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*Speaker: Honourable Ross Wiseman, MHA*

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman):** Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Yesterday in the House, there was a point of order raised by the Government House Leader with respect to comments made by the Member for St. Barbe. I had indicated then that I would review Hansard and the video clips of the proceedings from yesterday, and I have done that. I have considered what I have seen, recognized and identified as being differing views between two very hon. members of the House of Assembly, and there is no point of order.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Before we start proceedings today, I want to acknowledge some special guests in the gallery. We have fifty-four members of the Random New Horizons 50 Plus Club in Hillview, in the wonderful District of Trinity North.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Welcome to our galleries.

Also, today we are joined by Mr. Andrew Dale from the folk trio group The Once, along with fellow members Geraldine Hollett and Phil Churchill, and the Member for Port de Grave will sing one of their tunes when he stands in a moment.

#### Statements by Members

**MR. SPEAKER:** Today we are going to have members' statements from the Member for District of Conception Bay East – Bell Island; the Member for the District of Terra Nova; the Member for the District of Mount Pearl South; the Member for the District of Bay of Islands; the Member for the District of St. John's North; and the Member for the District of Port de Grave.

The hon. the Member for the District of Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

**MR. BRAZIL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand to recognize a very creative and innovative businessman in my district; I speak of Mr. Mike Murray of Murray's Horticultural Services. For more than three decades Mike has led the way as an innovator in the business areas of horticulture and environmental landscaping.

This respected businessman came from humble beginnings. After graduating from McGill University he began his entrepreneurship by growing vegetables on the family land in Portugal Cove and selling them on the side of the road. Mike employs seventy people at the height of his growing season.

Mike grew up with a love for the land and what it produced. He wanted to instil this philosophy in his sons and would hope to one day have the next generation of Murrays build on his creativity and innovation. This, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say is happening, as all three sons are now involved in the business: Evan, as an environmental officer; Tim, a landscape architect; and Cameron, the business strategist.

Mike is very involved in the community and continues to advise those in the industry around best practices and creative ways to embrace our environment while respecting the land.

I ask all members to congratulate Mike on an outstanding career.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Terra Nova.

**MR. S. COLLINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to recognize a well-known and talented gentleman from my district. Fred Rowsell of Glovertown has spent the majority of his life performing music.

Fred recorded his first song at the age of sixteen and would later go to Nashville with his cousin, Eddie Eastman, to record another four songs. It was around this time that Fred chose the stage name, Bobby Evans, to differentiate himself from many other Rowsells that were involved in the music industry at the time. Fred would go on to open for some of the music industry's biggest names, including Hank Williams Jr., Marty Robbins, Randy Travis, and Freddie Fender, just to name a few.

While music is a big part of Fred's life, his heart and compassion is what truly defines him. Along with his wife, Margaret, they have fostered over seventy children over the course of forty years. Fred has spent his life helping others, whether it has been appearing on the VOCM Happy Tree at the Arts and Culture Centre year after year, or lending his talent to numerous benefit concerts. Fred is truly a class act, Mr. Speaker.

I ask all hon. members to join with me in recognizing my good friend, Fred Rowsell, for his community service and musical accomplishments.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl South.

**MR. LANE:** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to stand in this hon. House to recognize the tremendous success which was the 31st Annual Frosty Festival in the City of Mount Pearl. Once again, this year's festival included various activities for citizens of all ages and interests, including: an Irish themed concert featuring some of Newfoundland and Labrador's greatest talent, two community breakfasts, an indoor and outdoor family fun day, a lip sync contest, a seniors bingo, a jiggs dinner and variety show, and a dinner theatre, just to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you can appreciate, any festival of this magnitude would not be possible if it were not for the hard work and co-

operation of a number of community-minded partners.

I would therefore ask all members of this hon. House to join me in congratulating the City of Mount Pearl, the Frosty Festival Board of Directors, the various community groups and organizations, the corporate sponsors, and all of the community-minded volunteers who contributed to the great success story which was Frosty Festival 2013.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House today to recognize the organizers of the second annual Janelle Blanchard Memorial Volleyball Tournament held last weekend at Templeton Academy in Meadows.

Janelle was a student at Templeton Academy who passed away in 2012 at the age of sixteen. She was very active in sports in her community and school.

In honour of her memory, friends and family have established the Janelle Blanchard Memorial Scholarship which is awarded to the student who demonstrates the same qualities as Janelle of sportsmanship, spirit and friendship.

Twenty co-ed teams took part in the tournament this year with players coming from St. John's, Corner Brook, Stephenville and the Bay of Islands area. The team known as Ballin' which included Nicole Goulding, Andrew Kendall, Thomas Lovell and Marissa Park won the championship game. Holly Smith was named the MVP, while Stephen Brake was awarded honours as the Most Sportsmanlike player.

The tournament was a tremendous success and a wonderful recognition of the contribution Janelle made to those who knew her and loved her.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in extending congratulations to the organizers for their hard work and commitment in ensuring that Janelle's memory and spirit will always be celebrated.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. KIRBY:** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in this House today to salute three students from my district who won awards in the recent Avalon Heritage Fair hosted by St. Matthews Elementary in St. John's.

