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Speaker: Honourable Ross Wiseman, MHA

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Before we start today's proceedings, I want to welcome some special guests to our gallery today. We have with us Raylene Mackey of the Goulds. Raylene is one of eight recipients of the URock Volunteer Awards that were presented last week. I had the pleasure to be a part of that ceremony actually. Raylene was also Miss Teen Newfoundland and Labrador in 2013.

Welcome Raylene, and congratulations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: We are also pleased today to welcome to our gallery Ms Carol Furlong, President of NAPE. She is accompanied today by some of her staff, but also some workers from the group home in the Bay St. George area together from Grand Falls and from Burin.

Welcome to our galleries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we have members' statements from the Member for the District of St. John's Centre; the Member for the District of Lake Melville; the Member for the District of Carbonear – Harbour Grace; the Member for the District of Lewisporte; the Member for the District of Humber Valley; and the Member for the District of Virginia Waters.

The hon. the Member for the District of St. John's Centre.

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the incredible, dedicated workers representing three, Level IV residential care group homes: the Bay St. George Youth Assessment Home, the T.J. McDonald Home in Burin, and Pine Heights in Grand Falls-Windsor. I thank them for the continuity of service they provide to some of the most vulnerable and challenged youth in our Province.

Each group home is staffed by highly-trained, experienced public sector workers with oversight by a volunteer community board. They provide the youth with stability, expertise, treatment programs based on relationships and trust, and a safe, supportive home. They work closely with schools, health care and families to give the youth the support they need to heal and to be the best that they can. In a few weeks all these group homes will be closed and the children will be moved elsewhere. It is a sad time for the communities that have proudly and generously supported these well-established homes, a sad time for the staff, and a sad time for the youth who for some, the group home has been their home for years.

Mr. Speaker, I thank these workers and their colleagues for the service they have provided and I ask all members to show their appreciation and gratitude.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Lake Melville.

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to recognize Mr. Bob Simms for founding and running the Goose Bay Judo Club for close to the past forty years, Mr. Speaker.

In 1976 Mr. Simms started the Goose Bay Judo Club and has built it into one of the largest Judo clubs in the Province not to mention one of the most successful ones. For almost forty years the Goose Bay Judo Club has been one of the mainstay sports for many young adults in the Lake Melville region. The club is so large that they have a waiting list to accept new members.

Mr. Simms, unfortunately, is moving away from Goose Bay and will no longer be teaching Judo in Lake Melville. However, due to his dedication and hard work, I am sure Judo in Goose Bay will continue to be one of the most popular sports in the region.

I ask all hon. members of this House to join me in celebrating the great accomplishments of Sensei Bob Simms.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace.

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to recognize seventeen-year-old Allison Somers, a promising young swimmer from Carbonear.

Allison was one of eighteen members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Swim Team that attended Hyack Festival Youth Cup in New Westminster, British Columbia from May 16-18. Allison was the only swimmer from Carbonear – Harbour Grace who joined other members of the team from St. John's, Mount Pearl, and Corner Brook.

At the festival, Allison faced off against some of the best swimmers the country has to offer by competing in six individual events and two relay events. Her top finishes included ninth in the 200 fly, eleventh in the 400 Free, and fourteenth in the 100 fly for girls sixteen to eighteen-year-old category.

As a senior member of the Poseidon Swim Club, Allison has taken top awards at most of the provincial swim meets she attended during the 2013-2014 season. This is one of the last events she will participate in as a member of Poseidon Swim Club as she pursues both her academic and sports career.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. members to join me in congratulating Allison Somers on her swimming achievements and wish her success in her future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate those who received awards at the recently held

Deer Lake Sea Cadet Annual Inspection. I had the pleasure of attending the event and was very impressed with the level of professionalism exhibited by all those who participated.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Deer Lake Sea Cadets for the invitation and recognize the following award recipients: the Brian Morrison Award to Leading Seaman William Pittman; Best Dressed Junior Cadet is Able Seaman Victoria Power; Best Dressed Senior Cadet, Samantha Janes; the Esprit de Corps Award to Leading Seaman Hannah Rubia; the Commanding Officer Award to Chief Petty Officer First Class Aaron Hiscock; and the Instructor's Award to Chief Petty Officer Second Class Samantha Janes.

Receiving 5-year Navy League Service Medals were Chief Petty Officer First Class Aaron Hiscock, and Chief Petty Officer Second Class Samantha Janes. Petty Officer Second Class Tyler Spracklyn and Petty Officer Second Class Christopher Cabot both received 4-year service medals.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate all members, parents, and leaders of the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps 73 of Deer Lake.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating the Deer Lake Sea Cadets on their Annual Cadet Inspection and wish them all the luck in their future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters.

MS C. BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize the 26th annual St. John's Rotary Music Festival which was held May 4-14. This annual non-competitive festival has been organized by a group of dedicated music educators and supporters. It is the largest festival in the Province for school bands and choral music.

This year's festival, like previous years, achieved its objectives to provide a high-quality

educational experience for all its musical participants of all ages. Perhaps the most memorable piece for the participants was the opportunity to work with world-class clinicians from across Canada and the United States. This year, 4,500 students from this Province participated in either school and community bands or choirs, totalling 109 groups.

What is unique about this Rotary Music Festival compared to others is that every participating group is given the opportunity to perform for their peers, as well as at one of the nightly concerts scheduled that week where the public are welcome to attend as well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the hon. members to join me in congratulating the organizers, our youth and our schools for another successful festival – adding rich educational value and cultural opportunities through the leadership of committed volunteers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today in this hon. House to acknowledge the recipients of the 2014 URock Volunteer Awards. The stage was filled with stars last Thursday night as we honoured this year's award recipients at a special gala event held in Mount Pearl.

The URock Volunteer Awards were established in 2010 to recognize the remarkable ways in which young people are giving back to their communities. Nominations are accepted in two categories – individuals and organizations.

Mr. Speaker, this year's URock Awards event was our biggest and best yet. It was also an

example of how technology is uniting us more than ever.

Along with over 300 people who attended the event at the Glacier, our NLYouth.ca Web site was viewed over 1,200 times on Thursday evening, with webcast audiences across Canada and around the world. One of these viewers included Melissa Thomas, a URock award recipient from Mount Pearl who was unable to attend the ceremony in person, but was able to follow the show on Twitter and on the webcast while attending field school in Italy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the other recipients of the 2014 URock Volunteer Awards. They are: Richard Churchill of Clarendville; Raylene Mackey from Goulds; Natasha Noel from St. John's; Fallon Piercey from Conception Bay South; Donald Slaney from St. Lawrence; Chanelle Cluett from Wabush; and the Corner Brook Regional High Pride Alliance.

All award winners received custom-designed electric guitars designed by students at College of the North Atlantic and guests enjoyed performances by some of the Province's top young musical acts. The event was hosted by Newfoundland and Labrador comedian, Matt Wright.

Mr. Speaker, having the support of family, friends and mentors – and getting recognition from them – inspires young people to continue their volunteer work.

As a government, we are dedicated to supporting their efforts and we are working hard to ensure that Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the best places in the world for young people to receive an education, start a career and build a future.

I ask all members of this hon. House to join me in congratulating the 2014 URock Volunteer Awards winners.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

Volunteering is the heart of community building. When a person gives freely of his or her time, knowledge, skills or financial resources to further a cause, big things can happen.

Our caucus is very excited and energized by the incredible work done by volunteers, especially our youth as they take on new roles, responsibilities, and challenges, become more engaged, and instill positive change on society.

To Melissa Thomas, Richard Churchill, Raylene Mackey, Natasha Noel, Fallon Piercey, Donald Slaney, Chanelle Cluett, and Pride Alliance at Corner Brook Regional High, thank you for being role models and leading by example.

The Member for Mount Pearl South was in attendance and we certainly applaud the utilization of technology at such an event, which illustrates that youth are global citizens pursuing education, volunteering, and gaining life experience abroad.

In future years, consideration should be given to a scholarship or bursary to help further education or make a contribution in which the youth would be involved. This would allow the gift to continue giving.

Congratulations, URock award winners 2014.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's East.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement here today. According to the award winners here, we do rock and they do rock as well. I would like to thank government for their engagement with youth in this particular case with the URock

Awards. They have been on the go now for a few years.

I can speak for one young gentlemen who is here on the list and how much he has an effect on the Burin Peninsula. Just about a week-and-a-half ago or two weeks ago, I was invited to speak to the founding meeting of Mothers Against Drunk Driving on the Burin Peninsula. I speak in the name of Mr. Donald Slaney, who is the founding member down there. We cannot discount the effect these youth have on our Province and the effect they are going to have on everyday lives, and this is just one example.

I would like to thank again the government for their participation in this and congratulations to all the winners of the URock Awards this year.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this hon. House to announce we have listened to the residents of communities in Northern Labrador, and will now provide them with the option to automatically select a shorter seven-month vehicle registration for passenger vehicles, light trucks, and vans.

We are extending this option to permanent residents of the communities of Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, Postville, Rigolet, Black Tickle, Williams Harbour, and Norman Bay.

Mr. Speaker, these municipalities are located along Labrador's northern coast, where many residents are unable to use passenger vehicles during the winter months. The seasonal registration option permits renewal for a seven-month period at a fee of approximately \$82 for most vehicles, as opposed to the standard twelve-month vehicle registration fee of \$140.

The new automatic option allows vehicle owners in these communities to register a vehicle from May 1 to November 30, after some of the snow and ice has receded and when many residents in

these northern communities are able to start using their vehicles. As always, the option for a year-round registration will still be available if desired.

Mr. Speaker, this option recognizes that these residents are often unable to use their vehicles during the winter and as such it is only fair that we extend the option to conveniently and automatically pay only for the months when they are able to use their vehicles.

The new option will also be available to residents of these communities who choose to renew online at eservices.gov.nl.ca. Of course, residents may also call the Motor Registration Division toll-free at 1-877-636-6867.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative will meet the needs of residents on the North Coast of Labrador. This government remains committed to making programs and services more accessible and affordable to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and this new offering now responds to the needs of those Labrador communities in terms of their geographic location and way of life.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. EDMUNDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I would also like to thank my colleague, the Member for Mount Pearl South, for giving me the opportunity to respond as he is the critic for Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I am very appreciative of this government's decision. I think it was three ministers ago that I did push the issue. I think then the Member for Topsail was the minister and he said that he would check into it. Then the Member for Labrador West said that it was a work in progress. I am glad today to stand here and hear the current minister make this announcement.

It took three years, Mr. Speaker, and it shows how fast things can get done and how slow sometimes it takes. In Northern Labrador and some of the other communities on the Coast of Labrador and maybe on the Island portion of the Province too, we do have snow for seven months of the year. Most times in those areas the roads are not plowed and the only time the vehicles can be used is during the summer months.

I am very appreciative of this. I thank all three members who were ministers on this portfolio for the hard work they have done over the last three years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's East.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement today. I was thinking when I was reading the statement earlier, this is a good move on the part of government in reducing the fees. I almost said to myself for the kind of winter that all of Newfoundland and Labrador had, we should all be eligible for the \$82 this year anyway.

Mr. Speaker, it is a good move on the part of government, but there are some things that they still have to address. They are looking at \$1.56 a litre, for example, up there in Nain right now. We are looking at high food costs. While we are thankful about the \$82 being down there for the seven months registration on vehicles, there is plenty more that we should be looking at too in order to help control costs. We know this is a good cost-saving measure for consumers up there and the drivers up there, but there is a whole lot more that we should be looking at too.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update my hon. colleagues on the work of the Supportive Housing Action Team. This group was established to help address short- and long-term housing needs for displaced residents of Newman's Boarding Home in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. It is chaired by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation.

I wish to express sincere thanks to all community groups, government agencies and departments, and the Nunatsiavut Government who came together so quickly and responded to residents' urgent needs, immediately providing shelter and necessary supports. Following the short-term response, the community partners have also expressed their appreciation of our approach in focusing on long-term solutions, and we cannot give them enough credit for stepping up in the way they have to help find housing for those individuals who were displaced.

Today the majority of tenants are in public or non-profit rental housing or with family and friends, receiving supports and assistance as necessary, while long-term solutions are sought.

We recognize this is a complex problem and finding longer-term solutions requires a combined effort across multiple organizations and community groups. The Supportive Housing Action Team includes senior officials from across a number of provincial government departments – Advanced Education and Skills, Health and Community Services, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, as well as Labrador-Grenfell Health and representation from the Nunatsiavut Government.

Mr. Speaker, the team has been meeting weekly and is fully engaged and working with Melville Native Housing, the Salvation Army, the Labrador Friendship Centre, the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, the area MHA for the district and also the Minister of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, and others in the community, to ensure long-term housing solutions are developed.

As we consider options and work towards solutions, we are grateful to everyone involved for the time and effort they have contributed. The collective response was truly outstanding

and is a testament to what can be accomplished when we all work together, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement, and I thank my colleague from St. John's South for allowing me to respond. Certainly, housing is something close to the hearts of myself, my colleague for Torngat, and all of us in the Liberal caucus. We are pleased to see community groups and Newfoundland and Labrador Housing coming together to help displaced residents of Newman's Boarding Home.

