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Speaker: Honourable Perry Trimper, MHA

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Trimper): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

I would like to welcome everyone here today.

In the Speaker's gallery especially, I would like to welcome Principal Kyran Dwyer and teacher Katie Clouston from St. Teresa's Elementary School. They are the subject of a Member's statement this afternoon.

A great welcome to you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: We have a repeat visitor in the Speaker's gallery, I would like to recognize Ms. Linda Ross. She is the President and CEO of Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. She will be referenced in a Ministerial Statement today. Ms. Ross is accompanied by her colleagues, Judit Lovas and Michelle Hanrahan Brown.

Welcome again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: In the public gallery, I just had an opportunity to spend a few minutes with them. I would like to welcome level I students from Smallwood Academy in Gambo. They are accompanied by Mr. Roger Snook and Ms. April Adams. They are visiting today as part of a Newfoundland and Labrador culture trip. They are learning about the House of Assembly.

We welcome you all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: For Members' statements today, we will hear statements by the hon. Members for the Districts of Ferryland, Conception Bay South, St. George's - Humber, Baie Verte - Green Bay, and St. John's Centre.

Let the games begin, I was dared to say.

The hon. Member for Ferryland.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Night sponsored by the Town of Petty Harbour Maddox Cove in honour of all the volunteers from their region. The event was held on Friday, May 24 to acknowledge the tremendous contribution made by so many to the area and I was delighted to be in attendance.

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are known for their generous volunteer work each year in our province. For many years we lead the country in our hours of volunteerism. This is demonstrated by many great volunteers from the Town of Petty Harbour Maddox Cove. I have had many opportunities to work with these groups and see the tremendous work they have done.

I want to commend the volunteers for their considerable contribution and the many wonderful volunteers who give so freely of their time and continue to do so. The volunteers of this town have made their town a better place because of the work they do.

I would like to ask all Members of the House to join me in congratulating the people of Petty Harbour Maddox Cove for the valuable service they provide and continue to provide in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday afternoon I had the pleasure of attending the Annual Ceremonial Review of the 2562 Queen Elizabeth Army Cadet Corps in Conception Bay South.

I had the privilege of being a reviewing officer at the ceremony and would like to recognize Commanding Officer Tony Kane for his dedication to the cadet movement and the efforts

of the cadets, their commanding officers and the organizers of this fantastic event.

I would like to acknowledge some special awards presented: Most Improved Cadet, Lieutenant Corporal Jacob Templeman; Most Dedicated Cadet, Corporal Hannah Tucker; Master Warrant Officer Ashlee Tucker and Warrant Officer Andrew Parker received the Army Cadet Service Medal for five years of service; Chief Warrant Officer Leah Bartlett was presented with the Cadet Service Medal for six years of service and the Royal Canadian Legion Cadet Medal of Excellence.

During the afternoon's celebrations, displays were performed by the drill team, band and flag bearers. I would like to commend them for their great work and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. Members to join me in congratulating the 2562 Queen Elizabeth Army Cadets and extend best wishes to them for their continued success.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of St. George's - Humber.

MR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make all Members and indeed all listeners aware of one of the premier cultural events taking place in the province this summer. The Flat Bay Pow Wow will be held this year on July 13, 14 and 15.

A Pow Wow is a unique event signified by social exchanges, cultural sharing and ceremonial rituals. Indeed, the Pow Wow is a time of teaching, learning, singing, dancing, feasting, sharing and healing. Pow Wows are an expression of culture, pride and identity. It is a unifying ritual of the young and the old, a recollection of the past and a celebration of the future.

The Flat Bay Pow Wow is a showpiece of the cultural revival which is happening amongst the Mi'kmaq people of this province. It is a must attend event for indigenous people who want to reconnect with their heritage and for anyone in

the province who wants to fully understand the multicultural nature of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all Members of the House and the general public to attend the Flat Bay Pow Wow held on July 13, 14 and 15 of this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Baie Verte - Green Bay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge a true entrepreneur, Mr. Wilbert Weir of Little Bay Islands.

Born in 1928, he received his sea legs at an early age as he spent the first 21 years of his life fishing off Fishot Islands on the French Shore. He started his first business at age 21. He built a small boat and travelled throughout the district entertaining the locals with movies, usually Westerns, at the community halls. He also operated a general store which grew to include a restaurant, pool hall and dry goods.

In 1969, after a terrible fishing season, he converted his old fishing schooner into a car and passenger ferry that would operate between the islands of Green Bay. He approached the provincial government for a subsidy to continue this service, and walked the halls of Confederation Building for six months until it was approved.

His favourite hobby was building Newfoundland banker dories and he has over 60 to his credit. Very active in all aspects of community life, on January 26 of this year, just four days short of his 90th birthday, Mr. Weir was elected as Deputy Mayor of Little Bay Islands.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARR: What a pleasure for me to honour my friend.

I ask all hon. Members to join me in applauding Mr. Wilbert Weir.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Walking into St. Teresa's Elementary School is an amazing experience. They are a true treasure in the middle of St. John's Centre and they have much to celebrate.

This year their Literacy Action Team created creative programs to get students reading. A Dress Up as your favourite book character and a family pancake breakfast where parents read with their children in the gym after breakfast won them the Indigo Love of Reading grant of \$100,000 for new books to help their students develop a whole new love of reading.

Their Kids Eat Smart breakfast program serves up to 1,200 students every week, making sure all students have a full belly to help them do their best in school. The program co-ordinators and volunteers make this a huge success.

St. Teresa's Pride is flourishing. Over 30 students, along with their teachers, are actively involved in making a difference in student lives.

Congratulations Principal Kyran Dwyer and his team for developing an incredible community of learning, inclusiveness and exploration for the lucky students of St. Teresa's.

Mr. Speaker, there is more to come. Bravo!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize World No Tobacco Day. Each year on May 31, the World Health Organization highlights the health and other risks associated with tobacco

use as part of their advocacy for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption.

This year, the theme is "Tobacco Breaks Hearts" focusing on tobacco's link to heart and other cardiovascular diseases. The goal is to increase awareness about the impact that tobacco use and the exposure to second-hand smoke have on cardiovascular health.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death worldwide. Seven million of those deaths are linked to tobacco use, including nearly 900,000 non-smokers who are exposed to second-hand smoke.

Mr. Speaker, our government committed in *The Way Forward* to improve health outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, including reducing the smoking rate in the province by 4 per cent by 2025.

In *Budget 2018*, we included \$250,000 for smoking cessation programs. This includes ongoing support for the Newfoundland and Labrador Lung Association Smokers' Helpline, the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco and the Provincial Smoking Cessation Program for individuals with low incomes.

Mr. Speaker, today I encourage all of my colleagues in this hon. House, and all of the citizens in our province, to join me in making every day World No Tobacco Day.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement. I wish, too, to recognize today as World No Tobacco Day. As this year's theme is Tobacco Breaks Hearts, we are reminded of the negative impact which smoking and second-hand smoke has on heart, lung and cardiovascular health.

I'd also like to take a moment to recognize the many health care providers, non-profit groups

and organizations which support individuals on their quest to give up their tobacco addictions. Groups and individuals such as these provide valuable supports to individuals as they try to improve their overall health and decrease their risk of cardiovascular and other diseases.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take a moment to remark about the impending legalization of cannabis and encourage government to implement smoking cessation programs for cannabis smokers, similar to the programs currently in place for tobacco.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I, too, thank the minister for the advance copy of her statement. Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest proportion of smokers in Canada. The national average for smokers 15 years or older is 13 per cent. In our province it is 18.4 per cent. That is way too high. I would like to see government set an even more aggressive target than 4 per cent reduction by 2025. The health care implications alone demand that.

So I say to the minister, considering ours is the highest smoking rate in Canada, we should be considering spending more than \$250,000 on smoking reduction.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize a modern-day suffragette. A person who has contributed greatly to the advancement of

women and to ensuring equality and equity are foremost in our society. Linda Ross is dedicated, tenacious and most of all effective.

Her list of accomplishments is lengthy. Ms. Ross has over 30 years of experience in policy development and program planning and delivery in community development, women's economic and social equality, HIV/AIDS and public health, both in Canada and internationally. She has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from YWCA St. John's Women of Distinction, the Aventis Pasteur Award and the Development Education Award from the Canadian International Development Agency.

Since 2009, Linda Ross has been the President and CEO of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women Newfoundland and Labrador. Ms. Ross works tirelessly to effect change. Through her global experiences she understands how to engage others in consultative process as well as move a team forward in addressing complex issues.

This has been very well evidenced by her incredible leadership in restorative justice, violence against women, pay equity and improving legislation on safe and caring schools as well as changes to the *Family Violence Protection Act*.

Ms. Ross is a tireless volunteer, contributing to many boards and committees, including the College of Family Physicians of Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador Access to Justice Committee, Chairperson of the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women, Women in Resource Development Corporation and Women Interested in Successful Employment.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Linda Ross for her outstanding contributions and wish her well as she retires from her position. She has made her place, advanced our society and we are all the better for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of her statement. On behalf of all Members of the Official Opposition, we congratulate Linda Ross on her impactful and successful career and wish her well in her upcoming retirement.

As the minister discussed, Ms. Ross has been an advocate of equality and equity for over 30 years. Her list of accomplishments and impacts are endless.

Since 2009, Ms. Ross has served as the president and CEO of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. It was in this role that she made perhaps her greatest contribution to this province as the Provincial Advisory Council grew in its influence under her steadfast leadership and guidance.

Although Ms. Ross is retiring, I'm sure that she will continue to volunteer in our community and continue motivating others, especially women, in our community. I first worked with Linda over 30-plus years ago and then saw the positive impact she would have on our society and she continued to do that.

I thank Ms. Ross for dedicating her career and volunteer efforts towards this quest for equality. Our province is truly better off because of your efforts.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Nine years of dedicated service to the women and girls of Newfoundland and Labrador, Linda Ross has much to celebrate and be proud of.

I remember so clearly when I first heard the announcement of her appointment and the excitement so many of us felt knowing that a feminist activist from the community with strong creds was going to be our next president.

Having a feminist heading up our Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women is so crucial to advancing equality in our province.

Linda has persistently and fearlessly advocated for our women and girls.

Linda, thank you for all you have done. Here's to your next adventure. Brava!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise and commemorate the life of Scott Simmons, a man whose business, work and volunteer efforts impacted not only those immediately around him but all of Newfoundland and Labrador and all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

I offer my condolences to the family, to the friends and the colleagues that surrounded Mr. Simmons throughout his 85 years. His legacy inspires us to work relentlessly for positive changes in our entire province.

A true agricultural pioneer, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Simmons founded both Hammond Farm and Scosim Farms. His innovation did not go unrecognized. He served on many, many agricultural boards and committees and was inducted into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame in 1997.

His willingness to take chances, his strong work ethic and his appreciation for the value of hard work and of money benefitted him and those around him substantially throughout his diverse career as he advanced agricultural initiatives.

Mr. Simmons worshipped faithfully at the Salvation Army church and was an active member of the band for much of his adult life. He was community-minded and sought every opportunity to help those around him. In fact, Mr. Speaker, he was a very early volunteer in New York City after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Mr. Simmons serves as a prime example of what can be achieved through a combination of hard work, determination, compassion and caring. We can all use Mr. Simmons as an inspiration of strength and resources as catalysts for improving

the conditions in our province, the conditions we all cherish and value.

Please join with me in recognizing a life spent helping others and a legacy which continues to live on.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

We join with government in passing along our deepest sympathies to Mr. Simmons's family, friends and church community. As an agricultural pioneer, Mr. Simmons has laid the groundwork for so many, including myself. I personally knew Mr. Simmons and continue to be involved with his family, many of which continue to farm within his precedent and are truly ag champions of the province.

Above his accolades as a pioneer, business person and Agricultural Hall of Fame inductee is his reputation as a hard-working and kind human being: characteristics we should all strive to achieve in our lifetime. I would like to take this opportunity to pass along my most sincere thanks for his contributions to the industry and the province.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for the District of St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

I, too, thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. I'm pleased to stand with my colleagues and offer my condolences on our behalf to the family and friends of Scott Simmons.

I want to thank the minister who has recognized a number of men who have played an important

role in the agricultural industry's past. I think it's important that he's using their lives as an opportunity to emphasize the important role the industry has played in this province.

Scott Simmons had a strong work ethic, a legacy of helping others and was a pioneer of the industry he worked in. That is a legacy we can all be proud of and hope to emulate.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

According to an ATIPPA posting it appears that Canopy Growth engaged in lobbying activities with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation as early as September 2017; however, Canopy Growth had not disclosed the activities in their required lobbying reports.

I ask the Premier: Do you think it's appropriate for Canopy Growth to not report their lobbying activities with your department?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation is engaged with any number of business, client or anybody that is proposing to conduct business with the government or with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It's my understanding that Canopy Growth did register with the appropriate mechanism with the Registry of Lobbyists within Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: The minister didn't directly answer the question. Our information says they didn't register properly.

According to Canopy Growth's lobbying disclosures, Canopy lobbied the Premier's office and the Department of Justice before they registered with the lobbyist registry.

I ask the Premier: Do you think it's appropriate for Canopy Growth to lobby your office or for your office to accept lobbying meetings without the proper disclosures?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I guess I can answer this as the Commissioner of Lobbyists is an office that falls under the Department of Justice and Public Safety.

I don't have this year's report in front of me. I will note that in the last number of years there's been no activity listed or no negative activity listed. I would look to the Commissioner of Lobbyists to provide input on this and see what they have to say as it relates to inappropriate activity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

According to the registry, Canopy Growth has failed to submit the required disclosure reports this spring leaving the public in the dark on lobbying activities by this company since November.

I ask the Premier: Do you believe it's appropriate to work so closely with Canopy Growth when they are in clear violation of the *Lobbyists Registration Act*?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, in this province we have a number of independent offices that deal with various issues. In many cases, we have independent offices of this House of Assembly. One of those offices is the Commissioner of Lobbyists which is an appointment. I will note that their most recent appointment was made by the previous administration.

I have not had any concerns brought to me about this particular company or any company as it relates to lobbying efforts, but I'd certainly be willing to listen to them if they were to arise.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As Canopy Growth is publicly traded, and the deal with government would increase the share value of the company, what precautions were taken to ensure this information was kept confidential before the deal was announced? Were there rules for anyone involved who had knowledge of the deal before announced, so such individuals could not purchase shares in Canopy Growth?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would say that within my Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation we have highly professional staff. When they do enter into agreements with any company or anybody who's looking to do business with the department or with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, they follow the highest standards.

I would say to the Member opposite that anybody who would engage outside of that

scope – that would be a criminal charge and that would be illegal activity.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My understanding is there was very little protection there in reference to this file.

On Tuesday, the minister was very vague on questions regarding education and awareness so I'll ask again: Based on the government's proposed threshold, how will an individual determine how much marijuana they can safely use before they are considered impaired by way of your definition?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A couple of points that I will make as it relates to this debate – which has been ongoing in this House for the last few days. I think it's a very important debate.

One point that I've made repeatedly is that it's hard to launch education and awareness campaigns when the rules, the regulations and the legislation have not been set yet. We are debating our own provincial legislation here in this House which I look forward to passing at some point, but we also realize that there's federal legislation, especially as it comes to *Criminal Code* amendments which the federal government makes. We cannot make those rules, they make it; in fact, it's in the Senate right now.

Once that comes out, we will be able to unveil a very extensive education and awareness campaign for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The one point that I continue to get across is that driving impaired is illegal.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In order for laws to be appropriate and achieve intended success, the public must understand the rules by which they will be judged.

How much marijuana would need to be consumed in order to reach the two nanograms-per-millilitre blood threshold?

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In order for people to follow the laws, the laws actually have to be made as well. That's what we are debating here and the federal government's debating as well.

What I will say is this, it would be absolutely irresponsible for me, as a Minister of the Crown and especially as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, to say that consuming any quantity may be okay. The fact is that our bodies react very differently to any form of intoxicant, whether it's alcohol, whether it's cannabis, whether it's prescription drugs.

What I will say is this, there will be education and awareness that is put out there, but I will not say that people should be able to consume and then drive. Doing that will be illegal.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If the minister cannot explain it and there is no tool for police officers to test, how can you be so confident that the public safety will not be jeopardized?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I'll note a couple things. We debated a *Highway Traffic Act* here in this House over the last number of days. The Opposition and the government have all voted for that bill on multiple occasions. The Opposition has supported it. They have supported the legislation that we have put out there for the safety – and no amendments put out there. So I would guess that the Opposition support the rules that we have put in place.

When it comes to the levels of impairment, that is a federal law. That is not even made right now. It's in the Senate. I can't talk about what it's going to be when the law has not even been made.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We want to make it clear, we here in the Opposition totally support the bill. We want to ensure that the tools are available so that every sector of society can be protected.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: The CEO of the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, Scott Crocker, is calling on the provincial government to make changes as promised by the Liberals in the 2015 election, to repeal a policy that denies care to those with an IQ of more than 70.

Crocker said, and I quote: I call it the most obvious, most blatant case of discrimination that I can talk about when I mention autism spectrum disorder.

Does the minister agree in this assessment? If so, why are we still waiting after three years for you to deliver on your promise?

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker.

As I have said on a couple of occasions this week in this House, we are working on a person-centred strategy to allow for appropriate care on an individualized person-centred basis that is not tied to a specific diagnosis.

We acknowledge there are challenges with the old framework. We will have a new framework in place by the fall, as I have said already to this House, and we are quite happy to look at individual cases on a needs basis in the interim, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Autism Society says there has been very little progress in three years, and the minister's assertion that they are working on it provides little comfort for those waiting.

I ask the minister: What exactly remains to be done?

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker.

The work is in progress; I have said it will be here by the fall. At the risk of sounding provocative, I could ask the Members opposite what they did in 12 years when they had the problem.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Mr. Speaker, the minister is responsible for this file now, and we know that the public are lobbying for it. We encourage him to get to the file, get work done, help out the people here who have particular needs and want to work on this file.

The province lost a quality doctor and the minister doesn't know anything about it. Cancer patients were sent home in Central; the minister blamed it on staff. The health ethics board held up clinical trials; the minister didn't know there was a problem. Now the ambulance audit is over six months late, and the minister is waiting for the House to close before making it public.

Why are you hiding the results of the ambulance audit?

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker.

I would not agree with any of the dots that the Member opposite has attempted to join together. As I have already said this week, the ambulance audit was delayed by the independent auditor because of issues around data validation.

This is a hands-off, transparent and independent process. When it is available, within the next two weeks or so, it will be released publicly. I can say no better than that, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The minister called the job cancellation for a radiologist who received a \$50,000 government bursary a hiccup.