Heritage fairs present an exciting opportunity for students to explore the heritage of their country and their province. I can tell you from personal experience that judging these fairs is a very difficult thing to do. There are so many young students demonstrating their enthusiasm for history.

Two of the fifteen winners at this year's fair were from Larkhall Academy. Brandon Dalton won the Edmund Dawson Community Award for his project on resettlement. Faith Sheppard won the Avalon Regional Award for her project entitled Zita Cobb: Preserving and Showcasing Fogo Island.

The other regional award winner from my district was Meret Ebsary from St. Andrew's Elementary, who won the literacy award for her project about the Newfoundland dog and the Labrador retriever.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. members to join me in congratulating these three winners, and indeed all of the students, teachers and parents who help to make our heritage fairs in the Province such a resounding success.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Port de Grave.

**MR. LITTLEJOHN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand today in this House to recognize Mr. Andrew Dale and the group, The Once, a folk trio group with fellow members Geraldine Hollett and Phil Churchill. They recently received the 2013 ECMA for Best Roots Traditional Group Recording of the year –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LITTLEJOHN:** - for their song *Row Upon Row of the People They Know*. Andrew, who originates from Coley's Point, has been performing all of his life.

My first experience hearing The Once was several years ago at a Christmas Concert at Grace United Church on Coley's Point. This I believe was one of their first performances, but I vividly recall the harmonies and musical talents of the group.

I am proud to say that I have seen Andrew perform in many shows, performances, and concerts over the years and I am not surprised of his success and that of The Once. Andrew continues to be very humble of his and their success and prefers to say he is thankful to be doing something he loves.

I ask all members to join me today in congratulating Andrew and The Once on their success and wish them well on their future endeavours in the music industry.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Statements by Ministers.

#### **Statements by Ministers**

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to provide an update about the tremendous success of the sealing industry this year.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Approximately 90,000 seals will be harvested by the end of this season, which represents an increase of approximately 30 per cent over the 69,000 seals that were harvested in 2012. This shows how our ongoing partnership with industry is creating benefits for licensed sealers and promoting sealing activity.

Mr. Speaker, investments in advocacy and industry development have been ongoing since 2006, and to date have totalled \$900,000. With these investments we have supported communications campaigns that counter anti-sealing propaganda with facts about the economic, cultural, and ecological benefits of the harvest.

We have supported seal marketing initiatives to gain greater access to international markets such as China. We have enhanced professionalization activities for the industry, which has included training sealers in the humane harvesting of seals using a process approved by veterinarians. Mr. Speaker, we have also supported actions taken by the sealing industry, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and other provincial, federal, and territorial governments to overturn the seal products ban that was put in effect by the European Union.

In addition, this government also recently announced another repayable loan of \$3.6 million to Carino Processing Limited. This loan provided inventory financing so that the company could purchase seal pelts and blubber, which in turn secured income for hundreds of sealers and plant workers. This investment also created economic spin-offs with respect to transportation, industrial supplies, and professional services. Our success with this financing arrangement continues from last year, when the loan we provided to Carino was repaid in full, with interest, and was used to create a total economic benefit of \$4.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, our sealing industry continues to produce high-quality products for fashion, pharmaceutical, and food industries, and these products are in demand throughout the world. The production value of sealing has been as high as \$55 million annually, and this government remains committed to working with the industry to grow that economic success for the benefit of harvesters and their communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. Barbe.

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, there are few areas –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, there are few areas where the Opposition is so in sync with the government, or the government is so in sync with where it should be as the sealing industry. This really is good news from the minister today.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, I can categorize three types of individuals who benefit, even four types, from this seal fishery we call it. In my own community you can see a couple of fellows in a small boat get 250 seals in a day or two. That is \$8,000 at \$32 a pelt.

The general store up in Port Saunders has sold \$100,000 worth of ammunition in a good year. Further north in the Straits area in the spring you will sealskins stretched out and there is a place that sells crafts made from sealskins.

Even over in Twillingate in the minister's own district, there is a legal client of mine who outfitted his boat last year so it would meet the CFIA standards where he harvested seals. He made \$60 or more per animal at a couple of thousand animals. He made a big haul last year

on a properly prosecuted seal fishery. I think this is a good news story from the minister and I concur with the minister.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I certainly agree with the statement as well.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** It is good to see this type of inventory investment that leads to a stabilization and even growth in the industry over previous years. It is good to see an increase in the price of pelts.

I am a member of the Canadian Sealers Association, and fishers in my district have several thousand seals this year. That is a great start to their incomes and everything like that.

I would like to see more where we develop local markets and extend those products. I do have a former sealskin economuseum in my very district of Shoal Cove East that sells all kinds of apparel.

I encourage the Minister of Fisheries and the Department of IBRD to continue working together in doing such positive initiatives. I invite anyone up for seal flipper pie we have at the caucus office today.