Losing your home is a very stressful experience for anyone. Boarding house residents live on very low incomes and so their options for relocation are limited. This situation illustrates just how close homelessness is for some people. Despite reassurances from government that megaprojects in Labrador will have minimal impacts on things like housing, we continue to see the gap widen between the rich and poor as limited housing stock is threatening housing stability for many.

Mr. Speaker, we have asked the Minister Responsible for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing about the future of the Paddon Home, which has sat vacant for four years now in a community facing a housing crisis. This is shameful, Mr. Speaker. The minister responsible maintains that it is too soon to say what the Paddon Home will be used for. For those on the brink of homelessness in Lake Melville, I say the decision cannot come soon enough.

I urge the government to make a decision on the Paddon Home and to consider developing a housing plan that addresses the full scope of housing issues in our whole Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. It is good that government departments rose to the occasion in response to the closure of Newman's Boarding House. I would expect nothing less. I know how concerned the departments as well as the other agencies would have been. It is good to know that all are being taken care of.

I am glad to see the mix of people involved with the supportive housing action team finding long-term housing solutions, as well as supporting the residents in transition. This collaborative community-based approach is essential to the planning government must do for long-term housing solutions across the Province.

I was pleased, for example, to be at the opening of the new NLHC seniors housing in Pleasantville today. I would encourage government to commit to providing affordable, accessible housing at a faster pace to help the growing number of people who need it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It has been reported that technical problems in three or four areas have delayed the final text of the CETA deal. Finalization is a long way off, as the federal government and the EU still have to consult with provinces and the member states.

I ask the Premier: Where is the process now, and have these consultations started with the federal government?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, indeed, a number of months ago when Canada announced they had reached an agreement with the EU we were very pleased in terms of the outlook for Newfoundland and Labrador and what we were able to achieve with Canada through the CETA agreements. At that time, it was indicated that sixteen to twenty-four months would be the process to legalize the text, to make conversions in regard to language and so forth. That process is underway. We continue to dialogue with the federal government.

We have started in relation to the \$400 million fund that we were able to negotiate, and started a process now to be ready. When the final agreement is signed, that money becomes available. So over that period of time we will be ready to access those funds and to build our industry, our seafood industry which is so important to us. The future looks bright in regard to that fund and our industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the \$400 million fund – of course \$120 million of it from our own Province – is determined by finalization of the deal. The EU trade negotiator said that the technical discussions have proven to be more difficult than they had originally foreseen. It appears that CETA is being held up by disagreements in intellectual property rights by pharmaceuticals and other issues.

I ask the Premier: What role is your government playing now in this discussion?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the dealings around the actual text are taking a little bit more time than we had anticipated. However, my officials have been actively engaged and are still involved in the project, and are still actively involved with the negotiators and with those writing the text in Ottawa as part of the facilitation of this process.

Mr. Speaker, I would not want to characterize that as being a difficulty, it simply takes time to get that done. We do anticipate that will happen sooner rather than later. We do know that the level of engagement is intense; people are working furiously to get that piece of work accomplished.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It was not my words talking about it being a difficult negotiation. These are the words of the EU negotiator.

Mr. Speaker, Nalcor's business and financial report says that the power purchase agreement for Muskrat Falls was signed last November. I have asked for this document many times, but it has never been available. The former Premier said last November that when it was finalized it would be made public.

I ask the Premier: Six months after the power purchase agreement has been signed, will you now table that agreement?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly be happy to take the Leader of the Opposition's request to Nalcor and get a copy of the agreement and the appropriate time

assurance that it is tabled here in the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Mr. Speaker, we have been hearing as we have been asking for the documents to be tabled and made public is that they would be appropriate. It has been six months now and that is long past what we expected to be an appropriate time frame I would say.

Nalcor's report also states that the generating plants, the transmission assets, and the distribution systems can continue to run indefinitely with ongoing maintenance. It says that Nalcor's assets are expected to be used for an indefinite period with no removal dates to be determined.

I ask the Premier: What does this mean to the future of Holyrood? Are you backing away, or are you still committed to closing Holyrood in 2020?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the chairman of Nalcor has certainly made it clear that they put in place a plan. The first part in the plan was to ensure they had the people there to develop a world-class organization. They addressed safety; that was the first issue they had to deal with. They also put in an asset management plan and looked for a source of future energy in the future, recognizing that generation was going to keep up with supply.

The other thing we did, Mr. Speaker, is that the previous government was withdrawing dividends, and I understand that. We are withdrawing dividends from that company. What we did in order to address these maintenance issues is that in 2007 we left the dividends in the company so they could use that money to double the cap, which is what they have been doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is about the Holyrood Generating Station, the generating plant, the closure, and the commitment to the closure in 2020. This has been a big piece of the argument for Muskrat Falls.

I ask the Premier: The closure of Holyrood in 2020 is that still the commitment of your government?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, there has been no change. Nalcor is going to develop Muskrat Falls, and when Muskrat Falls is commissioned, within a reasonable time after that, the Holyrood plant will be decommissioned. We will then have energy for the people of the Province at the least-cost option, the lowest cost to them, and we will also have surplus energy, which will be available for the first time to take to market in the US and the Atlantic Seaboard without having to go through the Province of Quebec.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In 2004, the government announced an agreement with Iceswater for the Arnold's Cove fish plant. At the time, government said, "Our approach ensures that the quotas and the historical rights to this fish will remain in Newfoundland and Labrador." That was the quote. Today it is in the news that a quota owned by the provincial government is being harvested by Nova Scotians, by a Nova Scotia boat, and it is also being landed in Nova Scotia, therefore not providing any of the direct employment benefits to our Province.

I ask the Premier: Why are you allowing a quota that is owned by the people of this Province,

owned by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, to be fished and landed in another province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in 2004 when High Liner decided to leave the Province and basically the assets that are here, this government stepped in with \$3.5 million knowing the value of the fishery at the time. Obviously, we had a downturn in the cod fishery, but knowing it was going to come back. We did not want to stand by and – make sure we used one of the most mechanized and most modern plants in the Province – let that go down.

What we did was we stepped in; \$3.5 million for Southern Harbour to Clarendville, for that region. Today, it employs 120 to 180 unionized employees, and we have seen the result of our investment, Mr. Speaker.

Now, in regard to the actual quota allocations, those as well were bought by this government, certainly leased back to the company with the benefit of allowing them to generate extra revenue to continue their operations, to grow that operation to where we are today, that we can meet the needs in the cod fishery when it comes back in the years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, in 2004 the government also said that this deal would have the highest economic and job impact. Well, obviously now if you are stepping away by allowing this to be landed and shipped by Nova Scotians, that is not the highest economic impact. What the minister is saying is that there is no one in Newfoundland and Labrador who could actually fish that quota, I take it.

This quota has been landed in Nova Scotia and it is bad enough, as I said, it is being fished by Nova Scotians. So why did you not insist that this be landed and fished by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, these allocations, over 100 foot vessels, it can be transferred to any entity in Newfoundland and Labrador now. They are free to negotiate with Icewater in regard to transfer of species and get access to that.

Is the hon. member suggesting that we are going to pick between the inshore harvesters and those 180 workers in Arnold's Cove, and we are going to shut down a very stable cod facility with the cod coming back? This was a comprehensive agreement to build the industry, not to walk away from it, but to step in when High Liner stepped out. We stepped in to make sure it was secured, and we are going to continue to do that and work with all industry to make sure it continues to move forward, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, what we are suggesting is that you step in and step up for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, not for Nova Scotians. Get the maximum benefit for our Province.

According to the twenty-year deal struck in 2004, Icewater pays the provincial government \$50,000 a year to lease the quotas for Newfoundland and Labrador. The provincial government now estimates that these quotas are worth \$16 million to \$20 million – that is the total package.

So I ask the minister: Why was there not at least an escalator clause or some provision in your agreement, your lease, to allow for

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to enjoy some of this benefit?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let alone the investment we made in the people in Arnold's Cove and the region, I said it is a return we got in terms of what we paid for that and what it is today. Mr. Speaker, this is all about the industry, the cod industry, in terms of that plant, state-of-the-art facility, and where we are moving ahead now with the return of the cod industry so that we can start that process again.

In regard to the allocations, I say to him again, if there is any entity in Newfoundland and Labrador that wants to work with Icewater, in terms of transfer of quota, whether it is other species for cod, or whatever it is, that is open to do. They are invited to do it. We would not stand in the way if it is not in the economic disinterest of Arnold's Cove, but this is something we invested in, in the cod fishery. It is important, that plant is extremely important, and we believe in it. If the hon. member wants to pick and choose in the industry, get up and say he wants to pick and choose between the industry.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace.

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, ten years ago government leased the 130 ton halibut quota to Icewater for a twenty-year term. In 2004 no consideration was given to putting a condition on this lease or a possible sublease.

I ask the minister: Why did your government fail to ensure conditions on the lease to Icewater that would guarantee benefits to our Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, what a failure, for ten years we have Arnold's Cove operating. We have a state-of-the-art facility in Arnold's Cove that is certainly ready for the opportunities. They are selling into the UK, they are selling into France, and what an opportunity they are going to have when the economic agreement comes and we can get cod right into the EU.

The hon. member, again I say to him on the other side: Are you going to start picking and choosing between the industry? This is a viable industry. If there are other entities out there that want to get access to this quota or allocation, they can certainly work with Icewater to do it. If it does not negatively affect Icewater and what they are trying to do out there, we will not stand in the way, but we encourage them to have discussions.

Once again, I say to him: Who are you picking and choosing in the industry?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace.

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would say we are going to stand up and speak for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; that is what I would say.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SLADE: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: How much revenue are we losing through the sublease of the 130 tons, a quota that could be going back to build up our fishing industry?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Let's go back, Mr. Speaker. Ten years ago the plant was going to close, assets were going to be taken away, no work for Southern Harbour to Clarendville, those workers who were there, no opportunity; we were going to shut down the cod industry, have no infrastructure left, have no ability to adapt and to restart the industry when the time has come, but we did not want to go there. What we did as a government, \$3.5 million we invested; we purchased those quotas.

Financially, that was certainly a different day then, but we saw it as so important, the fishing industry, we invested to get those quotas so that would allow Arnold's Cove collectively, in terms of royalties for those quotas, be able to build that industry, build that operation to the point they are at today and then as we go forward in terms of what is happening in the cod industry, they will have an opportunity. It is a benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Mr. Speaker, the Province invested \$2 million at a dividend of 3 per cent in the form of equity a year ago in Icewater Harvesting Inc. for an eight-year period to provide long-term benefits to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Less than one year after making this risky investment, the vessel has sunk.

I ask the minister: What returns have been paid to date by Icewater, given the Province is to receive an annual dividend?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, indeed there was a \$2 million loan to Icewater in regard to *Cape Dorset* in

regard to actually fishing some of those quota allocations. It was going quite well.

Unfortunately, they lost that vessel. We are now going through a process – my colleague in IBRD – in regard to the insurance and the payout on that, the terms of our investment, and the return on that investment. That has been working through now and I think in the weeks ahead we will be able to confirm the details of that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Mr. Speaker, the Department of IBRD in Estimates confirmed this equity investment was fully secure. Unlike traditional loans, when an equity investment goes south, the personal assets of the directors or shareholders are not at risk.

Given no asset remains, I ask the minister: How much of this \$2 million will taxpayers be left footing the bill, given other creditors have charge on this sunken vessel? Is our equity sunk like the *Cape Dorset*?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I never understand why it is that the glass is always half empty over there on the other side. What we are trying to do as we are working with Icewater in this is the same as was done ten years ago, which is to try to ensure that there is sustainable industry in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is an insurance policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS SULLIVAN: Yes, we are working with all of the proponents. Mr. Speaker, we hope to have a resolution to that. Our aim, unlike theirs, is to keep businesses open.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, every day we are hearing more and more stories of drug-related crime. It is a common occurrence to hear of break-ins, armed robberies, and even shootings. Eight years ago, government committed to a Provincial Substance Use Strategy to prevent and treat substance abuse.

I ask the minister: Where is the strategy?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mental health and addictions is a very difficult and challenging facet of many people's lives. It affects every family throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. It is very unfortunate that when people fall into a life involving mental health and addictions, it quite often as well leads to criminal activity as the member opposite has referenced.

We have made significant investments in mental health and addictions. Just recently, after coming in this department, I had the pleasure of announcing our new anti-stigma campaign. It is a very important campaign which is hopefully going to broaden the knowledge and understanding of mental illness and addictions that affect people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. It will broaden the knowledge and understanding for the people of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, that is a fine initiative but it is not the one I am talking about,

the one that this Province committed to eight years ago and spent millions of dollars on.

The strategy was not just a commitment on paper, it was a major undertaking. A Province-wide committee was formed with representatives from Education, Justice, RNC, RCMP, health boards, community stakeholders, and individuals in recovery. The strategy was written, the documents complete, where is the strategy?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss further on the importance of mental health and addictions in Newfoundland and Labrador. Just before coming to the House of Assembly today I had the opportunity to meet with the Newfoundland and Labrador Advisory Council, Mental Health Advisory Council. A very diverse group of significant backgrounds and areas, and very strong representatives of the Province; a very important group that are going to work with me, educate me, and assist me in the development of programs and how we do better.

