want to thank all of my colleagues on this side of the House. Again, I want to come full circle and thank the Premier and the House leaders for the manner in which we have arrived at this point, with a throne speech that reflects a collaborative, consultative process involving all parties in this House – and that's why, Mr. Speaker, I shall be standing to support this throne speech.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: I will now call upon the hon. Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I want to congratulate the Speaker on his recent elevation. Your position is one of great importance to this Assembly and I am confident you will do a great job, Mr. Speaker.

I want to congratulate the Premier and his caucus of whom four are new members. Of course, I want to offer similar

congratulations to the new Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition and his caucus as well, many of which are new as well. Finally, I want to congratulate the members of the third party who join me in the task of providing a solid and constructive voice to the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

Before I move on, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the generation of MLAs who left this Assembly earlier this year. Your service was appreciated by all Islanders and your personal and collective legacies will be felt for many years to come. In particular, I want to thank former premier Wade MacLauchlan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: Wade will be remembered as a hard-working, intelligent and selfless public servant who governed in a way that brought great repute to the government of Prince Edward Island and helped to shepherd our Island to one of the greatest periods of economic expansion and social progress in our province's history.

Those twin legacies, social progress and economic diversification will serve our province well for many years to come. The main challenge facing the new government will be to build on the gates made during premier MacLauchlan's tender.

Among the members of the third party, there is a great pride at what was accomplished over the past 12 years or so. Premier Robert Ghiz introduced public kindergarten and the positive impact of that decision will be felt for many decades as well. He also significantly improved access to post-secondary education and thousands of young Islanders benefitted from the programs introduced between 2007 and 2014.

In effect, during that time there was one goal in mind: An improvement in the quality of life for all Islanders. Certainly over that period there were missteps and errors. In an institution as large and complex as a provincial government, those false steps will happen, but every mistake should lead to a new solution.

Now, it's up to the new members of government to take up the torch, pursue good

decisions and learn from the mistakes of the past. Of course, they will learn as well from the mistakes that they will make in the future.

I'm looking at the Speech from the Throne and I see certain reasons for optimism. The tone is good, the words are generally constructive, but I wish there was more that reflected the need to create more employment opportunities for Islanders. I wish there was more about government maintaining a strong fiscal posture. However, these matters we will pursue during our debates in this House.

In particular I believe that we should all work hard to make certain that our decisions will always contribute to creating new opportunities for Islanders and especially in the area of job choices.

The new opposition will also face a challenging learning curve. It's difficult to criticize while avoiding the temptation to turn personal.

It is very hard to point out flaws in decisions or reasoning without appearing shrill or sanctimonious even.

However, I believe that if this Assembly truly embraces a spirit of collaboration and if deeds match the fine words that have been said that we can begin a new era of real productivity and productive debate – and with that in mind, I would remind members of this Assembly that their positions here are temporary.

Everyone who has ever been elected to the Assembly has enjoyed the confidence of their communities and as someone who has been a member here for more than a dozen years, it is a difficult seven-day-a-week task.

In that time, the most important lessons I've learned is this: Our constituents want us to remain with them, we are here to keep an eye on the government and we must try to act from a perspective of common sense.

The fact of the matter is this: The moment an elected person thinks they know everything is the moment they probably should leave here.

And believe me, I am more than willing to confess to the many things that I do not know.

One place that is new for all of us is the reality of this minority government. There is not a living person in the province who has been a resident of Prince Edward Island during a minority administration.

On our side of the House we can make certain commitments. First, we will always try to act in a way that is constructive that seeks the links in debate that join solid public policy with a full airing of all implications.

We will do our best to contribute; but we'll do so vigorously and in a way that illuminates the path forward.

Second, we will try to consistently reject personal criticisms because those tactics just drip poison into our greater task and our deliberations are difficult enough without the needless toxicity of personal attacks.

So, our commitment is this: We will try to shed light on ideas, without partisan reflection on those who articulate perspectives and decisions.

Finally, we will do everything in our power to hold government to account for its decisions.

That is the true role of members of the opposition benches and we will do our absolute best to ensure that Islanders are fully informed of the decisions made by the government of the day.

We will be deliberate in that exercise and as conscientious as possible in our work. This is our three point plan, which in brief, can be summarized as constructive, objective and deliberate; those are our goals.

Of course, we will waver from that path on occasion but I hope those moments will be brief and we will be more than willing to hear from the government and opposition benches should we stray from those ideals.

But I conclude, I do want to briefly reflect again on the accomplishments of the past 12 years. Over that time I believe our Island did succeed, our economy grew and

employment choices for Islanders grew in tandem.

I think that the women and men who guide our school system were given new and improved tools to guide the education of new generations.

In the face of constant challenge, we worked hard to build better access to health care and although the best will always be a goal, we did everything in our power to keep the best in mind.

I believe we tried to be fair and it will always be a source of pride that no Islander lost their job for reasons of political discrimination and that was during all 12 years that we served the Island in government. I can say without hesitation that the women and men who served with me and my colleagues over the last 12 years did so for the best reasons. They weren't always right, but they tried their best to do the right things.

Thank you very much and I look forward to our debate and deliberations in the coming days, months and yes, years ahead.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the introduction to the Speech From the Throne is a line that I paused on. I quote: and remember this, while your presence in this Legislative Assembly is for a mandate, you are contributing to a respected institution that will last for centuries.

The impact of the work we do while we're here will be felt far into the future. The legacy piece of this is poignant for me, particularly as I consider the task we, as legislators have, in governing through a period of changing climate.

I was pleased to hear the commitment of addressing climate change and that the long-term objective of achieving carbon neutrality is expressly stated. The timelines and targets around this will be critical in

determining whether there are any teeth behind those words, but those timelines and targets were notably absent

As such, it is my most sincere hope that this government understands the need to take the direction from climate scientists and experts as we set those targets.

We hear politicians say that they will make evidence-based decisions. In this file there's no shortage of evidence.

It was Barack Obama who said that we are the first generation to experience the impacts of climate change and the last generation that will be able to do anything about it.

History will judge us harshly indeed if we choose to squander that opportunity for decisive action while the window to do so, still existed.

I heard a commitment from the Premier to work with partners at all levels on climate, and I would remind the Premier, that that means there is an onus on him to inform his conservative counterparts, like Doug Ford and Jason Kenney, on the realities of climate change and push them for ambitious targets in their own provinces at First Ministers' meetings.

A report by the parliamentary budget officer came out last week and has made it clear that even if every federal incentive we have were to remain in place, we are on track to overshoot our Paris targets by 79 megatons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2030.

We are not on track for a stable climate.

Climate governance has fallen short on what is needed, reflects not just the immensity and complexity of the challenge, but also the difficulty of overcoming incentives for government to avoid contributing to the public good of mitigation. As well as the role that powerful interests, including some Canadian premiers, are playing in mobilizing resources that undermine scientific knowledge, create public doubt and delay action.

Politicians who are prepared to do that are betraying future generations for their own short-term interests.

There is so little time to get this right, and the ramifications of failing to do so cannot be overstated. I am keenly interested in knowing that our Premier will differentiate himself from these anti-science first ministers and hold them to account.

In the throne speech there is language around seeing PEI as a regional, national and global leader, and if this is going to be true, it will demand that we innovate and accelerate the transition to a clean economy, and then challenge other provinces to step up and meet us there.

It means setting the standard and demonstrating what can be done. The IPCC special report on global warming of 1.5 degrees makes plain the need for swift action. It tells us we have maybe 11 years, in which we need to cut emissions by 45% below 2010 levels. This isn't opinion. That is what the science tells us.

Presumably we will be policymakers for four of those 11 years and given how pressing the timelines are, that's significant. Failing on these targets means climate chaos, and that's also not opinion.

So I would like to think that no one in this Legislature would be comfortable advocating for any targets or timelines that climate scientists tell us will test the life support systems of this planet.

If we, as legislators, can agree that maintaining a stable, livable planet is above all what we must accomplish together, we'll put it as the centre pin and build around it when choosing our methodology of solving virtually every other problem that we face.

As such, I would like to see the Premier issue a clear directive to all provincial government departments to incorporate climate change in all decision-making, planning and budgeting.

Transportation, for example, is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in our province. Based on the Premier's remarks during the election, an absence of public transit seems to be the main reason he opposes a carbon tax, despite the fact that last year an economist won the Nobel Prize for his work demonstrating how effective carbon tax is at addressing climate change.

I would love some clarity around the language of a goal of a 'more self sustainable transit system for the province by 2050' – which is 31 years from now.

When we talk about a self-sustainable transit system, that means one that generates enough income to cover its operating costs. Is the intention that the new government recognizes a province-wide transit plan is critical to cut emissions and is, therefore, prepared to move forward with it rapidly but expects that the transit system would lose money for 31 years, or is the language intended to suggest that it would take that long to have a transit system? Three decades. I'm really interested in the details on this.

The intersection of economic policy and climate policy is an important one. And the changing of the name of the department from economic development to economic growth reveals a sore lack of understanding.

The ultimate end is not getting bigger, and thinking it is shortsighted. Getting better must be the goal.

We talk about the economy as if its growth would mean that those who are struggling would have more money at their disposal, despite the fact that this has never been true.

The conversation needs to be instead around how well we turn economic activity into well-being for our population, and if the Premier intends to get serious on climate change while also improving the lives of Islanders, I would have hoped to have seen language around well-being metrics.

Economic growth should not be mistaken as an end in itself. We have considerable inequality, significant rates of child poverty and food insecurity and an ever-growing gap in the distribution of wealth.

We are living in a climate changed.

Economic policy is not detached from those issues and I am not aware of one developed country or jurisdiction that has addressed those problems by simply growing the economy.

Sustainable economic development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present, without compromising the ability to meet those needs in the future. That is an important distinction.

There is talk in the throne speech of incorporating traditional knowledge of the Mi'kmaq people, and we would do well to remember that the wisdom of the Mi'kmaq cultural teaches us to consider the outcomes of our actions, not just on our generation or on the next generation, but seven generations into the future.

Other provinces in Canada have adopted environmental bills of rights to essentially give future generations property rights to ecosystems responsible for generating life support functions.

Without expressly taking this into account future generations, short-term incentives for economic growth will more often than not lead us to deplete a resources faster than it can regenerate. On that note, I'll be really interested to see what the new government intends to do with the *Water Act*.