Cheers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

From August 2 to August 17, more than 3,400 young athletes from across our country will converge on Sherbrooke, Quebec, for the 2013 Canada Summer Games. Since their inception in 1967, the Canada Games are held every two years, alternating between summer and winter, and have been instrumental in the development of some of the country's premier athletes.

A contingent of fine athletes from our Province will be among the many competitors taking part in seventeen sports at the games. Team Newfoundland and Labrador is made up of approximately 350 athletes, coaches, manager, and mission staff. As the best in their age group, these young athletes have trained many long and arduous hours to earn the honour of representing their Province.

Mr. Speaker, athletic excellence involves more than an ability to play a particular sport. Dedication, discipline, and commitment are also necessary ingredients that help shape our elite athletes. These characteristics will serve these individuals well not only in their respective sports, but in their daily lives as well.

Since the release of our government's recreation and sport strategy, Active, Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador in 2007, more than \$70 million has been committed to recreational and sport infrastructure, programming, and athlete development in our Province. Combined with investments in arenas and other athletic facilities, our total financial commitment to supporting sports and healthy living since 2007 is \$172 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** The results of our investment were certainly evident last evening, Mr. Speaker, when I had the honour of joining Premier Dunderdale for the 2013 Premier's Athletic Awards. More than 120 individuals were recognized for excellence in their chosen sport and received awards totalling \$91,000.

Mr. Speaker, Canada Games athletes are Canada's next generation of national, international, and Olympic champions. Our

government will continue to work closely with Sport Newfoundland and Labrador, School Sport Newfoundland and Labrador, Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador, and the provincial sports organizations to achieve the objectives outlined in our sport and recreation strategy. We will also continue with the development of our provincial athletes to reach their highest potential in sport performances such as the Canada Games, which we will be hosting in 2021 here in our Province.

Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy. I will just give a little personal story to say how much we have advanced in training in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I attended the 1975 Winter Games. I had three fights in boxing and I fought this guy, Randy Jackson, with 250 fights. After that weekend up there boxing, I earned the nickname canvas-back Joyce.

Since then, our Province has come a long way, Mr. Speaker, with our training with our youth. Government does deserve a lot of credit. Over the years we have developed a lot of facilities. We cannot forget the Stephenville training centre that is going to be a little detriment to the West Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Congratulations to all the athletes who are participating because their hard work and dedication will make all of us proud in Newfoundland and Labrador. To all the parents who bring their kids back and forth, you are doing a great job. You are showing the kids work ethics and ensuring they are off the streets and into some gym or into some facility. Also, to all the trainers and coaches, congratulations, you are doing a great service.

There is no doubt that government has put a lot of money into athletics in Newfoundland and Labrador. I commend the government on that because it is a way of life we all should follow and help out with Newfoundland and Labrador, and all the best to all the athletes who are going to participate. I am sure they are going to represent our Province well.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I would like to extend congratulations to our 350 athletes, coaches, and staff who will be participating in the Canada Games. This is certainly a great honour, as well as to all the recipients of the Premier's Athletic Awards. We must continue to invest in our athletes, and this is a great initiative.

Because we have ever increasingly high rates of obesity in our youth, it is so important to retain specialized resources versus the cuts we have seen in this year's Budget. Youth are spending more time on longer bus rides and behind computer screens. We need to do more to encourage an active lifestyle across all age groups to improve our overall health and well-being.

I commend government on the initiatives they have so far.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair have been without representation in this House since April 8, waiting for the Premier to call a by-election. This government has usually been quick to call by-elections in the past, except in this case.

I ask the Premier: Why have you waited so long to call a by-election and when will the people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair have an MHA?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are very well prescribed and public timelines for calling elections in this Province. In the very near future the by-election will be called in Labrador. Everybody understands why there was a delay. There was a federal election on the go. It only concluded last week. The people of Labrador ought to have and did have the time to consider their options in that election without being distracted by a provincial election.

Mr. Speaker, we will move ahead now as quickly as we can to fill that seat.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is the people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair that we are most concerned about. They are the ones doing without representation. We all know that in 2015 we are going to have conflicting provincial and federal elections, based on the prescribed timelines.

Mr. Speaker, one criticism of the minister's school board transition committee is that it is

undemocratic, and another criticism is its lack of diversity on the appointees.

If this government insists on collapsing the English school boards into one, I ask the Premier: Will you include input from the Federation of School Councils, the Teachers' Union, and the Aboriginal community on the transition team?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. JACKMAN:** Mr. Speaker, despite some accusations made yesterday - democracy ripped apart, and these are political appointees - the people we have on this transition committee are elected. They are elected officials who are now serving on a transition team.

I have said this in the House many times, we welcome representation. I am certain the NLTA will provide information, as well as the Federation of School Councils. I would ask them to submit their issues to the transition committee and all of that will be taken into consideration, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, unless I missed an election somewhere, I do not think any of those members who are on this transition committee were elected to be on the transition committee. In fact, what they have been elected to do was their own school board.