We invest over \$100 million annually in mental health and addictions in Newfoundland and Labrador. We have 950 women and men throughout Newfoundland and Labrador who work with people with mental health and addictions.

Mr. Speaker, these are significant investments. We have significant partnerships. We are investing in people. We are investing in new facilities for Newfoundland and Labrador, all in the best interests of mental health and addictions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, this Province committed to a strategy. They put millions of dollars into that strategy. Again, we see nothing. The minister is walking away from the question.

The people involved in creating the strategy were committed to completing it and getting it right. It took over two years to do the consultations, do the research and consult with stakeholder groups. It is a needed strategy, obviously.

I ask the minister very specifically: Where is this specific strategy?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not mind talking about this, I tell the member opposite. He can calm down and ask his questions and I will provide him with the answers because I do not mind talking about the investments that we are making in mental health and addictions. It was a very informative discussion we had today, as I was just referencing. One of the things that we talked about today is the investments we are making in facilities.

We are building two new youth facilities, Mr. Speaker, that never existed before in Newfoundland and Labrador. One for youth who are dealing with addictions in Central Newfoundland, and one for youth dealing with complex mental health needs being built in Paradise, just outside of St. John's. We are building a new adult addictions centre in Harbour Grace. As well, we have investments this year and work underway to replace the Waterford Hospital, a very needed facility for Newfoundland and Labrador and very important work that we are doing, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for St. John's North.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KIRBY: Mr. Speaker, we continue to hear from parents, students, and educators who point out that our schools lack critical mental health support services for our youth. In its pre-budget

submission, the Federation of School Councils called for youth mental health and addictions counsellors at a ratio of one per 500 students, but government failed to provide the funding need for this.

I ask the minister: Has his department completed an assessment of the mental health supports needed in our schools, and if not, when does he plan to make this issue a priority after all these years of neglect?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, it would be very easy for anyone to stand up in the House and find flaws with a particular strategy or a particular initiative or a particular part of society, but the reality is this government has invested millions and millions of dollars in education in this Province over the years.

I recognize the issue that the member raised. I spent twenty-plus years in the education profession, and I recognize that solving complex problems like that is not solely the responsibility of the education system, Mr. Speaker. It is the responsibility of a partnership with parents, and the responsibility of a partnership with the health care system. We have resources in the system. We have guidance counsellors who perform a role – a very specific role, I might add – and there comes a point in time when there is a diagnosis of a particular problem in the education system when it moves to people with more expertise, such as the health care system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's North.

MR. KIRBY: I am glad the minister is making that connection, Mr. Speaker, the lack of supports with youth with mental health needs is one of the most pressing issues in our schools across the Province today, yet this government still does not have a handle on it. They are neglecting it. School guidance staff tell us that students who suffer from mental illness are increasingly in need of help.

I ask the minister: When will he commit to improving the guidance counsellor allocation to reflect the growing need for guidance and counselling supports in our schools?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We look at the resourcing needs of education every single year when we do a budget, and in between budget periods we are always doing an assessment of the needs.

I will say to the member that the issue of the mental health challenges in the school system will not be solved by increasing guidance counsellors, because the guidance counsellors are not providing the specialized services for the problem that the member has identified. There has to be other supports in place to address those needs. Part of that is working with the home to find the right program, and part of it is referring at the appropriate time to the health care system, Mr. Speaker. That is why we also invest in health care, because we have specialized people who can provide specialized services. The education system cannot and will not ever provide every service that every individual needs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters.

MS C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, in January the AG expressed concerns about expensive external consultants carrying out oil royalty audits. The AG said staff are paid between \$40 and \$65 an hour, while consultants are paid between \$85 and \$340 an hour, and the department was not properly resourced to complete the work.

I would ask the minister: Why are you ignoring the AG's recommendation and continuing to use expensive external consultants?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly recognize and accepted the original recommendations of the Auditor General in the 2008 report. This year, in 2013-2014, there were two new permanent audit positions to assist with the audit inventory. Certainly, now we do not use currently consulting services. So recognizing what the Auditor General suggested we moved on that with those four new positions and take it very seriously in terms of what the return is to the Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The PUB has noted in its interim report neither extreme weather nor other unusual events were significant factors in the January 2014 system events and outages, yet the Minister of Natural Resources suggested otherwise in the media during the crisis.

I ask the Minister of Natural Resources: Why did he blame the cold weather when it was not a factor?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, we have the advice and recommendations of the PUB, for which we are very thankful. We also have the report of Liberty Mutual, the consultant for the PUB. Nalcor has done its own internal review as has Newfoundland Power. My understanding is they align with each other and now what is happening is they are starting to take action.

Nalcor put in place a number of years ago an asset management plan to deal with a large, aging asset base. It put in a plan that is going to

expedite the plan. They have recently purchased a combustion turbine. They are also assessing a recommendation about getting more resources.

Again, I always have to mention the fact that the government of 2007 stopped taking dividends from Hydro and left the money in the corporation so it could have that for capital expenditures, which have doubled over the last five years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The PUB has expressed doubt that Hydro can install extra generating capacity in time for next winter.

I ask the Premier: What plans has government made with municipalities and emergency service organizations for ensuring that elderly, sick, and vulnerable people are safe if we find again ourselves without power or heat in the depths of winter?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly value the PUB and the recommendations they make in terms of hydro, particularly, in terms of the circumstances we have seen over the past number of months. At the end of the day, it is important that all are certainly in the right direction in regard to these issues and the recommendations that were made. We respect that, and we expect Nalcor and Hydro specifically to follow up on those to make sure at the end of the day that we have the best possible service for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, which they certainly deserve, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

My question was about what happens for the people if the service fails.

Mr. Speaker, government seems to be still committed to hiring a consultant to examine the Province's power system and its relation to the North American system when Muskrat comes on stream. The PUB is proving beyond a doubt they have the confidence and professionalism to do this work.

I ask the Premier: Why not ask the PUB to complete this task?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the PUB was set up as a regulator in the electrical industry. We value the role they play. We know from time to time they are going to take initiatives and they are going to carry out their statutory responsibilities to serve the people of the Province, but so will Nalcor.

Nalcor is an energy company; it is the people's energy company. It has been set up to create value and get wealth for the people of the Province over and above taxes and royalties. Nalcor has its own responsibility to ensure that as we get ready to connect to the North American grid for the first time ever, that we do a review of our management, the operations, and the regulation to ensure that we are ready for when that very important interconnection takes place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, 3,800 people have signed petitions asking the minister to reverse his decision to privatize the care of our most vulnerable children and youth in group homes in Burin, Stephenville, and Grand Falls-Windsor.

I ask the minister: Will he listen to the people of these communities?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there are people who are in the galleries who are impacted by this decision. Some of these people I know personally who work in Burin.

Mr. Speaker, I know of the service that they have provided over the years to the youth they served. I can say to the member that the decision will not be reversed. There was a process that went through, an RFP was put out, and a framework was developed. Individual groups then made their submission and they awarded a contract to Blue sky on the merits of their applications.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, 3,800 people see the value of providing high-quality, specialized continuity of care for troubled youth in their communities who need support and treatment.

I ask the minister: Is privatizing their care to save a few bucks worth the upheaval and suffering this move is causing the children in these communities?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: I guess, Mr. Speaker, she has made the decision that Blue sky is not going to provide a quality service. I ask her that she submit that to that group.

Mr. Speaker, again I have said this in education and I will say it in this: We will leave no child behind and we will do what we can for children. This is now a provision of a service that is different from what was provided before. Before, these were correctional facilities and the children who went there were often issued by the courts to go there. Now, Mr. Speaker, what

is being provided is more of a residential setting and more of a provision of that family setting service within the community.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, the deadline to move the children in the Stephenville group home was May 19. It is May 21 and children, staff and boards still do not know when the children are leaving, where they are going. The staff is laid off as of May 31.

I ask the minister: Is this the efficiency you hoped privatization would bring?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the service provider continues to see if they can make inroads with the community of Stephenville so that we can get this service provided so that these youth can get on with the transition that is taking place.

We have indicated to the service provider that if they cannot meet their deadline they should certainly get in contact with us, and then we will see where we take it from there, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The time for Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Tabling of Documents

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MS JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 26.(5)(a) of the Financial Administration Act, I am tabling one Order in Council relating to the funding pre-commitments for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for Which Notice has been Given.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

MS JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, some questions came up in Estimates last night and I do have some answers. Is this the appropriate time to provide them?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

MS JOHNSON: There was a question by the Leader of the Third Party around the professional services in the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, so I can table that document.

There was a question around when we go to look for borrowing, how that process is done. This has been a long-standing tradition since Confederation, I am told, that there is a management group, which is made up of the five major banks, as well as a banking group, which is made up of seven smaller banks. This is a process where the managing group provides advice as to which day and which time specifically is best to go to the markets, and then they see out this process for us. This has been in place for decades, Mr. Speaker.

There was also a question around this \$5,700 in revenue under Financial Administration, section 2.4.01; that \$5,700 was for revenue that was received as personal expenses incurred by employees in the 2012-2013 fiscal year, but it was paid in the 2013-2014 fiscal year. An example of that would be telephone expenses.

There was also a question from the Member for Virginia Waters around the director of brand

management, so I have that position description as well as the specific accountabilities included with that position. I can table that as well.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Petitions.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the provincial government recently announced a new framework for staffed residential care, which included awarding contracts for three group homes in the Province to the private sector; and

WHEREAS Pine Heights Group Home in Grand Falls-Windsor is one of the group homes affected by this decision by government; and

WHEREAS as a result, forty-five public sector workers lost their jobs in the Province, including sixteen in Grand Falls-Windsor alone, some with over twenty years of experience and expertise in the field; and

WHEREAS the Pine Heights Group Home has been offering high-quality care to children with complex needs in the community for many years; and

WHEREAS the transition of the children in care at the home will in some cases split these children from their friends and group home counsellors, relationships which have taken years to develop, this transition has the potential to cause undue stress and harm to the children;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reverse its decision to privatize the Pine Heights Group Home in Grand Falls-Windsor.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have 3,800 signatures in total with more coming. This is a very serious issue. It is not just about the loss of jobs. It is about the privatization of the care of our most vulnerable youth who are in care, youth who have been entrusted into the care of Child, Youth and Family Services, entrusted into the care of the state. We have a moral and a legal obligation not to simply warehouse these children, but to give them comprehensive rehabilitative care.

Their care has been privatized to a company whose sole purpose is for a profit. These group homes were overseen by community boards that had the best interests of children. I am not against profit, Mr. Speaker, but this is not where for-profit companies, corporations should be wading in.

The government, Mr. Speaker, the minister has abdicated its moral and legal responsibility to ensure that these children are safely taken care of, that these children have opportunities for rehabilitation. This is not about simply providing a homey atmosphere. These are children who need rehabilitation, who need treatment. It is not about providing simply a homey atmosphere.

We need staff who are fully trained, who are fully experienced. This is not going to happen with a for-profit corporation that is hiring staff with no experience at \$13 an hour. Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent on this minister to do the right thing, to stand up to their moral and legal obligation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS ROGERS: Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

MR. J. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, a petition to the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS there is no cellphone service in the Town of Trout River, which is an enclave community in Gros Morne National Park; and

WHEREAS visitors to Gros Morne National Park, more than 100,000 annually, expect to communicate by cellphone when they visit the park; and

WHEREAS cellphone service has become a very important aspect of everyday living for residents; and

WHEREAS cellphone service is an essential safety tool for visitors and residents; and

WHEREAS cellphone service is essential for business development;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to partner with the private sector to extend cellphone coverage throughout Gros Morne National Park and the enclave community of Trout River.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, the Minister of Municipal Affairs yesterday appeared to have – although he did not have a very good grasp on how cellphones would work with somebody on a cliff in Trout River, he did make that commentary, he did invite the Opposition and anybody who was interested to partner with him to approach the federal government. That is exactly what I would like to be doing today on behalf of the people of Trout River and the other areas of Gros Morne National Park.

The major cellphone carriers have an opportunity to advance cellphone service throughout Canada. They also have an obligation because they are getting a very special deal with the federal government to promote cellphone coverage throughout Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Orders of the Day

Private Members' Day

MR. SPEAKER: Today being Private Members' Day and it is now 3:00 o'clock, according to our Standing Orders we now need to go to the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune to introduce the motion that is on the Order Paper in her name.

MS PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Member for Harbour Main, the following private member's resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Assembly supports the provincial government in its efforts to position Newfoundland and Labrador for leadership in Arctic development, which will be amplified in 2016 as our Province hosts the annual international Arctic Technology Conference.

Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure for me to rise in this hon. House today and introduce a motion that recognizes the provincial government's leadership in Arctic development which will, as I just said, be amplified in 2016 as our Province hosts the annual international Arctic Technology Conference.