An Hon. Member: Call the hour.

Speaker: The hour has been called.

This House will resume at 7:00 p.m. this evening.

The Legislature recessed until 7:00 p.m.

Orders Other than Government

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm actually going to call on the Leader of the Opposition with the first motion other than government.

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

I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act*, and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant (Doiron): Bill No. 100, *An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act*, read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

An overview?

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

An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act would implement recommendations made by the conflict of interest commissioner in 2015 and would extend the cooling off period for ministers from six to 24 months in alignment with Canadian best practices.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *Government Advertising Standards Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant: Bill No. 101, *Government Advertising Standards Act*, read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

An overview, hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

The *Government Advertising Standards Act* would establish standards for government advertisements and establishes the role of auditor general in upholding those standards. It further requires all government advertisements to state that they are paid for by the government of Prince Edward Island.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Climate Leadership Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Summerside-South Drive, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant: Bill No. 102, *An Act to Amend the Climate Leadership Act*, read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, an overview?

Ms. Lund: *An Act to Amend the Climate Leadership Act* would shift our emission reduction target from less than 1.4 megatons by 2030 to less than 1.2 megatons by 2030 to bring us in line with the targets established by last year's IPCC report.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I beg leave to introduce a bill to be intituled *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act* and I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Mermaid-Stratford, that the same be now received and read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant: Bill No. 104, *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*, read a first time.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: *An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act* would require the employment standards board to consider measures of poverty when advising the Lieutenant Governor in Council on a change to the minimum wage, and would make public the board's report regarding a change to that minimum wage.

Motions Other than Government

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

With unanimous consent of the House, I now call Motion No. 13 to be read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Do we have unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

Ms. Bell: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Clerk: Motion No. 13: Ending the Practice of Heckling.

WHEREAS heckling is defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “[harassing] or [trying] to disconcert with questions, challenges, or gibes”;

AND WHEREAS a survey conducted by Samara Canada shows that women legislators report being heckled more frequently, and that heckling is overwhelmingly viewed as a problem;

AND WHEREAS members of the Legislative Assembly should demonstrate decorum in the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS alternatives exist for demonstrating disagreement with legislative colleagues;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge its members to refrain from heckling.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

I’d like to begin my remarks on this important motion; one that I really hope receives unanimous support from all of my colleagues assembled here in the House.

With a quote from Graham Steel’s fascinating and deeply instructive memoir of

his time in Nova Scotia government entitled *What I learned about politics* – in his book Mr. Steel says this: I have never worked in a place as thoroughly dysfunctional as the Nova Scotia Legislature. 51 grown-ups act in ways that, if repeated in any other workplace, would get them fired. Visitors to the gallery often go away shaking their heads in bewilderment, groups of schoolchildren watch grown-ups act in ways that they, the children, have been repeatedly told not to act.

And while Mr. Steel, here, is of course referring to his experience in a very specific legislative context in a different province, his assessment of the incivility of his colleagues is a sadly fitting description of poor behaviour routinely seen in assemblies across our country, including, regrettably, our own here in Prince Edward Island.

Indeed, while we Islanders pride ourselves on a certain shared decency, a mutual respect shown in the face of disagreement, all too often our discussions and debates here in the House are debased by a type of incivility that I think we can all agree would be considered completely inappropriate in any other professional context.

I am, of course, referring to the practice of heckling, which could be defined here in the legislative context as the interruption of opposing members with interjections, be they questions, challenges or jibes, in an attempt to harass or disconcert.

My colleagues here, who like myself, have had the pleasure and privilege of serving in previous assemblies know exactly the behaviour to which I am referring. The shouting, the interruptions, the so-called ‘friendly reminder’ of the record of government’s both past and present, the hurling of insults, often personal in nature, et cetera.

I can understand in a way the impetus for such behaviour. As elected representatives, we are passionate about our work and the work that we do to address the issues facing Islanders, and we are all eager to have those concerns and viewpoints of our constituents made known in this House.

A lively spirit of debate, after all, is an essential ingredient of politics, whether it be

here on the Island or anywhere else. But, Islanders also understand the value of mutual respect and civility in the political forum, and of looking past political differences in order to serve the common good. They understand that there is a stark difference between respectful debate on important issues, and the type of theatrical outbursts that are so counterproductive and corrosive to our legislative processes and our work here in this House.

This is a special place. Islanders have elected us all in the hopes that we might use this venue to represent them, and by that I don't mean just represent them in the sense that I represent the citizens of New Haven-Rocky Point, but that we represent their desire for decency and respect and for the tradition's history and good natured character of this province and in making that commitment to suitably carry out the Legislative work that is so essential to improving their lives.

Heckling is decidedly not conducive to this work. Indeed, as part of a 2015 study on behaviour in the House of Commons, which I tabled this afternoon, entitled: "Cheering or Jeering? Members of Parliament Open Up About Civility in the House of Commons" the Samara Report for Democracy surveyed Members of the 41st Parliament on their experiences with heckling in the House of Commons in Ottawa. A considerable number, about 20%, of respondents reported that heckling, not only affected their job performance in the House, but even reduced their willingness to participate.

This is especially true for women in parliament, an incredibly important point to which my esteemed colleague from the riding of Charlottetown-Belvedere will address momentarily.

Moreover, the majority of MPs surveyed as part of this study recognized that the public views such behaviour in a very negative light and that it reflects poorly on us as individuals and on parliament as a whole. In other words, not only is heckling counterproductive to the work we do here, it also lessens the work in the eyes of the public that we are here to represent.

I know that I have talked about this issue before, but I really do feel that it bears

reemphasizing. We can do politics better here on Prince Edward Island, we can find ways to express our differing opinions and positions on issues without resorting to shouting to insults and to confrontational language. We can, in other words, disagree without being disagreeable. Object without being objectionable.

Over the course of the past election, the public made it clear to the leaders of every party that they were tired of the divisive tone that so often colours our political debate. Islanders are looking to see a more collaborative approach to government. An approach that was, much to my pleasure, endorsed by the Premier during the campaign and has so far been the hallmarks of his government.

This is indeed encouraging, however, we must remember that without a foundation of respectful behaviour and civility in the Legislative Assembly, such collaboration is just not possible. During the election, I asked my fellow party leaders to commit to refraining from heckling and jeering in the House, just as I and my colleague representing Charlottetown-Belvedere have refrained from such behaviour in the past.

I urge all members of this House to take on this commitment so that we might more effectively serve the people of Prince Edward Island and more accurately reflect their values.

Allow me to conclude my remarks by repeating a quote from Benjamin Disraeli, one that I have used before when addressing this issue that while short I think is evergreen in its relevance: "Courage is fire and bullying is smoke."

Instead of giving off this smoke that obscures the important issues facing Prince Edward Island, let our conduct and behaviour as legislators provide the fire and thus the illuminating light that is essential to effecting real, positive change in this House.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I call on the Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere to second the motion.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you to my colleague representing the riding of New Haven-Rocky Point for introducing this motion, which I think is a valuable first step in establishing a new spirit of mutual respect and collaboration here in the Legislative Assembly.

As a member lucky enough like many of us here, to have had the privilege to represent our constituents in previous sittings at the Legislature, I can attest to the need for setting a collegial tone early in a session. I believe that this motion is an opportunity to do just that.

While I do not doubt that my colleagues in previous sessions came to this place with the sincere intention of conducting themselves in a civil, respectful manner, all too often the hyper partisan nature of our politics reduced discourse in the House to a level far below what would be considered acceptable in any other public context.

How often have you heard this in reference to the behaviour of members of the Legislative Assembly that children wouldn't be allowed to behave that way in the classroom: talking over each other, having loud side conversations, or ignoring the person speaking. How about the irony of politicians wearing pink for Anti-Bullying Day when they are also trading personal insults that would be considered bullying behaviour on the school playground? How about behaviour that would not be tolerated in any other workplace and may even be contrary to the spirit of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

Sadly, such behaviour has too often become a feature and not a bug of our legislative processes and debates.

I believe that Islanders want to see a different mode of conduct from our representatives in this House, and indeed over the course of this past election numerous members of the public identified divisive rhetoric and partisan acrimony as barriers standing in the way between our province and the real and positive change it so greatly needs.

Now I know there may be a tendency among some people here to say, well heckling and jeering are far from ideal modes of

behaviour, but they are necessary byproducts of how we speak to each other in this space – simply a natural consequence of the competitive nature of our politics, not only here in PEI, but across Canada and the larger democratic world.

Perhaps some might say that those who take issue with heckling ought to, for lack of a better way of putting it, toughen up and get on with the work of representing their constituents. To that line of argument, I would stress the point made so eloquently by my colleague that the practice of heckling and jeering in Legislative Assemblies is not only disrespectful, but has been shown to have a deeply harmful affect on the important work that we do here as legislators.

Although already mentioned by my colleague, I think the findings from Samara Canada's 2015 survey of Members of the 41st Parliament of Canada on their experiences with heckling in the House of Commons are worth examining in a bit more detail. Of the Members of Parliament surveyed, 69% believe heckling is a problem in the House of Commons, but 72% of MPs admitted to heckling.

Many MPs commented that heckling contributes to Canadians perceptions that politics is irrelevant and dysfunctional. We are compared unfavourably to school children as one MP surveyed so aptly put it.

MPs primarily reported hearing heckling on the subject being debated, their ideological positions and their party, but women MPs also reported hearing heckles about gender, age, language, religion, and even their appearance.

Heckling can affect the work done in the House. Twenty per cent of respondents, especially those who are female, reported that heckling not only affects their job performance in the House, but reduces their willingness to participate at all.

So not only does this study suggest and in fact confirm that heckling and jeering make us less effective as legislators, but so too does this behaviour serve to create a male-dominated atmosphere but disproportionately hostile to female legislators, who at which in turn,

disproportionately affects the job performance of female legislators and reduces their willingness to participate in debate.

Women already face unique barriers to political participation.

As highlighted in the PEI Coalition for Women in Government's report from 2009 that we have referenced so often in this House entitled: *Whose Job is it Anyway?*, women disproportionately see engagement and legislative politics as incompatible with family responsibilities and achieving a suitable work-life balance.