I ask the minister: Can you provide some clarification of what decision-making process led to the cancellation of the negotiated radiology position? Have you spoken with Eastern Health?

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker.

I believe I've addressed this before, but for the sake of clarity, this was an unfortunate incident.

I have directed Eastern Health to look into those circumstance. My department have been in contact with Eastern health and once they have done their due diligence, I will hopefully be the wiser for it.

I would point out, however, that in the last four years, Eastern Health has provided no fewer than 60 bursaries. This is the first and only time in that period where they have had this problem. I would argue that the program works, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Can the Minister for Transportation and Works provide the House with an update on the tender for the replacement of Bay d'Espoir Academy, which was destroyed by fire?

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly appreciate the question. I must say to the hon. Member opposite that the process is going forward. Obviously, it's very important for us to make sure we address the needs in that particular area.

We know that there was an impact in that particular area with the fire there and so we're going to continue to look at that. We will make sure that provisions are made to have that provided as quickly as possible, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in March of this year the former minister of Education stated his intention to start work on the school.

I ask the current Minister of Education: Why has there been no announcement from government on this project?

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think there's been a fair amount of discussion in this House. We've made a significant commitment to replacing that and, Mr. Speaker, we're continuing to do that.

We will ensure the people that we will have the services available as soon as possible. We continue to work on that to make sure that we have a proper replacement for the facilities that were destroyed there, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I remind the minister: Those are words, not announcements. We're looking for announcements.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: People in Bay d'Espoir are looking for announcements, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the children of this region are going without adequate facilities and have been denied access to quality education for over a year.

I ask the minister: Can you provide definitive timelines for the completion of this school?

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You want to talk about announcements – words – in my former role as mayor of Grand Falls-Windsor, I often heard four announcements of

the same project. So if that's not words – that's not action. We have made a commitment and we are going to action that, Mr. Speaker.

We are very, very cognizant of the fact that we have made provisions there and we will continue to do that. We will work with the people, but we have a commitment to that replacement and that replacement will happen. They're not words, it will be action. This government – we, as a government, we put words into action, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Actions speak louder than words, Mr. Speaker, and we're not getting any here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PETTEN: I guess it goes both ways.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: Lack of action. That's the point, lack of action. Words are not action, action is what really means – and they don't know what that means.

AN HON. MEMBER: We built 45 schools.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, we built 45 schools, Mr. Speaker. I think our record speaks for itself.

Minister, the Premier and the former minister of Environment both stated that the details of your carbon tax would be revealed this spring. This new tax will impact everyone in our province.

Why are you pushing until the fall to tell the people of the province how much they will have to pay for a carbon tax?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, for the second day in a row, we get a chance to talk about carbon pricing and carbon targets that were put in place by Stephen Harper. I don't need to remind people in this province that the new Leader of the Conservative Party in Newfoundland and Labrador wanted to be a member of Harper's team.

Carbon pricing and carbon emissions are nothing new to the world, Mr. Speaker. I will say today that some 195 countries around the world felt that there needs to be some emissions reduction of carbon around the world. So they all agreed.

Mr. Speaker, the targets are in place. We meet on a regular basis with the industry leaders in our province making sure – and one thing that is becoming very clear –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Please proceed.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One thing is becoming increasingly clear is that the industry leaders in our province and the communities we are talking to, they want to make sure it's the provincial model, not the federal model, Mr. Speaker. There are two options: a federal model, a provincial model. Newfoundlanders have been telling us, don't let the federal government backstop this, let it be a provincial model.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Before we continue, before the temperature gets a little too high, I remind all Members, I do not tolerate interruptions. It's starting to creep up, watch out.

The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier: Can he provide an update on the unfair US tariffs imposed on the paper industry in this province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will do so, but I'm going to finish off the other question. I got some interruptions when I was speaking there, and I thank you for the cover.

I will say as I finish that last question, is that any money that comes from carbon taxation will be used at the discretion of Newfoundland and Labrador. I will say this, as I said yesterday, we will not put this province in an uncompetitive situation with other jurisdictions because of carbon pricing. There are a lot of variables happening across this country right now. We will not rush this through. We will take the time and do what's best for our province.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of doing what's best for our province, there is a company, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, because of a decision that was made by a protectionist president south of the border has an impact.

I'll be glad to answer follow-up questions from the Member opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We'll go with A and B this time, Mr. Speaker, if we can. We'll look for the update.

In the second part we'll look for: Can the Premier update the legal cost that's been incurred to date? A few months ago you indicated it was half a million dollars. Can we get an update on both of those, please?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We'll answer all of the above, of course, like we try to do to get the information out to the people of the province.

First of all, on the tariffs for Kruger, we are working very closely with the company

themselves. As a matter of fact, it was just last Thursday that I had a meeting with the ambassador to the US, the new ambassador, Kelly Craft, who is doing a great job, and we updated her on behalf of our presentation that we've been making south of the border with part of the legal team that I will say.

Mr. Speaker, these costs are coming in. It is now – I can't give you the exact number, we'll get this information for you, but we have made a commitment to work with the company on behalf of all the employees in the forestry industry in our province. What that exact amount is today, Mr. Speaker, they are creeping up.

Mr. Speaker, we must do so. We need legal representation in the US as part of our submissions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Mr. Speaker, I've asked the Premier before. As we know, signatories to all trade agreements are from sovereign countries, which Canada would be the signature to this agreement. I asked before about the federal government in terms of assisting with some of those costs as it is an international trade agreement.

Is the federal government assisting with that cost and/or have you asked them to assist with the cost?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

We've asked them, they are responding. We've met with Carr, we've met with O'Regan and we've met with Minister Champagne and others. There is complete engagement, both at the federal level and at the provincial level.

We are doing our part here, Mr. Speaker. As I just said, with the ambassador as well. There are governors in the US right now that are getting engaged. There are senators in the US that are getting engaged. Everyone is starting to realize

that this is having a negative impact, not only on communities like Corner Brook and communities around our province and Kruger, but it's also ironically having a negative impact on many of the publishers in the US as well.

Mr. Speaker, it's full on here. It's complete engagement. We will work with the forestry industry in our province making sure that we will mitigate the impact on Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: Does he stand by his previous commitment that any and all potential partnerships involving the Abitibi timber stand will include the Town of Botwood, the people of Central Newfoundland and their assets?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, we manage out forest resources for the benefit of those communities that are connected to the resource, those communities that have a long-standing tradition of the use of the resource, and Botwood is very much one of those communities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's really prudent, it's important that as we embark on new projects that we ensure economic feasibility. We are engaged with the Town of Botwood for their participation. But one thing we will not do is entertain 15 separate bioenergy projects as the other side did during the course of their tenure when they were investigating the opportunities and leave them aside.

We will be announcing – this government will be announcing projects that will produce real jobs, real results for the forest industry and for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Mr. Speaker, we've heard from multiple sources on the West Coast that one of the previous proponents interested in setting up shop in Botwood is now being courted by government to set up on the West Coast instead, while still utilizing the Abitibi fibre.

Can the minister confirm that this is indeed the case?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. Member has any information from reliable sources I would encourage him to say what those reliable sources are and what that information is, because I'm not aware that speculation of this variety is serving anybody's interest. If there is somebody, something that he's aware of, he should put it forth on the floor of the House of Assembly.

I will say this, there has been huge interest, significant interest by many, many players, many partners, many industrial proponents that this government is entertaining and considering, but we will select projects which have economic feasibility and viability, unlike their previous decisions which were just simply to pander and then leave the projects high and draw.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm a big believer by learn from the past, don't live in it. I could talk about a hockey stick factory that I think a Liberal government in the past started.

I still didn't hear a commitment from the minister whether he is unaware of anything. He actually reversed the question and asked me.

Almost a decade ago, privately imported lumber from New Brunswick was the mechanism of introduction of the spruce bark beetle in the Conception Bay region. Despite evidence of population establishment, resource depopulation and subsequent notification to the department officials, there has been no action to mitigate the damage or establishment caused by this invasive species.

I ask the minister and his department: Have they taken any action to control this beetle and the threat it poses to our forest resources and the livelihoods –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Your time has expired.

The minister's response.

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

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

What we're also very keenly aware of and concerned about is the cucumber beetle and its impact on activities which could reduce economic activity. The cucumber beetle, I think was a thing of the past. Now we have to focus on things in the future.

What we have in Fisheries and Land Resources, we've invested significantly in insect control science programs, insect control monitoring programs and we are on top of all infestations as they occur. What we will not do is spend significant resources, important resources on hypothetical situations.

Invasive species are important that we continue to monitor, and that's exactly, Mr. Speaker, what we're doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure I speak on behalf of those who rely on their livelihoods from the forest resources that it's very disappointing that a joke may be made out of a very serious issue that's (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LESTER: Mr. Speaker, since yesterday – and people watching the television program and lack of an answer regarding the salmon season.

Can the minister answer today whether he does have a date for opening the salmon season?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, as the House and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador – the anglers of Newfoundland and Labrador – are very aware, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans normally provides us with a window or a time frame of 120 days to be able to prepare for the printing of the licences and the production of the tags. One hundred and twenty days is the norm.

We know, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada made mistakes on the first order they authorized that caused us to reprint at Canada's cost. Then, of course, they made a second error with the second reprinting. That caused the order to have to be reprinted.

The difference here of, course, is that they left us for the third printing with just 12 days. I can report to this House, Mr. Speaker, that salmon angling licences will be available to the public by Monday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

A lot of people in this province are really concerned when it comes to the fishery this year. Particularly, the recreational fishery is wondering when the food fishery will start. We know your good, good friend Minister LeBlanc won't give you any answers, but have you found out anything from DFO?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources.

MR. BYRNE: My great, great friend, the Member for Cape St. Francis, provides an important question. He really hits on something that hits us all which is our connection, our social and wildlife connection, to our resources in Newfoundland and Labrador. The food

fishery and access to the food fishery is fundamental to that.

We are very disappointed in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans not providing these details at this point in time. I continue to press the federal minister and the federal department to get answers for each and every one of us. I ask him to join me with that and I'm sure he will.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, at the end of a three-month spring sitting we see government has done little to help people looking for work. With unemployment soaring, government refused to create an all-party committee on jobs, refused to modernize labour laws to better protect workers, did nothing about pay equity or raise the minimum wage to a living wage.

I ask the Premier: What can he say to the rapidly increasing number of unemployed people in this province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Member opposite, I think we share some common views on a lot of what she just said. There's a considerable amount of work that has been done already based on the vision that we announced for the province in *The Way Forward* in 2016, which is for growth and sustainability.

Currently, we're somewhere in between the employment numbers in our province of between 2010 and 2011. Of course, after 2011 most of the impact in employment in our province was as a result of some megaprojects that were done here.

We also see some impact on employment numbers coming out of Alberta, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you, fundamental to this government, we announced a Cabinet Committee on Jobs where we have a number of Cabinet ministers that are focused on this.

We know in creating jobs for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, sometimes a government investment is critically important, Mr. Speaker. We are doing what we can and we will do what's necessary (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, after three months in the House government has done little to ease the financial burdens of families. Since government's punishing 2016 budget there has been no relief or little from taxes, fees and levy.

More parents see their children leave the province in search of work and, yesterday, families learned their power rates will double in two years because of Muskrat Falls; a looming crisis government has done nothing to address.

I ask the Premier: What can he say to struggling families?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I take exception to some of the comments by the Member opposite. What the Member has done is voted against a budget that has put in place poverty reduction for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians at the very highest level ever in this province.

What she voted against was some \$121 million that will go to support seniors and some of the low income in our province, Mr. Speaker. I remind her she voted against support for Legal Aid people and those using those services. As the Member steps up today to ask questions, these are the things that she did not support.

We recognize the challenges that a lot of families are facing in our province. That is why we invested an unprecedented amount to poverty reduction in this year's budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

After three months in the House, government has done little to help seniors. No improvement to home care, no reinstatement of the senior's dental plan, no expansion of drug coverage for seniors, no relief for long wait times for seniors housing and no extended coverage of over-the-counter drugs.

I ask the Premier: What can he say to the seniors of the province who are looking to him for assistance and relief?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

MS. DEMPSTER: Everybody is eager to talk about the good things that we are (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, as the Member opposite said we can't live in the past, but I guarantee you one thing, we've been impacted by the past. Despite the tough fiscal climate that we have had to operate in, this government has put in unprecedented measures for seniors, for low-income people; \$280 million in more than 100 poverty reduction measures.

The Premier has already outlined the \$121 million for the NL Income Supplement. We put in place a Seniors' Advocate to help address some of the systemic issues that seniors are facing. It's never been done before in this province. Mr. Speaker, \$7.5 million to add new treatment options under the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

The Child Advocate reports government is infringing on the rights of children by clawing back child support payments from Income Support recipients, and is violating the right of children to be supported by both parents as is recognized in the UN Convention.

I ask the minister: When will he recognize that child support is the right of the child and stop treating it like parental income?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development?

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I really do thank the hon. Member for that question. For this purpose she's singing from the same page that I'm singing from.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, when I first got in the role back last August, I was somewhat surprised that we were clawing back child support for income purposes. What I did is I instructed my staff at that particular time to do a review, which we're continuing to do. We are anticipating to have that completed and certainly will become a budgetary discussion as we get into the spring of 2019. I am looking forward to that.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has ended.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Tabling of Documents

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Pursuant to section 8 and section 10 of the *Public Tender Act*, I hereby table report of *Public Tender Act* Exceptions for April 2018 as presented by the chief operating officer of the Government Purchasing Agency.

Further tabling of documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS class sizes, adequate school space and healthy socialization is essential to our children receiving the best quality education; and

WHEREAS schools such as St. Francis of Assisi are without a cafeteria space and students do not have the opportunity to move about during the day; and

WHEREAS schools in Newfoundland and Labrador have some of the largest cap sizes and some of the lowest rates of literacy; and

WHEREAS the education system in our province must be designed to ensure that each child has the ability to reach his or her full potential;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call on the House of Assembly to urge government to: Call on the government to take action in our education system and ensure smaller class sizes and provide sufficient personal space per child to

allow for a higher quality of education; take action to address issues in schools such as St. Francis of Assisi which are without adequate space and are using combined classes; and ensure that students have the highest standard of education in a quality learning environment.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I presented the same petition yesterday and I told the parents of St. Francis of Assisi that I'll continue to present their petition until we hear answers and people start to listen. This is not only an issue that's in this school. This is a very small school; probably 240 children go to this school. But it's an issue in schools in the province.

A lot of parents are concerned about the size of our classes and we all know – everybody in this House of Assembly know, parents know, people in this province know it's important that our children get the best quality and best possible education that they can get. We also know that the lower the number of students in a class and the one-on-ones that the teacher can give them, their education will improve.

What we're asking here today is for the government to have a look at this. We feel and parents feel it's too high. Parents in this area have a different little concern; they're talking about the socialization of their children. There is no cafeteria in this school, so the children can't move about with their grade fours or grade fives or grade six friends; they're in the one class all day that long and that's where they eat their lunch.

What we're asking is for the minister to have a look at this school. Combined classes are not going to work. Just have a look at the school, have a look at the issues the parents have in this school and we feel the class sizes are way too high.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for a response, please.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly thank the hon. Member for the petition and, of course, I know he's been very passionate about the school within his district. We all share the same concerns. Many of us have some similar concerns.

Mr. Speaker, each year, the school board really looks at the enrolment for schools and then they do some deployment of positions, depending upon enrolments. Sometimes these enrolments and the deployment of staff are dependent upon the types of services that are going to be provided to the schools.

While we do have concerns and some concerns in those areas, we know that sometimes situations can appear to not be productive; but, Mr. Speaker, I spent 30 years in the education field and certainly many of the concerns that I had, as we worked through it, there were always challenges.

I just want to note as well that under the Premier's task force there are 82 recommendations. Come this September, we have identified certain schools that we're going to be putting special services in, and that's going to be the first step, and we're going to be working with the schools. We're going to look at support services for schools and for students.

We want to have a school system that's conducive to a good education and we will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. I would encourage the parents as well to have a discussion with the school board, with their concerns and hopefully there will be some resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Further petitions?

The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

I stand today with a petition entitled: Designated Parking for Cancer Patients at Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Clinic.

These are the reasons for this petition: Having a designated parking area close to the hospital for cancer patients who are receiving treatment is vital. Cancer patients often experience significant difficulty when walking long distance, and are having difficulty finding available parking spaces close enough to a clinic.

Providing designated parking, permits and similar monitoring and enforcement measures of these spaces could significantly improve access for cancer patients to the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer clinic. Designated parking for cancer patients is currently offered at a number of other hospitals and clinics across the province.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to encourage Eastern Health to provide a designated parking area for cancer patients with at least 25 spaces at the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer clinic.

I stand today and speak to this petition –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand today and speak to this petition, which has 420 signatories, a petition similar to what I presented last week, Mr. Speaker. A petition that is signed by cancer patients, that is signed by families and friends of cancer patients, that are signed by people who support the call that they are making in this petition.

It's hard having cancer, Mr. Speaker. A lot of us know that from personal experience, from the experience of loved ones or friends. One of the hardest things is when you have to go for treatments, especially chemotherapy. It's not an easy thing. For some people with chemotherapy it's weekly. Sometimes you have a cancer that requires daily treatments; it varies. But one thing

is certain: Getting chemotherapy, especially as it accumulates in the body throughout the period of treatment, is not easy.

I think I mentioned last week and I'll mention it again, I, myself, have seen people coming from chemotherapy in wheelchairs being transported to their cars because they are not in a state to walk from the hospital to their cars.

What they are asking for, Mr. Speaker, is to have a designated parking area. The petitioners are looking for something that would ensure that cancer patients would have secure parking spots and will not have to have undue stress because of long searches for space, as some of them have experienced.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I think my time is up and I present this to the House and hope it is heard.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

Further petitions?

The hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's an honour to present this petition to the House of Assembly.

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

WHEREAS opioid addiction is a very serious problem affecting many individuals and families in our province, and the Bell Island area is no exception; and

WHEREAS the effects of this problem have implications that negatively impact many people, old and young; and

WHEREAS support and treatment programs have been proven to break the cycle of addiction and have helped many into recovery;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to: Establish a suboxone-methadone treatment plan for Bell Island which would include a drug addictions councillor at the hospital and a drug awareness program in the local schools.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I've spoken to this a number of times, and the reason I continue to do it is because every time I speak to it there becomes more awareness from the general public and from those in the health care. Every time I do it, somebody else will reach out to me; somebody else will send an email. Somebody in another part of the province will say we have the same issues in our community, we still need some of these supports and we wish you the best. We know Bell Island is taking a leadership role by its citizens from a volunteer point of view and by the health professionals that are there.