Nearly every aspect of life in Newfoundland and Labrador is shaped in some way by the ocean. It is not just our history, it is our nature. It is who we are. From our early ancestors on the water catching cod to our ocean technology companies who are today leaders in a wide range of fields, from satellite-based monitoring to working with developing sophisticated autonomous underwater vehicles, this Province and our people have been on the leading edge when it comes to ocean opportunities.

Our deeply rooted culture in ocean innovation has turned what many view as challenges into opportunities and competitive advantages. When you think about it, Newfoundland and Labrador has extensive experience working in harsh and cold climates. This experience has perfectly situated us as the ideal path to the Arctic.

With our rich heritage rooted in the Arctic, we have long recognized the potential that the Arctic has. While not geographically located in the Arctic, the water surrounding us here in the

Province is colder than anywhere else south of sixty degrees. It is even colder than the waters near Norway, parts of Alaska, Greenland and Iceland. Surrounded by cold water and extreme weather conditions, our experts are successfully developing cutting edge technology and world renowned solutions to operational challenges in the Arctic.

The Province's extensive expertise and untapped potential means that we play an integral role in Arctic development. This is the motivation behind the Arctic Opportunities Initiative. Through this initiative, our goal is to bolster economic development by positioning the Province as the ideal staging ground for Arctic activities.

We want, Mr. Speaker, to create an environment in which local stakeholders can benefit from emerging opportunities, northern communities can thrive, and an environment that will further attract global industry leaders. In recent years, Newfoundland and Labrador has become synonymous with oil and gas and the offshore. We know this industry and we have helped change how to explore, and ultimately thrive in demanding environments.

Our ocean technology innovators have experienced the gambit of what the ocean can offer; drifting sea ice, towering ice bergs, and immense North Atlantic waves. Together, we have learned to operate successfully and safely in the Arctic and sub-Arctic.

Newfoundland and Labrador's seasoned shipping and offshore supply and service experience has led to the development of a strong, highly capable sector of over 500 companies, Mr. Speaker. This sector can meet operational requirements and possesses some of the world's top ice-classed offshore supply vessels.

Our expertise in ocean observation, oil spill response, remote sensing, ice management, telecommunications and navigational systems, underwater vehicles and marine simulation is recognized globally and has positioned us as a world leader in ocean technology. It is clear that Newfoundland and Labrador is well positioned for future growth. Positioning the Province as the path, building local capacity and fostering

economic development and business opportunities will remain important priorities, Mr. Speaker, as we continue to develop, refine and implement the Arctic Opportunities Initiative.

Recognizing the potential that exists in Newfoundland and Labrador for Arctic exploration and development and building on the world-class industry and academic expertise in this Province, we have been chosen to host the prestigious Arctic Technology Conference in 2016. This conference was created by the organizers of the Offshore Technology Conference held annually in Houston, Texas at which Newfoundland and Labrador is regularly featured.

Recognizing the Arctic as an area of growing interest and opportunity, the OTC created the Arctic Technology Conference. Modelled after the OTCs multidisciplinary approach, the Arctic Technology Conference focuses on cutting edge technologies and innovative practices needed for the exploration and production of natural resources in harsh and cold climates, while emphasizing respect for Northern peoples and the environment.

Since the inaugural conference in February, 2011, the ATC has quickly become known as one of the world's most comprehensive Arctic events, attracting over 1,000 delegates and roughly 100 exhibitors from around the world. The ATC is an important event for many local stakeholders and provides the provincial government with an excellent platform from which to advance the goals of the Arctic Opportunities Initiative.

With an international and targeted audience in attendance, the ATC is an opportune venue to profile the Province's many Arctic-related capabilities and network with industry and academia from around the world, thereby happening to strengthen the Province's position as a key Arctic player. Our government has participated in all three ATC events held to date, and along with ACOA and the City of St. John's, we have demonstrated a very keen interest in bringing the prestigious conference to St. John's since 2011.

ATC is not the only world-class prominent conference that will be taking place in this Province, Mr. Speaker, over the next several months. From September 14-19, St. John's will proudly host the prestigious OCEANS' 14 conference with more than 1,200 delegates and 150 exhibitors from around the world expected to be in attendance. OCEANS' 14 will be the largest oceans conference ever held in Newfoundland and Labrador.

This high-profile event will provide the Province's ocean technology sector with an international platform to showcase its research and development initiatives, extraordinary marine infrastructure, and foremost education and training capabilities. To date, nearly 130 booths have been sold, twenty-three of which are from our local ocean technology (inaudible). That is quite impressive, Mr. Speaker. The businesses and companies we have in this Province are phenomenal.

With OCEANS' 14 on the horizon and as we eagerly look forward to the Arctic Technology Conference in 2016, we also look ahead to hosting the annual international conference on Ocean, Offshore and Arctic Engineering in June 2015. This conference will showcase the diverse range of engineering activities related to challenging marine and Arctic environments, from exploration and production of oil and gas in challenging deep waters, developing technologies in the ocean renewable energy sectors, deep-sea mining, protecting marine habitat, to developing structures for extreme ice loading. That is just a small sample, Mr. Speaker.

Last year's conference was held in France, with this year's taking place in California before coming to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador next year. It is not a coincidence, Mr. Speaker, that all these conferences are converging on our Province. The world has taken notice that Newfoundland and Labrador is on the leading edge of ocean and Arctic development. The world is coming to us, to listen to our experts, to see what we have to offer as we continue to demonstrate our leadership in Arctic development.

In addition to these three major conferences I have outlined, there are many other important

oceans and Arctic events taking place right here in Newfoundland and Labrador, including the annual NOIA Conference, Maritime & Arctic Safety & Security 2014, Arctic Oil & Gas North America, and Arctic Shipping North America Forum.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be introducing this motion here today, and I look forward to support from my hon. colleagues in this House as we continue to develop our potential and continue to shine the light on Newfoundland and Labrador. I invite my colleagues here in this hon. House to join us as ambassadors for this Province's abundant ocean technology and Arctic-related capabilities, with some phenomenal entrepreneurs, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker for the opportunity to speak to the member's private member's motion pertaining to wanting Newfoundland and Labrador to be a leader in Arctic development, and to also highlight the conference that will happen in 2016 around Arctic technology.

The conference itself is quite significant in the fact that when we look at what is going to happen around the knowledge sharing, the research, and the technology of bringing stakeholders together around the world's harshest climates to bring all these academics, to bring business, to bring community, you have more than 1,000 delegates and exhibitors from all around the world. This is where you can look at facilitating and creating really meaningful projects and strong partnerships moving forward.

We have had some discussions about things like this in Estimates when we talk about the Arctic Opportunities Initiative and the value of what a conference can bring to a region. So when this is hosted in 2016 in St. John's, this will have significant spinoff for the local business

community and for us to shine a light on our best assets; whether it be looking at the Marine Institute, looking at Memorial University, the College of the North Atlantic; research institutions that we have, like the work that is happening with Dr. George Rose and other areas, the Research and Development Corporation; and to highlight the industries that we do have, whether it be in the oil and gas in the offshore sector, or whether it be looking at the mining opportunities or the potential in our fisheries sector; and where we take this forward, and the opportunity to look at where business and where local business can benefit from being able to be leaders and look at pursuing the opportunities that are there in the Arctic.

That is what this is ultimately about. We want to make sure that business is engaged, that they want to be involved in the Arctic, that they know the opportunities, and that government is facilitating that initiative, providing the guidance it needs, and playing its role because the business community must be engaged in this whole process.

If we go back a little while, there was the Arctic initiative launched. I believe it was in 2010, maybe 2011, this initiative was launched. In it there were stakeholder sessions that happened throughout the Province. I had the opportunity, or my office did, to take in the one that was hosted in St. Anthony. We saw these stakeholder sessions happen a while ago, but we have not necessarily seen much come from that point. I would like to see where the follow-up is, where that engagement has led, and what kind of plan the minister, through her department, is carving out for Arctic opportunities and initiatives because surely there is a lot of work to be done, not only leading up to this conference but tapping into the opportunities when it comes to Arctic investment.

This type of private member's resolution, we had one very similar introduced in November 2012. I spoke to it then about the Arctic Opportunities Initiative and developing a plan. At that time, the Prime Minister of Canada was talking about the Arctic, Arctic sovereignty, and the investments the federal government would be making in these initiatives. Since then, we have seen a little bit of a step back from the

federal government. I am wondering what that changes at the provincial level, what that means for our local business and local entities, and where we are going as we move forward.

Certainly, our opportunities depend on investment and we need to have that investment. We have seen it in oil and gas, we have seen it in mining, and there are more opportunities to expand that, whether it is on the Island or in Labrador. I think there is a real role here, too, for the Minister of Fisheries to play a critical role when we are looking at the Arctic, when we look at the change in climate, and when we look at the impacts that is having on our fishery, the differing technologies, and what that is actually meaning to biomass and species that are there. We are certainly seeing and we are hearing a resurgence of codfish and other ground fish, pelagic, moving into our waters. We have seen that. We need to see a plan as to how we can capitalize on those opportunities and that transition.

When we look at the tourism potential that will come from Arctic opportunities and investment, we look at ecotourism where people could be looking at taking people out on the waters, we look at the cruise ship ports and the destinations that we are creating, whether it be on Fogo Island or whether it be in northern parts of Labrador in the Torngat Mountains, or looking the UNESCO status that Red Bay just recently achieved. There are opportunities to have this fully developed, but there are gaps we see where items like federal custom officers may need to be put in place to expand the capacity, expand that trade and how we are going to get and facilitate when we look at international agreements like CETA and how that can bridge into where we get further economic development.

Arctic research is a key piece. We should be looking at specifically creating a centre of excellence around Arctic research and that piece of technology. Utilizing how we apply technology, how we look at ecosystem research, and to have that located in a place of the north, whether it be in Labrador or whether it be on the Northern Peninsula. I think they would be strategic areas to look at the high-risk environment, potentially high reward that would

come from looking at doing business in the Arctic.

There is potential for hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars in this, and I have already talked about the institutions. We have very strong business here in Newfoundland and Labrador, strong communities. We need to find that collaboration where there seems to be a disconnect between the provincial government and community and what is actually happening around this initiative.

You have the one stakeholder session, and that does not mean there is a real plan as to where you are going forward with port development and infrastructure. Looking at the transportation links that are needed to truly capitalize, what is the provincial government prepared to do to make that investment? Whether the investment is in key port infrastructure for Arctic shipping, whether that would be in places like St. Anthony or whether that be in Cartwright or whether it be somewhere else, St. John's, to look at: Where do we make that investment, and how do we engage the municipalities and the business community around that so those areas have strategic ports?

We see in St. Anthony, where it has the second containerized port for shipping internationally in Newfoundland and Labrador. Eimskip comes biweekly and does shipping into Iceland and into Europe. Could that be expanded further? Are there other companies that could be involved in these types of investments? Surely that has to be part of the plan as we look at the free flow of goods and services and how we get things to Arctic areas. It is something that members on this side of the House have brought up several times, when we looked at the investment in our deepwater ports and when we look at the flow of goods and services, transportation links.

I know the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair has raised moving past a pre-feasibility study and to looking at the feasibility of a fixed link and what that actually means for the free flow of goods and services to be able to get through North America, to get to the Island, and to flow goods and services through Labrador as well and into Quebec. It creates a world of opportunity. If we do not do that feasibility study, then we are certainly not able to move

forward in a dynamic economy and in a global world to be more competitive.

Advanced transportation links are needed, not less. When we signed the Atlantic Gateway agreements we had stated that we were in a brilliant geographical position, just like the Arctic, but every other province and every other territory is racing for that piece of the Arctic as well.

When we look at the Atlantic Gateway, there were seventeen projects in 2011 underway totalling \$229.2 million. Our Province's share? None. We did not get any of that from the federal government. If we are not active and we are not creating those partnerships with business, with municipalities, with our academia, then we are not really going to capitalize if there are federal funding initiatives and infrastructure projects that are needed to move our Province forward.

We have missed other opportunities when it came to national shipbuilding and the shipbuilding procurement that will see multi-billions of dollars going to other provinces, but not in Newfoundland and Labrador. This all went to Nova Scotia and British Columbia. Those are dollars that we are not going to receive. We need to be able to look at the cross-departmental opportunities and focus on the things that we can do to change, develop, and invest in the Arctic.

We have seen significant cutbacks in jobs at the federal level, whether it be in the Coast Guard where we have seen several Coast Guard radio stations slated for closure in St. Anthony, on the South Coast, and in St. John's. We have seen a downgrade in services when we look at search and rescue and the critical role they need to play. That needs to be expanded.

We also need to look at, if you are going to be leaders, we are certainly laggards right now when it comes to telecommunications, when it comes to – when we talk about it, we are twenty years behind the times of basic 911. We have more areas of the Province that do not have access to broadband Internet and slower speeds than other places in the country, most other jurisdictions.

We are at a real disadvantage when it comes to the fact that only 66 per cent of the population has a speed at greater than ten megabits per second. Most of the people have the absolute bare minimum. It puts us at a competitive disadvantage when we are looking at all the technology offerings that are out there and expanding cellphone coverage.