Mr. Speaker, when this government fashions its new super school board, will the Premier guarantee that the English board contains a balance of urban and rural members, as well as Aboriginal representation?

I ask the Premier: Will you also implement a method of public consultation to ensure equal access across this Province?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. JACKMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to tell you, the people who are on the transition committee indeed are elected. I went down through the list of the names of some of the people who have served on these boards. Some of them have served on it for eight, nine, ten years.

Mr. Speaker, they spend hours away from their family and they are volunteers. Some of the references that have been made to these people in the last few days, I think it is just utterly disgraceful. These are people who volunteer for the sole reason, Mr. Speaker, in the best interest of the students in this Province. Mr. Speaker, they are to be commended for it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, to the minister, I did not hear the word consultation. Obviously, it seems to be an area that he does not want to go. What we are asking for is public consultation so people can have meaningful input so that they will be heard.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Tourism confirmed in Estimates that there were no consultations with the industry on the \$4 million cut to the marketing budget. He also confirmed that it was strictly a budgetary decision.

I ask the Premier: Why did you make these drastic cuts without any consultation with the major stakeholders in this industry?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am glad the hon. gentleman has brought up tourism. I just had the privilege of attending Rendez-vous Canada, Mr. Speaker, where the industry association, the TIAC for this country said that Newfoundland and Labrador was the poster child for tourism in this country.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Mr. Speaker, this is a government that not only invests in tourism marketing but tourism in general, with over \$17 million this year our budget is; \$9 million in marketing, which exceeds many of my counterparts across this country in tourism.

Mr. Speaker, the most important part of this is that over the last several years this government has invested \$94 million in marketing in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, while the minister was away, the industry here in this Province was telling us that this \$4 million investment into marketing would be negative, would have a negative impact. As a matter of fact, we have been told that it will take us back to 2009 levels, and that our major competitor is at the same area where we are with Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, we all know the investment in tourism marketing have paid significant dividends to this Province, yet government saw fit to cut this very budget that was bringing diversification and growth to this Province. We agree with that.

I ask the minister: What is the return on the investment in tourism, and why would you cut a department that was making a significant contribution to this Province?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Mr. Speaker, this year I had the privilege of attending the Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador Conference. When I was there I had the privilege of sharing some statistics that we have accumulated over a twelve-month period on a wide range of things, what people thought of – what they liked about Newfoundland and Labrador, why they come here and so on. One of the key points to that, Mr. Speaker, was that the tourism industry right now in Newfoundland and Labrador has a billion dollars in spending. That is because –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** - of the investments that this government has made, plus the 13,000 people who work in that industry right across this Province, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, this week escaped farmed salmon were found in the Garnish River in Fortune Bay. These escaped farmed salmon raise the risk of transfer disease like ISA, and sea lice and interbreeding.

I ask the Minister of Fisheries: How long were these Frankenfish on the loose? How many escaped, and where did they escape from?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we were informed that the farmed salmon were sighted on April 30 at the mouth of a river on the South Coast.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. DALLEY:** We immediately followed the Code of Containment practice which references escape and recapture policies. DFO investigated the issue for us and have instituted a recapture plan. Some of the salmon have been recaptured. We will do some genetic testing to determine where.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, it is a very small amount of salmon. At the same time, industry is well-aware of the importance of this issue. They are very co-operative and there have been no significant escapes reported. In fact, there have been none reported since 2010.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. Barbe.

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, if that is true, it sounds like they were on the loose for three years. Bill 29 is being used to cover up information on sea lice, dead and dying salmon, and salmon escapes on the South Coast. At the same time, such reports are all available in British Columbia.

I ask the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture: Why is he covering up this information in our Province when it is readily available to the residents of British Columbia in their province?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, if I did not know better, the hon. member on the other side is trying to end this session of the House as he started it, to try to find a way to shut down the aquaculture industry on the South Coast. There is no cover up; it is very open. Our practices are lauded across North America.

We know and the industry knows, Mr. Speaker, our investments in surveillance, in monitoring, our investments in fish health and biosecurity, and the economic impact that we are having in

the Province and the strong industry. We are following best practices; we are cautious in what we do. There are issues, Mr. Speaker, but I can assure you we will continue to work with industry to resolve these issues, and not continue to try to find ways to shut down the industry.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. Barbe.

**MR. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, I notice that the minister did not answer either one of the questions posed to him. I can assure him that this is not about shutting down the industry; this is about making it viable and making it last. Since the minister did not provide any answers I assume either he has no answers or he is ducking the question.

Again I ask him: How many fish escaped, where did they escape from, and how long were they on the loose? British Columbia has a registry. Why don't we?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I did answer the question the first time.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. DALLEY:** Obviously he is focused on trying to get this industry shut down. There were very few fish, Mr. Speaker. It happened on April 30 that we got a report on it, and DFO are doing the investigation.