We do have some supports from the health professionals who are part of Eastern Health, but they are restricted by not having a mandate to be able to provide the direct services that are needed here and the two direct ones – there's a multitude of things that are needed, but directly that's immediately needed is a methadone and a suboxone treatment program. We need to have that immediately because we have, unfortunately, a number of people who are struggling with opioid and addictions issues who, on a daily basis, are taking the lead themselves and are doing everything possible with the supports of their family and their friends to beat this addiction, to become more productive in our society and to want to be able to give back to our communities. But when it becomes so encompassing, when you're dealing with ferries, travelling, costs out of their pockets, and some of these individuals because of the situation have very little, if any, financial security but want to be able to get back into having financial security and being productive citizens.

As a result, this is costing the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador much more than it could be and less effective if we had the services available in their own community where we

have a fully-equipped hospital, where we have health professionals who can endorse and support. We also have the community itself and many agencies over there who are bought into the process of collaboratively working to ensure there are supports before treatment, during treatment and after treatment.

So what we have here is what I say, and what we're proposing as a community, to be able to set a template for the rest of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to offer these services. So I'll have a chance to add this petition again in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Sir.

Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 20.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that I do now leave the Chair for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the said bill.

Is it the pleasure of the House do adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

The motion is carried.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, the Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Warr): Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 20, An Act Respecting The Control And Sale Of Cannabis.

A bill, “An Act Respecting The Control And Sale Of Cannabis.” (Bill 20)

CLERK (Murphy): Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just so our viewers at home will understand where we are now, we’re on Bill 20 that we have been debating. From a calendar point of view, I should say from an operational point of view in the House of Assembly, we’re basically into our seventh day of debate on this particular bill, which is what it was meant to be.

It’s a very encompassing bill. It’s a very important bill. It’s part and parcel of being prepared for what the federal government’s piece of legislation or the two pieces that they’ll bring in in the near future and the impact that they’ll have on the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the government, because the government has to be the legislative process and the administrators of the legalization of cannabis but, particularly, the selling of cannabis and all the relevant restrictions and responsibilities that also go with that.

We’re talking about – and we’ve had this discussion, I’ll just note a little bit where it’s been a day or so since we’ve had this discussion, to bring people up to speed again – the provincial legislation related to cannabis, before I ask a few questions to the minister and I know a number of my colleagues have some questions here for clarification. I think we’ve already asked somewhere in the vicinity of 50 questions and have gotten good responses.

Sometimes we go back and forth looking for some extra clarification and while we’re asking that we may get an email or a text from

somebody who are asking: Can you please clarify exactly what’s meant in this situation, or I’m a potential business person who would like clarification on this, or I’m a particular person who will be using cannabis and would like to know my rights and my responsibilities, or I’m a landlord and I need to know exactly what impact it’s going to have.

We’ve been back and forth having this debate and just so we can clarify for people, this is not a stand-alone bill. There are four particular bills here. This is the largest one and I suspect this is the umbrella one that government must deal with. Everything else must complement and fit in a continuum to ensure that this bill fits well and meets the needs that it’s set out to, while at the same time clarifying for the general public what they’re allowed to do, what they’re not allowed to do, where there are restrictions and where are the opportunities.

Part of the plan here and part of how this was promoted is that there would be business opportunities. There would be opportunities to create employment. There would be opportunities to generate some additional tax revenue. There would be opportunities for people who, in the past, partake in cannabis use and would have to do it in secrecy and have to do it with a fear of repercussions legally, could now do things legally in certain areas and would not have to worry about prosecution once they’re following all the rules and regulations that are put in play.

We’ve accepted this in our society, or particularly in this House, that this is a law that will be enacted in the upcoming months, probably unlikely it’ll be done in the upcoming weeks, which was the original plan. So that gives us an opportunity now to do some further debate here in this House, get the remaining questions answered and go back to clarify any other issues that may be part and parcel of it.

I just want to explain to people before my colleagues get up and ask some more questions, the first bill here is the *Cannabis Control Act*, and that’s the key one we’re into now and that has the general concept of what will be offered here and what would be some of the particulars, particularly around the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation, its regulatory

process, responsibilities and the avenues for distributing and selling and to a certain degree monitoring the cannabis use in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Smoke-free Environment Act is something that we've debated. It's a key act because it's about everybody's safety in Newfoundland and Labrador. It's about everybody's freedom to ensure that whatever other particular activities somebody else has, it doesn't impose a safety risk to that particular citizen.

We've gone through that and we've defined exactly what smoke free means. We've designed and added the word cannabis and cannabis use to what already existed around tobacco use, vapors and e-cigarettes to ensure that people still have freedoms to use those devices and to partake in that, but that people who do not still can feel secure that the environment that they are living in, or an environment that they will want to travel in, or partake in will not be hindered or they'd be restricted to it because of the impact of somebody who is smoking cannabis may have on that.

That's the second one that we've already had a full debate, a very inclusive debate and I think we've come to a consensus on where we are with it and being able to move that one forward.

The *Liquor Corporation Act*, that's particularly more about the financing, the operational part of it from a tax point of view, the administrative, the collections and these type of things. We've gone through that to ensure that rules and regulations are put in play, but those who are going to be in the production and those who are going to be into the distribution know exactly what it is that they have to have in play when it comes the producing and selling. Then, obviously, the Liquor Corporation needs to know how it works its template to outline to the general public what its profit margins are, what its expenses are and what are some of the other particular supports they need in play.

We've talked about inspectors would have to be in play here. We talked about auditors would have to be in play.

We talked about public relations would have to be in play and maybe even some advertising. When I say advertising it may not be advertising

about let's go out and use cannabis and here it's for sale and we have a sale over here, it's more about the fact the general public will need to know their responsibilities and the legalities of the use of cannabis. They're parts of the *Liquor Control Act*.

The fourth one is the *Highway Traffic Act*. This is one that is fairly contentious only because there are a number of unknowns. We all support it. We all feel that there have to be laws in play and there have to be mechanisms to ensure that people do not drive impaired.

In a lot of cases we talked about zero tolerance and if we could in some way impose that, but we realize that's not realistic. At certain age categories, that was brought in here. We put it in line with the same use of alcohol for impairment.

The question becomes and the challenge is because this is such a new process – and not only new for us in Newfoundland and Labrador but new for every province in Canada – we don't have the mechanism, the device. We have great police enforcement officers, we have some that are trained in a particular skill set in being able to identify impairment for people who are under the influence of cannabis or drugs. But unlike what has been developed over the last 30 years when you talk about the Breathalyzer being 99 per cent accurate in being able to determine a person's ability to drive and not being impaired and being able to determine if they're impaired, and then being able to use that as a legal argument in court that this person indeed was violating the *Highway Traffic Act* and is indeed open for prosecution.

We don't have that mechanism here; there's been some discussion that there are potentially maybe some out there. While we're waiting for that there is a bit of apprehension about how do we ensure that people are not driving impaired? It's not only about safety on the road for people who don't want impaired drivers, there are legitimate, very cognizant, very law-abiding citizens who want to ensure they're not impaired and that for whatever circumstance that they do partake and that it wasn't an ability for zero tolerance, they do not want to drive if they're impaired.

If there would be a mechanism for them to know what that impairment would be, I know we talk about nanograms for millilitres of blood but, again, we still don't have clear answers as to what exactly that means. That's the apprehensive thing here that people have, it's around the issue particularly related to how do we determine if somebody is going to be impaired and the mechanism. Our police forces need to have all the devices possible to ensure that they have the ability to take people off the road who should not be on the road, who are impaired, before they cause any havoc for anybody. Also, to be able to let the general public know exactly: here is what we have, to be able to determine at what level you are when you're driving. We've talked about some of the things that are there relevant to those type of things, and we want people to be clear on what it is we're proposing. We're going to have an opportunity over the next number of hours to discuss that and get some clarification.

One of the questions I have here is around inspectors, and I'll go back to the cannabis bill with the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation. I'm just asking for some clarification and understanding because I've had one constituent ask me about this particularly when it comes to placing a complaint. Can inspectors receive complaints from individuals, and if an individual places a complaint will their privacy be protected? I ask that to the minister.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wasn't anticipating that question, but I will get an answer from officials. As soon as I receive that answer I'll pass it on.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

It's indeed a privilege to get up again. I'll state to the minister that this piece of legislation, I am in favour of, and any piece of legislation I think we all should be up on our feet. All Members on the other side should be up speaking on this

piece of legislation. It's very important to our province.

I have a couple of questions for the minister. Minister, if you don't mind, I'm going to put a couple of them together in the same one so you can respond to me.

I'm concerned about the retail aspect of how we're going to roll this out, as we would say. I know recently the NLC announced that there are 24 new retail outlets in the province, and we've had questions in Question Period where we asked about the schools, how close to schools. It's all new to me, the tier one, the tier two, the tier three and the tier four and I think the public are starting to get to know it.

I think tier one, tier two is where you have to be over 19 to get into it. Tier three and four, it could be your tobacco shops. It could be a local store or pharmacy or something like that. It would have to be something like tobacco, where the product is not visible. It would have to be away from anyone, that someone just couldn't go in and pick it off the shelf or anything like that, and I understand that.

The concern I have – and it is in the legislation. I read it in the legislation we had to review last week. It was about schools. Schools were mentioned, places of worship were mentioned. There are some areas where people will have a say into – I guess there'll be some kind of, almost like gazetted where it would have to go out in the media so people will have an idea. If they have some objection to where that was, they'd be able to go to a hearing or submit something to the NLC so that they would be able to get their opinions expressed.

We live in a society where nobody wants stuff in their backyard: not in my neighbour; put it down the road in someone else's road but not in my neighbour. As politicians, we deal with that on a daily basis, whether it's a new business that's opening next door to your house and the effect it's going to have on the resale of your house and stuff like that. We understand that, but in this specific piece of legislation it does mention schools. It does mention places of worship.

My thing is we have a lot of small communities in the province. I spoke to a couple of mayors in

my district and they were wondering what consultations we'll be having with municipalities on the opening of cannabis stores or whether it's going to be part of the retail store. I understand that once, for example, a Liquor Express gets issued a licence for a Liquor Express goes in, it does be gazetted. It does have to go through some kind of a transfer and appeal, whether anybody has that or whatever, but it also goes through the municipality.

My question to the minister, and I'll have a supplement question after, but I'd like to just – I understand if a municipality has concerns with proximity to a school, it could be a daycare that they don't want it next to. Again, I understand people are going to protest in anyone's neighbourhood but obviously there is zoning in these towns and it would have to go under the zoning for the town.

A municipality, I'm wondering what say they would have and what the procedure is when a retail store or anything is put in a community, or it could be put in St. John's in a neighbourhood, Corner Brook in a neighbourhood, or it could be in my Town of Flatrock.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Any application would have to meet zoning requirements in a municipality. That would be part of the process. The process through the NLC is they would be approved to be a retailer but once it gets to the municipal level it would be up to the municipality to decide whether or not it meets zoning criteria within that municipality.

NLC will not dictate to a municipality what the zoning is or whether or not a municipality should allow something in a zoning. Those decisions will be made by the municipality.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Okay. Not to try to move anything any differently but the recent 24 that were submitted – now, one has withdrawn and I know the one that has withdrawn. I spoke to the

mayor of the town and they had no idea whatsoever that that application was in.

I don't know how the process works. Was there any consultation done with municipalities? How was the consultation done to select the 24? Was it part of municipalities, or maybe there's another stage that it goes on to and these 24 that are selected now are not necessarily the 24 that are going to get a retail licence. I just want to know. I was asked that by the mayor of the particular town.

I also understand that where it was okay – while it could be just an address, maybe there's another location they were probably going to put it on, I don't know, but it was in a residential neighbourhood. Maybe you can answer that.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, myself and the Member opposite did have a discussion about this. If that were the address, the municipality would not have approved it in any event, is my understanding.

The NLC doesn't dictate to a municipality whether or not they should approve in a particular neighbourhood. The initial process here is that people made an application for a licence to be a retailer. So they've passed the initial stage of that.

The second part of that is they have to advertise for three weeks. They have to advertise in a conspicuous place for three weeks, the newspaper and so on. They have to put a post on the front of the location in a conspicuous place that they intend to have that as a retail outlet, but they've also got to get approval from the municipality.

The particular situation you were talking about, while the NLC may have said your application looks good, you've passed the first phase, they have to go through the second phase, which is what's contained in this legislation where they have to advertise for three weeks. They have to go through that process. They'd have to get municipal approval.

So at that particular stage, even if the people didn't back out, by the time they went to the municipality the municipality would've said, not on. At that particular point, they'd have to go back and say to the NLC they're looking for another location. They would require municipal approval, obviously. The NLC are not going to dictate to a municipality whether or not they should approve. It would be up to each individual municipality and their bylaws and their zoning regulations and so on, whether or not they approve a particular location.

On that, before I conclude, I do have an answer to the previous question, so I'll read it because I didn't know the answer but it did come from an official: a complaint from a member of the public, whether or not the complaint or their identity would be protected.

So the response is: This may depend on the nature of the complaint but should not be different from other complaints made to law enforcement. In many cases, an officer or an inspector could investigate a complaint without disclosing the identity of a complainant. If someone makes a complaint about an infraction and would be a necessary witness on a prosecution, then their identity may be disclosed in the course of court proceedings. We may need more info on the context to answer further.

Hopefully that answers your question on that.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to go back to the minister's commentary. My colleague from Cape St. Francis asked questions about the application process. I thank him for his response. That's one question I guess I've had, and it's come up in the House of Assembly here at different times on the three locations in my district in particular, close to schools, in churches I guess too if you want to look at it that way.

My question is – and I listened closely when he explained. I guess I'm at a loss. Because when the announcement was made we announced 24, and there has been 23 now as we all know – facilities. Why make an announcement on your

– you're permitting someone to apply. So basically, it's a two-tiered process. Most times you apply across the board and you pick out your successful applicants. Why that extra layer? I know it was asked in the House previous times about this process.

I'm somewhat at a loss that we announced that these people can go and apply – and they've had locations identified, which drew attention from me and my colleague from Topsail - Paradise.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

Thank you.

MR. PETTEN: So I don't know if you can give me some more clarity. That's where I seem to struggle with – why is that extra layer put there? In normal times, you just go and apply. You open the application process, the government's (inaudible) open process; you review the applications and these are your successful applicants. In this case we've got this layer – it's an extra layer, I guess, of bureaucracy for want of a better word and that is something that me, personally, and I know a lot of people find that the bureaucracy sometimes gets a bit complicated.

This is a 30-page application process to be allowed to apply to go to the municipal government, advertise for your locations and get feedback, just like you're starting from scratch again. I guess I'm at a loss and look forward to you giving me some more clarity as to why we've got that extra layer of approvals there. It seems to me a bit of overkill on the bureaucratic paperwork.

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

MR. OSBORNE: I'll answer that, and not to be factious, but we had numerous people saying when are we going to announce the successful applicants for licence. If we didn't tell people who the successful applicants were, well two things would have happened: We'd be criticized for not telling people who the successful applicants for stage one were; secondly, those individuals, if we didn't tell them who they were

and tell the people who applied who weren't successful that they weren't successful, they wouldn't be able to go to stage two.

The NLC are not dictating to a municipality where a location should or should not be. So in order for somebody who is successful in the first stage of this process, they've applied to be a retailer, the NLC looked at the applications and said certain applications based on their business plan, based on the level of security and the video cameras, based on their retail set-up and design, based on their financial information, we believe these people are strong enough in their application to proceed to the next level.

You have to inform those people who they are in order to proceed and advertise for three weeks. If you had some people advertising for three weeks and the people who weren't successful weren't advertising, I mean how does that happen unless you inform people who passed the first stage?

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I guess the question is: Were the applicants aware when they entered this process that they would be going through this two-tier process, this extra layer? Was that made clear to those applicants when they first approached NLC or your department to apply, when the applications were being accepted? Was that something that was clearly stated, or is that something that changed part way through the process?

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

MR. OSBORNE: We said at the outset that these applicants were applying for the first stage of approval. The applicants themselves were informed that there was additional work that would be required. When we announced the 24 successful applicants, we did say that there was additional work that had to be completed before we could determine, of those 24, who would be successful in being granted their licence.

These are people who have passed the first stage. There were no surprises here.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, I don't want to belabour this but still it's something that just doesn't settle with me is that you make application, most people will have to go and get a municipal sign-off, municipal approval. You go to Crown Lands to purchase the Crown land, you have get a municipal sign-off – municipal approvals it's called – before you can proceed, before any deals can be done. That's usually the first stop you'll make: municipal sign-off. It comes with your application; it's part of your process.

That is one of probably the gaping – to me, that's one of the biggest issues that jumps out at me with this process. If you went with a municipal approval, you would alleviate all the other concerns that's listed out in the legislation about proximity to schools, churches, of public interest. Because a municipality that's their responsibility to look after the citizens; it's on a municipal level.

So if we had those checks and balances in place in the beginning, wouldn't you have eliminated this process to have to go through a second level of approvals?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I'm not going to say we're going down the road to silly here now, but I will ask you a question. There were 86 applicants. Are you suggesting that we have all 86 apply for three weeks and go pay for a municipal permit and go through all of that stage and put – because we approved 24, which meant that we'd be asking 62 people to go through an expensive process of advertising and getting municipal permits and doing everything that's required in the second stage. Some of these processes are expensive.

So are you saying to those other 62 people we should have put them through a very expensive, but very unnecessary process because they weren't going to be approved in any event? Is that what you're asking?

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: No, Minister, actually that's not what I'm asking. I'm asking: Why wasn't the process made more clear and straight forward? When you go to get municipal sign-off, that doesn't mean you have through all of this big, long, expensive process. That's not what's required every time.

Public meetings are not held for every application that comes to a municipality. There may be an advertisement, a little piece in the paper that may be advertised. My guess is, if you're a business person, you're setting up a business, some expenses – there's no doubt there are costs come into applying for this originally. This application process, unless you were well established with a full fleet of staff like a Loblaws, somewhere like that, most of those people probably got some help, they would have gone to a business development area, someone to give them assistance to do this. I mean, I would think that would be a normal process.

I guess I'll be very blunt in my response. I just don't know why it wasn't done – to me, there is a missing point and it wasn't done right. I think this is an extra layer that we're going through now because it just doesn't make sense. You approve someone to go and apply.