I think the Minister of Municipal Affairs talked about it in debate, when we talked about the 911 and how important it is to put in more cellular infrastructure and work with the providers. I think that ability is there, especially when the provider is willing and puts forward proposals to put that investment there, to put those investments in key infrastructure. The Province is ready to partner, because that will truly build stronger communities, stronger rural communities and partnerships when we look at moving forward.

We also see federally, there is a broadband Canada program that is put in place. We (inaudible) happening to those dollars, we truly do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MITCHELMORE: We need to accelerate the growth and move past. We need more fibre strands happening, going through the North, in Northern communities of Labrador, on the Northern Peninsula, and in many other rural communities across the Province. We need to see a multitude of different technologies deployed, whether it is Wi-Fi mesh networks, whether it is looking at cellular, whether it is looking at non-wireless technology. There is lots of potential there.

Where is the plan, a strategy if you are not looking at tangible goals? We have not seen that plan put forward as to what the Arctic initiatives are. What is the actual plan put in place for key areas of the Province to capitalize on any investment in the Arctic? Are there going to be dollars associated with it? Is this going to come from the Department of IBRD, or is the Department of Finance going to play a role in that plan? Because we have seen in many instances where there have been strategies

announced, and we have seen time and time again a year or two later after the fact, there has not been a whole lot of movement and they end up getting cut or rolled into some other program.

We want to see where the dollars are going to match up to make sure that local regions, local areas of the Province are really in a key investment to be able to capitalize on new technology and new investments. I certainly believe, and I feel this government obviously believes, that we can excel in the Arctic but we need to see a real commitment from government. We need to see the kind of energy put into the plan that is tangible. We need to see real measured initiatives that can be based on the real world and can really put our Province forward.

Like I said in the past, the Atlantic Gateway, we should have been strategically located. We are saying it again for the Arctic, we are in a great geographical position. We talk about export and we talk about our great geographical position when it comes to markets to Europe, but in many cases we have not capitalized on the opportunity that is there at our doorstep, and some of that responsibility falls upon government to create those plans and live up to its commitments to making sure business and community can capitalize on the real opportunities that are there. We need to, where possible, put forward open, accountable, transparent best practices so we can develop and expand the opportunities that exist in the North.

I certainly have no problem in supporting this initiative, as long as a plan is developed. I think the conference – I hope I am able to attend in 2016, this type of initiative, because there really is a lot of good work that is done here in the Province and there is a lot of potential where we can capitalize on that, but like I said, we need to see that concrete plan. I look forward to other speakers addressing some of those issues, maybe, that I raised.

I certainly will support this resolution that is put forward before the House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the member opposite for his comments, as well, and certainly for his support of this initiative because it truly is a wonderful initiative. As my colleague the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune said, we are bringing the world to Newfoundland and Labrador as a result of this particular initiative, and so we should, Mr. Speaker, because we have so much to offer in this area of Arctic opportunities. The member opposite asked some very good questions and I hope I will be able to answer those questions as I proceed through some of what I had hoped to be able to say here this afternoon around the Arctic development.

Mr. Speaker, we have been working diligently as a government, and certainly through the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, to develop and implement this Arctic Opportunities Initiative. As the member opposite just alluded to, we have been doing that through stakeholder engagements. They were a very vital part because we had to hear where the stakeholders were, how they wanted to contribute, and what they wanted to contribute to this particular initiative.

We also had to ensure they were onside and we had a vision that was common, so that took a little work. We were really happy to have had that opportunity to engage. When I get further into this text, we will be able to show how we actually have engaged them in putting together an implementation plan now for what we heard from those stakeholder agreements.

Mr. Speaker, we also met with the Nunatsiavut Government, and that was an extremely important piece of work for us, again, as we came to understand the Aboriginal culture and as we came to understand what it is the Aboriginal peoples can offer to this particular program and to the initiatives we are launching. It was a real eye-opening piece of work that happened there as part of the stakeholders meetings that were held.

The business community, Mr. Speaker, were also exceptionally engaged in this process. One of the things that I was delighted to learn in

coming to the department is that we have over 500 companies in the Province right now that are anxious and active and have the capabilities and the capacities to get involved in the initiatives that we hope to see happen as a result of implementing this strategy. So, that was really heartening, and I think the networking and the relationship building that we did with the business partners also proved to them that we are serious about making sure that Newfoundland and Labrador is the path to the Arctic, and I have no doubt that we can do that with the help of all of the people that are involved.

Academic institutions, Mr. Speaker – talk about a centre for excellence, as the member opposite just reflected. I believe we have them in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. The work that is happening at this Marine Institute is second to none.

AN HON. MEMBER: Awesome.

MS SULLIVAN: As one of my colleagues behind is saying, it is awesome.

Whenever I have gone there and I have seen some of the simulation work that they are able to do, it is truly inspirational and inspiring. Whenever I have gone to C-CORE and looked at what they are doing there – Dr. Claude Daley, and the work that he is doing around exploring, around ice conditions, and how we can actually function within these really harsh environments, particularly in Arctic ice, and through C-CORE as well. I think that we have some centres of excellence that the world itself would love to be able to emulate, Mr. Speaker.

So, that is sort of the direction that we took in starting to get a framework in place and putting a foundation down, and we have been, as I said, very diligent about taking a look at that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we could ask the question, as well, as to: Why are we interested in doing this? Why do we think that this is a good niche for us? Well, there are so many advantages that we in Newfoundland and Labrador have as we position ourselves to take advantage of the opportunities. Certainly, we are very strategically located on the international shipping lanes and the northern sea routes. So

that is an obvious advantage to us. We are home to Arctic communities and Aboriginal peoples, and my colleague will speak to that later on this afternoon and broaden that out for us so we understand just how with working with the Nunatsiavut Government and with NunatuKavut and the Innu Nation that we can make inroads there.

In terms of transportation and logistical expertise in remote locations in Arctic-like conditions, the Woodward Group of Companies certainly have amazing skill in that area, PF Collins, A. Harvey; we know that we understand that part of the industry.

Experience in safe and sustainable development of natural resources: We only need to mention Suncor and Chevron, and ExxonMobil and Husky Energy, and all of the work that those companies are doing in those very cold, harsh and ice infested environments, Mr. Speaker. They already can help us understand how it is that we can proceed there.

The mining sector: When we look at that and we look at the diverse and environmentally sustainable northern mining sector, then we understand from the work that Vale are doing, we understand from the work that the Iron Ore Company of Canada is doing, Rio Tinto, past work as well that is happening, just how to function there.

The speaker opposite also referred to the industrial infrastructure that would need to be put in place. I believe we have support and a growing support in our sectors, particularly around accessible ports, Mr. Speaker. I make reference to St. John's, Lewisporte, Corner Brook, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and St. Anthony where, with ACOA, we actually did some dredging work not very long ago to make that port even more accessible.

I look at the work that we are doing industrially at Bull Arm Fabrication, at Bay Bulls Marine Terminal, Cow Head Fabrication and so on. We have expertise, Mr. Speaker, make no doubt about it. Our job now is to ensure that we mobilize all of that, put it into the package that helps us grab the attention. Because make no doubt about it, the eyes of the world are on the Arctic right now, and we very clearly have our

gaze pointed in that direction and with all the resources that are needed to make this possible.

We have a world-renowned technology sector with oceans, Mr. Speaker. Again, I reference the Marine Institute which is second to none. The simulation, the tow tank, the flume tank, all of those – if you have not had opportunity to go and check those out, I really suggest that you go up there and take a look. The National Research Council, again in terms of offshore engineering, in terms of the ice tank and the tow tank, it is amazing the work that is happening over there, and, of course, C-CORE with the centrifuge.

Mr. Speaker, I could use up all of my fifteen minutes just giving examples of what we know already that we are able to do here in Newfoundland and Labrador. I think we need to make reference as well that the global industry has made Newfoundland and Labrador their Northern Atlantic base of operation. Now, that tells us something, Mr. Speaker. When the world is coming here to set up because they too have a vision of the North, they too have a vision of the Arctic, then we know we are doing things right and we know that we are strategically positioned.

Talk about Rolls-Royce, for example, Schlumberger, Statoil, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Technip, we can go on and on with the people who have set up here. They know how well positioned we are, and that we are at the forefront of developing innovative technologies and solutions, Mr. Speaker.

Look at C-CORE and how it is applying its locally-developed solutions and experience to leading the European Space Agency's Polar View project. Look North, Mr. Speaker, at a national centre of excellence where researchers are able to identify potential transportation corridors. We have it all right here, Mr. Speaker, and we need to use that and use it to our advantage.

Our goal, of course, is to ensure economic development for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It is to continue to diversify the economy here in Newfoundland and Labrador, and it is to create an environment where our local companies and other stakeholders, other subsidiaries, can benefit from the emerging

opportunities that present themselves to us as a result of Arctic operations.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that our stakeholder input therefore has been very valuable. We heard what the stakeholders had to say and we listened. As a result of that now we are learning to develop those relationships, to sustain them, and to brand our Province as the place, as the path to the Arctic. We are, I believe, bringing the world to our home here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: We are doing that, Mr. Speaker, through the three conferences that we have been able to attract here. We are the envy of many places around this continent because they wanted those three conferences and we have all three of them coming here.

We have OCEANS' 14 coming here in September 14-19, I believe are the dates; 1,200 to 1,300 people from around the world coming here. What opportunity that presents for us.

We are selling out in terms of the booths. We also have ATC that is coming here, Mr. Speaker, in 2016. We have OMAE which is coming here in 2015, the oceans mechanics engineering association and so many others that want to come. They want to see what we are doing here.

AN HON. MEMBER: We are open for business.

MS SULLIVAN: That is a really good point. One of my colleagues just said, "We are open for business." We certainly are. Business has been ongoing on this file for many, many years. As I said, the 500 or more companies that are already in place have shown us proof of that. We have a very comprehensive approach, I believe, as we move forward and we are putting together that formal action plan that the Member for The Straits asked about.

Our overall plan then will identify three strategic directions – and he did ask about what we were going to do. One is positioning ourselves as the path by developing better communications so that everybody knows what we offer here, Mr. Speaker, and positioning our strategy such that

we are reaching out to all of those areas and bringing in all of the people within Newfoundland and Labrador who want to be part of this, and can be. We are participating and sponsoring key Arctic-themed events. We are continuing to work with our stakeholders in building those relationships, and we are establishing partnerships with other northern jurisdictions. That is so important, Mr. Speaker. We cannot do this in isolation. Our northern jurisdictions are so important to us.

Apart from that, our second step is to build local capacity, and we are doing that by developing a provincial inventory, by increasing outreach on how to do business and working with local partners. We are identifying the gaps, Mr. Speaker, and we are filling them in. Thirdly, we are fostering economic development and business opportunities right here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I was at Common Ground a little while ago during Innovation Week and somebody there came to me and spoke about the Arctic opportunities, and some ideas that he had around how to foster that development here. It was really exciting to see that. People understand that they have a place to come, they have a place to be supported, and that we are there to help them.

Mr. Speaker, I can go on about a variety of other activities. The member opposite also asked about who we might be partnering with to ensure this implementation strategy. Well, the Research & Development Corporation, the Marine Institute, the Nunatsiavut Government, and other groups. We also have a ministerial steering committee in place, a deputy minister steering committee in place. I think, as we raised our national profile, one of the best things that we are doing is that we are connecting with the Arctic Council, which is chaired by Minister Leona Aglukkaq. I have had the privilege of working with her. She is the Chair of the Arctic Council. I worked with her as well when she was the Minister of Health for the country, so we had many interactions. We will continue to work with her to ensure that the message on Newfoundland and Labrador is getting out.

We are continuing with Noia and we are continuing our work with NATI. Mr. Speaker,

one of the other ways that we know we get our message out is when we go to events and sponsor events like Northern Lights, like the ATC that my predecessor went to, like the Offshore Technology Conference, like Arctic Oil & Gas North America, Arctic Shipping North America, ISO Plenary, the Expo Labrador, Northern Exposure, and so many more.

Our goal, as I said, is to promote economic development and activity in Newfoundland and Labrador by creating the right environment, by ensuring we have engaged everyone here in the Province, and by ensuring we have done the outreach that is going to get us noticed and that is going to affirm that we are the place to be, that we truly are the path to the North.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that with the eyes of the world now looking northward, Newfoundland and Labrador is ready to lead the way. I am so happy to be part of that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. EDMUNDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the minister and the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune for an advance copy of their notes because I heard the same thing on November 21, 2012 when the Member for Lake Melville spoke to it, Mr. Speaker. The only problem is what has happened from back then until now is very little.

Industry has taken the lead, Mr. Speaker, in leaps and bounds. I remember attending the Noia Conference and they were talking about pushing Newfoundland and Labrador forward, and I support that. What they did not know is the state of the infrastructure, so I told them. They were shocked.

A little while after, I asked the minister, the Member for Labrador West, when he announced the ferries: Are you going to upgrade infrastructure? The answer was no. This is a government that is poised to go North? I do not

think so, Mr. Speaker; I think there is a lot of work that has to be done. I will support this PMR, but I realize from living in the North that there is a lot of work that has to be done.

We have organizations, like the St. John's Board of Trade, that have gone forward. They even recruited a senior government member to get on board their Labrador and Arctic working group. I would have thought it would have been the other way around, Mr. Speaker.