It just speaks to the level of co-operation in industry. It speaks to the policy and practices that we have instituted. Mr. Speaker, the result of that is we have 1,000 people working in this Province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DALLEY:** We have very strong economic activity on the South Coast. I can assure the member opposite we are going to continue to work with the industry.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

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

We have just learned that an experienced Crown prosecutor has resigned in this Province and accepted a job in Alberta. He said due to the cuts from Budget 2013, he has no confidence in the Attorney General, no confidence in the Minister of Justice, or the Premier to make even the most basic of decisions.

So I ask the minister: Do you now understand the full effect of your harmful cuts to our justice system?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Attorney General.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MARSHALL:** Mr. Speaker, as Attorney General, I have full confidence in the prosecution service in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and so can the people of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, the cuts you refer to, all those positions were replaced. There were also additional vacancies that were filled and, in addition, there was another position placed in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the prosecution service in this Province of Newfoundland should have the confidence of the people of this Province. It has the confidence of me as Attorney General.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** I would say that the Attorney General may have confidence, but the people in the system do not have confidence in you, Minister, and the positions are still vacant and they have not been advertised – the full positions.

Justice officials in Alberta have said that they are getting a lot of calls from lawyers in our Province since this government imposed cuts on our system. We have been told that the cuts from Budget 2013 expose every front-line Crown prosecutor in our Province to an increased likelihood of an avoidable error and professional liability.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. A. PARSONS:** So I ask the minister: While you hide behind the rhetoric and spin, what do you have to say to the lawyers who are fleeing this Province to save their professional reputations?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. Attorney General.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MARSHALL:** Mr. Speaker, in the Province of Newfoundland, a lot of lawyers want to work for the Department of Justice and for the Attorney General's office in our government. More lawyers are applying than ever before. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that many years ago people did not come to work for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Now most lawyers want to come here because of what it offers, the opportunities that lawyers have, and they are there to protect the public interests of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Member for Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Speaker, the Town of Stephenville has made it clear that it cannot handle another regional facility like the West Coast Training Centre and government is washing their hands of this important recreation facility.

I ask the minister: Will you consider this ill-conceived decision to deprive the people of the Bay St. George Region of this important recreational asset?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when we were doing our Budget assessments this time around, we had to look at facilities across the Province that this government supports. Mr. Speaker, as I read earlier in my report, we have invested \$172 million in sports facilities across this Province.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of Stephenville, the facility was there. We have now called the RFP in April for ninety days extension. We have had some interest in this facility and we will do what we can to help support somebody to move in, take over this facility like all other municipalities in the Province, and operate their own recreation facility.

Like I said, we have invested \$172 million helping areas build as we did in Stephenville with the Stephenville Dome, Mr. Speaker. Just last year, I think it was \$900,000 we invested.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Bay of Islands.

**MR. JOYCE:** I will just let the minister know, you were just talking about the Canada Summer

Games. You are going to deprive a lot of athletes on the West Coast, especially in Bay St. George, an opportunity to train to make these teams you were just touting for Newfoundland and Labrador. Mr. Speaker, the building requires significant work, which you know users and groups in this region cannot afford.

I ask the minister: Will the minister live up to his responsibility and provide the residents of Bay St. George the same privileges as government provides to other recreational facilities like Goose Bay and like St. John's?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Mr. Speaker, I want to correct one thing. It was the Aquatic Centre in Stephenville we invested \$900,000 in last year. This is a government that does invest in sport and recreation around this Province. There comes a time that government cannot operate facilities and program facilities in every single community.

We just helped the member for St. Anthony build a beautiful new arena up there. There is a new arena being built in Paradise. There is one being in Carbonear. There is one being built in Conception Bay South. The taxpayers of this Province will not be responsible for the day-to-day operations, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that certainly believes in recreation across this Province. The \$172 million, Mr. Speaker, surely sees to that. As individuals who live here, we are expected to operate our own facilities.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills spoke about the excellent quality of service students receive at the College of the North

Atlantic. The Canadian Federation of Students released a position paper today on the premature and risky cuts made to programming at the college.

I ask the minister: If the college provides such excellent quality service, how then do you explain cutting twenty-seven programs and over 100 faculty and staff due to Budget cuts?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have always been very proud of the programs offered at the College of the North Atlantic. The minister has stood in here day after day after day, as has the Premier and the Finance Minister, going through the Budget exercise.

The primary focus at this point in time is looking to the future. Newfoundland's economy has never been brighter than it is today, but we have an obligation to the people of the Province to ensure that the money we are investing in the college is directed in the right fashion so that we are providing training opportunities to allow those who attend the college an opportunity to avail of the job opportunities ahead, Mr. Speaker.

While the college is making some program changes, removing some programs, they are also adding back new programs to match what is required in the labour market.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Time for a quick question without preamble.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Mr. Noseworthy says the colleges indeed have (inaudible).