Since the release of that study we have seen some really encouraging signs that more women are participating in politics here on the Island. Our recent provincial election saw an increase in the number of female candidates. For the first time, 30% of those running for office during the election were women.

Our opposition caucus, which of course includes myself, and four other wonderful, intelligent and competent female members is a further testament to this progress. But our work is not done.

It is essential that we continue to make the arenas of Island politics, not just this Legislative Assembly but also our provincial boards, agencies, commissions, and municipal councils more inclusive, more diverse, more representative of the totality of Islanders' experiences, backgrounds, and viewpoints.

Over the course of this past election, the leaders of all four major parties, including our new Premier, pointed to the importance of further incorporating the perspectives of women into government. By continuing to heckle, a practice proven to be more problematic for women than their male counterparts, we are directly impeding this progress.

A shift in behavior can and should be supported by new rules and structures, both preventative and disciplinary. However, all hon. members must also recognize their own individual responsibility to make the legislature a more respectful and effective workplace and only together can we elevate

the tone of our legislative discourse. This is not about taking the passion out of politics. Debates can and should be interesting and even emotional but it can and should happen without personal insults or partisan rights.

In the end, I am happy to second the motion brought forward by my colleague, representing the riding of New Haven – Rocky Point and I ask that all of us here do the same, in hopes that we may start to build a foundations of a more respectful, civil and inclusive Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister Responsible for Status of Women.

Ms. Compton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today in support of Motion No. 13, ending the practice of heckling.

We're all here as part of the Legislative Assembly because we are deeply passionate about Prince Edward Island. Despite our differences, this remains true for each one of us. It is important that we encourage diversity in our Legislature. After all, we all share the common goal of making this province a better place to live, work and play. Now more than ever, with an increase focus on collaboration, we need to ensure the Legislative Assembly is respectful and open to all perspectives.

As Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, there is interest in gender differences when it comes to heckling. I believe in encouraging women to run for public office and, really, for all people to run for public office and have that interest, and to participate in this democratic process.

The report of the standing committee on the status of women, titled *Elect Her: A road map for improving the representation of women in Canadian politics*, was released in April of 2019. In the report's list of observations, the committee asked that its chair send a letter to the speaker of the House of Commons to ask the speaker, to consider studying initiatives that could prevent and discourage the use of gender-based heckling in the House of Commons.

This is not an issue unique to Prince Edward Island. According to research presented by Dr. Margaret Anne Amaro at A Bold Vision, which a number of us attended the women's leadership conference in Brudenell, she referenced in reference by the Prince Edward Island coalition to women in government: When gender parity is achieved, women and men tend to work more collaboratively, generate more creative ideas, draw from multiple perspectives and divides the best solutions to problems.

We are all working together in the best interest of all Islanders and we need to do so in a respectful and efficient manner.

Earlier this month, meetings between ministers responsible for the status of women and national Indigenous leaders and representatives offered an important opportunity for leadership from coast to coast to coast. Discussions included shared priorities, strengthening collaboration and working together to make life better for all Canadians.

In this spirit of collaboration, ministers and national indigenous leaders and representatives came together to discuss women's economic and political leadership, a commitment made at the 36th annual meeting of the federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for the status of women in October 2018.

Two panel discussions took place, one of which was how to advance in opportunities for women's political leadership. Different perspectives and, really all perspectives and ideas, are the key to achieving our goals together. We think we're off to a great start and I support continued, respectful collaboration.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Premier: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, would like to add my voice to those who will be supportive of this motion. I think it's a very important motion being put forward and I commend the Leader of the Opposition and the Member from

Charlottetown-Belvedere for bringing it forward.

I believe we are in a new day of politics here on Prince Edward Island and I'm very proud to play a very small role in that. I think all of us here as legislators, all of us who are involved in the political process have experienced in the last six to eight to 10 months, a changing of attitudes among Islanders. I really believe Islanders are very proud of what we have brought together as legislators in here and they are really, really supportive of the new approach that we're putting forward. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy a good heckle as much as anyone else, I could have sat here during the response to the Speech From the Throne and I had eight or nine really good heckles on the top of my mind that I would only have been too glad to put forward. But, I do believe that it's important for us to set a better tone in here and to set a better example for the Islanders who are watching and for the Islanders that we represent.

The comments that the Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere raised are important because Islanders are paying attention and Islanders don't want, what I would dare to say, that childish behavior and I don't like to use that word because my two youngest children, I wouldn't put up with them with that type of behavior so why would we do the same in here?

We are going to have lots of disagreements in here. We are going to have spirited disagreements and that's what this legislature is supposed to be. It's not about all agreeing on things and all wanting to be the person who's right. But to do so respectfully and to do so collaboratively is what were supposed to do here and that's what I'm happy to put forward.

I did have the opportunity to go to the House of Commons recently and I watched in absolute horror to try and keep pace with what was actually going on. It was alarming to me that we've allowed our politics to erode to the point where nobody listens to what is going on. The House of Commons, I would say, should be one of the most important venues for the business of Canada to take place and it is a romper room in there. It's sad that we've allowed it and it's

now become acceptable it seems for that type of behavior to take place.

At the end of that, I was introduced by the Speaker of the House and was given a very gracious standing ovation by all members of that Legislature and that was very personally, nice for me. But I think that ovation was for Prince Edward Island, I think it was for all of us, because I do think in the April election we set a different tone with our politics.

I did at supper time sit with the Leader of the Opposition and we were talking a little bit about this. People still come up to us, and they did tonight, and they were like 'wow, you're sitting together'. 'You're actually civil and you get along?' Actually I think we all get along in here and we should get along. That doesn't mean we agree on everything. That doesn't mean I agree with everything he said in his response to the Speech From the Throne but that's fine. That's what it's supposed to be. I look forward to getting up at my own time and to responding to some of those things and that's what this venue is for.

I think that the other thing I would like to add because when I started in this journey in November, I was told that you couldn't be kind. I was told you couldn't do it this way and here I stand, I think as proof, I think you can do it this way. Being kind doesn't mean you're weak, being kind doesn't mean you're afraid of something. Being kind is actually a generous feeling of a generous nature because I want to hear the questions. I want to hear what other people say. I want to understand the basis of where the questions come from. So I don't want to just stand here and give you a textbook answer to a question that I don't know where its coming from, I want to learn more about it and I think that's the example that we have to set here.

I'm very proud to stand here and support this motion. I do think it's a call to our better nature. I think the former Premier made that four years ago and I think if that got the ball rolling, if the entrance in this legislature of the now Leader of the Opposition got that ball rolling, then let's keep it rolling, lets live up to the standard that's been started so long ago. Let's make this a better place and

I'm very happy to support this motion, so thank you for introducing it.

Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition to close the debate.

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

I'm greatly encouraged, not just by the words that I've heard from the other side of the House, and even saying that feels a little odd today, but by everything that has happened in this Legislature today and again for those of us who have sat in this house.

Absolutely as the Premier said, heckling can be fun. It can be funny, it can add spice to the proceedings here but more often than not that is not what heckling does. Heckling debases debate, detracts from the work we're trying to do here and unbalance for sure. I feel that the absence of heckling is going to improve, not only the work we do but, Islander's sense of who we are and the work that we're doing here and of this institution.

So I want to thank all of those members who spoke to the motion and I look forward to unanimous support.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Now, is everyone ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: Now I'll call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You've got me popping up and down today.

Speaker: Yep.

Ms. Bell: I now call that Motion 14 be read.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Ms. Bell: Sorry, with unanimous consent.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk: The Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park moves seconded by the member from Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere the following motion.

WHEREAS sex education is vital to the understanding and respect of self and others and the development of healthy relationships;

AND WHEREAS Prince Edward Island has taken significant steps in supporting diverse identities including same-sex marriage, human rights protection for gender identity and gender expression, and in-province access to abortion;

AND WHEREAS elements of Prince Edward Island's sexual health curriculum have not been updated to reflect social progress and the realities of the present-day;

AND WHEREAS students need access to up-to-date and accurate information that includes dynamics of consent, healthy relationships and healthy sexuality; the range of sexual orientations and sexual behaviours; the many ways to build a family; the spectrum of gender identities, experiences and expressions; and the many ways people communicate about sex and sexuality, including using the Internet and social media;

AND WHEREAS students need culturally sensitive messages that respect the diversity of students' backgrounds; that promotes good sexual health in self and others; and encourages safe and appropriate sexual behaviour;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urges Government to develop a new, comprehensive, and up-to-date sexual health curriculum for Prince Edward Island students from K-12;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge Government to work with community groups in the development of this new curriculum.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

I'll ask the member from Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park to move the motion.

Ms. Bernard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Sexuality is a huge part of our identity as human beings.

Our bodies, relationships, feelings, boundaries, confidence, understanding and knowledge play a huge role in who we are.

Sexual health is often considered on a moral and political level, which makes no sense to me.

Morals and politics have no place as we consider an individual's sexuality and their right to learn about it and grow healthily. Ten years ago the Public Health Agency of Canada provided this synopsis of what should be compulsory for all students in considering comprehensive sexual health education.

Sexuality is an essential and positive and part of the total well-being of young people, and as a result, comprehensiveness of sexual education for children, adolescents and young adults involves far more than prevention of unintended pregnancy and STI/HIV education.

Sexual health should include an understanding of developmental changes, such as puberty, rewarding interpersonal relationships, developing communication skills, setting of personal limits, developing media literacy, challenging of stereotypes, prevention of STI/HIV, effective contraception methods, information on sexual assault and coercion, sexual orientation, and gender identity, and a critical examination of evolving gender roles and expectations. We must update our sexual health curriculum through a comprehensive sexual health education curriculum. Such a curriculum should be compulsory and age appropriate and accommodates all students across sexual and gender differences.

This will be quite a change from some of our current curriculum that still defines marriage as being between a man and a woman and that defines a family as being a mom, a dad and their children. There is no mention of the fluidity that exists within these traditional roles and genders.

Can you imagine the relief and normalcy many of our youth would feel if we addressed this in schools? What would it do for their well-being and safety?

Learning about healthy sexual relationships and practices is a critical task for the developing brain of adolescents. Youth receive varying information, or they don't, from their parents, so it is imperative we take this on in education.

When teenagers have not experienced this type of curriculum, they often turn to porn sites for pedagogy, and this often makes up their introduction to sexual education.