If there are 84 people going, get municipal approval. Sometimes that can be done by going down and talking to a planner or something as simple as: you meet the crunch, it shouldn't be an issue. Even that sometimes would be satisfactory to some, but something, some approval or some sign off: Okay, a conditional approval subject to this. Then there will be no extra expenses to them. Get something more firm than what we have now, but now we're going to go back to a process and there's a good chance that a lot of these people in this 23 may not be approved. Then we're going back to square one.

It seems like we're spinning our wheels and creating an extra layer of bureaucracy, I guess you could call it, to the applicant. It's probably an extraordinary unfair burden placed on the applicants to get approval to know if they can operate a store or not.

I don't mean to belabour it, but it's something that, of all this legislation, the various points of it that stuck with me and that's one of the ones. With all due respect, most of your answers have not really clarified. It's not a matter of creating extra layers for anyone but the process now has created extra layers. I feel strongly that it's not a big deal. It's not a deal breaker to have to go to a municipality and get a conditional approval.

If you buy a piece of land to build a house, you go to a municipality, they'll give you conditional approval for little or no cost. Then you're getting into the real business when you get your approval and you have to get everything else in place. That's when it costs money. That's the cost of doing business, but in this regard I just don't understand why we couldn't simplify the process.

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

MR. OSBORNE: I will say the application process was absolutely clear right from the outset. So if there's anybody confused here, I would suggest it's the Member opposite.

I'm not sure if you've looked at the application process – it was 30 pages, I think – or if you filled out an application process or if you've studied it, but nobody else has complained that this was unclear or that this was an unnecessary process. I'm not going to answer any further questions on this. I'm not being factious, but I think we're going down a rabbit hole that's a little bit silly.

The other aspect of this is the application process was very stringent. If we were truly looking to add an extra layer of unnecessary expense for 86 applicants it would be to say go get your municipal approval before you can put your application in. That would be silly, because they wouldn't even know whether or not they're going to get approved through the NLC and whether or not they're even going to be an acceptable applicant with the NLC. I think that would be rather silly and it would be an extra cost burden on those individuals.

The only thing we're arguing here now is about the particular location, which is something the NLC have said you need municipal approval on

that location as well. If somebody wanted to put in an application for a location, such as the Member for Cape St. Francis which was very clearly in a residential neighbourhood, but everything else about the application, the business idea, the financing, the business plan, everything else was approved and at the end of the day the municipality said no, we don't like this location. Well, then the individual has the option to look for another location. They're still approved to be a licence, quite simple.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I remind the minister, I don't think there's any question in this House that's silly. It's one of the biggest policy shifts to come out of his mouth himself, probably in our country. I take exception, there are no silly questions coming from this side of the House, Mr. Chair. Every question that comes from any Member in this House is valid. If he takes offence that it's silly, well I won't make any apologies for that because I think every question is very important

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: Every question is very important. I'm only looking for answers. I ask for some respect in that context, too. I have some questions.

I have three businesses in my district; there are concerns being raised by the residents. It's not me; I didn't create those questions, Minister. I take exception to you getting up and calling my responses silly. If that's your rationale of trying to be humorous in this House, I take exception to it.

We're debating a bill that's very important to this Legislature and people of the province. It's one of the biggest policy shifts, as you stated, and I'd appreciate some clear answers. Those questions I'm asking you are not silly, Mr. Minister, I tell you that now, because a lot of people have asked the same questions I'm asking. I question as well, and we have lots of

more questions to ask and we'll ask them. I take exception, there is nothing here being said silly. We'll continue on but I hope we get some clear answers.

Section 24 reads: "Where the applicant requests, the board shall provide written reasons for refusing to issue a licence."

Have all applicants who were not successful in the previous RFP process received written reasons?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I said in this House yesterday, Mr. Chair, that there are no questions that are silly. The first time the Member asked a question it wasn't silly. I gave him an answer. The second time he asked the same question, it still wasn't silly but I gave him the same answer. The third time he asked the same question, I'm not sure what he wants me to do. I gave him the same answer for the third time. I said the process was getting silly.

I said very clearly yesterday there are no silly questions on this because it is a big policy shift. But I do take exception, Mr. Chair, to questioning the good work of the staff of the NLC, to questioning a group of very professional individuals at a very professional organization that has been dealing in controlled substances for decades and decades to say that they put people through an unnecessary process when the process was very clearly outlined from the very get-go – very clearly outlined. That's what I take exception to.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd advise the minister to check Hansard because I think he has a selective memory there. He's forgotten a few quotes he said. He did say they're silly questions and he never answered three times. He might be getting frustrated at me asking the question because you know what? I guess I'm not getting any answers. Simple questions.

Section 25(3); will a maximum five-year licence make small retailers more vulnerable than their subsidized counterparts with larger stores to sell products? Has any thought gone into that? Because as I say, Loblaws and Sobeys have a lot bigger backdrop than a smaller independent operator. With the five-year licence, has there been any – that's another thing that comes to mind too, with these five-year licences.

I know they'll have to reapply, but has there been anything in place, any backstop to those people having to reapply and the possibility of losing? Is that going to affect the licensing process or is that – what I'm trying to say I guess, is that going to be – they're going to be at risk, it's going to be a deterrent, I guess for want of a word. They have a five-year licence and then they're going to go through the expense of getting set up and operational and then that licence could possibly be – after the five-year period someone else could apply and take the licence.

Will they have a first right or refusal, I suppose for want of a better word. Will there be any securities in place for those smaller retailers that are not backstopped by a Dominion or a Sobeys so to speak, to protect them in the event that other applicants come into the market?

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

MR. OSBORNE: This process is the same process that is in place for liquor outlets. They have a five-year licence. They have to reapply at the end of the five years to get their licence back. There had to be some time frame put on a licence. You couldn't give it indefinitely.

The process for liquor outlets has been in place with a five-year renewal for quite a number of years, and it's working quite well. It does keep retailers, liquor outlets – it gives them an incentive I guess to operate within the rules and fulfill their obligations, and that's the same expectation with cannabis retailers.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Part II of the legislation outlines inspection protocols and rules. Will liquor inspectors also serve as cannabis inspectors? What training will be provided to cannabis inspectors? Have any of these inspectors already – I know it's a lot of questions, but it's all pretty well around the same kind of topic. Have any of these inspectors already been trained, or will the RNC or the RCMP be asked to assist these inspectors?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, the inspectors will be the same inspectors. They will be inspectors through the NLC. I fully anticipate that the NLC will ensure that they're properly trained and equipped to carry out the inspections.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Section 28(b) discusses the cannabis tracking system.

Will the province have its own interim tracking system while the feds don't? How will the store-product inventory tracking be done when there are holdups and burglaries, fires and floods, et cetera, or spoiled product or whatnot? How will that be done?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The tracking system that's in place, seed to sale, I think it's called, is a federal tracking system. That's a system through the federal government. It's not an NLC system.

Outside of that, some of the questions there are technical questions. I can certainly ask the NLC and report back, but I don't know, I would presume it's the same as alcohol in a retail outlet and how they track those and ensure that the tracking is done.

Again, the NLC have been in the business of controlled substances for a number of decades. I have full confidence that they know how to deal in controlled substances from the retail aspect,

from the distribution aspect and from tracking their sales.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Section 28 also discusses processes of the retailer. Will stores be prohibited from offering refunds or substitutions for portions of product that fail to satisfy customers?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That, Mr. Chair, I'm not certain. I can certainly check with the NLC. I know if somebody purchases a bottle of alcohol and it's very clear that the bottle has not been tampered with, the NLC will take a bottle and refund and allow somebody to either take the refund and leave the store or purchase another product.

So I'm guessing – I can clarify and provide an absolutely certain answer – if the sealed container hasn't been tampered with, because the product will be in sealed containers, that they'll probably have the same policy.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Under section 29: If the rules change for sellers that have already been approved are subsequently opposed by neighbours, will the seller be able to transfer the licence to another location or will the licence be lost to another applicant?

Can the licences be moved to a new location or to a temporary new location in the event of damage to the existing property?

I'm guessing that if it's in the same community, if an applicant has been approved in the first stage – and we talked about this a few minutes ago, needing to get approval through a municipality – and finds out that for whatever reason a municipality is not going to approve their location, I'm guess that they would have

the ability to go back to the NLC, as an approved applicant, as long as it's within the same geographic area, and look to set up another location.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Section 32 discusses a suspension by an inspector. How easily can store inspectors suspend their licence? There has to be some clear definitions of when an inspector would suspend the licence, clear violation. I'm sure there would be warning issued before the suspension of a licence. Do you have any idea what would constitute the spending of licence?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I have an answer to a previous question that the Member asked, that's on orders of cannabis that need to be placed by retailers through the NLC portal. The NLC will be tracking the product. They'll be able to inspect books, records, inventories, et cetera. We will not have our own separate tracking system since this would not be expedient considering the federal government have the seed-to-sale tracking system.

Again, the licence is for a specific location. A licence for an existing location can be transferred, but a person would need to work with the NLC if they wanted or we're looking to change location. It was the previous question to this particular one.

If you could ask the question again?

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Just to be clear, you're asking about the question of the changing of locations?

MR. OSBORNE: No, you just asked a question. I think I answered the previous one.

MR. PETTEN: What's required to suspend a licence? What triggers a licence suspension as opposed to a warning?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, similar to liquor outlets, the inspectors will be the same inspectors, but similar to a liquor outlet, if the licence retailer is not operating within the conditions of the licence or if there's illicit activity taking place or if there's – similar to liquor retail outlets or liquor retailers outlined in the regulations. There will be regulations put in place, the same as the regulations are in place for retail outlets. They would have to abide by the conditions of their licence. They'd have to operate in accordance with law. They'd have to be providing the remittances to the NLC for products sold and sales tax and so on.

If they're not operating according to the law, if they're not operating according to the conditions of their licence, that's when an inspector would put a closure order on the operation.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Section 39: If a retail licence is suspended, but following an investigation it's deemed that the suspension should not have occurred or that the suspension was wrongfully enacted, what compensation would be offered to the retail location, if any?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That's something that I can't answer at this particular stage. I guess we're, in a way, talking about a hypothetical situation. I guess it would depend on the circumstances and the situation as to why an outlet was closed, but, again, I have full confidence in the NLC.

We don't hear of frivolous cases of liquor retail outlets being closed or licences being suspended for liquor retail outlets. So I would imagine that there would have to be a level of sufficient evidence to warrant that a retail outlet be closed.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Section 64 outlines possession rules. What is the limit one person can possess in their home at one time? Can a person's four plants be located outside of the property? If located outside, what safeguards are in place to prevent nearby children from accessing them?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I think we talked about one aspect of that; there are two aspects to the question. Possession limits in a residence, there is no possession limits, per se, in a residence. Personal possession can be up to 30 grams. If an individual is hosting some sort of a get-together or I guess a social event on their property, they can only possess up to 30 grams at a particular time, but if they went back to a retail outlet and purchased another 30 grams, they could transport that to their home. If they went back and purchased another 30 grams, they could transport that to their home.

I don't imagine they'd have an abundant quantity, the same as they'd have alcohol. I have bottles of alcohol in my home that have been there for three or four years. Alcohol has a different shelf life than cannabis would. I would suspect that cannabis after three or four years certainly wouldn't have any shelf life or any value.

As far as the plants are concerned – the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands had asked the same question yesterday or the day before yesterday about having plants outside the home – according to the way the legislation is written, you can have plants inside the home or outside the home.

It's something that officials have been flagged with and regulations will deal with that. I fully anticipate that if the regulations are going to allow plants outside the home that they would have to certainly be secured. I'm not going to predictate what a regulation is going to say here on the floor today, but I would certainly anticipate that it would have to be in a contained area, whether it's a fence or a locked greenhouse or whatever the case may be, but the regulations

will deal with whether or not plants are allowed to be outside.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

With the new regulations with cannabis where a person is permitted to have four plants in their home, are there any regulation in place or any restrictions in place with people who have children under 19 years of age? We know they're not allowed to go into a tier one or tier two store, for obvious reasons. So if the cannabis is being grown in a home and they have their four plants, are there any regulations, stipulations to protect people under 19, under age?

Are there any rules around how you have to grow those plants in your home? I know we say you have to be your own parent and guardian, but is there any special regulation, or is it you can grow them wherever and you have to control that yourself?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I think the Minister of Justice and Public Safety provided an answer in Question Period to the same question.

As a parent, I've got household cleaners that I've got to ensure they're not in a place that would endanger my children. I've got other products in my home that I've got to ensure that they're not in a place that would cause danger to my children. I have alcohol in my home. I actually keep my alcohol locked in a liquor cabinet because I've got young children in my home. Not everybody has a liquor cabinet that locks, but people who have bottles of alcohol, I would fully anticipate that a responsible parent would ensure that the alcohol is in an area or stored in such a way that it would not put their children at risk.

There are no specific rules to say that a plant has to be so many feet high or in an area in the house that is locked and away from children, but we fully anticipate that parents would be responsible if they're going to have a plant in

their home that they would take responsible measures to ensure that their children are not in danger.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just go back, Minister, to your previous answer to the last question when I asked my question about possession in their home at one time. You stated that you can bring 30 grams at a time and I guess you can go back and forth, you can bring as much home as you want.

As with alcohol, we can go today and there's no limit what we can go and purchase from the NLC for whatever reasons, just go purchase it and pay for it, as long as you're of age to take it out.

I guess if there are limits of 30 grams on possession, yet when you go home you can go bring your 30 grams and go back and get 30 more and onwards for eternity basically, there's no limits. I guess I'm going roundabout: Why do we have possession limits when in your home that's still considered possession? It's in your possession in your home whether that's 500 grams, yet we have 30 gram possession rules.

If you're comparing it – and we've married a lot of this to the NLC rules and Liquor Corporation rules – we have no limits on alcohol for personal consumption. So we have a limit on marijuana for personal consumption for 30 grams, yet when you go home you can bring home endless trips, the list is endless and you just stated that yourself.

To me, I just have trouble with that one. Could you elaborate further and give me some rationale as to why there's a limit on possession on cannabis as opposed to alcohol? Why it's not the same?

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

MR. OSBORNE: There are a number of reasons. Reason number one: the federal government set a personal possession limit at 30 grams. Reason number two: if you've got four

people above the age of 19 in your home then that would dictate that you could have 120 grams in your home, for example. If one of those people leaves to go out but doesn't take what they purchased at a cannabis store with them, then that's still in the home.

You could have four adults in a vehicle each having 30 grams in their possession, that's 120 grams in the vehicle but there's only 30 grams per person because they've, obviously, got to get into the vehicle, but if those four adults live in the same dwelling, that could be 120 grams. We can't control whether or not people have to take that and put it in their pocket when they leave the house or lock it in the cupboard when they get home. That would be very difficult to police.

Again, if you are having a social function or you're having whatever and you needed more than 30 grams, you are allowed to provide another individual, provided you're not doing it for monetary gain. If you wanted to provide some recreational cannabis to a friend when they came to visit you at your home, you're permitted to do that.

Primarily, the 30-gram limit is following the federal limit, but once you're in your own home, we haven't set a limit for that. Again, it has to be in the approved container; anybody purchasing, it would be in approved containers. When somebody goes to their home, whether they take it out of the approved container, similar to wine – you can take wine out of the bottle that it was purchased in and put it in a decanter. So it becomes very complicated and almost unmanageable if we were to say you can only have 30 grams per adult in a household.

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate the explanation, but it still comes back, I guess, to I know the federal government has put a 30-gram limit of possession but, really, the possession amounts are endless after you leave the store; any one time, as long as you've got 30 grams – you could have 3000 grams home in your cupboard, for argument's sake, and there's nothing wrong with that.

So I'll leave that, but –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. PETTEN: I'll leave it at that but it's still possession. That still constitutes possession, whether it's in your cupboard, in your car or in your pocket.

In the briefing we were told that organizations could not use cannabis as a prize for a fundraising. However, in responding to a question from the media, Minister, you said that this is a grey area and talked about gift cards.

Can you elaborate more today on what are the rules surrounding fundraising?

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

MR. OSBORNE: If somebody were selling tickets, they'd have to have a lottery licence, obviously. That's not a part of this act, so I'm not going to go too far into that.

If a company were giving away a prize, we often see automobile dealers giving away a trip as a prize, as a draw for people – if they purchase a car, their name gets put in to enter for a trip prize, whatever the case may be. We often see fundraisers for charitable organizations where they give away gift cards to the NLC. What we've said is that it's illegal for an organization to possess cannabis. It's illegal for an organization to give actual cannabis as a prize. But if they were to give a gift card to an authorized legal retail outlet, that's not illegal.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: If you could correct me on this, if I'm growing four plants at home and I want to have a social gathering, I can share the product from those four plants with my guests – is that correct?

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

MR. OSBORNE: The legislation very clearly outlines the fact that you can have social sharing. You can't sell for profit. You can't have monetary gain. But if you can legally have your four plants and you have a guest come in and however you – I'm not sure what the process is to turn that into an edible, or to turn it into a joint or whatever it's called today. If you wanted to share it, yes, you can share it with guests in your home.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Well, I do believe edibles at this point are not covered under this legislation. Is that also correct?

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

MR. OSBORNE: The sale of edibles is not covered under this but if you went to a retail outlet and bought your 30 grams and went home and made brownies, that's perfectly legal.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Back to my concerns raised yesterday in reference to the variety of seeds and, as you indicated, they would be required to be purchased from NLC; but, a little bit of research and, of course, a little bit of experience also brought a concern to my mind, and that is it's the cultivation of a certain crop that will create a variance in the content of the crop, and this concern being the THC level.

If I have a group of friends over to my residence and I bought the seeds from NLC but because of the way I grew them, the THC is a higher level than what can be purchased at the liquor store, am I, as a property owner, responsible for any negative consequences that will come out of that?

CHAIR (Reid): The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

MR. OSBORNE: You're getting into a legal and a justice issue here, for sure, but on a without prejudice basis, let me say if you gave somebody alcohol to the point that they were

intoxicated and you let them leave your house and drive, you would hold some responsibility.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: So those similar liabilities will be outlined in this legislation?

We also have a concern when it comes to the establishment of Canopy Growth operation in the White Hills area. Currently that's zoned commercial and in other jurisdictions the production of cannabis has been deemed agricultural.

Has that also been verified with the city whether that type of occupancy can be carried out there in that location?

MR. OSBORNE: I don't know. That's not part of my legislation or my department.

MR. LESTER: It actually is, because occupancies and zoning is covered by provincial legislation.

So I'm wondering: Have we also jumped the gun on the proposal of establishment of the Canopy Growth facility in the White Hills?