**MR. SPEAKER:** No preamble, a quick question, please.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** I ask the minister: How can you stand behind cuts to the programs when your own consultant says that decisions are not being made strategically?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Time for a quick response, the hon. the Minister of Justice.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, the decisions that we make are very strategic. They are based on the labour market outlook. The individual reference provides input, as do hundreds and hundreds of other people and other groups. All of their input is welcome. It does not mean we do what they ask us to do. We make informed decisions based on the feedback we have received.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. OSBORNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have heard reports of pending job cuts to Eastern Health. Will the minister advise the House and the general public what positions will be cut and what effect those cuts will have on the delivery of services?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MS SULLIVAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, he has not given any specifics with regard to where he is getting his reports. Mr. Speaker, as he would know from discussions that we have had in this House, there are number of reviews underway.

We did an operational review over at Eastern Health about a year-and-a-half ago now, and we have seen some very positive affects of that review. We are currently in the process, Mr. Speaker, of undertaking two additional reviews.

One will be a clinical efficiency review; one will be a management review.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in time those reports are underway. In fact, one of them is underway, the other one we are still laying down terms. Mr. Speaker, we do not have any numbers at this point in time.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

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

As the construction of government's Muskrat Falls' hydroelectric project begins we see the economic arguments for it starting to unravel. The European-based international energy agency reports that an oversupply of oil from new sources across North America will keep oil prices low over the next five years. This likely means decreased oil royalty revenues which weakens government's reason for building Muskrat Falls in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: Can she explain to the people of the Province why she is forcing them to carry this burden?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have met extensively with energy advisors, Wood Mackenzie and PIRA on the price of oil in the next number of years. We have looked at the outlook of various agencies. There could be up to twenty-eight different reports, was the last I have seen.

Essentially, Mr. Speaker, what we are being told is the price of oil that Saudi Arabia wants per barrel is \$100 per barrel and that even the cost of

producing shale oil is in the \$65 to \$75 range. So the oil companies are going to get back their return on their investment, and, Mr. Speaker, there is no reason to think that the price of oil will go down below that factored into \$2.2 billion preference for Muskrat Falls.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The European-based international energy agency reports that a glut of oil from new North American sources will lead to depressed oil prices. The implications for the Province's ratepayers could be grim. Lower royalty revenue could translate into more borrowing to complete Muskrat Falls and the burden of repayment will be carried by the same ratepayers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: What plan does she have to protect the people of this Province if this internationally respected energy authority's predictions are accurate?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are currently approximately 90 million barrels of oil burned per day in the world. It is expected that could go up to 110 million within the next five to ten years. China currently burns approximately 10 million barrels of oil and the Americans twenty. It is expected that the Chinese will reach the level that the Americans are burning, Mr. Speaker.

What we have with shale oil, as outlined by Dr. Schwartz in the report prepared for the PUB, is that shale oil is growing. That could lead somewhat to self sufficiency for the United States, but the rest of the world still needs oil. There is no indication, Mr. Speaker, that the

basic principles of supply and demand will not continue to apply. That being the case, there is no reason to suspect that oil will go below the cost that was factored into that \$2.2 billion differential for Muskrat Falls.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

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

The 556 megawatt Kewaunee power station in Wisconsin is closing after forty years of operation because utilities are switching to lower priced natural gas generated power. As cheap power infiltrates the American energy markets the rationale for the Maritime Link and the Muskrat Falls hydro project is evaporating.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: What analysis has the Premier done to see if Muskrat Falls power will be able to compete with looming American natural gas generated power?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MARSHALL:** What the Leader of the NDP forgets is that Muskrat Falls was built to provide the cheapest electricity to the people of this Province. Muskrat Falls is for us. We are not concerned about other markets. If we have surplus power, then we will go to those markets and we will sell our product on those markets.

The Minister of Finance and I, last year, went down and spoke to energy advisors in New York and they told us there will always be a market there for our power but that is not our concern. Our concern is providing the cheapest, most reliable electricity to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It has to be proven that is going to be the cheapest electricity from Muskrat Falls.

Mr. Speaker, with Hydro-Quebec predicting a huge glut of power that they themselves will not be able to sell by 2020, I ask the Premier: What guarantee has she that it will not undercut Muskrat Falls' rates for Labrador mining companies power needs?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make again, the point that the Minister of Natural Resources made in response to the last question from the Leader of the NDP. Muskrat Falls is primarily dedicated to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who have energy requirements.

Mr. Speaker, we have looked at the refurbishment and replacement of Holyrood, the refurbishment or replacement that is required to use the oil that she is talking about. We have used forecasts from experts around the world to inform the forecast of the price of oil, Mr. Speaker. We have considered all of these things, including wind, including tidal. Muskrat Falls is still the best answer for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Mr. Speaker, this government claims there will be 70,000 job openings in the next few years, yet operates without a plan. This failure to create a climate of opportunity is harming rural Newfoundland and Labrador. When asked about rural

successes, even today government emphasises the Coast of Bays and their investment in many wharfs that created hundreds of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Natural Resources: When will his department see the value in maintaining hundreds of long-term forestry and potential mining jobs on the Great Northern Peninsula by investing in one wharf in Roddickton – Bide Arm?