The PMR that was presented in 2012 by the Member for Lake Melville was much more elaborate than what I heard today. I had faith that this would go. It is too bad that the Member for Lake Melville just spoke to it, because nothing happened after. Nothing happened after.

We talk about the world is coming to us. I heard the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune say the world is coming to us. I heard the minister talk about the world is coming to us. Mr. Speaker, we have to go out and get the world. Nova Scotia is poised and ready.

I listened with much dissatisfaction and watched the MP for Labrador put \$500,000 into a port in Quebec. We could have had those resources. We could have opened up, but there was nothing from the government, Mr. Speaker, to support a railway to a port in Labrador. So, Quebec is ready to go.

Churchill, Manitoba looks at their community as a gateway to the Arctic. Mr. Speaker, we have organizations that have taken the initiative, companies that have taken the initiative. We have companies like Woodward's Oil that could not wait for this government. They have gone on and they are delivering supplies right across the North. We have tourism companies like Adventure Canada that do tours from Greenland to Iqaluit to Baffin Island and down the Coast of Labrador to St. John's. They could not wait, they took the initiative.

We talk about having the resources and to be strategically placed. I agree with all of that, Mr. Speaker. The resource is over 500 years of marine industry in our Province. We have the best. The minister referenced the Marine Institute and other companies. I fully agree, Mr.

Speaker, in the offshore technology when it comes to oil and gas. We are the best. We are the best, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot to present and we are strategically located. The Coast of Labrador is longer than circumnavigating the Island portion of our Province.

Mr. Speaker, this government cannot even get an icebreaker to help the *Apollo* out. We are talking about marine shipping and ferry passage to Northern Labrador. I talked about this earlier in this session. The *Northern Ranger* that provides tourism services went dead in the water. I am a marine navigator by trade, Mr. Speaker, and the term dead in the water is the last thing you want to hear when you are onboard a vessel. This is how this government is poised to go forward in the Arctic? Mr. Speaker, it leaves a lot to be said.

I certainly look forward to 2016 for us to host an Arctic conference. An international conference that will bring hundreds and thousands of people to talk about how to open up ourselves, how to sell ourselves as the gateway to the Arctic, and how to sell our resources that we have to offer to benefit from the Arctic.

I heard the minister say that all eyes are on the Arctic. That is so true. Living in the subarctic if you may, Mr. Speaker, because we live just south of the Arctic Circle line. If we look at Voisey's Bay, if we look at Muskrat Falls, if we look at Strange Lake, if we look at the tourism potential, this whole Province is strategically placed. It is strategically placed, it has a lot to offer, but it is lacking in initiative.

At the NOIA conference, Mr. Speaker, there were a number of presenters there. I remember one industry official talked about Newfoundland and Labrador's expertise. I will quote this: In working in a harsh environment, combined with its proximity to the Arctic, makes it a natural centre of excellence when considering developments in Arctic environments.

Mr. Speaker, truer words were never said. The only thing is once you look at harsh environments you have to look at a safety factor. Just to give you some example of what it is like – I may have stood in this House before and unfolded this story, but it is relevant. I took part in a search and rescue just south of Makkovik a

few years ago. The search and rescue was a total success, Mr. Speaker. The cormorant helicopter lifted off from the nearest base in Gander and it took them five hours to travel south of a community and do a successful rescue. Five hours, and that is the closest point.

Mr. Speaker, if you are going up to the Arctic, until you get to Baffin Island, Gander is the only cormorant on the East Coast that can go North. We do have the 444 Squadron in Goose Bay but they are not as equipped. If you get in trouble – and when we are talking about Arctic development, tourism fits right into that category.

We have sailing ships, we have cruise ships that are continuously going up and down the coast. I just made reference to Arctic Adventures. Mr. Speaker, in the event of an accident somewhere between Cape Chidley on the tip of Labrador and Baffin Island, which is some 390 miles of ocean, what do we do for mass rescue? How equipped are we? Tourists are going to look at that. I worked in the tourist industry, Mr. Speaker. I did it for ten years. I totally understand how much of a factor safety is and having the safeguards in place.

Mr. Speaker, I talked about the *Apollo* and there are so many people travelling on it. Time and time again I have heard my colleague from Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair talk about, question where this government cannot access an icebreaker. I know it is a federal issue but it is a service, it is this government's mandate to go after that service, Mr. Speaker, they could not do it.

We talk about a sea route and I think traditionally you think of the sea route as the gateway but, Mr. Speaker, the Inuit from Nunatsiavut and from Nunivik have traditionally integrated the Nunatsiavut Government as part of their circumpolar conference, part of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami have always had discussions all over the North in Labrador. They are poised, they are ready to go. They have their communications.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, everyone has their ducks lined up except for this government. The reason I say that is because I heard this presentation or this PMR two years ago, and I am hearing the

exact same thing again. The notes that were provided for the minister and for the mover of the motion, Mr. Speaker, I pretty much have them in my hand. It is the same thing; the only difference is this time we do have something to look forward to, and that is the conference that is coming up in 2016. Everyone is ready to go. There is an old saying that if you build it, they will come. Well, sometimes you have to go after it and, Mr. Speaker, that is where this government is lacking, what can be done between now and 2016, I am fully supportive of it. I will fully endorse it, but just to say that it has to be done.

Mr. Speaker, I could read the same notes I did two years ago because they are still relevant. If it has come to representing PMRs, I would like to talk about a PMR that was submitted, and actually submitted by our side, on search and rescue. It is the same thing in this category when you look at going north into the Arctic. In the North, they supported that PMR. The only thing is they gave it lip service and we have not seen anything since. As a matter of fact, what we have seen is the closure of the marine search and rescue sub-centre in St. John's. We have seen closing down and cutbacks in coast guard presence. That is not how we go forward to present ourselves to the Arctic as a gateway.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is a lot more that has to be done but in the meantime, as I have said, before I take my place, I supported this PMR two years ago and I will gladly support this PMR again today.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I always do when I rise in my place in this hon. House, I would like to thank the people of Lake Melville for their continued support. I would like to say it is an honour and a privilege to speak to this private member's resolution here today.

I commend the Member for Torngat Mountains across the way for his passion. It is all appreciated, Mr. Speaker. I am glad he remembered that this was discussed before and there have been stuff that has happened, but the bottom line here now is I am so depressed I do not know if I am going to be able to continue. My goodness, to turn everything into a talk about search and rescue, ice breakers, and all that and to try to look at the people who are out at home watching and to try to have them convinced that the federal responsibilities are on this government right here during a private member's resolution that should be celebrating our educational institutions, our youth who are in those institutions, our business sector, and our innovation as a people and a Province in order to take advantage of what is coming from the opportunities in the North.

With that being said, I would just like to say he did make some positive reference, I will give him that, about the fact that we are positioned well. We certainly are. You can talk about our academic and research development facilities, infrastructure, and our technology, Mr. Speaker; we are certainly well positioned in taking advantage of all of those opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, what inspires us to do these things the way we do, to develop our industries, to get our educational institutions in-line, and to make sure that we position ourselves and take advantage of that? It is the legacy of our Province's explorers, our elders, and our traditional knowledge passed down from generation to generation.

I will just say very quickly, as I do many times in this House, as it is on the Island it is up in Labrador, Mr. Speaker. Knowledge and tradition are passed down from elders to the youth in our communities, father to son, mother to daughter, and whatever the case may be. That is what leads us to be the type of people that we are, which is to keep pushing the boundaries when it comes to technology, exploration, and opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I will give the member from across the way a little bit of kudos, too, because he did talk about our expertise in operating in a harsh environment. If you talk about Labrador, if you talk about Newfoundland, and if you talk about

our great legacy of fishermen, hunters, and trappers, Mr. Speaker, we certainly know how to survive and make do in terms of living in a harsh climate to support our families and our communities. Everything from development in the middle of Iceberg Alley, unmanned vehicle technology, and we have gone so far as to get involved in monitoring icebergs with satellites. We are certainly doing a lot.

Again, not to go off topic, Mr. Speaker, I am just going to say I talked a little bit about our industry side of things and I talked a little bit about our educational side of things, but in terms of what we are doing, Mr. Speaker, as a government it is great to say you talk about tuition freezes, you talk about elimination of student loans, you talk about continuous – continuous – dedication to our students and infrastructure developments on the campuses across this great Province, Mr. Speaker. We are certainly serious about what we do.

One thing that has happened since this was brought up last time, I will say to the member from across the way, is simply this: we have stepped it up in terms of our partnering, Mr. Speaker. I would like to give a little bit of mention here to our partnering in specific with the Nunatsiavut Government as we implement our Arctic Opportunities Initiative. I will go back a little bit in time and take you back to even before I was actually a member of the Nunatsiavut Government. I had worked for a development corporation and we had partnerships with companies, Aboriginal groups, and Nunavut itself, if you will, in terms of delivering supplies and partnering up in terms of fishing quota and vessels, if you will.

The Nunatsiavut Government has the personnel. They certainly have the youth who are taking advantage of post-secondary student support programs to get involved in opportunities that will take place further north. They have the government; they have the members in place who want to see our youth thrive. You have to look a little further than just behind your doorstep, Mr. Speaker. You have to see what is out there for the kids and you have to dream a little bigger, if you will, in order to truly grow and to be able to develop as a society and as a people.

Mr. Speaker, I will say something about the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies as well, which is a part and parcel with the government that we are partnering with. They are certainly ambitious in terms of acquiring infrastructure, construction companies, heavy equipment operations, and all of those things that will allow us through a mutually beneficial partnership to get out there and to get into a position where we can seize an opportunity. Whether it becomes research and development, whether it becomes bidding on a project, whether it becomes starting a new industry, or whatever it happens to be, they are ready to go and so are we.

It is not as if this was talked about before and nothing happened. I believe the member from across the way said the Member for Lake Melville spoke about it and then he did nothing. Well, Mr. Speaker, it takes more than one member on any one given side of this House to make something like an Arctic Opportunities Initiative take place. You simply just do not say hey, let's go do this, bang, we go up to Nunavut and say here we are, and let's go. It does not work that way.

You have to have your ducks in a row; you have to have your partners in place, which we are doing. You have to get out there and see what those opportunities are. You have to strategically pick where you are going to put your investment and then you have to go after it, as the member said. This is not a government that simply talks and walks away, Mr. Speaker. We get it done. When it comes to this, we are going to be moving towards getting it done up there too.

Like I said, Mr. Speaker, with the partnerships and the collaboration that takes place, what you are going to see is the enabling of success inside of Northern communities. You are going to see growth and prosperity, just as we are seeing in Newfoundland and Labrador right now, but further up North in Labrador and up into the Northern regions of Canada, up into Nunavut.

What you are going to see are entrepreneurs. You are going to see students, like I said before. You are going to see beneficiaries of land claim agreements take advantage of post-secondary student support programs. They are going to get out; they are going to get job opportunities.

Local businesses and entrepreneurs are going to get the ability to get involved and everybody is going to benefit from this. It is not just about one particular group, one government benefiting from this, but it is everybody involved, and that is where partnerships come into place, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, just to talk about some of our northern communities, we have a wealth of traditional knowledge. You talk about the unique experience that it is living in Northern Labrador, I can only imagine now going way, way up above the treeline and being born and raised in Nunavut, Mr. Speaker, a totally new experience again. It is probably similar in terms of the cold, but other than that definitely a different situation altogether.

It is these decision makers who have been leaders in these northern communities all this time. These are the people that we need in partnership and side by side with us, Mr. Speaker, in order to make the right decisions about how to proceed when we are talking about just that – opportunities that happen in the North and in the Arctic.

We talk about Qalipu Nation, the Innu, the Inuit, the Metis of NunatuKavut, we certainly have our share in this great Province – and not to leave Miawpukek out of that as well; I better include them all. When you are talking about traditional knowledge – and I will just give you one example. If you were to go up through Torngat National Park, which is a little bit north of the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains, his district, what you see is a base camp with an electrified bear fence and you have bear monitors who are Inuit born and raised people there who are trained – experts marksmen with these rifles. Not only that, if you were to get stuck out somewhere while you were out fishing – I nearly was eaten by a bear myself one time. I thought it was my good friend Johannes Lampe creeping up behind me. No, it was a black bear looking for a nice, juicy meal.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, they know what to do when they are out on the land. So you can imagine whether you are talking about drilling on a remote site, maybe we are looking for ore, maybe that is the opportunity. Maybe we are doing seismic testing or something and

you have to have a base camp where people are going to be able to lodged, fed, kept safe. Maybe you are just stopping here on your way somewhere else, but it is a very, very harsh environment, Mr. Speaker.

So survival is priority number one – safety for all the people involved. I guess if something went wrong, if a vehicle was to break down, maybe it is a chopper, maybe it is a speedboat, or what have you, it is that traditional knowledge and the unique experiences that have given these people their immediate culture in these northern communities that will benefit that part of the expedition, that part of the research and development initiative, whatever it happens to be.