MR. OSBORNE: That's not part of my legislation.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Getting back to the few questions I had earlier about municipalities and retail and stuff like that, is there some sort of a plan so that all parts of the province have the opportunity to buy? Is there a regional approach? An example are there so many stores – I know that in Liquor Express stores again that there can't be so many in an area; there has to be a distance between them. I'm thinking about – I know there were 80 that came in, and I believe, Minister, I am not sure, but there's only one for Labrador in total. One of the 24 retailers that were selected so far, there's going to be one in Labrador.

So what are the NLC doing to see if it's a regional – going to be stores, like say in Marystown area, Burin Peninsula, there'll be one on the South Coast, one on the West Coast. I'm just wondering: What is the criteria, or is that a part of the overall plan for this.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Of the 86 applicants, there were 24 that were approved to go to the next level. The NLC have also gone to tender – I believe it's for six more – an additional location in Labrador, I understand. I believe the second RFP is to look for locations in areas of the province that were underrepresented. At this particular stage, not knowing what the sales volumes are going to be for certain – if it's determined that sales volumes weren't or that an area is underrepresented, my understanding from the NLC is they will look to go in the future for further RFPs, once we get a better understanding of sales and demands and what areas.

The other aspect of this is the NLC is an online retailer as well. So even if you're in an area of the province that you find it difficult to get to a retailer, you can purchase online.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Minister, I think we're on the same wavelength because my next question was about online sales. Right now you can get medical marijuana online, I do believe. If it's not, you can correct me. Will that continue in the future? I believe right now if someone was prescribed with medical marijuana that you could have it and it could be delivered to your door via UPS or Purolator or someone like that.

Will that continue or will medical marijuana right now only be purchased from NLC?

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

MR. OSBORNE: My understanding is online sales through the NLC now is for recreational

cannabis. At some point the NLC may get into medicinal, I'm not sure. But my understanding is it's only recreational that will be available through the NLC online at the moment.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Again, these are new questions for me and I'm just looking at the whole new legislation that we're bringing in here, and it's questions that are being asked all the time.

Online sales as we know today – I'm not an expert at it, by no means. If I want to order anything, I got to go next door to get my son or my daughter to do it. Online sales today are massive, as we know. There are boxes coming through the mail, I'd say in the last 10 years probably has increased a thousand times.

Is there going to be anything put in place to be able to recognize it? Most days today you'll just see the box that's coming with either your Purolator or Same Day or UPS just on the box with absolutely nothing to determine what's in that box. I would imagine that if the sale of marijuana in Newfoundland, for example, is \$10 a gram, and somebody can get it in Ontario or Quebec at \$5 a gram, it'd make a whole lot more sense for that person to go elsewhere and buy it, like you see what happens on Amazon or any of those places now.

Is there anything that the NLC are going to be doing? Probably there's nothing you can do, I don't know. Is there going to be anything to show that that is marijuana or will there be added enforcement? Will it mean at Purolator there will be dogs in once a week or something like that? I don't know. I'm just asking the questions because I know the online sales are only going to be related to the NLC, which is correct, right?

I don't know if this is going to be a standard price across Canada, so maybe it won't have an effect. Maybe someone will order something from Colorado, I don't know. I'm just wondering, is there anything in place – because once it becomes legalized, once it gets in to the house, we'll never know where it came from. Is there anything in place for that beforehand?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I did get some clarification the federal government will maintain control over online sales of medical marijuana. I knew the NLC at this particular stage is not getting involved. Like I said, whether they do at some point in the future, but it's our understanding that the federal government is going to maintain control over that, at least for the foreseeable future.

As far as your other question, you're right. The province, for example, loses out on a considerable amount of sales tax as a result of people purchasing things online and having it shipped in. It's very difficult to monitor, very difficult to control.

Under this legislation, if you were to travel to another province and on your person you could purchase up to 30 grams and bring it legally from another province to our province. As far as purchasing online and having it shipped in to the province that will still be considered illegal. Once you open the package and you got it in your home, it becomes very difficult to say whether you purchased it here or purchased it away perhaps.

It would still be illegal to purchase online from another location, another jurisdiction outside of the province, but it is very difficult to police. In cases where somebody is caught, I'm sure they will be prosecuted and whatever offences can be laid will be laid.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much.

That was interesting because we're thinking alike.

My next question, is there going to be legislation brought in for – I know there's so much in your system. In the last number of days we talked about impaired driving by drugs and two nanograms versus five nanograms and zero tolerance when it comes to novice drivers, people under 22 and commercial drivers.

My question is, when it comes to people getting caught – because the biggest deterrent we can have any time when something is new, whether it's alcohol or whatever it is – is there something that the Justice Department will be bringing in? I know once it becomes law there will be certain fines, first term, anyone that will be caught online. Personally, I think this is probably going to be the biggest issue for government. I know government looks at this as we're going to be taking criminals off the – the money's not going to people that are doing stuff illegal; it's going to be going to government.

If revenue is based that way, I don't think it's going to – the criminal aspect of this, I don't think it's going to decrease the criminal aspect at all. That's just my personal opinion.

Government doing this, there is a benefit that if we can make money and the money is not going into criminal hands is good, because through taxes and that. My fear with the whole process is the online sales – and like you just mentioned, there's not much we can do about it because it's happening every day when people are delivering from Amazon or wherever they order stuff through now online.

Will there be anything brought in through the Justice Department to have fines or anything to – if someone gets caught the first time it's \$1,000. The second time – because there needs to be some kind of deterrent.

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

MR. OSBORNE: That would actually – it's already considered to be a criminal offence to buy cannabis online and have it shipped into the province. It would be considered contraband. Once cannabis is legalized and it is sold legally through retail outlets and online through the NLC, that cannabis would be considered legal cannabis. If you were to purchase cannabis online it would be considered contraband.

Similar to Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia will have their own online system. NLC will not ship out of the province. Nova Scotia's online system will not ship to our province. So if you're purchasing online, you're purchasing contraband cannabis. There are offences under this act for contraband cannabis, including \$25 per gram

fine in addition to other fines for contraband cannabis.

In this particular case, this is one of the areas where – at least I’m hopeful. I don’t think it’ll disappear completely, but I’m certainly hopeful that once cannabis is legal and people can purchase it online through the NLC and a) they know they’re getting a product that’s regulated so that they know what they’re buying is safe; b) they know they’re getting a product that’s not laced with either pesticides or herbicides or other chemicals, they may be more enticed to buy it from the NLC, whether online or at a retail store.

Right now, some of the people who are purchasing online, it’s quite simply because they don’t want to go down to the corner and buy it from somebody. They feel online is safer. If they know that purchasing a regulated, safe product from the NLC is absolutely safe and legal, I’m hoping that some of the online sales – like I said, while I don’t anticipate it will disappear, I’m hoping those people will purchase it from the NLC knowing it’s legal and purchasing outside the province online is considered contraband and you don’t know what product you’re getting.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I ask the minister, in regard to the *Revenue Administration Act*, part 9 of that deals with tobacco tax and this section deals with the rate of taxation, how it’s collected and how it’s remitted et cetera. If you look at the *Revenue Administration Act* and section 9 that deals with tobacco tax, the question is related to mirroring that legislation related to cannabis sale.

For example, section 92 says in regard to tax levied: “A person who acquires tobacco at a retail sale in the province shall, in respect of the consumption or use of that tobacco, pay to the Crown at the time of the sale a tax calculated in accordance with section 98.”

Section 98 references the rate of tax. “The tax imposed on tobacco by this Act shall be calculated as follows.” It references cigarettes, open tobacco, cigars and cigarettes and that sort of thing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. HUTCHINGS: The tax levied in that particular section 92 also talks: “A person who, as a consumer, brings tobacco into the province or receives delivery of tobacco in the province shall, except as prescribed by regulation, immediately report and pay to the Crown the tax that would be payable had that tobacco been acquired at a retail sale in the province.”

Minister, if you just comment on in regard to the *Revenue Administration Act* and that section that deals with tobacco tax. Would that be replicated for cannabis when it talks about the level of taxation and the type of taxation when this is legalized?

MR. OSBORNE: I’ll get that answer for you. I don’t know off hand.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: I’ll ask one question on the online sales tax, and it’s to do with medical marijuana again. I know that’s how people – because I know there are a couple of people in my district who will get that. The question that will be asked, once everything comes into place here with the NLC and everything else, medical marijuana can be purchased elsewhere other than the province? It’s still online sales?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I’m not tasked to deal with medical marijuana, so I’m not as up on that, but it will still be controlled federally. Right now, at least for the foreseeable future, the NLC will not be getting involved with medical marijuana. So I guess whatever legal methods they’re able to purchase it online, under federal regulations, and have it delivered, they’ll be able to do so.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you.

I thank the minister in regard to the questions on the *Revenue Administration Act*. Provision 9

talks about the tobacco tax and he said he would get that information. There are just a couple of questions I wanted to include in that as well. Section 97 of the *Revenue Administration Act* notes a person who is not an HST registrant can apply to the minister to be a tobacco retailer.

Will that be replicated again with the legalization of cannabis? HST, I assume, would be collected on cannabis in addition to the cannabis tax. So I'm just wondering again, if in that process of answering the questions, would there need to be an amendment as well for that particular item?

Section 98 of the *Revenue Administration Act* as well notes the rate of tobacco tax, which I mentioned. So will a section be added for the rate of cannabis tax that I talked about and described earlier? And again, what will the rate of cannabis tax be?

Another question related to the taxation scheme would be the taxes collected on the sale of seeds for personal growing in addition to dried cannabis, in addition to whether there's a difference or would be a difference in regard to whether those seeds were purchased for commercial use or production, and/or for personal use or production – would there be a difference in that as well?

Section 91 of the *Revenue Administration Act* also outlines rebates on tobacco tax related to Labrador border zones. We've been familiar with that and have certainly talked about it here in the House before. So this effectively lowers the cost of tobacco in this particular case to prevent individuals from crossing into Quebec to purchase cheaper tobacco.

So again, looking at the parallel of the two substances, tobacco and cannabis, how will the price of cannabis in the province compare to the price in Quebec; and if Quebec is lower, again similar to that in regard to the Labrador border zones, will the same provisions exist or will they be considered, as the ones that are considered today in regard to tobacco in relation to us and the borders and going in and out of the two jurisdictions?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I'll make two comments. One is, we're here to debate Bill 20, but I will answer your question on the *Revenue Administration Act* in this particular instance. It's not what we're here to debate but it is an important question. There will be no replication of the *Revenue Administration Act* such as it is for tobacco with cannabis.

Any cannabis purchased will have to be purchased through a licensed retailer. Anything that they purchase will have to be through the NLC. So any purchases of cannabis in the province, with the exception of bringing in what's considered to be a legal limit – 30 grams or under, the same as there's a legal limit on bringing in alcohol if you were to come into the province if you're travelling – you could bring in up to 30 grams, no more, on your person if you're coming from another province to this province.

The same would apply whether you're coming from Quebec across the Labrador border, you'd be allowed up to 30 grams. So that would be permitted. The reason there's no need to replicate the *Revenue Administration Act* is because any other cannabis purchase in the province, whether it's online or at a retail outlet, is governed through the NLC the same as alcohol.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

I'm happy as the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi to stand. Minister, right now – it's sort of related to tobacco but in a different way – we have outlets such that all manner of accessories which can be used for consuming cannabis, such as pipes, but they're selling it under the guise of being for tobacco use.

After this bill comes out, will retailers who are not cannabis retailers and who are selling these accessories, which now everybody knows are going to be for cannabis use, will they be allowed to do that?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That's a very good question. If they're selling it and they're selling it legally now as a tobacco accessory, my guess is they'll still be able to sell it. I personally don't have any desire to say to Mary Janes or whomever is selling tobacco products that these are no longer tobacco products.

If it's considered legal today, cannabis shops will be allowed to sell cannabis accessories. And if tobacco or other shops are selling tobacco accessories and they're considered tobacco accessories today, I guess they'd be considered tobacco accessories tomorrow.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

So from what you're saying, they probably shouldn't identify them as cannabis accessories in that case.

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

MR. OSBORNE: I'll find out the answer to that for you. I know that this bill does deal with cannabis and cannabis accessories, but we all know that there has been cannabis accessories sold in the city for a number of years and it hasn't been considered illegal. I'll get a more definitive answer for you on that.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Just connected to that then, I notice in the bill that it says that we're depending on the definition of cannabis accessories from the federal legislation, but my understanding is there is no definition of cannabis accessories in the federal legislation.

What sort of definition is going to constitute cannabis accessories?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I got a note from one of my officials. It says: Under the federal act and under our act, a cannabis accessory is a cannabis

accessory if it's held out as being intended to be used as a cannabis accessory or sold in the same place as cannabis. So the federal act does define cannabis accessories.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, I have one question that just occurred to me. I think I might have raised it before but I'm not sure if I got an answer, so I'll just ask it again anyway for the record. If you have a licensed daycare in your home, I'm assuming it would be no different than even with alcohol, I suppose, that if you wanted to have a licensed daycare to take in children, I guess there's someone from Child, Youth and Family Services comes in and inspects your home, so I'm assuming that marijuana plants wouldn't be allowed to be in the living room or in the playroom where there are children. It's one thing to say keep it away from your own children; it's another when you're operating a daycare out of your house.

I'm assuming there'll be something in place to deal with that issue.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yeah, licensed daycare or child care operations are licensed. Those would be inspected and would have to comply with certain terms and conditions in order to be a licensed daycare. If they're deemed to be unsafe for any reason, my guess would be that they would be issued a notice to correct the problem and if they didn't, they would be at risk of losing their licence.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

Mr. Minister – Mr. Minister sounded strange, reminds me of the television program.

Minister, the bill refers to the possible distribution, possession or consumption of cannabis for research or educational purposes.

Can you elaborate on what would constitute research or educational purposes?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That will be defined in regulation. I know my officials are listening. If I can provide you any greater detail at this particular point I will, I'll wait for officials to provide me a message, but it will be outlined in regulation.

The act will not prohibit research and education. The legislation we have before us will not prevent research or education, but I'll see if I can get you a more definitive answer, prior to that being in regulation.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you.

I know that your officials are listening, so maybe they could put this in too, what they're looking at. Would that, for example, refer to the million dollars cost-shared program on research and development with Canopy Growth? In doing that maybe they can look to see well what exactly was thought, would be the research in that area?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, as soon as I get some feedback, I'll provide the answer.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you.

I just have a general question for the minister in regards to the sale of cannabis. The control of that would be by the corporate entity, which is now the Liquor Corporation, and how that would evolve.

I'm not sure if it was covered, but it's something that came up and was mentioned to me in regard to the import and the purchase of product from somewhere else in Canada in terms of the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Is there any restriction on that? Can the corporation decide to produce from another producer anywhere in the country and bring it in from another province? As well, is there an ability to bring it in from the US or from other jurisdictions? How would that work? Are there any restrictions on that?

I know within the bill it talks about the corporation and their ability to control that in terms of what's brought in. So just give me an idea if it can be done through other provinces in the country. Is there any restriction in regard to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement?

The second question would be: Could the corporation decide to bring it in from the US or could they decide to bring it in from Europe? I know Health Canada would designate licensed producers. I don't know if I'm answering my own question but: Would they have to be in Canada or could they certify others from outside of the Canadian jurisdiction?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That is a Health Canada question.

Again, officials are listening, whether or not they can provide any greater clarification, but the NLC will be able to purchase not only homegrown products, products that are produced here by local producers, but the NLC – similar to alcohol where they bring in products that are produced in other locations – will have the ability to bring in products, whether it's a product produced in British Columbia or in Ontario, they'll be able to bring in different brands of products and make that available to local retailers for sale.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you.

I thank the minister for that. Just in regard to that, it's about the packaging and the product that is brought in, as he just described, from

other jurisdictions in Canadian provinces. I heard some discussion from the federal government in regard to generic packaging. I think I'm correct, and the minister can correct me if I'm not, there would be generic packaging so there wouldn't be individual. Right here in the province, the corporation wouldn't have to have distinguishing packaging for various types of product or that sort of thing. I think in the country it's going to be generic.

Is that the understanding that the product here, when it's sold, it will be generic labelling, no matter who it is that's putting it on the shelf, that it will all be same? Is that your understanding or would packaging change once the product came into the province?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I don't know the answer to that question as far as the labelling, whether it will have the same label here as in Nova Scotia, as in Prince Edward Island, but I'll get that answer for you as well.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

Minister, I have some labelling questions too. You may not know the answer, so hopefully we'll get them.

Will there be labelling with regard to the strength of the product? For example, with alcohol we can see what the alcohol content is. Will we have that kind of labelling, especially with regard to mixing or blends because you can have that happening? Will there be labelling describing the different effects of different strains?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, labelling comes under federal jurisdiction. So it's my understanding that the THC levels will be on the labels, is my understanding. My understanding is we have the ability, if we wish, to add to a label here,

provincially, we have that ability. Outside of that, at this particular stage, the federal government has jurisdiction over labelling and what else would be on the labels.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, have you been having discussions on that point yet between your department and NLC on the desire to have that labelling and whether or not it is demanded by the federal government?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I personally haven't had those discussions with the NLC, officials in the department may have. The retail aspect of this, we've put a great deal of confidence in the NLC, as somebody with a great deal of experience in dealing with controlled substances.

Again, everything that's talked about here in debate, if there are issues that are raised or good ideas that are raised, not only will they be looked at as the regulations are being put together, but officials from the NLC are tuned in to this and officials from the department. If there's a concern or if there's something raised that has gone under the radar with them, that's exactly the reason these debates happen so that these things get on the radar and become important.

What I will say is I will have a discussion with the NLC in terms of labelling. It is my understanding that THC levels will be a part of the labelling. What else is a part of the labelling, primarily at this stage, is federally governed, but we do have the ability to add to it. If there are things that we should be having on the label that the federal government for some reason doesn't, that's an important point.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I have a couple of questions now that I want to ask because I was asked this question before by a constituent of mine, actually.

Once you grow four plants in a house, so that's the minimum that you can grow in a dwelling. If you have a basement apartment, you can grow four in the basement because that's considered a dwelling and upstairs are four plants.

It takes a period of time for them to dry out, I don't know how long it takes. I'm not sure if it's a month or whatever it is that you have it so that it's – I don't think you can take it when it's really green; it takes a period of time for it to be able to dry, we would say. During the period, once a plant is cut down, can you go and grow more plants?

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

MR. OSBORNE: No, I mean that's exactly the reason we have these debates. It is a good question. I'll find out. Without stating that it's the answer and carving it in stone, my guess is a plant is a plant. If you've got a plant that's drying out, then that's still considered a plant. But I don't know; I will get you a more definitive answer.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: So again, just getting back to the four plants that you're allowed to harvest. For example, on a piece of property that I'm on – I have a large piece of property; it could be downtown St. John's. Once the plant gets a certain height, the stink, you can't bear it in your house any more, that person can't put that on my property, can they, to store it?