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Mr. Speaker, I said before in the House our programs since coming to power in terms of economic development is second to none, historically. We just revamped our programs to make it more conducive to small and medium enterprises all over Newfoundland and Labrador in terms of creating opportunity. That is opportunity driven by large projects, but, as well, driven by supplier demand in terms of small companies and what is happening.

Throughout all of that, we are generating opportunities for our youth through our post-secondary, through education and through those opportunities. Those opportunities are being seen right here in the Province, seen all across the country, that there is opportunity here and jobs are available.

I do note that just recently the NDP Finance critic was in town and her conclusion, after speaking to the Chamber of Commerce, was Newfoundland has lots of job opportunities.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Mr. Speaker, certainly our rural communities are suffering –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. MITCHELMORE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A further blow to our seasonally-based economy comes from the Department of Advanced Education and Skills. Employment applications made for targeted wage, workplace skills enhancement, and others are being told to wait until the end of May while a new application is developed.

It is a critical time for the tourism providers to add employees to a \$1 billion industry. This poorly planned change is discouraging.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills reduce employer barriers by permitting the use of the old application until the new one is fully implemented?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely ridiculous. Day after day we stand in this House and listen to the doom and gloom coming from the NDP. While even their own colleagues on the federal scene recognize the tremendous things happening in Newfoundland and Labrador as a result of the tremendous leadership that this government has provided over the last ten years.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills have made significant changes in all aspects of what we are doing to make sure that we are staying in tune with what is happening with the economy in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Furthermore, I say to the member opposite, it is less than fifteen minutes ago that my colleague behind me talked about what is happening in tourism and that we are being recognized all across Canada. It is because this government

supports tourism, believes in tourism, and invests in tourism. We will continue to do that. The JCP programs and all other programs will still be there to provide the necessary support.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In their brutal spring Budget, government again slashed funding to the Human Rights Commission, rendering it incapable of meeting its public education mandate, and creating longer wait times for resolution of complaints. Once again the most vulnerable people of the Province find their protection ripped away by this government.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Justice: Will he reinstate the funding of the Human Rights Commission to ensure vulnerable groups and people are protected?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, the Budget exercise that we went through, as people in Newfoundland and Labrador would recognize, was challenging and decisions had to be made. I have every confidence – absolutely every confidence in the people who work with the Human Rights Commission that they will provide a tremendous level of professional service as they always have.

I would say to the member opposite that if you check the investments in the Human Rights Commission, the level of resources that this government still continues to provide to that commission today far exceeds anything that was there over the last five or six years, Mr. Speaker.

We make those investments because we believe in the work that the commission does, and we believe in the continued support for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MS ROGERS:** Mr. Speaker, their budget has been cut in half in the past two years, and a waiting list of over two years to get resolution of complaints. Mr. Speaker, if the new Office of Public Engagement is true to its mandate of real consultation, it is going to learn some hard facts. Few are more anxious to have their needs heard than the seniors of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister responsible: Will he commit to extensive consultations with the seniors of this Province on the many issues they want addressed and report the findings to the people of this Province?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HUTCHINGS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Office of Public Engagement is all about consultation and reaching out to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and the full demographics. In regard to seniors, we have a Healthy Aging Seniors team who are out around the Province and we hear back from them through the Department of Health in terms of issues that are important to them.

There have been a number of programs that have been developed through Health and Community Services to assist with seniors in our communities. Certainly through Tourism, Culture and Recreation there have been a number of initiatives. We have worked with seniors and continue to work with seniors through the Office of Public Engagement.

Through those entities together, we continue to consult. Last year, I think there were thirty-five reports received from the Rural Secretariat in terms of issues important on the ground in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. We use that and much other consultation in terms of driving economic and social policy in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. John's Centre, time for a quick question without any preamble, please.

**MS ROGERS:** What is the minister going to do to ensure the new ABE instructors at the Waterford Centre will have the specialized training the current ones have in order to do their work?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice, for a quick response.

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, we have made a commitment that we will continue to provide ABE at the Waterford as it has been offered in the past. There is no change in the curriculum the students will receive there. We recognize the importance and we will continue to provide that service.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. A. PARSONS:** A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, on a point of order.

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

During Question Period in an exchange between myself and the Attorney General and the minister, the Minister of Finance could clearly be heard saying that I was telling lies.

Obviously such a statement is clearly unparliamentary and I would ask that he retract the statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Speaker did not hear such a comment, but I will commit to review Hansard to see if the value of recording had recorded any such comments and report to the House at the next sitting.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

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

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS the process of slickwater hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, injects hazardous chemicals into rock formations to extract oil, and is polluting groundwater and air across North America; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has commissioned an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of shale oil and gas extraction in Canada, including fracking; and

WHEREAS Quebec, Nova Scotia, and a number of US states have halted fracking, and others are introducing regulations specific to fracking; and

—

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Speaker has recognized the Member for St. John's East.