When this happens, teens are left confused and they misunderstand what constitutes healthy sexual relationships and consent, as they struggle to piece together what they have seen on their computer screen into real life.

This is hugely problematic, in particular in a world where sexual and dating violence are huge concern.

When sexually active youth do not have adequate comprehensive sexual health education, they can act impulsively and recklessly.

As Dr. Andre Grace, whose report I tabled earlier, states: 30% of 15 to 17-year-olds in Canada have had sexual intercourse at least once and 9% have had sexual intercourse prior to the age of 15, so this education, crucial in high school and before – although most of the research that I have found suggests that this age is earlier and the numbers higher.

Many of these students are not using protection and have sexual intercourse with multiple partners. This of course translates into unwanted pregnancy and imagine the impact on a young woman's life, her mental health and her future.

Our gonorrhea and syphilis numbers have doubled on PEI in the last two years. We know that one in five women will experience some form of sexual assault while attending college or university and we know that numbers of sexual assaults on PEI are extremely high and those are only the ones that have been reported.

There is currently no measurement to see what our Island students understand about this crucial aspect of their identity and way of being in this world. Many high school teachers I have spoken with are shocked at the lack of knowledge students have. In this the age of the #MeToo movement and the blending of different cultures through immigration on to our Island, it is important that we offer this honest and open education.

Any time you turn on the news there are stories of gender-based violence and sexual assault. This is the norm in their world, and we must teach them the difference and how to protect themselves.

We must teach them about age-appropriate consent at a young age and continue working consent as they grow. We must teach them about healthy relationships and the role they play. We must teach them to set boundaries and do so confidently. We must teach them about gender and the great diversity within it.

I was encouraged when Mary Beth Rogers with the Public Schools Branch led her team to add some wonderful supports to current outdated curriculum with the inclusion of Kinley Dowling's microphone. This addition seems a little out of place in a system where the curriculum promotes abstinence from all sexual activity and behavior. It is out of context and sends mixed messages.

We cannot stop here and think our job is done.

A comprehensive sexual health education is crucial in our ever-changing world where anything we need to know is at our fingertips, regardless of whether it is truthful or not.

We must teach our children to think critically and give them accurate open and honest information and discussion about their bodies and health. It is our responsibility as responsible adults who care about the health and futures of our Island youth. I tabled a document that explains in detail why what we are doing is not near enough, and the detriment that this brings.

As a school counselor, I had the pleasure of being a part of a professional development workshop Dr. Andre Grace put on. He stressed the importance of including youth in these discussions with the creation of the program as we move towards this comprehensive sexual health education – and he offers concrete steps to help us get there. He has also volunteered to come help.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I'll call on the hon. Member from Charlottetown Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a pleasure to second this motion brought forward by my very knowledgeable colleague from Charlottetown-Victoria Park today.

Probably one of the first questions that we hear when we talk about sexual health and sexual health education is why should we be doing this in schools at all. Why doesn't that happen at home with the parents or in the community?

As a parent of a preteen daughter, I can tell you that even though I feel myself to be very well informed on this, I am not able to keep up with the amount of information that I need to have and the range of information that I need to be able to provide to her. Nor, can I do so, in a way that makes me comfortable that she is getting all the information that she should have in the range and scope of the contents that this motion covers.

In particular, it's about in this case not just about sexual health, but about mental health. One of the key things that we hear when we talk about the need to update this curriculum is how important it is that it is fully inclusive and representative of our current times. A space where we have, not just different cultural norms now in our community with different cultural backgrounds, but a significant impact of digital media and connectivity and the access to information at a much younger age than perhaps any of us would like to admit that we even remember from our own childhoods.

But also, the important piece around conversations that have changed and for the

better where we are talking about things like #MeToo, and the impact of consent and what that means in terms of how we need to educate and support our children to make those informed decisions, and understand, not just in terms of how they conduct themselves in intimate relationships, but how they conduct themselves with their peers on a day-to-day basis.

In fact, this reflects much more closely than we might even like to admit to some of the things we talked about on the previous motion – about how people speak to each other and the spaces that they make for themselves. So education in this case is something that we also need to reflect on. It's not just something that happens with one or two uncomfortable classes in Grade 6, but with something that needs to be integrated into our educational curriculum from Kindergarten through to Grade 12 and beyond.

Again, like it or not, whether we are parents of young children or not, these educational experiences are going to happen for our children whether we provide them or not. I would much prefer that they happen in a curriculum that has been informed by experts in the community and educational experts and health experts than from a very, very dodgy source on the Internet. Your children will find it regardless.

So understanding that and being able to speak comfortably about this and being able to speak comfortably about all of the aspects of this and all of the aspects that may not make us feel comfortable – so that may be about experiences that are not ours and that's also a critical piece of this conversation.

If we can't understand, that there is no way we could educate our children about something that we have never experienced or don't know anybody who could share it, then how can we support them appropriately and educationally if they then choose to choose the path which isn't one that we are familiar with?

More and more as we see that there is a broadening of our understanding of things like gender roles and gender expression and sexual expression and sexuality, there is a broader and broader scope of what we need

to be able to support and cover in that educational experience.

Integration into what we know has already been really good work done in student wellbeing, whether that be through direct mental health services or in the overall wellbeing of students through curriculum that supports the varied recognition of what people need for health, must include this aspect and recognition of health.

Times have changed and by developing and delivering an updated and relevant sexual health curriculum that is inclusive and reflective of the many, many different experiences and diversities that we have in this amazing province, we are more likely to be able to produce healthy, diverse, and educated and rich children who will grow up to be healthier adults in our society. Really that's what we want.

I am so pleased to be able to second this motion today and to speak to this from the experience of a parent who is struggling with these things and doing my best, but would most definitely support an updated curriculum, one that is reflective of our current status and one that does look to where the expertise sits which is across our entire community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning.

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

It is a pleasure to rise and speak to this motion, and I really commend the Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park for bringing this motion forward.

I, of course, do have two children: a daughter aged 12 and a son who is age nine. It's always been our intention as parents, my wife Karen and I, to really prepare the child for the path not prepare the path for the child. Of course, sexual education would be one of those areas where you really want your children to know what's going on.

In fact, I do know that there is a fairly robust sexual health curriculum in our schools right now. I'm not saying that it's completely up to date, but my son came home last year as an eight year old on the bus, and I said: Hey

lad, how's it going today? And he said, don't assume my gender. I said, all right, well you know. They are definitely talking about these things in school and it is getting across.

In Kindergarten I believe they're talking about basic topics like respect for your body, privacy, and respect for other people. Right now in Grade 1 to 9 there is a mandatory and fairly comprehensive curriculum and in Grade 10 to 12, there is an elective course.

Now, the goal of this current sexual health curriculum is to enable students to make well-informed healthy choices and to develop skills that contribute to the wellbeing of themselves and others. So we know, as you mention, that students learn sexual health education and other health (Indistinct) information from many sources, whether it be at home, at school, through their peers and the community, film and TV shows, traditional media, social media.

My kids tend to watch a lot of YouTube, and not something maybe I should broadcast, but that's one area where they're definitely getting their information.

Our health curriculum in the province of Prince Edward Island provides our students with accurate and reliable information. The outcomes of our sexual health curriculum are broad and deep to allow healthy and open discussions and societal concerns to occur in the classroom.

Now to be clear, the Grade 10 to 12 curriculum probably is a little out of date, as you mentioned and the Grade 1 to 9 curriculum does need some renewal as well. We know there is more work to do, but the great news is we reached out to the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning and that there is already work underway in this area.

As our world becomes more diverse, we know our sexual health curriculum needs to be comprehensive and evidence-based allowing all students to see themselves.

So as I mentioned, work is already underway. I am very pleased to say, you will be glad to hear that the department is working on a renewal plan for our health curriculum for Grades 1 to 9, and we've also

identified that the 10 to 12 course has an older curriculum and will need to be renewed as well.

On the Grade 1 to 9 front, and this will be the guidelines for 10 to 12 as well, the renewal involves researching in the best and current practices across Canada and the world and the department is consulting with Dr. André Grace who is a Canadian Research Chair in Sexual and Gender Minority Studies, a professor at the University of Alberta.

It is following Sex Information and Education of Council Canada framework guidelines, updated in 2019, and also, engaging with key stakeholders and partners like the PEI Human Rights Commission, the PEERS Alliance, the Mi'kmaq Confederacy, the Women's Network, the Department of Health and Wellness, and Interministerial Women's Secretariat.

As you can see this renewal plan is quite thorough and the department is very mindful of all components that should be considered and included. Of course, if there is something that you see as missing or any of the stakeholders you talk to find is missing, please feed that back into the department and we will include it.

I'm pleased to share in terms of timelines, that this curriculum will enter a pilot phase in 2019-2020. That's for Grades 1 to 3 and 7 to 9, as well in that 2019-2020 pilot, then hopefully, full implementation in 2020-2021. Grades 4 to 6 will have the pilot phase in 2020-2021 and be implemented in 2021-2022.

So the department is really taking action here getting some good work done.

When it comes to the Grade 10 to 12 sexual health curriculum, based on this motion, I'm going to ask my department to review the timelines for potential acceleration of that renewal – sorry, potential acceleration of the Grades 1 through 9 renewal and also put a tentative timeline together for a 10 to 12 renewal, because I do believe that is important that we at least have that on our radar of when that will be done.

Furthermore, I really, really want to recognize the work that the department is

doing to specifically enhance and advance the LGBTQ2+ curriculum. We are providing our teachers with access to current 2SLGBTQ+ resources, guidelines and policies to support curriculum delivery.

In our sexual health curriculum, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of sexual orientation and develop interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect, and caring in order to have established healthy interactions.

Now the department has recently developed the resource known as the Microphone Project. I'm sure that the members across are probably aware of that. It stems from Kinley's "Microphone" song, which is – aside from being a great piece of art – is very, very informative and very emotionally moving, especially the video associated with it. That's in partnership with the PEERS Alliance that addresses gender norms. It is important to think about that, especially this time of year, when we do have, for example, the proms underway and I think that actually underlines the story that she bares out in the song.

Now the resources address the gender spectrum and recognizes that a person's gender is the result of a complex interrelationship between at least three dimensions, body, identity and expression.

So Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning is also working with agencies like the Island's human rights commission to provide inclusive resources in Island classrooms at all levels. The most recent action item was insuring representation of inclusivity in novels in our high school libraries. It's great to see.

It really is clear that our department is working diligently, they're working and taking action right now, to improve our sexual health curriculum and based on the motion, perhaps we can do even more and I'm going to talk to the department and see if we can do more, to speed this along.

I agree, wholeheartedly, that our Island students need access to comprehensive and evidence-based information and that includes, the whole reigns of sexual orientation, the many ways to build a family,

spectrum of identities and of course, the way people communicate about sex and sexuality.

Therefore Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to support this motion and I commend the actions already being taken by the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning to improve the sexual health curriculum and hopefully we can do even better and improve more.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I welcome this motion and I want to thank the member for bringing up this very important subject. I wanted to talk about it in a slightly different vein however, being the Minister of Health and Wellness, and not overly responsible for the education of our young people on Prince Edward Island, but I am a firm believer in lifelong learner and I'm a firm believer in providing the necessary services, particularly through the health department as well, to help all Islander's of all ages.

Sex education and sexual health are very important topics and we, as a government, have a responsibility to be proactive in providing services in these areas. My department is committed to promoting the health of Islanders in all its forms, including physical health and mental health.

Sexual Health is an important part of that duty. The Province of Prince Edward Island has taken many progressive steps in this area. Our public health nursing staff delivers and support sexual health education and information in schools across the province, working, of course, alongside teachers and other education staff. This collaborative partnership has been in place for years, benefiting many, many young Islanders.

Additionally, our sexual health services and women's health services have seen considerable investment and planning, in just the last number of recent years. I want to thank the many health care providers who work so hard to deliver these services.

The Women's Wellness Program and Sexual Health Services offer a person-centered care approach, to support Islander's in need of information and education about sexual health and reproductive services. Services being delivered as part of the Women's Wellness Program include, sexual health education and counseling, sexually transmitted infection screening, testing, treatment and follow up, contraception counseling, pregnancy testing and options counseling, prenatal care for patients without a primary care provider, menopause care for women without a primary care provider, prenatal and postpartum mental health services, pregnancy loss support and fertility counseling.

Prince Edward Island sexual health services offer care to people of all genders, orientations and ages, at sites across our great province. At our sexual health walk-in clinics, service is available to all individuals with no appointments, or referrals required. In fact, last year, nearly 4,000 Islander's of varying ages and genders accessed sexual health services here on Prince Edward Island. This is clearly a service that Islanders need, they want and they are using.

I'd urge anyone interested in issues around sexual health, pregnancy or fertility, to visit the sexual health pages of the Health PEI website to see what services are available.

Sexuality, reproduction and relationships are part of what makes us human. As Islanders mature from childhood into adulthood, their relationship to sexuality changes and they will naturally need both education and guidance. Accurate, appropriate information is vital to sexual health and the information that our Islander's learn as children will inform their ability as adults to make healthy choices about sex, sexuality and reproduction.

Sex education can help people develop respect for themselves and others. This might help development of healthy adult relationships. Our young Islanders need and deserve information that is accurate and comprehensive. Community groups certainly offer an important program to Islander's and have a great deal to add to the discussion. In addition to the advice from medical professionals, educators, social

workers and academics, it's important to present this information in a way that represents the diversity of students' backgrounds, beliefs and experiences.

I thank the opposition for bringing forward a motion that seeks to protect and educate young Islanders in a very important aspect of life and I will be supporting this motion.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Next speaking to the motion is the Leader of the Third Party.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and certainly I would like to take a moment to stand in support of the motion brought forward tonight by the two opposition members from the Charlottetown area.

I must admit it's been a number of years since my own four children have left the school system, but I do recall the sexual health education portion to their education a number of years ago. So to hear an educator on the floor of the Legislature to say that this is the time that it needs to be modernized and updated, I'll take that for what it's worth and support her comments on that. Obviously you know, our Island children do have diverse needs when it comes to sexual health education. Being introduced during the K level right through to the 12 level, if that is something that needs to be modernized, brought up to today's standards, I'm fully in support that that work gets done.

I must admit that I did find it a little confusing when the minister was trying to explain at what levels they are now, either K-4 was good but 4-10 was bad, but it was encouraging that he will look into it with the department and try to encourage that they put a bit of a ramp up in speed. I did hear him say that he has great Internet at his house because he watches YouTube, so that's good to hear.

But certainly, obviously we like to stand in support of it, I think there has been a lot of work done in the formation of this motion, it's very well done and certainly the third party will be looking to support it as well.

Thank you.

Speaker: Next speaking to the motion will be the hon. Member from Mermaid-Stratford.

Ms. Beaton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to speak to this motion because I believe that this is something that is truly required, just as an aid to help parents. I'm a single mom, so the onus is on me in order to bring my daughter to certain phases in her life, where she has enough information in order to be able to move forward. I think it's amazing that were talking about a family is not your traditional family of a mother, a father and siblings.

Every family is very different these days and my daughter has experienced an elementary school of children not understanding that. So I am encouraged by hearing that we are going to address this and we're going to update this and I really think that we need to understand that children understand things at a much earlier age than we think that they can understand that. They are actually more capable of handling it then we are probably able to teach it.

So I think that this is an extremely important motion to help families guide their children through their younger years and I want to say thank you for bringing it forward because parents like me can use all the help they can get, so I wanted to say thank you.

Speaker: Next speaking to the motion is the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

We're pushing boundaries in the Legislature today. We're taking ourselves beyond comfort levels, whether that be in the decorum between us, or talking about subjects that are generally not easy to talk about.

I'm British – talking about sex is not something that we do. But, we're not talking about sex here, we're talking about sexuality. We're talking about people learning about being comfortable in their own skin, about developing relationships with other people, and learning about themselves and the world around them and surely, that is what the education system

should be about – about learning comfort with who you are and with the world in which you live.

For too many children, this is a topic which is not comfortable. We do it very poorly here in North America. We look to some European countries; I'm thinking of the Netherlands in particular, they introduced comprehensive sexual education as young as four years of age.

At that point, they're talking about simply relationships with other people – other people in your class, within your family, in your community, and what constitutes a healthy relationship. Then by eight years of age they've expanded that to look at self-image, to talk about gender stereotypes, and sort of expanding the conversation age appropriate.

By 11 years of age, in that country they're talking about sexual orientation, they're talking about contraception and that sort of stepped approach appropriate to the age has had dramatic results on the population in that country.

They have very low incidences of teenage pregnancy, a fifth of what it is in the US, a fifth. Where, in many states, people are not encouraged to talk about sexual education whatsoever. In fact, abstinence is, in some states, the only sex education that children receive.

So talking about sexuality is about having open, honest conversations – not always comfortable conversations – but introducing them at an age where people can become comfortable with that, with a notion of being comfortable in your skin and with people around you. Again, in countries where they have comprehensive sexual education introduced at early ages, you find that not only is the sexual health of those individuals of that generation better, but that the health care system is saved from an awful a lot of expenses. This is about a human cost but also about a legislative, political cost.

The hug that resonated around the country – some people are comfortable with hugs. Some people are not, and part of sexual education is allowing people to say: I don't want to be touched. I'm not comfortable with that. Or whatever, but just having an

open conversation about that is what's important. Let's talk about this, and the place that we need to talk about this is in our schools, and the time we need to talk about this is at a very young age.

I'm encouraged by what the minister said that they're reviewing the curriculum here. But, I would encourage him to look – and his department to look – beyond North America. We are not the trendsetters here. We are not the ones who are doing this best in the world. Best practices are in Scandinavian countries. How often is that the case in our world?

Let's not raise another generation of Islanders who are uncomfortable with their own sexuality. Let's introduce the sexual curriculum program, comprehensive program here in Island schools, that teaches kids, that allows them to learn to be who they are, to love who they want to love, and to be comfortable in their own skins.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Is there anyone else wishing to speak to the motion?

If not, I'll ask the mover, the hon. Member from Charlottetown-Victoria Park, to close debate.

Ms. Bernard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As a school counselor and involved with the Pride community and the Pride parade and that community whenever I can be, I have a poster that hangs in my office that I made myself to put on my kid's wagon when I was pulling it in the pride parade that says 'love is love.'

I really am encouraged by everything I've heard here tonight. Thank you for that – and our students in our schools, thank us for that.

I was going to ask the minister about timelines and he got to it right away, so that's fantastic – and accelerating them, wonderful, and looking into the grade 10, 12 curriculums – I'm really encouraged by all of that. I just can't imagine being a family life teacher in our Island high schools with those extremely outdated, embarrassing resources and trying to teach from there.

I want to thank the teachers who are doing some of this cutting edge work, who are talking about gender, who are talking about all of those things when it is not necessarily reflected in the curriculum in that time and space, so thank you very much, everyone, for the support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Speaker: All those voting against this motion, signify by saying ‘nay.’

All those voting for this motion, signify by saying ‘aye.’

Some Hon. Members: Aye!

Speaker: Okay, motion is passed unanimously.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I seek unanimous consent for Motion No. 12 and seek that that motion now be read.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

Clerk Assistant: The Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere, moves, seconded by the hon. Member from Summerside-Wilmot, the following motion:

WHEREAS public housing is defined in Prince Edward Island as social, family or seniors housing that is funded and maintained by the province, or that is privately owned with a rental subsidy provided by the province on behalf of the tenant;

AND WHEREAS most public housing has a no pets or limited pet policy;

AND WHEREAS pets bring their guardians improved quality of life, companionship, support and engagement;

AND WHEREAS pet ownership has been proven to increase health outcomes for their guardians, alleviating depression, anxiety, PTSD, loneliness and isolation;

AND WHEREAS tenants should not have to choose between losing a home and giving up their pets;

AND WHEREAS responsible pet guardians should not be punished for the reckless behavior of others;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge government to end the restrictive policies against pet guardians in public housing and implement a default right to companion animals in public housing, with a reasonable exemption policy where pets can only be restricted under clearly defined circumstances.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere, to move the motion.

Ms. Bell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Those members of the House who were here prior to the current sitting will recall that there was some media around a constituent of mine who I worked with for many, many months. In fact, he was probably one of the first constituent cases that I ever took on fully when I was first elected and it started with him about his cats. And so the reason I'm standing today to bring forward this motion is because of the story of Eric and his cats.