If somebody grew a plant in their home and they said okay, listen, we can't bear the smell of this anymore, you have a huge yard, I can't put it in a home or in a town – I got nowhere to put it because I live in an apartment building. Is there any way that a person can take that plant and store it on your property to grow afterwards?

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

MR. OSBORNE: I'm not sure I understand the question. Just to repeat, to make sure I understand – I guess I'll reiterate. If I'm wrong, you can ask it again. Is what you're asking is if you've got a plant and because the smell of the plant or whatever you no longer want to keep it, you want to put it at somebody else's property are you –

MR. K. PARSONS: (Inaudible.)

MR. OSBORNE: Outdoors you mean?

MR. K. PARSONS: Yeah.

MR. OSBORNE: Okay, I think that goes back to a discussion we had earlier. Right now under this legislation, the legislation doesn't dictate that you can't have plants on your property. Under the legislation, it doesn't say you can't. They're going to put in place regulations. Now, whether the regulations determine – I guess part of what the regulation, based on the discussion we're having here – but there will be regulations covering whether or not you can have plants outside.

That will be covered under the regulations. My guess is at this particular stage, based on discussions that I've had with officials, is that within those regulations they'll probably say that it's got to be in a fenced area or your yard has to be fenced. Whether it's a five-foot fence or a six-foot fence, I can't say at this particular stage. My understanding is that the regulations are going to determine whether or not you can have plants outdoors and, if you are, what the conditions of having a plant outdoors would be.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: We're almost on the same page.

What I'm saying, Minister, is that what's going to happen, and I think it's going to happen, is that once a plant gets so high or whatever and it's in your house and it starts to smell or whatever and you want to move it outside, some people don't have access to a piece of property, like again if you live in an apartment building or something like that. I have an area where, it could be not in my yard, I own some property, I

got some trees, you want to put it there and do whatever you want to do to grow it.

Most of the grow-ops that the RCMP and the RNC get these days are usually out in the woods. I know last year there was a huge one off the Salmonier Line and I think they spotted it with a helicopter or something like that that they got it. But my question is: If a person wanted to move plants to my property or somebody else's property – and you say it will be in the regulations.

Right now, under these regulations, we're only talking about in a dwelling. Once it's moved outside, there are going to be different rules for plants out in a yard. I'm not going to grow it.

MR. OSBORNE: Sounds like you are.

MR. K. PARSONS: No, but I may have a friend of mine that wants to bring it along, right? I'm not going to grow it but I've got lots of friends, okay, that may grow it. And they may want to put it on my property.

So that's my question. A dwelling and a property are two different things. Is that what you're saying here?

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

AN HON. MEMBER: The oldest trick in the book.

MR. OSBORNE: Yeah, as my colleague said, the oldest trick in the book.

The reality is a person can only have four plants in their possession. So if a friend of yours asks you to hold their plant for them, then that is in your possession. That is now considered your plant. Whether you're holding it and cultivating it for a friend, while it's in your possession it's your plant.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Under section 73, Minister, it gives NLC the ability to fix the products sold and their prices.

Will the government direct NLC to purchase from producers other than Canopy Growth or just Canopy Growth? And on that question, has there been any work done on the Free Trade Agreement? I know that NLC can import product – if we don't have enough local product to provide our local retailers, you can import from elsewhere.

So could you elaborate more on the rules of where and what's involved with NLC if we don't have enough local product to supply our retail needs, what's involved with that?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you.

We actually had a discussion about that three or four minutes ago. The Member for Ferryland asked the same question. The NLC has the ability to purchase products from outside of our jurisdiction. They can purchase products whether it's Ontario or British Columbia or Nova Scotia, different brands, different labels – they can purchase products. Any products that are sold here have to be purchased through the NLC, but the NLC have the ability to bring products in from other jurisdictions. So a local retailer would have to deal with the NLC, but the NLC can bring products in from other jurisdictions.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: I know there were lots of consultations done before this was brought into what we're debating here in legislation today. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and the deputy, deputy, deputy House Leader a question.

Minister, was there any analysis done with the Department of Health on the effects of marijuana? We know that there are so much effects I know on tobacco and stuff like this, but it seems to me that tobacco is smoked with a filter, marijuana – from what I understand, and I don't know how it's going to be sold – is not sold with a filter. Has there been any analysis, maybe through Health Canada or anyone else that can give what the effects of marijuana

smoke will be to your lungs, or to cancer or whatever it is?

I know smoke is bad, period, but I was just wondering if there was any analysis of it.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: I think the short answer is yes. The slightly longer answer is that filter or no, any of these inhaled products are problematic. I can recall from years ago that was one of the challenges around marijuana for medical usage, because of the delivery method. That was around can you use oil and what's the active ingredient, or whether there was a spray.

I think that there will certainly be ongoing work at that level from the federal government. The challenge with the health effects of marijuana is that inhaling it second hand also has an intoxicant effect, whereas with cigarette smoke traditionally it tends to affect merely the person who is habituated to it and who is using it. So, filter or no, smoking is a delivery mechanism. It's not one that has any merit from a medical point of view.

Exactly what kind of damage will become apparent; to be fair, the damage to the lungs and to the health of individual from tobacco, it took 200 years to generate the data. We've only had this on the horizon for a significantly shorter period than that.

I don't know whether that answers ...

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

MR. OSBORNE: The Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi had asked a question earlier. I do have the answer for you on that.

On research and education, cannabis is currently illegal and there is not a lot of good research on it. So what's intended in the act is to regulate the retail sale and general use, but we do want to allow the ability for academic institutions like a university to conduct valid, legitimate research, which would have to comply with the ethics and other guidelines of that institution.

There may be regulations put to this aspect if deemed necessary.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: It's really ironic, here we are going through the process of legalizing another pollutant in our lungs on anti-tobacco day.

I ask the minister: Will there be any programs initiated that will assist in the cessation of the consumption of cannabis, simultaneously with the legalization?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That's not a part of this act, nor a part of my department, but if the Minister of Service NL returns I'll certainly ask her to answer that question for you.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: I have another question for the Minister of Health. I really appreciate the answer that you gave me the last time.

We had the discussion the other night, and I agree with you, it took about 200 years for tobacco to be able to be – people realized. I gave a couple of stories about playing hockey the other night with smoking in the dressing room, but things have changed.

I really want to know because we all recognize things that are out there today like when you're smoking a pack of cigarettes now it shows all these pictures and everything else, has the department or anybody decided that once this comes into law that there will be a program or some kind of public notices or advertising that will show that – everybody knows now that second-hand smoke is bad, everybody knows that the cause of lung cancer, the number one cause is probably tobacco smoke.

Will there be anything like this with people with marijuana? Either minister can answer that. I'm just wondering about public knowledge of what we're going to do.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you for the question.

That's certainly a very good question. I think the immediate consequences of intoxication from second-hand smoke from cannabis are actually dealt with, with the places of use piece from the Smoke-Free Environment Act. You can't smoke in a confined space with others, you can't smoke it in public places, nowhere where children would be and you can't smoke it in a vehicle when the vehicle is moving or a boat when the boat is moving even if you're not driving it.

There is some work around that, but as far as the education piece is concerned, certainly my department, along with the department responsible for wellness, is working with our federal counterparts to make sure there are education packages out there.

The lead time we have is simply down to the fact that we – I've heard from the federal Minister of Health, personally, that it's unlikely that the federal legislation will be proclaimed prior to the fall.

So we're as far ahead as anyone in terms of the education piece. I would argue not having had the chance yet to discuss it with my provincial and territorial counterparts, that's in three weeks' time, but I would argue that we're probably ahead of the curve. The short answer is: We're on it.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: In a situation where I bring product that I produce in my home out into the public, as long as it's below the 30 gram level, is that illegal?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, that's my understanding, it is.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: How are we going to deviate between the product that I have in my pocket, which is supposedly grown at home, versus something I could purchase on the black market?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That's a question for Justice. I mean there's product on the black market today. Currently, anything is illegal. It's certainly our hope that once you can purchase product that is legal and that you know is safe because it's regulated, you know it's not laced with something that you don't want in the product that you're buying, it's hope that there'll be less sales in the black market.

If you've got something in your pocket, whether you bought it at the NLC and took it out of its original packaging and rolled it into a cannabis cigarette, or whether you did that from a plant that you grew at home and rolled it into a cannabis cigarette or joint or whatever you want to call it, or whether you got it on the black market, it's going to be pretty difficult to distinguish.

We know we're not going to completely eradicate the black market, but it's our hope that if you know you can buy a product that's safe, it's not laced, it's not full of herbicides and pesticides and hormones, whatever the case maybe, that you'll opt to buy the product that you know is safe.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Minister, when it's rolled up it's called a joint, just to let you let you know. I can tell you kind of struggle with it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. K. PARSONS: Yeah, that's a friend told me about that too.

My question is the by-product of marijuana. Sometimes people can make oil and cookies and whatever they do, but when they produce or make oil, I'm not sure how much marijuana it will take. Is there a measurement of the amount of oil you can have on your – or is oil illegal?

Are the cookies illegal? Is that stuff legal or is just marijuana that's -?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you.

If you purchase cannabis and bring it home and make brownies or put it in some other recipe, whatever other edibles there are, you're permitted to do that. As far as oil, I'm not sure if you can derive oil from the cannabis that they're going to be selling at the NLC or not. It's something that I'll ask officials now to respond to.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Okay, my last question. We just talked about – I know in the briefing I asked questions about in a boat, for example. The question was: If, for example, you have something in the vehicle, it still has to be sealed and in a boat, it has to be stored in – I guess in a car it would have to be stored in the glove box or something like that, but when it comes to edibles and stuff like that, how would you measure it? Is there going to be any amount you can only have so much on you? If an edible is in a car, is it not allowed to be there while the car is moving?

I know we talked about it and I think they were going to get us the answers for that. So I'm just wondering about that also.

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

MR. OSBORNE: I know in a vehicle, within the legislation – I've got an answer on your oil, by the way, as well. In the meantime, in a vehicle, the possession of cannabis in a vehicle is permitted if it's not within the reach or accessible to the driver, or if it's a sealed container and the seal is not broken.

As far as being in a boat, you can actually consume cannabis products or make use of cannabis products in a boat as long as it's anchored. The operator of the boat is not allowed to be intoxicated or partake, but if you're going out a day on the bay type of thing

and there were three or four people on the boat, once you're anchored everybody other than the operator can enjoy their product.

As far as cannabis oil is concerned, there's a federal equivalency table in Bill C-45 and that translates cannabis flour quantity into the number of seeds or quantity of oil, et cetera. As a province, we've adopted those equivalency provisions.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Mr. Chair, there is actually a way to identify whether the product is legally purchased and cultivated versus black market and that's through the genetic sequence and cell structure.

Will our law enforcement officers be given the tools and capabilities to identify the genetic variance between legal and black market?

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

MR. OSBORNE: That's not within my Department, but the Minister of Justice and Public Safety would be best equipped to answer that for you.

CHAIR: The hon. the leader of the Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We're getting through the act here. I know a number of my colleagues have asked a multitude of questions in different sections.

I want to get back to section 44, and we've had a discussion here about the investigative process. I want to dive into that a little bit just for some clarification because I did have an email from somebody asking particular issues around that.

Section 44, this section outlines investigative powers when the corporation may investigate. This includes, under section (a): the affairs or conduct of a person who has a licence. Section 18(g) talks about "a fit and proper person."

Will the NLC be monitoring or inquiring into the personal behaviours of licensee holding after they have received a licence?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yeah, we did, I guess, sort of answer a similar question to that earlier.

An inspector will ensure that a licenced retail establishment is operating within the confines of the licence; they will ensure they're operating within the confines of the law. If there's any illicit activity or if they're not operating within the confines of the licence, that's when a suspension would take place.

A suspension would be valid for two days until the board of the NLC would look at a suspension and determine whether or not to override that or to allow the suspension to continue. At that particular point, a licenced retail outlet would have the ability then to communicate with the NLC to determine what the infraction is, whether or not it's something that can be worked out or whether or not the closure of that establishment would continue. If the closure were to continue, they'd have the ability to appeal to the court to have that looked at.

CHAIR: The hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: I just want to clarify because there are two approaches here. One is the original licensing where you must meet the criteria, and that obviously looks at your criminal record, your past, your affiliations, your associations. All the things relevant to that, which I think is a good process. I think it serves a real benefit to ensure those who are going to be the licensees are indeed of moral character to ensure they run this like a business, and that the rules and regulations and the laws that are being put in play are to be followed.

My concern, or the discussion I've had with some people is about – and legitimately – NLC's ability after the fact, after the licensee has been up operating but then all of a sudden – say, for example, they didn't have a criminal record. They weren't associated with a biker gang. They didn't do things that were untoward that would

be acceptable from an operational point of view or moral point of view in society, but now all of a sudden they're part of the one per cent gang. They all of a sudden have been charged with something else. It has nothing to do with their licensee as a cannabis thing but it's their personal behaviour and what impact that may have on the licence.

Does the NLC take that into account after the fact? To what degree can they impose either restrictions on the licence or the withdrawal of a licence? Just some clarification on that, please.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, you have to meet certain qualifications in order to be considered for a licence, but once you receive a licence there are certain conditions that must be met and kept in order to retain your licence.

If an inspector believes, for whatever reason, an operator is no longer qualified to retain that licence, if an operator is not operating within the law, if an operator is not operating within the conditions of the licence, than an inspector can suspend or even revoke a licence.

CHAIR: The hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Okay. Yes, fair enough. I think that's something we need a bit more education to those that say you're still under scrutiny, particularly in this case more so, because your behaviour outside after the licensing has an impact on whether or not you get to continue with that licence. I agree that the NLC should have that right because this is a unique product we're offering.

One of the issues about moving it from being illegal to not just going directly to decriminalization to now going to legalization was about trying to prevent the criminal element from having more control and using this as a revenue generator, and ensuring that maybe we keep the criminal element away from our ability to be able to sell this publicly. So I support that and see where it goes.

In any business, and I had a number of businesses over the years, you would have to keep your sale records for periods of time. I'm just asking, are the same regulatory processes in play for the cannabis stores as they would be for any other retail, or are we doing something different because it's a new entity, until we're comfortable that the time frames can be in play equal to any other retail outlet?

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

MR. OSBORNE: If you're looking at revenue and so on, I believe the time is seven years that people would have to keep their records for revenue purposes, for remitting taxes and that type of thing. As far as the NLC is concerned, any product that a retailer purchases is tracked through the federal tracking system. It's also tracked through NLC. Retailers have to provide remittances. The NLC is fully aware of what products the licensee purchases, what they've got in stock and so on.

It's very similar to a liquor outlet, where the NLC have controls in place over the products that are purchased, the products that are sold and remittances to the NLC. These would be similar to cannabis.

CHAIR: The hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I do thank the minister for outlining that. That's good clarification too, because for some reason – and I say this flippantly but out of pure respect because people have said it. We want to ensure that people understand the regulatory process here is the same as any other business. We hear it tongue-in-cheek, people joke about a cannabis store and a retailer and all this. This is an entity like our Liquor Express outlets would be and our convenience store down the road or smoke shops and these type of things. I think we need to ensure people are clear on that –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) and more strict.

MR. BRAZIL: More strict, and rightfully so. I agree, and we've supported that over here and

support the regulatory process we have here. I do think, and it's been mentioned and I compliment, that a big part of this is going to have to be the whole education. Not only education about the effects of it, but education about the operations of it. I do think – and I realize that's a living entity – as you start moving things forward, better play to be able to educate what that means in your community, the proximity to the schools and what is relevant to other agencies and organizations. You've already clarified about what you can do. You can't have giveaways, you can't have these special promotions and these type of things.

I do respect that, but I do caution that because there are so many other nuances where this is a new entity, probably similar to other operational procedures we have and entities, that we need to really clarify for people so they don't have a misinterpretation or a mis-clarification that this is a professional entity and all the rules and regulations, so they're not caught.

I don't want, at the end of the day, somebody who invests \$100,000 in doing a building, buying coolers and this, if it's proper ways of securing it and shelving in this, to all of a sudden because they weren't aware that this is not as flippant as somebody might jokingly say about, that this is a full entity, that they would understand their investment has to be protected. To protect your investment, follow all the rules and regulations, but before you follow them, understand what they are as part of that whole process.

I do remember in a different career decades ago government had brought in, at the time, a special unit. It was called a special investigations unit within government, particularly looking at fraud, fraud investigations over the period of time. I remember sitting down first when we had the discussions around how this would roll out and what it would mean, was around training. Training was a key component because you were figuring out about what specific skills would you need, but to get those skills, who would be the best to train. Then after you're trained and have the skills, what are the parameters that you have as part of that?

At the time, when the special investigators were hired, the RCMP, the RNC and the Department

of Justice were contracted for a period of time to train these individuals in their understanding of the law, interpreting various segments of regulatory processes, because what was being done in that part overlapped four or five different line departments, so you had to be cognizant of that.

I remember one of our training sessions, or a number of them for a period of time, were about conflict resolution and aggressive behaviour, because you're going to have the same thing. If an inspector goes into a facility and they're going in to inspect something or they're going in to either suspend a licence or confront somebody about selling to a minor or letting minors in, then, obviously, the training component would have to be very much entrenched and done. I know we already have it as liquor inspectors.

As section 47 talks about, the section gives inspectors the powers of the RNC, as related to this act. Given this role, what training and background will they have and is there a job description already put in play?

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

MR. OSBORNE: The job description for the liquor inspectors is already there for certain – it'll be the same inspectors that are inspecting liquor establishments that will be inspecting cannabis outlets as well. There will be additional training provided. It may already be provided, but there's additional training provided to the liquor inspectors to ensure that they're fully up to speed on what the requirements and duties are in terms of inspecting a retail cannabis establishment.

CHAIR: The hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

That's good to hear because this will also have to be a living entity because you don't know what may be the differences. We're hoping there aren't because they're retail, but just in case there are, for whatever reason if it's – if we're trying to enforce that the criminal element doesn't try and find and to slip its way into the business thing, that we'd be able to identify how

our inspectors would note the differences between that and what was legal licensing.

Ironically, last night, I was at the university's convocation and of course parents and everybody were sitting there – I'll have a chat with the minister, he did a wonderful job last night. I was going to note him later on to say he looked good in that robe up there. I do actually have a picture because I was dead centre.

AN HON. MEMBER: Was that your daughter?

MR. BRAZIL: Yeah, that was my daughter who convocated.