So all I am trying to say here, Mr. Speaker, is we, on this side of the House, recognize what people with that local knowledge, the traditional knowledge, the culture, the expertise, we know what they have to offer, and we know they can contribute. Hence, the partnership with Nunatsiavut Government and a focus on pursuing these opportunities in the Arctic together, walking side by side. That all comes to our ancestry, both on the Island, and in Labrador as well, Mr. Speaker, how we survived – I already mentioned that – hunting, fishing, trapping up in Labrador, primarily; some fishing, too, but I guess not as much as the fishery was the mainstay here on the Island portion of the Province.

It is the challenges, Mr. Speaker, that we have all faced as a people which makes us ready to go. It makes us the right people to partner together with different people in the industry, different verticals if you will, and march towards linking up with the people in the far North in order to secure some of those opportunities and again further diversify our revenue streams as a Province, which is something we are proud of doing over here.

Moving on, I would be remiss if I did not talk about what we are doing here on the ground. Like I said, the previous speakers got up and said: Oh yes, you spoke about it in the House and then the Member for Lake Melville did not do anything. Mr. Speaker, you do not do these things overnight; it takes time. You have to have a purpose; you have to have a vector. We

have to know where we are going and that takes investment here on the ground, investment in our own people, investment in our industries, and investment in MUN, Mr. Speaker.

It is the Marine Institute; they are partners at the National Research Council – the industry partners. We are positioned perfectly – and I know it has been said over and over and over, but it is a perfect fit; it fits like a glove, if you will, Mr. Speaker. These institutions are essential partners in the ocean technology sector. They are going to be integral to whatever success we have with developing those opportunities that are going to happen in the North.

Not only are they going to be integral but they are going to strengthen what we have to offer, so you bring in people from different areas, get them to a point where they are going to contribute in one aspect and we will contribute in another, bringing in our resources, bringing in our kids, our young adults, bringing in our professionals. Eventually we will have the right mix to be able to do something effective, and that is mutually beneficial for everybody.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it has already been mentioned here – and I see my time is running short – but I also would like to talk about just the location: Newfoundland and Labrador, in general. We are poised – and it was said across the way and it was said on our side as well. You take that straight route right up to the North, Mr. Speaker. I mean, that is the way. If you talk about shipping, receiving, hauling a lot of gear, obviously it is inaccessible by road. The sea is going to be there. Who has that expertise? We do, Mr. Speaker. We have the expertise not only in the harsh climates such as ice – and we are famous for being able to work around the ice, whether you are talking about oil platforms, or you are talking about running a subsea cable, drilling through the rock, missing the ice that scrapes along the bottom, going to the deep water. We already have all that stuff.

Like I said, we are positioned perfectly. We have the people involved; we have the industry. We may as well reach out to those people, to those parts of industry that we do not have, partner up, and start to head up towards the

North to get the maximum benefit for everybody involved.

Again, our location is key. We have businesses, Mr. Speaker, technologies, and services that better equip us to simulate and even do test (inaudible) right off our shores. If you talk about real life Arctic-like laboratories we have our shores to get people prepped for what is to come when you are in the high Arctic because if you have ever known anybody – I, myself, have not been up that far. If you have even you known anybody who has worked in places like Resolute, you are gone past Iqaluit and you are gone past Rankin Inlet; you are in the North where the only people up there are the few brave enough to fuel up the planes that happen to drop off supplies to mostly scientists who are up there shining lasers into the night sky and doing what they do. Having said that, it is a harsh climate, one where minutes and seconds count, where it is live or die, when you are out there exposed to the elements.

With that, I am running short, Mr. Speaker. I cannot stress enough about the benefits that northern communities, northern residents, and Aboriginal people will derive from opportunities we are seeking. We recognize the opportunities these partnerships with the various Aboriginal groups and governments will present.

Again, it goes back to developing careers along the way for our youth, fulfilling careers, high-tech careers, and high-paying careers as well. That is the focus of what we do on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. I have talked about post-secondary education, I have talked about industry, I have talked about our youth, I have talked about our elders, and I have talked about making the most of the traditional knowledge that is out there and the unique experiences that Aboriginal communities, their people, and their culture have to offer. We have talked about the partnerships we are undergoing. We have talked about what we have done as a government.

To conclude, in my last few seconds I will just say it is a partnership that is going to make this a reality. In the spirit of that partnership with the Nunatsiavut Government and with the other Aboriginal groups, I will say to my Inuit friends out there, nakkumek, to my Innu friends, tshinashkumitin, and to you, Mr. Speaker, thank

you for allowing me a few minutes to speak on this private member's resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Littlejohn): The hon. the Member for St. John's East.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am rising this afternoon to express our views on this particular motion. In this particular case, if there is one common word we are hearing today, Mr. Speaker, it is the word Arctic. Of course, in this particular case I guess we could say we are washing and rinsing again, and we are recycling this motion. I think we talked about this one, as my friend from Torngat Mountains said, back in November 2012. So it is washed, rinsed, and recycled, and I guess we are using a little bit of Arctic Power to do this one now today.

Mr. Speaker, we will support the motion again. I figure they were kind of critical issues that would be brought out in the House of Assembly like health care issues or issues having to do with seniors. We know we have a population growth problem, an aging population in this Province. I would have figured that government would have liked to have heard other party's inputs on this rather than a detergent to be used in talking about a motion that we already talked about two years ago. You talk about a waste of resources here, a waste of thought, and a waste of input.

Having said that, I will carry on and I will talk about this motion in a different context again, as we did in 2012. At the same time it gives a chance to give new views to something. I figured I would go back in the past.

The previous member who just stood up from Lake Melville, talked about partnerships. One of the things I will remind the government across the way of is how much of a partnership does not exist with the federal government in the promotion of the Atlantic Gateway. This Province has been grossly left behind when it comes to the investments the federal government have made in this Province in giving us a hand to promote ourselves at the same time.

It is great to see government coming out and amplifying what the Province has to offer when it comes to the Arctic Technology Conference and the other conferences that are going to be happening in the future. We have to go out and we have to do this ourselves. That is the disgusting part of it. What has federal government done with us?

I am looking at a list of projects that involve the Atlantic Gateway as of January 24, Mr. Speaker. I flip it open and I am looking at all these projects. Here are some from New Brunswick. You talk about strategic investments in provinces, maybe when you look at a list like this it makes you wonder if Fabian Manning was not right.

Have a listen to these projects: Fredericton International Airport runway upgrade, \$10.4 million; Greater Moncton International Airport runway extension, \$24 million; Route 1, Trans-Canada Highway twinning and rehabilitation, \$210 million. If Newfoundlanders and Labradorians had that invested into the Trans-Canada Highway in this Province we would be a pretty happy bunch I would tell you.

Saint John Harbour Bridge rehabilitation, \$36.17 million; Port of Saint John Cruise Gateway Project, \$14 million – I will come back down – \$368.9 million for New Brunswick alone; Nova Scotia, \$137.3 million investment into airports here throughout Nova Scotia. The link between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island was another strategic investment of \$2.68 million. Prince Edward Island had \$20.8 million worth.

Newfoundland and Labrador, \$40.8 million – \$40.8 million, that is all. Investments in the Gander International Airport runway upgrade of \$10 million; St. John's International Airport category 3 instrument landing system, \$25.8 million; and a Marine Institute SmartBay project expansion. That is to enhance traffic management systems and maintain safe operations in the high-traffic area we have.

What else did they not do? At \$40.8 million, as this program started, we did not see strategic investment, obviously, in Coast Guard as we heard other members say. We have Coast Guard ships that are parked, left rusting, if you will, tied up to the wharves, and crews laid off. We

do not know what is going to be happening in the future with Coast Guard boats. We know we have radio stations that are closed up. We have lost the ability for search and rescue monitoring, for example, out of Southside Road over there.

It is great to get up and talk to a nice, warm, fuzzy motion here and, by golly, I tell you this is a nice, warm, fuzzy motion, but the reality speaks differently.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is actually a pretty cold motion. It is about the Arctic. It is not very warm and fuzzy at all.

MR. MURPHY: Some of us are old enough to remember government trumpeting this bold initiative, and like I said, it is great, where the federal government was going to be spending money to improve all this infrastructure, but the reality is completely different, is it not? Reality is completely different when you are seeing \$368 million going to New Brunswick for the gateway opportunities. At the same time, \$368 million and you are seeing \$40 million come to Newfoundland and Labrador.

In 2007, this government's Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development signed an agreement with the three other Atlantic Provinces and the federal government to develop the roads, the railways, and the ports necessary to make the region the hub of international trade. Great, fine and dandy, sign your name to the bottom line – it is great. I am pretty sure the intentions were all there, but Newfoundland's federal representative in the Harper Cabinet, Mr. Peter MacKay of Nova Scotia – remember him? I have not seen him for a long time. Of course, salmon season is coming up so maybe we will see him again.

He said at that time, "All four Atlantic provinces are working together, pulling together and moving in the same direction with the federal government." Six years later, let me give you the financial reality of pulling together and moving in the same direction. Let me remind my hon. colleagues in government a few of the unpleasant financial truths.

As of 2013, the breakdown already went through: \$368.9 million to New Brunswick, \$137.3 million to Nova Scotia, and \$40.8

million to Newfoundland and Labrador. Our hopes and dreams are resting on federal money sometimes when it comes to this, but we need to see provincial initiatives happen too. We got a pittance in comparison to the other provinces.

It is great, like I said, for the groups that received it: St. John's Airport, Gander Airport, and the Marine Institute. I cannot think of any better place to invest the monies but we need a whole lot more investment done if we are going to become that gateway to the North like we want to be. We need federal participation in this, too, if we are going to be able to make it. So far they have not responded. The conference is all good, but we need more.

Let's look at infrastructure. I can think of several pieces of infrastructure right away that my previous friends here in the House have already talked about. An operating ferry system, for example, would be great. Other people in Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, are also talking about the potential for a tunnel to connect the Island of Newfoundland to Labrador through Blanc-Sablon to somewhere along the coast, as long as there is a connection there. They are talking about the development, for example, of Plan Nord which would probably help out the Coastal Labrador regions a whole lot in opening up Coastal Labrador to have more opportunities to become gateways to the North.

Let's not forget that Labrador is also a part of this Province, a very valuable part of this Province. Just because of their geographical placement closer to the North, they deserve to see just as much of an investment opportunity happen there as much as anywhere else. So if we are going to pursue a role in the development of the Arctic, like I said, which we are in support of, we should first make sure that we have basic infrastructure in our own northern regions. I have been told the Province is a natural fit for Arctic development because of its strategic position in the North Atlantic. Of course, if you look at a map we know it is true.

Currently, the response time – I want to talk a little bit about search and rescue here because if we are going to have people travelling in the North for development, we need the support services too, at the same time, to help support

them. Let's not forget that when it comes to the development of the North.

The response time for a cormorant helicopter – this, again, is a federal issue. We have been trying to get the feds to address this for a long time. The response time right now for a cormorant helicopter, they are working between 9:00 and 4:00 o'clock p.m. Monday to Friday; wheels up response time for a cormorant, thirty minutes. After 4:00 p.m. and on weekdays and during holidays the wheels up response time is up to two hours.

Needless to say, the response time has cost mariners their lives. If we are going to be sending people up North, we cannot find that is going to be an acceptable response time for the people of this Province, or for anybody who wants to do some sort of business up there, if they are fishing or what have you. We need the support services that the federal government are responsible for that we are not getting.

I want to talk a little bit about environment, too, because if you are talking about development of the North you have to talk about environment. It is a harsh environment, too, at the same time, one of the principal reasons we hear all the time. We do not necessarily hear about fishing a lot that is happening there or that could potentially happen, and that needs to be explored. We know shrimp fishing happens, of course, in zones 0, 1, 2, and 3 up there, albeit in a limited way. There are limited catches.

What we hear most about, particularly in the media, is oil companies heading north. This is probably where there is going to be a very important role for the Marine Institute, their Marine Studies branch, and the development of technology that could be happening here in Newfoundland and Labrador. Another good reason why this conference should be coming here is to find out what our role is going to be.

Let us look at the development of the North particularly when it comes to oil and gas infrastructure. You are talking about a very hostile environment there, number one; but number two, the capabilities.

I ask everybody to think about this, too, at the same time in the House when it comes to the

responsibility we have towards our environment because it is ours. The Coast of Labrador, if we have a spill in deep water in coastal Labrador, how do we clean it up? Look where it flows: the Labrador Current, right down the Coast of Labrador and right off the Coast of the Island portion of the Province. It is going to be a massive thing to have to deal with.

We know that if development is going to happen where we should have as many regulations at the same time, that is going to be controlling that mode of development, but at the same time we should be able to be there and be able to respond in a second, a split second. We should be able to get out there and be able to have the resources to tend to it, and tend to an environmental disaster if it happens. This is the danger here.

We do not have the supports right now in our Province to handle it if it happens. We do not have a spill response. Right now, in the Gulf of Mexico they are still dealing with the after effects of a spill in the Gulf of Mexico and we do not know, with the hostile environment we have, how we are going to be able to handle it. Simply using Corexit on it to disperse a patch of oil simply is not going to do it, Mr. Speaker. We have to be careful in an environment that we know very little about. The National Energy Board, again, is going to have a role in that, too, at the same time.