But, what it uncovered in that very, very long fight to find Eric appropriate housing that he could afford, that would meet his needs as somebody with a limited income and a disability, and with two beloved, long-term companions of the feline variety, was how challenging, not only our housing situation is in PEI, but housing for people who have companion animals.

In other parts of the world it is having a pet as part of your right as a tenant is actually considered to be a civil right. So in the US, and in other countries, particularly in France, and with restrictions in other parts of the world, there is a presumed right to be

able to have a pet as part of your rights as a tenant.

We; however, in PEI do not have any legislation and regulations and so by default, not only private landlords, but also management of public housing, which is the province, frequently have a no-pets policy or a very restrictive pets policy, which limits pets to properties where they have been previously allowed and usually with some restrictions often around the size of pets. For example, a maximum for dogs is no more than 40 pounds, or only one animal per household or so on.

This isn't to say that there are publicly managed properties that don't allow pets, that's not the case. In fact, that is where now Eric lives – but getting him there was incredibly challenging and incredibly stressful.

Without the assistance of many people within government, including at the ministerial level, it would not have happened and that's not something most Islanders have the option to access.

So why do pets matter? Why would we want to stand in the House and talk about whether someone should or should not be able to have a cat?

It goes way further than having a companion. It goes to speaking to people's mental health. In fact, having a companion animal, particularly for seniors or for people who live on their own or are living with a mental or physical disability, often having a companion animal not from a medical perspective but purely as a companion, is actually a significant part of their long-term mental health and well-being.

While we don't have legislation for service animals – and we've also heard about this recently in the news as well, and in this case we're not speaking about service animals. We are talking just about the fact that pets are a part of what would be considered the importance of mental health for people in terms of how they are able to cope with some of the challenges that come to them in their lives.

That may be anxiety, PTSD, depression, or just loneliness and we've certainly had many

conversations here in the House and in our communities about the impact of loneliness and separation, as our communities begin to change.

Where we have a crisis not only in availability of housing and affordable housing, and almost zero vacancy rate, one of the first things to go are the things people can choose to not honour.

So, if somebody has the choice of having a home because there's a rental available but has restrictions on that which says that they have no pets, then they are having to make those very hard choices.

We know that the animal shelter here in PEI and in other places across Atlantic Canada are seeing a rise in owner-abandoned animals as people are having to make those difficult choices over and over again.

For Eric, the choice was that he was going to have his cats put down, so he turned down the first housing that he was offered because that wasn't an option that he was prepared to consider and that's not an option that many pet owners would choose to consider.

In fact, people remain, not only in substandard housing because that's all that they can get where a pet is allowed, but in fact, for women in particular who are in situations of domestic abuse, almost 40% of women will stay longer than they should in those situations and put themselves at risk and their families at risk because there are pets involved and they can't take the pets with them.

Both of our current shelters do the best they can to accommodate. But certainly if somebody is fleeing domestic abuse having to make emergency accommodations for your pets as well as for yourself, is certainly an additional risk and challenge that is a lot to ask.

When people are moving on from those challenging situations, again, availability rental opportunities means it's very unlikely that they're going to be able to find something that works for them and a family with children and with animals.

We see them, a family which has been put under huge risk and huge stress, going

through the breakup of a very difficult situation has that added situation of having to give up their beloved pets and animals.

To be clear, though, we know that landlords, whether public housing or private landlords, know that having tenants who have pets in the – sorry, lost my train of thought.

Landlords in public or private housing are often really clear that having tenants who have pets are the ones that are the most destructive to rental property. And I've been a landlord in the past and I can tell you what that looks like when you've got damage from inconsiderate pet owners.

So having a right to have a pet does not mean that you have a right to abuse your right as a tenant. It would be very important that any policy brought forward is inclusive for pet ownership, allows for, not only the recognition and appropriate disciplinary measures for tenants that abuse that, but also to always make exceptions. For example, we do have individuals who may have a chronic fear of dogs or a terrible allergy. There are always going to be other circumstances.

In fact, when we look at legislation that has been brought forward in other places it has those extenuating circumstances written into it, so it is not a catch all that allows people to abuse of the system. What it does, is it changes the priority to one of inclusiveness and tolerance to allow people to actually make more choices which are informing their lives in the way that they want to live them, but also one that allows them to be healthier and happier with better mental health, physical health, and hopefully, more flexibility in the choices that they have for accommodations.

This can start with a motion from the government to look at the policies currently in place for provision of public housing spaces, including those which are and managed by the province, as well as those contracted by the province to provide subsidized spaces through its various programs in social, family and seniors housing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Next speaking to the motion will be the Member from Summerside-Wilmot.

Ms. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to second this motion. The benefits that come from companionship of pets are well known and were well articulated by colleague. Dogs and cats, in particular, can reduce stress, lower anxiety and depression, ease loneliness and isolation and encourage exercise.

Allowing pets in public housing is a small thing we can do that can offer significant benefits to mental health.

Going door-to-door during the election campaign, I'm sure many of us have heard heartbreaking stories from people who had to choose between keeping their beloved pet who feels like a family member, or moving into appropriate housing.

I know I sat with one woman in my district whose husband had passed away and she found she could no longer keep her home was moving to senior's housing, but then discovered she would also have to get rid of her tiny dog and it was heartbreaking for her.

I think that devastation is something that's unnecessary for people.

This is a simple motion that has the potential to have significant impacts for a broad range of people and I thank my colleague for bringing it forward.

Speaker: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Belvedere to close debate.

Ms. Bell: Oh, no.

Speaker: Sorry, the hon. Minister from Social Development and Housing.

Mr. Hudson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do certainly want to thank my hon. colleague for bringing this motion to the floor. It is an important topic that has generated concerns and dialogue in the context of our current housing challenges.

I have to say that as a boy who grew up in a small, mixed farm in western Prince Edward Island, some of my greatest memories are of animals, the pets – and generally it was a

collie dog that I had as a pet growing up – and just the great experience in how, you would get home from school and there'd be this lovely dog just jumping up on this little guy and probably tipping him right over.

I certainly do appreciate the importance of pets to children, to seniors, to everyone. They are, in a lot of cases, pretty well like a part of the family, without a doubt. I do, like I say, know and appreciate that pets provide a great comfort to Islanders. Our new PC government is very supportive of pet-friendly public housing.

I have reviewed the motion as tabled, and have had conversations with my department about this matter. They have shared their concerns with me; but the second clause, as written, states that most public housing has a no pet or a limited pet policy.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, I'm pleased to inform this house that 90% of government-owned public housing properties are pet-friendly. Given that 90% of government-owned public housing properties are pet-friendly, I cannot support the motion as written.

What I will say is that as a government, certainly affordable housing is a priority for us. Again, I want to thank my colleague for bringing this motion forward. I would welcome the opportunity certainly to sit down with my colleague with –

Speaker: Hon. member, do you want to adjourn debate? We've got to go to third party time.

Mr. Hudson: Oh, okay.

Speaker: Adjourn the debate.

Mr. Hudson: I will adjourn the debate.

Speaker: Thank you.

Debate has been adjourned.

The hon. Member from Evangeline-Miscouche.

Mr. Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We would like to now move to Motion No. 1.

Speaker: Shall it carry?

Oh, sorry, unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Clerk: The hon. Member from Charlottetown-West Royalty moves, seconded by the hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness, the following motion:

WHEREAS wellness is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity;

AND WHEREAS in 2016, the provincial Department of Health and Wellness released a Wellness Strategy aimed at covering the time period 2015 to 2018;

AND WHEREAS in 2018, the provincial Chief Public Health Officer released the Children's Report 2017 which addressed wellness related concerns;

AND WHEREAS it is important that wellness play an important role in overall health policy and programming;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly refer wellness to the Standing Committee responsible for health for review.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Charlottetown-West Royalty.

Mr. McNeilly: Well, thank you very much.

It's a great pleasure to stand up as my first time to talk about anything in here. I want to say hello to my people in District 14, so I know they're watching.

This is great because wellness is often talked about, and I've often dealt a lot of things in my life about wellness, but it's not always committed to every day. It's a soft word. It's a word that follows health and wellness. It's always secondary; but I want to bring some light to what wellness means and what we can do here together to make it more substantial moving forward.

It's something that gives us hope. You know, you hope today everybody in your district is hopefully out going for a walk or doing something active. You can see yourself doing that. It gives you hope and it takes away barriers and it allows people to live healthier.

There are three barriers to being healthy. There are three barriers that Health Canada says stops us from being healthy and incorporating wellness. First one is time. We often look at our schedules and say: Hey, we don't have enough time to something. The second one is energy and the third one is motivation.

Motivation – one person with commitment is worth more than a hundred with only an interest. If you can move yourself from being interested in something about wellness and being committed to it you're going to get energy and you just have to make time for it.

I do believe in the coming months we need to move from a reactive model of health to more of a proactive one. There are some things in life that can't be avoided: catastrophic diseases, things that change lives, we don't have control over those things. We were all just at an event earlier about cancer and how important that is to each and every one of us. We don't have control over that; but the things we do have control over is your wellness.

It's important for you and your life and family's life, and if you increase your daily activity, you'll benefit in the following ways. Your quality of life's going to improve. Your quantity of life will improve. Your mental health – we've talked about that a few times today – will improve, as well as your emotional health. In other words, you're going to feel better, live longer, engage more, and be present in your life.

With this motion, I believe our government could build a better PEI investing and focusing on collective well-being to invest in three specific demographics: our young people who are forming positive relationships through movement, being active, creating social and building inclusive relationships around activity; adults who continue to be active to combat burnout,

mental health stresses, and get a break from trying to be everything to everyone; and our older adults to be social, laugh, engage, keep your bones healthy, exercise, and work on things like balance to prevent falls.

Everyone fits and it's up to each person to engage and reach out to promote walking, cycling, swimming, walks on the beach and healthy eating. There are few things are more important in life than being healthy and our well-being is so important. Don't wait to discuss the plan and take action today.

Our province is in an important position we can work on. I'll quickly to give you five quick points about things that I see us moving forward.

Awareness – we need to be aware this is important. The research points to reducing costs of our ballooning health budget. Action can stabilize, minimize, and reverse trends with some diseases and drastically improve heart health. We need to be aware that we can do more right now and take meaningful action.