I was dead centre, right in the middle but you can't see on the stage because of the lights, but I'll get to that later.

Minister, we talked about – it was ironic, we're all sitting around later and the number of people, it was good to see people who I've gone to university with and certain areas and crossed paths over the years, their kids now were graduating. As we were stood around talking about old days, living in residence and these type of things, we did get talking about, ironically, they were joking about the House of Assembly, what are you debating now and the issues. We were talking about the cannabis thing and some joked about what went on in dorms years ago, but they did ask the question: What would be the regulatory processes in a dormitory?

I tried to explain, as much as I could from the questions here, which I think were fairly accurate, about that if that's designated as a smoke-free residence, then all the same rules, regulations and responsibilities are relevant to that.

Then the conversation came back to: Well, there are some areas where you can smoke cigarettes and different houses will designate a particular area, it could be out in the gazebo. What effect would that have on it? I think they're just thinking from an education point of view as part of that.

I did say, when I get to that point I'm going to ask that question because I'm curious to see did we look at that differently. Did we engage the

post-secondary institutions to see? Particularly ones that have residences, that's the thing we're worried about because universities themselves and colleges have particular rules around housing and what impact that may have.

So I was just curious to see: Was there a certain nuance or a certain approach there or did we engage the colleges or those that have those to have that discussion?

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

MR. OSBORNE: As long as people are compliant within the Smoke-free Environment Act, they'd have to be compliant with that. A hotel, for example, or a university, the university can designate a specific area, as long as it's compliant with the Smoke-Free Environment Act. They can designate a specific area where they'll allow the use of cannabis. That is up to them. They set that rule whether or not they're going to allow cannabis on their campus, and if they do, they designate specific areas for that.

A hotel, for example, can do the same thing. You have rooms that smoking is permitted in some rooms in the hotel. Most hotels now are smoke free but if a hotel designates certain areas as being allowed to use cannabis, that's entirely up to the establishment, as long as it's within the Smoke-Free Environment Act, they're still compliant with the other rules and regulations therein.

CHAIR: The hon. the leader of the Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I do thank the minister for that. That clarifies that. It was pretty close to what I told last night. I'm glad I didn't give false information to some parents, particularly one that had a young son who is now going to enter university and encourage them to stay on campus for that experience. That's good to know as part of it.

I'm only down to a couple of extra questions here for clarification. I think we've noted we've asked 122 questions on this and it's good that we had good dialogue. The minister, if he couldn't immediately answer, did get the information and we appreciate that, and some of

the other line ministers who jumped in to support exactly what it is that we were doing.

I do want to note one of the other issues here about smoke-free areas. I know that would probably cover a couple of other line departments. I know Transportation and Works may have a segregated part for buildings that they own, Service NL may have it as part of that, the Department of Health may have it, but I'm just curious to know: Did we have a full-fledged dialogue to look at it?

This is human nature. People who can find a loophole in why they can do something in a particular area will find it, but we're better equipped if we do a full scan, if we have the right people in the room and look at every piece of our regulatory processors or our policies to ensure that we cover off every component of that.

I'm just curious to see if those line departments who would be responsible for one particular part or most parts of making sure smoke-free areas are enforced, that could be around designed rooms in a particular building, it could be a designated area next to a building.

I'm just curious to see if we've had those discussions and how that (inaudible).

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

MR. OSBORNE: Yes, and I do have to provide a clarification.

I did say that hotels may allow a room. Hotels can allow a designated area but not within their rooms. The owner or operator of a residence subject to the Smoke-Free Environment Act, no designated smoking rooms for cannabis in universities or hotels. Those designated rooms are only for certain health or long-term care facilities. However, common areas, dorm rooms, for example, would be up to the owner of the facility. So that would be, again, up to the university.

There's no public consumption of cannabis allowed and the Smoke-Free Environment Act prohibits smoking in any public indoor location. So a hotel or a dorm at a university, a hotel can

set up a gazebo outside if they have a smoking gazebo, that type of thing, but smoking in public places is prohibited just as it is with cannabis.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

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

I think this may be my last question, Minister, but it has to do with what we're perceiving as a conflict between two areas. I'm sure it's not. So I'm sure that there'll be an explanation, but in Part I in section 9 it talks about: "The corporation may issue to a person an authorization to sell or otherwise supply cannabis to a retailer in the province." So I'm going to ask a question about that first then and connect it to something later on in Part III.

Does this mean authorized brokers?

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

MR. OSBORNE: The only place that an authorized licensed retailer can purchase from is the NLC.

I don't know if that answers your question.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: No, not exactly, because it says: "The corporation may issue to a person an authorization to sell or otherwise supply cannabis to a retailer" So it's the corporation giving somebody else the authority to sell or otherwise supply cannabis.

So is it a broker that's being created there?

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

MR. OSBORNE: No, that section is for authorized producers. The NLC can authorize an authorized, legitimate, sanctioned producer under the NLC, but any retail establishment, the only cannabis that they're allowed to sell is cannabis that has been sanctioned and gone through the NLC process.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MS. MICHAEL: Okay, now I see then where there is no conflict because in Part III in section 69 it says: "A retailer shall not purchase, attempt to purchase, obtain or attempt to obtain cannabis from a person who is not a producer." So back there that means producer.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK (Barnes): Clauses 2 through 115 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 through 115 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 115 carried.

CLERK: Be it enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor and House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows.

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: An Act Respecting The Control And Sale of Cannabis.

CHAIR: Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the bill without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 20.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 20.

Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, the Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Trimper): The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay and Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

MR. WARR: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 20 without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to report Bill 20 without amendment.

When shall the report be received? Now?

MR. A. PARSONS: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time?

MR. A. PARSONS: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, report received and adopted. Bill ordered read a third time presently, by leave.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, Order 2, third reading of Bill 20.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources, that Bill 20, An Act Respecting The Control And Sale Of Cannabis, be now read third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the said bill be now read a third time.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

AN HON. MEMBER: Aye.

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

The motion is carried.

CLERK (Murphy): An Act Respecting The Control And Sale Of Cannabis. (Bill 20)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill is now read a third time and it is ordered that the bill do pass and its title be as on the Order Paper.

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting The Control And Sale Of Cannabis," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 20)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Given the hour of the day, and I understand that the Lieutenant-Governor may be approaching, I think as is custom at the end of the each session, the Leaders of the parties provide some closing remarks to this House of Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well.

The hon. the leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's indeed an honour to, for the first time, get an opportunity to, as we close this session, wish everybody a good summer, but particularly thank everybody for what we've been engaged in here over the last number of months.

I first want to start by thanking you, Mr. Speaker, for your guidance since I've taken this position, your support and for your indulgence and, at times, putting up with us in caucus. Sometimes we can be a bit hard to handle.

I do want to note, if you come from rural Newfoundland you'll know a term – and I think it was used here in the House – yes, b'y, no sweat, Mr. Speaker. I want to note that's a term of endearment and respect, not disrespect for

you, Mr. Speaker. So I want to acknowledge that as that was used here.

I want to particularly thank the table officers. Thank them for their patience with me over the last number of weeks going in asking questions and having discussions and getting clarification. As people know me, particularly the office would know, I'll drop in every now and then just to take one of their little – when I need my chocolate fix, to get that. They all nod and go from there.

I do particularly want to thank Elizabeth because of also being engaged with the Public Accounts and my colleagues on the Public Accounts for, we're meeting sometimes twice a week early in the mornings to do what we set out here to do to ensure that people are represented properly. So I thank the table officers for that and my colleagues on the Public Accounts.

I also want to thank all the key people who make this House of Assembly run so efficiently. I want to start with the Sergeant-at-Arms who protects us here, but also very professionally ensures that we follow our protocols.

Our Pages, I want to welcome some of you guys back, some new people here, and no doubt there may be some changes next fall as you move on from an education point of view and an employment point of view. I want to thank you guys for, on a daily basis, taking care of our particular needs here.

I want to thank the Broadcast Centre because that gives an opportunity for the general public to know what we do in this House and the valued work we do representing them, no matter what district you're from or what political stripe you're with.

Also Hansard, I'm amazed at Hansard because sometimes, as you know, we have different dialects, we speak at different speeds and every now and then I will get an email or a text, and it will say: Mr. Brazil, can you please explain what this word is? I can't remember what the word is, let alone explain what it is I was trying to say at the time, at various times. But I do respect and thank them because this is a living record of the discussion we have here and the dialogue among colleagues in the House as we get to

representing our people and doing proper dialogue.

I also want to particularly thank all the civil servants who so professionally ensure that we can do our jobs. If it's those who work in a line department, if it's those who work outside this building, they all have a major stake in ensuring what we do in here has an effective outcome and does the best things here.

That's the people I wanted to thank here, but I also wanted to talk about my colleagues here in the House of Assembly, particularly the government Members and the Third Party Members here. I want to thank you for your support in this House. We've had some good banter, but the good banter is based on the principle of getting to an end result, making lives in Newfoundland and Labrador better through our legislation, through our policies and through our regulations, and we've done that.

We've made some major strides in this sitting on legislation. There's still a lot of extra legislation that needs to be done. There are a lot of changes that need to be done to improve people's lives and do things more efficiently, but we're on the right track and we'll continue to do that.

We have a role as Opposition to ensure we keep the government's feet to the fire, but also that we represent maybe a different approach and a different look on how legislation should be enacted. So we do that. We do it with full commitment and we do it with the best interest of improving people's lives here.

I want to say, at no point ever in my eight years in this House of Assembly have I ever thought that any MHA – regardless of where they sit, what party they are with or how long they have been here – don't have as their primary objective to improve people's lives. When they walk out of here, every one of them want to be able to say something was improved because of the input they had, and I wholeheartedly believe that. People get elected on that principle. We may stray every now and then and we may have different beliefs and different approaches, but no doubt I think we set out to do that.

This has been a challenging session, no doubt, for everybody here. You know the old cliché, a

day in politics is like a lifetime. We've seen that change dramatically in this House over the last number of months, but we all come with the one main principle here that we have to work under a respectful process. We have to make sure we're harassment free. We have to make sure we're given the ability, the tools and the respect to do the job that we set out to do.

I know we've had some challenges, and I think we're on the right track to be able to ensure we have that mechanism in play to make this work the way it should. So I'm hopeful for that. I'm glad to be part of changing what may have been an unacceptable process and that we have to change the way we do things. We're now talking about democratic reform so that more people can have access to the political process, more input and we can do what we do better, and that's what we set out to do.

I also want to talk about the Standing Orders Committee. We've come a long way, just in the Standing Orders in making this House more family-friendly, more outlined so people can still be engaged in what we do here, and enjoy what we do.

Last night, as I mentioned – and the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Skills did a great job representing all of us here in the House of Assembly at the convocation at MUN. I was sat next to a couple – the couple was from India, their son had spent six years here, convocated with masters – and I got into a little conversation. Their big issue was around, they said, things they missed, the six years that he had been here. He had been home twice in that period. The things they had missed, not being able to see him, but they realized the value of education.

While I was thinking about things, we talked about the process of democracy. He talked about what he would do. I told him who I was and these type of things, a politician. Sometimes I wasn't quite sure if his response would be positive, but we had a grand conversation.

When I reflected on it, I thought about in this House, my colleagues here, particularly those that I can't relate to not coming from an isolated, extremely rural community, but the commitments that you guys must make. What

you miss with your families, the times you don't get to spend in your district. Because when this House of Assembly is open, you're in here for the whole week.

I'm fortunate enough, while I have some challenges with Bell Island at times, being able to get there and back, at a moment's notice I can meet with a group in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's or Paradise, or a group from Bell Island can come here. I can still manage to do it, and I'm still every night in my own bed, every night I'm with my own family. So my hat goes off to those who are away from their families when they serve in here. My hat goes off to those who miss a lot of events in their community because they're in here serving the people who elected them. I note that as part of what we do here.

There's a particular group, too, that I left for last, deliberately, and that's the staff in the Opposition office. Obviously, we have a new Leader. There are changes that happen. There are some people who've decided they're going to move to another career. I want to thank them, not only for the last three weeks in my new role, but I want to thank them for what they've done representing the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and ensuring that the Opposition can do its job very effectively and very professionally.

For those who are staying, I look forward to continuing the work we're doing. To those who are moving on, I wish them the best. They're an extremely group of talented individuals who'll do wonderful wherever they go and, obviously, will continue to contribute to this great province of ours.

To my colleagues here, I want to note – first of all, I'll start with the former leader, the Member for Topsail - Paradise who I have a full, better understanding of what this role is all about and the challenges sometimes, the stresses and the decisions you have to make and the commitment. I appreciate that. I learned very quickly from watching what you've done here over the last two-and-a-half years, and I appreciate that.

To my colleague, the Government House Leader and the Member for Ferryland, for being able to keep things on track. If you operate the way I do

sometimes, I can be all over the place. I think I did a couple of Billy Madison speeches where some people were confused, but I think at the end of it we were probably a little bit smarter than when it started. I do thank him for keeping me on track and ensuring we had a continuum going that we got to where we needed to get to, and that's what we've done in this sitting of the House.

To my colleague for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune – who, unfortunately, has a family issue she has to attend to – for her support and her energy to want to be able to come in this House every day. She's the one, out of all of us here, you can relate to the most for having challenges when coming to travel and getting to her district and things that she has to sacrifice. I appreciate that, and I appreciate all her support and what she's done here in the House.

My colleague, the man who has perhaps the best talent here when it comes to being able to keep us all alive, outside of maybe my colleague the doctor, is the Member for Mount Pearl North, and his background in business and agriculture. Somebody would say, would you call him farmer Jim? I call him farmer Jacques after hearing him so eloquently speak in the French language yesterday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: I said what an easy transition I have into this because now I have somebody else who is fully bilingual in both languages. He can be my French companion whenever we travel as part of that.

My colleague from Conception Bay South, who every day gets up ready for a good banter but always wanting to get out what is represented by the people in his district, and the people in this province, and stands for that. I was fortunate enough; he was my colleague when I was a minister. We worked better, closer together. So I do know his commitment to what's happening here.

To my friend and my colleague here from Cape St. Francis – who every day talks about the beautiful district that he represents, and rightfully so – I had an opportunity to be at an event with him on Saturday in his district and

just saw how people's eyes light up when he walks in a room. He's so friendly, he's so open and what you see is what you get. That's a testament to him and to the people he serves. I'm very pleased about that.

Again, there's a group here that we all forget sometimes because we're too busy doing what we're doing and worrying about constituents, and rightfully so – it's our families. Our families are the people who guide us, the people who support us, the people when we miss a trick they're there to pick it up. The people when we've missed special events and stuff like that, they cover for us. They're the ones that we need to acknowledge.

That meant something to me last night when my daughter graduated, having her family there. I think that was very important to everybody. It's been a privilege to be here, it's been a challenge. It's been time-consuming; it's been a learning process. It's been rewarding. Maybe not financially but it's been rewarding.

No doubt after eight years I cherish the opportunity to be here. I do look forward to the next sitting. I do wish everybody a safe, a very engaged and a very happy summer. We'll see everybody back here in the fall.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if I might indulge my colleagues in the House. We have a special visitor who's going to be arriving in the next few seconds, I believe.

We'll interrupt our remarks and we'll return to that shortly.

I now turn to the Sergeant-at-Arms to direct us.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Her Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor, has arrived.

MR. SPEAKER: Admit Her Honour.

All rise.

(Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor takes the Chair.)

MR. SPEAKER: Your Honour, it is my agreeable duty on behalf of Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, Her Faithful Commons in Newfoundland and Labrador, to present Your Honour a bill for the appropriation of Supply granted in the present session.

CLERK: A bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2019, And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service." (Bill 3)

HER HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR (Judy May Foote, PC, ONL): In Her Majesty's name, I thank Her Loyal Subjects, I accept her benevolence and I assent to this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the General Assembly of the province has at its present session passed certain bills, to which, in the name and on behalf of the General Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's Assent.

CLERK: A bill, "An Act to Amend The Electrical Power Control Act, 1994 And The Public Utilities Act." (Bill 2)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Pension Benefits Act, 1997." (Bill 5)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Loan And Guarantee Act, 1957." (Bill 6)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act." (Bill 7)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act, 2000." (Bill 8)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Schools Act, 1997." (Bill 10)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Financial Administration Act." (Bill 11)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Jury Act, 1991." (Bill 13)

A bill, "An Act Respecting Children, Youth And Families." (Bill 14)

A bill, “An Act Respecting Tenancies Of Residential Premises.” (Bill 15)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Court Security Act, 2010.” (Bill 16)

A bill, “An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province.” (Bill 17)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Corporations Act.” (Bill 18)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Energy Corporation Act.” (Bill 19)

A bill, “An Act Respecting The Control And Sale Of Cannabis.” (Bill 20)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act.” (Bill 21)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005.” (Bill 22)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act.” (Bill 23)

A bill, “An Act Respecting The Restraint Of Salary And Extinguishment Of Severance Pay For Non-Represented Public Sector Employees And Statutory Officers Of The Province.” (Bill 24)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Other Post-Employment Benefits Eligibility Modification Act.” (Bill 25)

A bill, “An Act To Establish The Innovation And Business Investment Corporation.” (Bill 26)

HER HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR: It’s obvious that you’ve been really busy.

In Her Majesty’s name, I assent to these bills.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise.

(Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor leaves the Chamber. Mr. Speaker returns to the Chair.)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated.

I would now ask the Leader of the Third Party if she would grace us with some final words for this sitting.

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

From Mr. Ted Russell, “Tall are the tales that fishermen tell when summer’s work is done, of fish they’ve caught and birds they’ve shot, and crazy risks they’ve run. But never did a fisherman tell a tale so tall by half a mile, as Grandpa Walcott told one night in the smokeroom on the *Kyle*.”

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MS. ROGERS: Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, we may not have been shooting birds or catching fish here in the House this session, but we certainly have worked hard. When we hear the list – we’ve dealt with pensions, loan guarantees, juries, children, youth and families, residential tenancies, court security, energy corporation, control of cannabis, the Liquor Corporation and then a smoke-free environment – it’s a good thing that the *Kyle* was a little bit earlier than our legislation. There wouldn’t have been as much fun happening on the *Kyle*, although we have talked about what cannabis would have been like in the *Smokeroom on the Kyle*.

It’s been always a pleasure and an honour to be able to come to this House to do the work of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. They have entrusted us with an incredible task. I would like to say what an honour it has been to be in this House for all of us to work together, knowing that the work we do here is important.