The last thing I will address when it comes to environment, and like I said, we have to be cautious but we have the resources to learn around here, so I would advise government to keep those investments happening with our Maritime education sector and keep in touch there. I love the whole idea of having opportunities in the Arctic, but it has to done with trepidation.

The last thing we need to look out for if we are going to have people in the North, and I touched on this earlier when it came to the Statements by Ministers earlier today, it is okay to be growing a population, but a growing population in the North is fine and dandy. It has to have all the supports, but you also have to feed them at the same time. We have to make sure we are dealing with affordability options as well here when it comes to that.

The price of food right now in coastal Labrador is out of this world – out of this world. I do not know how they do it, sometimes. The price of milk, even; I have heard prices \$6 and \$7 for a two litre of milk. How do we maintain a population if we want to have an opportunity here in the North at the same time in getting supplies up there?

It is bad enough we do not have a boat to do it right. Right now, we have boats that are causing us problems and we are not looking after our own transportation infrastructure. That is the other thing I wanted to touch on. When it comes to having the ability to deliver goods and services, you have to have the transportation infrastructure to deal with that. If we are going to have people in the North, we are going to have to have the health infrastructure there, in case somebody gets sick. We have an awful lot of challenges here.

Do we believe in it? Darn right we do, but again, Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, we have talked about all these things and the role we have in developing the North at the same time. The opportunities we do know are immense, but we have to look after the environment. Most of all, we have to look after our people.

The last thing I will say about it, Mr. Speaker, in the time that is running out, is we have to have the participation of the federal government that has not been there and has not been here in the last five or six years since we have been trying to pursue this ideal.

I thank you very much for the time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HEDDERSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Unlike some of my colleagues, I am really delighted – absolutely delighted – today to stand in this House and report progress on a very important initiative. It is an initiative that fits so

well with this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. This Province is so strategically located for this type of initiative, and I do not think anyone disagreed. From what I heard from my colleagues on both sides of the House, nobody disagrees with the fact that this Province is strategically located and that it will allow us to play a big part in the Arctic exploration and development in the years to come.

Of course, it is not unusual, and I am sure the Speaker has reminded us many times, that people who stand up to talk about what is in the motion do not always stick to the intent of that particular motion. We heard all sorts of things, but what we mostly heard is not what we are not doing; it is what the federal government are not doing, the icebreaking that my colleague from the North Coast talked about and how difficult it is sometimes to avail of that service. My colleague from St. John's East went off on a tangent about what the feds are not doing here in this Province.

I will remind him that the federal government and we as a Province never give up, I say to the Member for St. John's East. We never give up on this side of the House with regard to lobbying the federal government to get our share of their revenues. We are not always successful and I would be the first to admit it, but we do have some degree of success. You already mentioned them: the airport in Gander and our own international airport here in St. John's. They are very much excited about making sure they can put in a system to allow landings of a greater number.

I am reminded of the Member for Exploits telling me about the Bond Bridge, I think \$25 million.

MR. FORSEY: Yes, close to it.

MR. HEDDERSON: The close to \$25 million that was absolutely necessary for transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on, but I, too, want to get back to the main motion, if you want to call it that, and talk about, and I think both sides of the House again talked about, how we must diversify and how we must build on the success we as a government over the last decade or so have been able to garner from this

Province of ours. There have been some tremendous successes. This is an opportunity to look at one of those successes.

It is interesting because when we look at Newfoundland and Labrador – and nobody who stood up today argued with the fact that Newfoundland and Labrador is truly – I say, truly – the path to the Arctic. That is not to say we are not in competition with other jurisdictions right across this nation from coast to coast to coast. We are in a dogfight to get our piece of the action.

Guess what? We are getting it. Not only are we getting it, but the people who are interested in the Arctic exploration and development, guess what? They are getting it as well, and they are getting it because they are going to be here in 2016, for an example. We have carried off a coup. If you want to talk about success and where we have advanced in the last couple of years, that conference is the be-all and end-all as the Nation, and not only the Nation, but companies and other countries are so interested. We have pulled off a coup, and there are other jurisdictions not far from us that cannot figure out how we did it and why they did not get it. We did get it and we are going to take advantage of it.

Again we ask: Why is Newfoundland and Labrador so poised to take advantage of the changing conditions in the Arctic that are opening up and allowing for exploration and development? Of course, you would have to look at where we are strategically located, and not only strategically located, but we have something that no other jurisdiction has, not even Iceland, not even Norway, and not even Alaska.

We have some of the coldest waters that mirror the waters in the Arctic. It is the strangest kind of location – and that is something we do not always brag about, but the colder the water makes this jurisdiction, Labrador and the Island of Newfoundland, that perfect incubator for any type of research, experimentation, or whatever under controlled conditions that can help put together better ways in which we can safely – not only personal safety, but environmental safety and other safety – make sure that exploration that takes place and develops in the

Arctic will be done in a manner that is in the best interests of everyone.

We are surrounded by cold water, we have extreme weather conditions, and of course necessity is always the mother of invention. There has been a tremendous amount of research done, in the oil industry in particular with the exploration that has taken place off our coast, dealing with how people can work in these harsh environments. We can in some ways manipulate the environments with regard to icebergs, ice, and so on. We can build upon this success because Newfoundland and Labrador is looked upon with regard to oil exploration and development as forerunners. In concert with other companies, with other organizations, and so on, we have put together an expertise in this Province that is second to none. We can use that expertise now as the expansion begins up in the Arctic. Again, we are there.

Of course, I am very proud to represent my District of Harbour Main, and I do not think there is anyone in this Chamber that does not realize that Arctic exploration is nothing new for Newfoundland and Labrador. The one name that I would mention, that you would all know, is our Captain Bob Bartlett who sailed out of Brigus, one of my communities. I think it was forty or fifty expeditions to the Arctic, and it was he that Peary chose to basically lead the expedition where they established the North Pole.

During the conference, I think at Battle Harbour, for example, that is where they all conjugated and one of the jump off points to the Arctic – it was there that the press release was done – but Captain Bob Bartlett is up there with any of the major explorers in our world from Armstrong who went to the moon to Peary himself who went to the North Pole, and everything in between; but again, a long tradition of exploration in the Arctic. It is nothing new to us as Newfoundlanders, as Labradorians.

When we look at Labrador, my colleague has already pointed out the great connections between the various Aboriginal groups and governments there. I can tell you, Bob Bartlett knew where to go to get the expertise, and it was through the Inuit and the Aboriginal people in

Labrador that he depended upon to teach him the ways in which to deal with the Arctic.

I digress again, Mr. Speaker, but to get back, we recognize past successes, but past successes are past successes and we must look to the future, and the future is in the Arctic. We, as a jurisdiction, must be part of it. It is not only IBRD by the way that is putting this motion forward. It is not one department; it is all of government that has to be involved here, from education with our Marine Institute – and I do not have to tell you about the Marine Institute. We get, lately, that we are the bottom of the barrel here in Newfoundland and Labrador – the bottom of the barrel – that we are leading in nothing. What was it someone said?

AN HON. MEMBER: Last, worst and least.

MR. HEDDERSON: Last, worst and least. It is almost insulting. I do not know if it was a political statement or who said it, but the people of Newfoundland and Labrador have to take exception to that because we are leaders, absolute leaders, and we are proving it by what we have done in the oil exploration and development offshore. We are proving it in forestry. We are proving it in mining. There are things happening in Newfoundland and Labrador that people are standing up and taking notice of.

I read in the newspaper the other day, and I think the Minister of Finance alluded to it, we are one of three with the best economy in all of – so, what we are saying is that this is a jurisdiction that people are looking at who know, as the minister is always pointing out, we are open for business.

We need to come into this House every now and then and put a motion forward. I know, as the Member for St. John's East, that yes, there are all sorts of issues that we can bring forward. The issue that we are bringing forward right now is that we need support in this Chamber; we need support of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to make sure that people coming in here, whether they are business or otherwise, are getting the welcome that they need, that they are coming in here and poisoning themselves and this Province to be the best in Canada and indeed the world.

I do not go for second, or third, or last, or least, or worst, or whatever. I go for nothing but the best, and I believe in the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HEDDERSON: I believe in the education system of Newfoundland and Labrador. I believe that we are doing what we can as a government to give the opportunity – and this is what this motion is all about: to make sure that people understand that there is tremendous opportunity. Because listening to some parties, it is just as well – as I said one day in here, I was afraid that the dome was going to come down on me because the sky was falling. It is far from falling.

I am very, very proud as an MHA. My district, in the fifteen years I have gone from a situation where we had some of the most skilled workers in this Province who built not only bridges here in Newfoundland and Labrador, they were on the Twin Towers, they were on the bridges in New York, coming to me and saying: Tom, I am really in a hard spot. I cannot get any work. Is there a government program or something where I can get a few weeks' work? They were embarrassed. I was embarrassed. That was fifteen years ago.

Do you know something right now? I am very proud to say that those same people today are in Bull Arm, they are in Long Harbour, they are on Muskrat Falls, and guess what they are telling me? Tom, I can't believe the good luck and the good fortune. I don't have to travel. I am living in my own backyard of my parent's house and land. This is where we have come. Those same resilient people, those same hard-working people are ready to tackle another frontier and it is not new to them.

We just had a death I think of a gentleman up in Chapel's Cove who worked in Greenland during the war. Not only that, but many Newfoundlanders worked up North at all the radar sites and that. They know what it is like to work in the Arctic. When people and companies come here, guess who they are looking for? They are looking for those hard-working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

It is not only about location, it is not only about government support and basic companies and that, it is about people. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador, I have great faith in them. I know they will take advantage of any opportunity to make this a better Province for themselves, for their children, and for the future. That is why I am very confident Muskrat Falls is going to be built, and on time and hopefully on budget. I believe very, very much in the ability of us to move ahead in new ways.

The frontier right now is the Arctic. I fully support this private member's motion that was laid down. I am very confident in our ability as a government to carry forth. The invitation is out to all, and I have already heard from some of the members who said they are going to be there in 2016, we are going to be there in 2016. That conference is going to again allow us to showcase what I believe is the best Province in Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune to close debate.

MS PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly would like to commend my colleague from Harbour Main for his great presentation. We are indeed very passionate about Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, some of our hon. colleagues in the House may remember our discussing this in the House a few years ago. We are back here again today to reinforce where we are, to show how far we have come in our commitment towards developing potential of the Arctic, and to indicate how far we can really go if we continue on this great path. This course that has been set for us by our government, the fantastic entrepreneurs, and people we have right here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I would like to thank the Member for Lake Melville, and the Members for St. John's East, The Straits – White Bay North, and Torngat Mountains for their comments here today; and, in particular, the hon. Minister Susan Sullivan

who has done a fantastic job, has great enthusiasm for this Province, Mr. Speaker, and I am absolutely delighted to be working closely with her as we continue to build this great Province that we call home.

Throughout the debate, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, we have heard that our Province is truly the path to the Arctic. We are perfectly positioned to be the ideal staging ground for Arctic-related activities. We are located strategically on international shipping lanes and northern sea routes. We are home to Arctic communities and Aboriginal people with traditional knowledge and unique experiences, and our immense transportation and logistical expertise in remote locations and Arctic-like conditions, Mr. Speaker.

Our Province has had considerable experience working in harsh and cold environments. I am going to reinforce some of the points that have talked about today, just to emphasize how far we have come and what great opportunity is there for us to take advantage of.

Surrounded by cold water and extreme weather conditions, our experts are successfully developing cutting edge technology and world-renown solutions to operational challenges in the Arctic. The Province's extensive expertise and untapped potential means we play already an integral role in Arctic development. That is why it is no surprise the world is coming to Newfoundland and Labrador to discuss exploration and development. This is a very exciting time for us.

We are poised to host three major world-class oceans and Arctic conferences, each bringing with them over 1,000 delegates from around the globe. As I have said here earlier today, and as some of my colleagues have discussed, in September, 2014, we are hosting the Oceans'14 conference with more 1,200 delegates, and 150 exhibitors from around the world expected to be in attendance. It is going to be the largest Oceans conference ever held by this Province.

Then, closely behind that, in June, 2015, we welcome the world once again at the Annual International Conference on Ocean Offshore and Arctic Engineering. Followed by that, in 2016, incrementally building our great potential, we

will host the world at the prestigious Arctic Technology Conference in 2016. This conference focuses on leading technologies and innovative practices needed for exploration and production of natural resources in harsh and cold environments, while emphasizing respect for northern peoples and the environment.

Our approach to the Arctic is clearly working. Our approach to diversification of the economy in Newfoundland and Labrador is clearly working. We are taking a holistic, sustainable, responsible and respectful approach to developing opportunities in the Arctic. With a long history based in the Arctic and with a strong academic and industry presence right here in this Province, we already are leaders in Arctic development, Mr. Speaker.

I, for one, am so very, very proud of our people, our potential, our skills, our expertise, and the efforts of this government, Mr. Speaker, to continue to grow the economy, to continue to diversify the economy, and to ensure that the future of Newfoundland and Labrador continues to be better and better.

I ask all hon. members in this House to join me in supporting today's motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

This being Wednesday, in accordance with Standing Order 9, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 1:30 p.m.