Our government needs to consult and so do our people trying to get healthy. Reach out and discover friends being active, families to get healthier and get involved in activity groups. Our province can consult past strategies as mentioned before, establish and be leaders in the wellness movement for others to follow. We can be a beacon of hope wellness across the country and it can start anytime now.

Develop a plan to guide us the next ten years. For example, 15 minutes, if we can look at 15 minutes of increased physical activity for our school aged children, it would have amazing benefits for them all. It will help them develop the ability to self-regulate, making them better learners.

In your community, my goal would be to have a walking club in each and every district in Prince Edward Island. Some place you meet. You can picture it as an MLA, where would that spot be? Where 50 to 100 gather to meet and walk and be a part of something that's socially amazing and gets everyone healthy.

Our province needs to hire more professionals to deliver quality services, teach and work with people to change nutritional patterns and as well, lifestyle patterns. And reward – don't forget to reward yourself to keep in mind the journey is the reward and we should enjoy wellness, strive for inclusion, build a foundation away from computers and cell phones and one that has the entire family shooting baskets and pretending they're Kawhi Leonard or saving pucks like Carey Price.

An Hon. Member: Carey Price?

Mr. McNeilly: I know, Carey Price. Sorry.

An Hon. Member: Tuukka Rask.

Mr. McNeilly: Tuukka Rask, sorry. He's a Boston fan.

It's your choice, but life is precious to do nothing. Be bold. Let's get healthy together.

One stat I want to leave you with about your province: Our health budget 98.1% of our health budget goes towards Health PEI. 1.2% goes to the ministerial department budget. 0.6% to the chief public health officer and 0.1% goes to health promotion. We need to change this and change it quickly.

Thank you.

Speaker: The hon. Member from O'Leary-Inverness, to second the motion.

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

It is my great honour to be here to talk to this particular motion as a former minister of health in the legislature and the person responsible for trying to focus on the health and well-being of all Islanders.

It's certainly been a challenge. Obviously it's a large budget. I'd like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Minister of Health and Wellness in the province right now.

I know the task he's up against and wish him every bit of success in achieving some of the goals. I do believe it is very important

we develop a wellness strategy. When I was minister we had focused on developing a wellness strategy in the province and tried to make others to be more proactive when it came to health care issues and needs in the province.

I think it's really about trying to create a holistic approach to what's health. Like the hon. member next to me mentioned a little bit about taking the responsibility to get involved in clubs and activities – but unfortunately, sometimes working families, working individuals, people in professions that don't always provide them that opportunity and time.

We have to try to do what we can to make sure we have a society and a province that puts higher emphasis on activity and on overall holistic approach to one's health. I think you can see there's certainly lots of different impacts on a person's health. You know, we have to as – depending on the profession we're in, we have to devise ways to handle stress. Professions that we have here as politicians tends to be a very stressful occupation. So we have to come up with ways to just try to, at least in our own minds, be able to handle and deal with that.

We have to look at dealing with our work situations. We have to have a work and profession that tries to stimulate us to feel good and positive, that we're achieving good things within our community, for our family, creating wealth.

We have to focus on just our own mental well-being. Once again that's something that's always important. Sometimes you look at someone and they look like the physical peak of health then you find out a little more that they have lots of worries and issues that are causing them concerns and there's an inner health that comes with mental health and I think that's important.

Sometimes we have to learn with ways to have our own senses of humour, develop our own sense of confidence in what we do. You know, that's always a challenge.

I always had the opportunity as a former employment counsellor; I felt lots of people sometimes the ability to deal with drama in their lives is a deterrent to health. Sometimes there are all kinds of factors. It

would be a family member not doing real well and they're fearful of that. It might be a neighbour issue causing drama in lives, so people have to be able to focus and be able to handle drama.

The food we eat, as a former minister of agriculture and fisheries I think it's very important we're encouraging our farmers, our families out there to make sure they're accessing safe quality fresh food – that they have the skills to decide that they want to grow their own food, grow their own gardens and that they have the skillset to do that.

I know in the department of agriculture there's staff that will help with that.

I think another component of this is fresh air. I have the opportunity in the weekend to do a little bit of kayaking around Frederick's Cove in my part of the riding. You know, when you get some good fresh air it's a big difference. If you live in a more urban setting, sometimes a lot of emission from vehicles, issues around that nature that also will impact your health.

So there's a lot of determining factors that comes with health. Sometimes like the hon. member mentioned genetics can a factor. There's not a lot you can do. Some might have Multiple Sclerosis and things like that – those may be more genetically driven diseases. We need to provide department of health provide medications and supports to alleviate those types of issues.

I had the opportunity not too long ago the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Minister of Social Services and Housing were at the meetings at the community hospital in O'Leary – the foundation meeting. If there's ever a facility I feel a real beacon for a modern health care system in a rural community, is that facility.

We certainly have seen they deal with a lot of different factors. It's the base of operations for home care and supports in the community, and the whole region. It has a 13-acute-care bed facility there that focuses on restorative care, palliative care, and convalescent care. It takes the pressure points off the main referral hospitals, the QEH and Prince County Hospital. It's a

place people can go at a lower cost per bed to spend more time.

Their stays are longer but at some point in time they are going back home after their health care issues have been completed. It also has a long-term care beds there, there's 39 long-term care beds and one respite bed. There is over 134 people work there in providing good health care to the people who are in that facility as well as people who just have to access that facility for a short period of time. There's a training lab there that's the envy of any spot in Prince Edward Island. In fact, it was even one of the highlights mentioned in attracting and recruiting a physician to the area.

The foundation provided supports and to put the training lab in that has a model there that they can kind of make the model do certain things to determine the certain health issue and staff can go and get their skills upgraded before they have to implement it on the human being.

It has an x-ray and lab there that can do blood analysis, it can take tests for other specimens and what not and get that information right back. It can do that in a local community like O'Leary and it can get those referrals from anywhere in Prince Edward Island. It has a health centre there that provides mental health services, and those are the situations. There is a Wednesday walk-in clinic where anybody can walk in without a referral to get some mental health access to services.

These are the types of things that are very important in providing an overall level of healthcare services to all our Islanders. I think it was interesting to note in some of the statistics that I've heard, some of them were mentioned earlier, the cost of health care. But when you get into it as the former minister of health, we had some statistics by 2030 on Prince Edward Island, 26% of the Island population will be over the age of 65.

That's going to be a large number of people that are going to have to, be more likely to require more health care services, it's just a logical fact that the older you get they tend to require more of those services. But we can slow down that trend, we can make that trend different, we can make the outcomes different by implementing some of the

things that my hon. member next to me was saying about taking more responsibility to your health and trying to focus on things that will be a better social determinate and a better outcome.

When I was minister of health, I was always astounded by some of the costs that are affiliated with some of the health care requirements. Did you know that a liver transplant can cost about \$127,000; a lung transplant over \$200,000. That's the types of costs that you can deal with in this province and all of those costs are supported by the Province of PEI in delivering health care, whether that service is provided here or whether it's, most likely in those types of services are provided off-Island, that comes at a cost.

There's over 93,000 Islander's visit an ER room in Prince Edward Island in the run of a year. The cost of an ICU unit in Halifax for one day can range anywhere from \$2,500 to \$5,800 a day. So these are staggering figures that tend to come forward to us that this government or any other government in the future has to recognize it's going to be a challenge.

So I think it's really important that we try to, as a government, that is in this Legislature, that this government has to focus on is thinking about some of the preventative measures, like the hon. member would mention, a number of us were over at the cancer society, they had a presentation to us about some of the factors that they're dealing with. One of the things that I felt that I really would have liked to have seen, even when I was minister, was to try to focus on a smoking sensation plan. Right now, I think all we provide is a \$75 credit for smoking sensation products and I think that's something that I'd certainly encourage the hon. minister to look forward to and see if they can implement that, that we can provide that service under the drug formulary and have it covered for any Islander that decides that they want to quit smoking.

With issues certainly around flu vaccines, mandatory vaccinations is something that's a critical component of this. There certainly were investments when I was minister about having flu vaccines for Islanders. I know the government in its election platform, it was

one of those 120 promises was that it was going to provide the shingles vaccine free to Islanders. I encourage you to implement that, it's one of those things that can – I know when I was campaigning I had a constituent that had shingles in their eye, an extremely painful situation. As a former minister of health it wasn't a really good spot to necessarily knock on that door. But these are things that happen and I know they come with a cost, but I would say that this government has good financial resources and I'm hopeful that it will be able to implement some of those things.

The Western Sports Council, that's something that we have in my area and I know there's I think five of them all across the Island and the Western Sports Council really promotes healthy living and healthy activities. These are some of the things – I know, they have running clubs –

Speaker: Member do you want to adjourn debate?

Mr. Henderson: Okay, Mr. Speaker, before I expand too much on the virtues of the Western Sports Council, I will adjourn debate and continue at another time.

Thank you.

Speaker: I'll call upon Morrell-Donagh.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I request a unanimous consent to call Motion No. 16.

Speaker: Have unanimous consent?

Carried.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Clerk: The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir moves, seconded by the hon. member from Morell-Donagh the following motion:

WHEREAS on June 6, 1944, numerous men and women from Prince Edward Island and elsewhere in Canada took part in the Allied invasion of Normandy beach in France;

AND WHEREAS D-Day was a significant turning point in the Second World War,

leading to the liberation of western Europe, the ultimate defeat of the Axis Forces and end of the war in Europe;

AND WHEREAS many Islanders sacrificed their lives on the beaches of Normandy against tyranny in defense of the freedoms we enjoy as Canadians today;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly honour those who took part in the events of D-Day, living and deceased, and express our gratitude to veterans and their families for their sacrifice.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir to move the motion.

Mr. Deagle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

No matter your age or where you grew up, you have no doubt heard of the term D-Day and the sacrifices made that day. Perhaps you've heard it mentioned at a memorial service on Remembrance Day, or perhaps in a history book.

However, the important thing is that we all understand what happened there and the sacrifices that were made to preserve freedom and democracy around the world. While we are not the biggest province in terms of size or population, it could be said that its contribution to the allied victory in World War II is rather large.