On behalf of my colleague, the Member for St. John’s East - Quidi Vidi, I would like to say thank you very much for the work that we have all been able to do together. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for the great work that you have done. It was interesting to be at the hanging of the former Speaker, and to remember the work that he had done to improve the way we work together here in this House. Not only have you carried that on but you’ve brought your own talent, skills and expertise to that process as well. I would like to thank you for

guiding us all in our deliberations and ensuring that we're able to do the best that we can as we gather here in this House.

I'd like to thank the Table Officers – and, whew, we didn't have a filibuster this year, this session, that's certainly a bit of a blessing to all concerned – who guide us with such a steady hand and with expertise and with knowledge. I'd like to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms and all of the Pages who have been with us this session. It's been so good to get to know some of you. Thank you for keeping us well watered. It's so important. You've all done such a great job to help keep us organized and to ensure that we have the tools we need to do the work on behalf of the people of the province.

The security staff – we see them everywhere, in the hallways, in the galleries, whether they are the security staff from the RNC or the security staff from the Commissionaires or the security staff from Transportation and Works. Thank you for keeping us safe. Thank you for also being so accommodating to the guests that we've been able to have here in the House, whether in the Speaker's gallery or the gallery upstairs.

My dad was a commissionaire at one point at the end of his military career, so I have a special place in my heart for commissionaires. The RNC who are here at times late at night or early in the morning; the people who ensure that we have a safe and a clean place to work, the cleaning staff; the Broadcast staff who work so hard to make us look even a little bit better than we actually are; and the people in Hansard, I really don't know how they do that. Not only do they have to listen but they also have to transpose everything that we say.

I would like to thank our team in our caucus office. We're a very, very small team and yet the work we have to do is broad. People have worked so hard and they are very tired. They are proud of their work and we are. My colleague from St. John's East - Quidi Vidi – we are proud of the work that they have done. We have had to rely so much on their dedication and their expertise. I'd like to thank them publicly.

We look at the amount of legislation that we have done. Behind every piece of legislation are the staff in the different departments and the

legislative staffs who have worked so hard to ensure that we have the best possible legislation on behalf of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and, also, ensuring that we have great briefings so that we can do our work with at least a grain of expertise and some intelligence when we do enter this House together. I would like to thank them on behalf of not just our caucus and all of us here in the House, but the people of Newfoundland and Labrador for the incredible work they've done.

I would like to thank the leader of the Opposition, the House Leader and his caucus. What a pleasure and honour it has been to work with you. I know that each session we learn so much from one another. We also learn so much from the people who work with us and support us.

I would like to thank government Members, the Premier and your team for the hard work you do. None of it goes unnoticed, particularly those who have taken up the positions to serve as Cabinet ministers of parliamentary secretaries. We can imagine the load of work, but the commitment, the dedication, the passion and compassion with which you do your work, and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador thank you for that.

I would like to thank the independent Member for St. John's South. It has been a pleasure once again to work with you and to have you close by. Our families – of course our families – they are part of the great sacrifice of the work we do.

I'd like to thank the good people of Newfoundland and Labrador who prod us, who push us, who encourage us, who we serve. Together, we will get through some of the tough times and together we will share in the prosperity, the wealth and the richness as well of our province.

I look forward to meeting everybody along the way and perhaps a drink in different kinds of smoke rooms and different kinds of (inaudible) across the province this summer.

Thank you for the honour of being able to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say thank you to the leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party for their kind comments today. Actually, it's not a rare moment in this House of Assembly that we often agree. I think on all of the comments I could really say ditto by just about everything they said today in appreciation, in a very respectful way of this session of the House of Assembly.

I say that simply because we've had about 30 pieces of legislation that have gone through hours of debate over this floor in the last few weeks. Almost all of that legislation has been approved and voted on by all Parties, and all Parties supported most of the legislation we've seen here today.

Also, has been mentioned already, our independent Members, we want to thank them for being attentive and for the role they have played in the debate we've had on all the legislation that we've talked about.

The Leader of the Third Party mentioned about some of the important pieces of legislation. Indeed, they've been pivotal and critical at this point in our time when we talk about, and she's mentioned already about the Residential Tenancies Act, things like the *Children, Youth and Families Act*, the *Energy Corporation Act*. The work that's been done around cannabis, getting that ready for federal legalization that will come eventually once the federal government gets the final approval on taking this and putting this legislation in place. Of course, the Schools Act, making sure we put safer schools in place, not just in the schools itself but also what happens outside.

All of these, what I've been thinking about this, and reflecting and watching the debate, really our province is a much safer province because of the work that has been done in recent weeks and recent days within this legislation. So that's a

good thing. We done this with consensus and support from all parties.

Of course, the spring session is a budget session. A big focus of what we've been doing here is the budget debate and getting our province back in to a stronger fiscal situation. Nearly \$2 billion over the last three budgets and shaving off the deficits, and support. None of this comes without support from people of the province.

It provides a lot of balance, and keeping in mind that decisions we make here on financial matters impact people, no matter what those decisions are. It is more services, and wanting to always provide more service. There's not a person in this House of Assembly who would not want to have an unlimited amount of money to provide all the services that people in our province so rightfully deserve.

We have to strike a balance in making sure we're in a position that the services that we put in place are indeed sustainable. That's what the level of debate is all about. I'm very proud we've been able to – many of those decisions and the services are reflected in this year's budget as we continue to invest in people in our province.

We've seen, over the last few weeks, some very historic sessions and things that have happened here. Our first female LG just left, she came in to close down. Of course, I was sitting there and just listening to the LG and her comments and just reflecting on a lot of the discussions we would have had, because I believe the current LG will indeed make our province, in her own unique way, a better place to live as well, just as she did in her career, in the history of the work that she's been doing for the people of our province.

I really want to thank the Opposition, because there's no doubt that even in Question Period, in debate, what happens is it actually stimulates good conversation sometimes and it strengthens legislation. There's no doubt about that. As being a leader of the Opposition for four years, I understand when people reach out. It is really about engagement. It's really making sure that whatever the conduit is to getting the messages and the questions on this floor of the House of Assembly, they either go through the

Opposition. That's one way to facilitate and improve the discussion, but it also comes with engagement, with our own caucus and Members and people we meet on our travels as well.

I do want to say thank you to our own caucus for the great work they have done in bringing to our Cabinet and bringing it to their government, the issues and the areas of concern they find and they get from their own constituents as well.

As I've been sitting here, and as Leader of this Party for nearly six years, I also want to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition in his new role; and, indeed, the leader of the Party who's not in the House but represented by the leader of the Opposition in the work they are doing.

I also want to congratulate the outgoing leader of the Opposition, of course, the Member for Topsail - Paradise. We've had the opportunity both as Leader of the Opposition and when the Member was the former premier and then the roles were reversed. So we've become accustomed and quite common about what happens across the floor. I really do want to wish you all the best in whatever the future would hold and thank you very much for the way we've handled ourselves in both chairs. I think it's not often when we've seen that, maybe just a couple of times in this House of Assembly, when you actually see the roles reversed.

What I do know is there are lessons you can learn in both those chairs. I think the Member opposite would agree that as the Leader of the Opposition it's a different role and a different profile that comes with that chair, and likewise for me, in actually seeing the positions that have been changed. So I want to thank you for the role you've played and the work you have done in helping out and getting us to where we are today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: And likewise to the new Leader of the Third Party, and we've seen some role switching there over the years. I remember the first time I sat in this House of Assembly back in 2007, when the former leader was a

leader at that time and we often had lots of conversations about important issues.

If I can, just for a moment, just to go back in time and remind ourselves; it was back around the Cameron inquiry at the time when you and I had some great discussions – and I know I'm not supposed to be looking at the people and just speak to you, Mr. Speaker, but my memory constantly goes back to those times when as an Opposition Member, someone that was the critic then for Health and Community Services and the discussions we would've had in how we would improve health care primarily for women who were dealing with breast cancer at the time. The government of the day, of course, they would've had to deal with that. I think we all learned a lesson.

When you look at the Cameron inquiry right now, it has really been – when you look back at the history of health care and the way those services are delivered within our province that was indeed a turning point. It was indeed a turning point. The recommendations of the Cameron inquiry has led to some of the significant changes we've seen in policy and in service delivery in our province. So I want to thank the outgoing leader of the Third Party in her new role, and I know you will work very closely with your new Leader and we look forward to continuing support and dialogue in the weeks and months ahead.

No doubt, when you go through the weeks and the hours that we spend here, I will say that all of us as MHAs – and it's been mentioned already about lots of travel that has to occur from Members who work in rural areas.

I have a large district. Tomorrow I'll find myself in Springdale - Baie Verte, on Saturday night I'll be in Cow Head in my home district and on Sunday we'll be back here. Mr. Speaker, I will say this: For those of us that represent rural districts, yes, the pace is fast and we do find ourselves taken away from family and friends, there's no doubt about it. I will say it's one of the most rewarding jobs that you can do, walk into a small community, a rural community in our province and really speak to the people no matter where they are.

It's like walking into a shed or out in – no matter where it is, people have some very unique stories to tell. There are a lot of poets in Newfoundland and Labrador and some of them just do it in their own way. It's their own flair; it's what makes us very unique as it is. I will say I am really looking forward this summer to exploring even parks and communities within Newfoundland and Labrador that we really – I'm just looking forward to getting around this province and engaging people where they are in their own communities. I'm sure our paths will cross.

That is the work we do. I still remind all of us every day that it's a privilege for us to sit in those chairs, but it's a privilege that's given to us by the people in those small communities and in the larger communities in our province. We sit here with their support.

Once we get here we need support too. It's like our Table Officers – as I've said so many times, I just sit here and as they sit there so stoic. As the debate goes across this floor, they sit here in such a professional manner – and us, as MHAs, as we work our way through the various debates. For our Table Officers: A big, big thank you. We respect the work that you do and I wish you all the best this summer as well.

As has been mentioned already, we have Pages from Labrador; we have Pages that have come to our province to live. It's always refreshing. I know when I speak to former Pages they always look back at their time spent in the House of Assembly that has created a lot of great memories. We get the opportunity to – that's it, you can smile because I know it is something that you will take some great memories. I'm looking forward to, as you would encourage others – your friends that haven't done the job that you have done yet. Some of you will move on but I remind you to encourage others to do exactly what you are doing because they do create great memories for you.

I mentioned all the staff here. Of course, the Sergeant-at-Arms, our security, people in the Broadcast: They all do their job in getting the message out. The Speaker keeps reminding us that the ratings are up so we must do our job. These people who are working behind the scenes are doing a great job. I think it's up to us. The

onus and the responsibility are on us to get our message out to the people of our province.

I know the people in my own district, when they get closer to the House being open, they're always constantly saying: When are you back to work? That's what I find unique about this. Well, we're back to work every day, Mr. Speaker. It's not just what we do in this House of Assembly. I will tell you that people are watching, so it's up to us. When we look at conduct, when we look at how we treat each other people are watching us and they expect us to do so in a very professional way.

Mr. Speaker, to our own staff – and I have to tap our own House Leader there, we've put a lot on his shoulders. He's done a great job. I told some kids that I met outside today – one of the young fellows was there with a Batman T-shirt on. I said the House Leader who has been sitting next to me, during all of my career in politics, he wears Batman socks as well. Ironically, when he went outside today they asked him to show his socks. This is a guy, I will say, I've put a large responsibility on. He stepped up. He does it with the support of all his colleagues, including our Deputy House Leader.

Those of you that have sat through Committees

–

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) the deputy.

PREMIER BALL: The Deputy House Leader, yeah.

Mr. Speaker, those that work with Committees, our Whips and so on, our own staff, I just thank them all for the work they've done. It really takes all of us in all political parties to make sure these sessions run smooth. We do so making sure that we improve the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

I will finish up by wishing everybody safe travels. There's a lot to do in our province over the summer. I'm sure our paths will cross. I will guarantee you I don't think there's a person in this House – that sometime in the first Wednesday in August, weather permitting, we will be celebrating the 200th Royal Regatta right here in St. John's. I'm looking forward to that. I'm sure the country, actually, is looking

forward to that, Mr. Speaker, as many people in this area would be as well.

This will be a summer of engagement; it will be a summer of exploration no matter where we go in our province and around our province. I will encourage people who are watching – as we close up this session, we'll be in your communities looking forward to speaking with you on our travels.

To you, Mr. Speaker: You've done a great job. I want to thank you and wish you all the best too, Sir, over the summer. With that said, I'll close my remarks. I'll pass it back to you as you, in your own eloquent ways, close up this session.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I guess the beauty about going last is you do get to wrap up and fill in some gaps. There weren't many gaps left from the eloquent speakers. I thank you all for your support.

I was reflecting back on the 8th of August last year when you, Premier, and the Member for Topsail - Paradise, the leader of the Official Opposition at the time, dragged me in here. We spoke about this a couple of days ago during the hanging of the former Speaker. This theatre, the reluctance of coming in, I really was quite excited to come to this job. I thank all of you for this opportunity. The last – well, it's approaching a – year now, has been a tremendous experience. I'm just thrilled that I've had this honour and opportunity and I appreciate every day.

I did want to add names to some of these people. As I always like to say, when I get a chance it's important to put a name to all the important people. First of all, I want to thank my executive assistant who's sitting in her office watching, Kala Noel, whom you've all gotten to know quite well. She's also an incredible chef, as most of you have had an opportunity – and please watch the special occasions like Valentine's Day and other events like that. She's probably cooking something up and it would be a good place to drop by. We definitely have improved over the bowl of candy, I would say to the

former Speaker. That still remains but we have really upped our game in that office.

In front of me, to the Clerk, Sandra Barnes: If anyone has any experience in this House they'll know how hard this lady works and how experienced and sage she is. Her assistant, Elizabeth Murphy: It's just an honour. You can look at the corridor and see the years of experience that Ms. Murphy has here. It's been an honour to work with her as well.

Kim Hawley George, our Law Clerk: Thank you too – the Minister of Justice and Public Safety's looking at me. Her intelligence and sage advice on so many of the rulings have been really insightful. As I like to say, it's fascinating and if she can't figure it out, we're going to London, England, or over to Australia, or around the country. I'm telling you that happens almost on a weekly basis. It's a fascinating world.

Also, in the office are Yvonne Power and Maureen Dooley. Our Sergeant-at-Arms is Wayne Harnum. Bobbi Russell is our communications lady. Since I've come in, I've gotten her quite busy because there's been a lot happening. I would like to talk about that for a second.

In relation to your remarks, Sir – the leader of the Official Opposition, about Hansard – absolutely; Mark Jerrett and his team, it's amazing what they can do and how quickly they can have all of those words put into a hard form and available for us to refer to. On the Broadcast side, we have had so many exciting moments that most of you don't even know about. A couple of days ago we were usurped by a bingo game, but Cathy Simms and her team at the Broadcast Centre always come through for us. I thank them very much.

In Corporate and Members' Services, Wanda Lee Mercer leads that team along with Michelle Evans and Dayna Wicks. They're sort of three of the key people, but there are many others in there that help keep us all on track. Kim Hammond is an incredible resource in our Legislative Library. Always at her fingertips is all manner of historical documents that I always like to look up, and then the Records Management Office – tremendous.

I do want to introduce the Pages to you again because, unfortunately, a couple of them are leaving us. Beside me is Mohammed Bakshi. This is going to be his last opportunity to work with us. Behind him is Alden Spencer, who is going to be leading tours for the House of Assembly this summer. Elle parle français aussi. She is leading tours now in French; I'm very pleased to see that. She and I ran a tag team the other day. Beside me is Anna Hutchings, behind her is Catherine Bennett and missing from our team is Jeremy Cook who was here earlier. We took our official team photo just before we sat in today. Frankie Leonard is back on the Labrador enjoying a little bit of snow.

I did want to also point out a few things. It's been interesting, this job. I said to my wife the other day my favourite magazine now is the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*. What I would have thought would have been one of the driest manuscripts you can imagine, I look at it with – you're just going through it, oh, look at that decision, look at that. It's quite fascinating.

A couple of highlights on some of the things that have gone on here in the last several months: The Moose Hide Campaign. I thank all of you for that very special moment that we had here with the elder recognizing a stand that we can all take in violence against women and children.

The visitors that have come to this Assembly – it's a fascinating role in the Speaker's Office. I have been with ambassadors from Norway, Russia, Indonesia, senior government officials from Korea and many other countries. It is fascinating what goes in and out of this office.

I also, on the international front, would like to again remind and thank all of you for the support that I received to go to Turkey and then to receive the amazing proposal from the Turkish government about moving forward with the monument at Gallipoli. I look forward to further progress. You should know we've started a bit of an invasion. We have our third delegation, I understand, coming soon from Turkey. They're quite anxious to get this done and I look forward to hearing more about that.

In two weeks' time I'm very pleased to tell you that this Legislature – and some of you are going to be escorting me to Quebec City where, for the

first time in the history of our provinces the legislatures from Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador will be sitting down and talking about what's in common and working together. I see that as a very historic event and I'm very proud to say that is happening very soon.

Last night, for those of you in the Management Commission, I think we made a very important decision. It has been challenging some days here and I think the move to incorporate an interim application of the Harassment-Free Workplace Policy for the Legislature, I also think is an important step in the right direction.

As the Premier alluded to, I have been watching the ratings of our broadcast and doing what I can to make this – this is the people's House and it needs to be welcoming to all of our people. We've had school groups here and I've heard from Broadcast, many, many guests. It's absolutely been an honour to host them.

I did want to indicate that several good enhancements have been done to our website and I thank the team that are watching. The videos, the background – we're hearing a lot from teachers who are teaching children about politics and what goes on in this room. I thank them for having those mediums and those products now that do that.

Further to my announcement just of a couple of days ago where I indicated – and thanks to the Bureau for service en français. We now have sections of our website in French. I've very pleased to announce – and I would like to take this opportunity to advise Members that the Management Commission has approved funding in the Legislature's 2018 budget to investigate the provision of closed-captioning of routine proceedings. Our team will be working on this project over the summer break. We will provide an update for this in the fall 2018 sitting. I think that's a great way to reach additional people.

Further to that – and I'm looking behind the Members in the Speaker's gallery. As you know, recently, we have had folks here who have had accessibility challenges. That's my next target. I'm going to be working on that I say to the Minister of Service NL.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Finally – and as I say to my other 39 colleagues in this room – I would like to thank and always remember the constituents that helped get us here. To me, it's the people of Lake Melville. I thank you very much and I thank my wife for her incredible patience.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I would now ask the Government House Leader for what may be a final motion.

MR. A PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm wishing you all a safe and happy summer.

Given the hour of the day and given the hour of the month, I would move, seconded by my good colleague for the District of Bonavista, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against?

The motion is carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow, the 5th day of November, Monday, at 1:30 p.m.

Thank you.

On motion, the House adjourned to the call of the Chair.