Both men and women from PEI volunteered to join Canada's war effort between 1939 to 1945, many of whom unfortunately did not return home to their loved ones. Some families would end up having most, or all of their children, enlisted to help fight for the common wealth.

Those who did not return from the fight were many times found to be scared, both mentally and physically. As time marches on and our direct connection to those veterans fade, it's important that we remember their sacrifice, not just every November, but on a regular basis. It's also important that this kind of sentiment is shared in our education system. One such initiative that I've always found rewarding for students, is the annual Remembrance

Day poster and essay contest hosted by the Royal Canadian Legion.

This contest inspires Island youth to actively research and become engaged in the process of learning about the struggles and sacrifices made by our veterans. It's also a great showcase for some of their artistic talent as well, creating many inspiring poems, essays and posters by students as young as age 6 or 7.

I, along with the Premier, recently had the opportunity to take part in Montague's ceremony that marked the 75th anniversary of D-Day and the Normandy Landings. At this event I was honoured and humbled to speak with service men and women about their experiences. Their stories are inspiring and heroic. It's startling, to think that those soldiers that stormed the beach that day, were in some cases 10 years younger than me. Of course, many of these soldiers had lied about their age to enlist, making their efforts even more remarkable. The power of this motion pales in comparison to the sacrifices made on the beaches of Normandy and that is why we must always remember.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I'll call on the hon. Morell-Donagh, to second the motion.

Mr. MacEwen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to thank the member of Montague-Kilmuir for putting this motion forward. I know when he went out to that ceremony, he was moved and wanted to put this motion forward, so I appreciate it.

World War II shaped our province in more ways than we think. If you look at one of the communities in District 7, for example, you'll see this.

It's been said that the St. Peter's area in District 7, proportionally lost more people in the Second World War than any other community in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and I know you know that well.

For any Island community, no matter how big or how small, that would decimate a population and this was at a time when the province was home to less than 100,000 residents.

I'd like to think of PEI as being a very helpful place. I think it all traces back to being a province of helpful, hardworking people unafraid to make sacrifices for the greater good. In PEI we pull our weight.

In World War I, we supported the military effort by offering our soldiers to fight in places like Vimy Ridge, Passchendale, and the (Indistinct). We lost many brave soldiers in these battles, but they volunteered to fight for the greater good. It was the same in the case of World War II and more specifically, D-Day.

I echo the points made by my colleague, the hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir and agree that remembrance should not be limited to a day, a week, or even a month in a year. I am proud of the fact that our district is bisected by the province's main arterial highway: Route 2, Mr. Speaker, which you know very well and you travel. It was renamed the Veteran's Memorial Highway by the former premier, Patt Binns, and then transportation minister, Gail Shea.

I'm also proud that one of the ceremonial monuments for the Veteran's Memorial Highway today stands in St. Peter's, just outside by the park.

It can't be stressed enough that our duty as a government is to help inform and educate future generations of Islanders. I'm thankful for the work on this by the many fine public servants working at Veteran's Affairs Canada under the leadership of Veteran's Affairs Minister and my own MP, Lawrence MacAulay.

A personal story: for a few months after I graduated university, just a couple of years ago, a friend I graduated with – we backpacked Europe. We were all around and we had quite a good time, and we ended up finishing our backpacking in France and we went to Normandy. Well we would have been 22-23 at the time. We knew it was going to be special when we go there.

Obviously, the Germans had occupied France at that time and the allies were coming ashore taking Juno Beach was the responsibility of the Canadian Army as part of all the allies.

You get down there, and this was in a time when really as social media was just starting, but even digital cameras were just a new thing then, so we didn't know a lot about going in there.

It hits home when you go onto the beach and you go into the bunkers and you picture yourself as a German soldier sitting there. You can picture the Canadian soldiers coming off the ships and the rowboats still out there. They would come off, they would beach these ships roll out and they'd just start running to shore. All they could see were these bunkers. They had tiny little holes. It hits home. You think of – we just had seen the graves too and they were just being picked off one by one by one. Amazingly, somehow they took Juno Beach, but it was something else.

We were hit very emotionally. Of course, we were at the end of a very tiring trip, but we were sitting there crying in the bunkers because you can just imagine the 20-year olds and the young kids that were coming in and just doing it for their country. Knowing they were going in to death. It was an emotional experience for us.

It's heartwarming to see the effort that we make now, especially for the 75th anniversary, to take the kids over, to take veterans back over. We seen the special – we bent over backwards to make sure our veterans could get there again with the special flights and all that.

But to see the students go each year, I know there are special trips that are arranged. I know even at the Morell High School they arrange these trips every few years. What a remarkable experience. It's better than any education you would ever get. For them to go and see this and understand – it really helps. I would encourage anybody if you ever have the chance to absolutely go. You will never forget it.

As the years continue to pass since the end of World War II, our government hopes to encourage both the federal and provincial counterparts to help keep the public aware of the sacrifices that were made in the name of freedom.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Next speaking to the motion will be the hon. Minister of Fisheries and Communities.

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

I'm somewhat of a history buff when it comes to the Second World War, and it's something that I will never forget what these veterans did for our country and for the world.

My family has a long history with the military. My uncle, he actually – Uncle Bob – he started in the Air Force back in the 60s – in the 50s, I should say. He was part of the Bomarc Missile as an engineer around the Avro Arrow time. He served abroad in the European theatres for many years.

My Uncle Frank, he was with the signal corps. He spent a lot of time over in Cyprus in peacekeeping missions over there.

Another Uncle Darryl was in the signal corps. He spent a lot of time in the Golden Heights.

My Uncle Linden, he was with the armoured regimen and he served a lot of his time in Germany, right against the Czechoslovakian border in a tank.

My brother Paul, he was in the artillery. He served in New Brunswick, out west, and also sometime over in Europe.

Myself, I joined in the Cadets when I was 12 years old. I went into the militia with the 89 Field Battery. I served out West and I served also over in Germany – twice I was over there. I was to the cold – to the walls in Czechoslovakia and down through France and Germany, and saw the remnants of the destruction of the Second World War and it's something that I will never forget. It's quite powerful when you are in the areas and you actually see people in the gun towers and they are actually pointing machine guns at you.

I think we never can forget what took place in the First World War or the Second World War, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam War which actually had Canadians in it, and as we progress up through into this era from Afghanistan to other different theatres where

we have been in Romania and where our armed forces are today.

As I mentioned today, this morning, that we lost another soldier in the last 24 hours. I will always stand up and support our Armed Forces. I wholeheartedly support the Navy, and the Army, and the Air Force. It bothers me when people will cut them down, and they'll make comments about our men and our women who were there to protect our democracy and what our families and relatives and our friends before us have defended.

Right now I am thinking about Austin Gaudet and Mr. DesRoches; two living veterans in my area. They are still living.

So I think we need to look at the background of Normandy. I'm going to give you a bit of a history lesson, because it all started back in June 1941. As the German Army invaded the Soviet Union and the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin began pressing his new allies for the creation of a second front in Western Europe.

In late 1942, the Soviet Union and the United States made a joint announcement that a full understanding was reached with regard to urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942. However, British prime minister, Winston Churchill, persuaded the US president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, to postpone the promised invasion, because even with the US help, the Commonwealth and the British Forces believed that they could not and did not have adequate forces to secure an invasion.

Instead, in an immediate return to France, Western allies stage offences of Mediterranean feat of operations where British Troops were already stationed. In mid 1943, the Campaign North Africa had been won. The allies then launched the invasion of Sicily in 1943 and subsequently invaded the Italian mainland in September of the same year. By then the Soviet Forces were on the offensive and they were moving to the West and won a major victory at the Battle of Stalingrad.

The decision to undertake a cross channel invasion within the year was taken at the Trident conference in Washington in May of 1943. Initial planning was constrained by

the number of available landing craft, which were already committed in the Mediterranean and the Pacific.

At the Tehran Conference in November 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill promised Stalin they would open the long delayed front in May of 1944 and four sites were considered. Brittany, Cotentin Peninsula, Normandy and Pas-de-Calais.

As Brittany and Cotentin Peninsula it was believed that their forces and our forces would be cut off and trapped. So those sites were rejected. With Calais being the closest point in continental Europe in Britain, the Germans considered the most likely the landing zone, and that's where Hitler and his forces concentrated a lot of troops.

So it was the most heavily fortified, but it offered few opportunities for expansion as the area is bounded by numerous rivers and canals; whereas landings on broad front on Normandy would prevent simultaneously threats against the port of (Indistinct)

Coastal ports further west from Brittany and an overland attack towards Paris and eventually into Germany, Normandy was hence chosen as the landing site.

The most serious drawback of Normandy coast was the lack of port facilities. However, these would be overcome through the development of artificial mulberry harbours. They were truly engineering feats for back in that time.

A series of modified tanks nicknamed "Hobart's funnies" dealt with a specific requirement expected for the Normandy campaign such as mine clearing, demolition bunkers and mobile (Indistinct)

The allies were ready. They planned to launch the invasion on 1st of May, 1944. The initial draft of the plan was accepted at the Québec conference in August of 1943. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was appointed the Supreme Allied Commander of the Expeditionary Force and General Bernard Montgomery was named as commander of the 21st army group, which comprised all land forces involving invasion.

On December 31st, 1943 Eisenhower and Montgomery first saw the plan which promised amphibious landings by three divisions with two more divisions in support.

The two Generals immediately insisted that the scale of the initial invasion be expanded to five divisions with airborne divisions by three additional divisions, to allow operations on a wider front and to speed to the capture of (Indistinct)

The need to acquire or produce more landing craft and expand the operation meant the invasion had to be delayed to June. Then eventually 39 allied divisions would be committed to the battle of Normandy, 22 U.S., 12 British, and 3 Canadian, 1 Polish, 1 French, totaling over a million troops – all under British command and ready to storm the beaches of Normandy.

An Hon. Member: Call the hour.

Mr. Fox: And on that day –

Speaker: The hour has been called.

Mr. Fox: – they did.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I'd like to call on the hon. Government House Leader to move debate.

Mr. MacEwen: Almost got a promotion there.

I move, seconded by the hon. Member from Montague-Kilmuir, that this House adjourn until June 19th, at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Shall it carry? Carried.

The Legislature adjourned until tomorrow, June 19th, at 2:00 p.m.