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To continue:

WHEREAS it is incumbent upon the provincial government to ensure that our natural environment is protected from harmful industrial processes;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to impose a moratorium on slickwater fracking until it develops comprehensive regulations and ensures that each proposed project undergoes a conclusive environmental assessment to determine whether it is safe for the environment, the integrity of water supplies, and human health.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have risen in this House a number of times talking about this petition. This petition comes from the people of Lark Harbour and York Harbour down in the Bay of Islands, Mr. Speaker. There are about 200 signatures here of people who had a meeting down in that area a couple of weeks ago.

My understanding is there were probably twenty-five or thirty people who were there at the meeting, but there are about 200 here who are grossly concerned with the industry progressing on a basis of where we do not know much about this particular industry. They want to see more information released. They want to see government, of course, impose a moratorium

on this industry until we know more and until there are comprehensive regulations developed for this industry.

We also know, too, at the same time that what this means as regards to the environmental damages that can occur in this industry, what it can do to tourism. We just heard the Minister of Tourism a little while ago talking about tourism being a billion-dollar industry and employing some 13,000 employees. So, we have to examine this and develop these regulations and be safe if we are going to be going ahead to do this. We cannot recklessly go ahead without having the proper regulations in place.

I just have to note, Mr. Speaker, as well, at the same time as saying all this, that the Government of Quebec is getting set to impose another five-year halt to fracking until the regulations are put in place so that this can be done safely.

So, Mr. Speaker, I present this petition on behalf of the people of Lark Harbour and York Harbour, and the other people who have signed this from outside those particular regions, and thank them for expressing their concerns as regards to the advent of this industry.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. KIRBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS residents of Newfoundland and Labrador have not been provided with detailed evidence providing justification for government's decision to remove Adult Basic Education from the College of the North Atlantic; and

WHEREAS residents of Newfoundland and Labrador are concerned that government's decision to remove ABE from the College of the North Atlantic will lead to a decline in already low provincial literacy rates; and

WHEREAS residents of Newfoundland and Labrador are concerned that government's decision will limit access to ABE services in remote regions; and

WHEREAS residents of Newfoundland and Labrador are concerned that government's decision will result in a decline in the availability of supports to assist ABE learners; and

WHEREAS government's research shows that educational attainment is the most important determinant of earnings and sustained attachment to the labour market.

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to provide the full details of the enrolment, graduation, and funding analyses that were carried out to justify the decision to cut Adult Basic Education at College of the North Atlantic.

As in duty bound your petitions will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is accurate to say that there have been over 2,000 petitions, individual petitioners who petition the House of Assembly about this particular issue. This one has petitioners from Grand Falls, Bishop's Falls, St. Jacques, Deer Lake, Little Burnt Bay, Grand Falls-Windsor, Wooddale, Windsor, and so on, Mr. Speaker.

The Canadian Federation of Students released a brief earlier today arguing against these cuts, again presenting certainly a compelling argument to rescind this decision. Some of the most vulnerable people in this Province are those who do not have a high school completion, who have not completed senior high school.

Adult Basic Education is one of the primary mechanisms for them to get their high school equivalency so that they can have an opportunity to get a decent job, to participate in the labour market, I say to the Member for Mount Pearl North, and to take advantage of the things that are going on in our economy. This decision denies them that.

There are lots of people out there who are very anxious about where this is all going to turn. I think the onus is on the government to provide these details to the public. People want to know why it is you made this decision. You keep talking about how this is better, it is going to be better that it is privatized. Show the evidence. Show the people the evidence. Open the books.

Government talks about transparency and openness and being accountable for decisions, show that. Show that, I say to the Minister of Justice. Show that and release this information.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

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

WHEREAS the offshore of the West Coast of the Island of Newfoundland is recognized as a region containing potentially billions of barrels of oil; and

WHEREAS hydraulic fracturing could be an accepted and effective method of petroleum discovery and exploration, and is compatible with the protection of the natural environment and water sources when executed within the context of a comprehensive regulatory framework; and

WHEREAS the petroleum exploration sector needs the certainty and confidence of a stable regulatory regime; and

WHEREAS with that regulatory oil discovery and oil industry could provide unprecedented economic opportunity and bring people home to a currently economically challenged area; and

WHEREAS the undersigned support properly regulated exploration and development of the oil and gas resource in the Province;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to introduce a regulatory framework immediately under which hydraulic fracturing could proceed safely, and move this industry forward in Western Newfoundland.

WHEREUPON your petitioners hereinafter pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is a plea for people who are approximately an hour or so North of where Gros Morne National Park is. I think it is important to bring it to the attention of government, of members opposite, that forces are really coming together to oppose exploration in our Province. Forces are coming together.

People from within our Province are reaching out to others. They are reaching out to UNESCO to attempt to have designation of Gros Morne National Park called into question in order to challenge hydraulic fracturing.

No drilling is contemplated or permitted in Gros Morne National Park. Yet, people who are opposed to development in our Province generally, and who are opposed specifically in a region that I represent, will reach out to others in order to bring pressure to bear to set back the chances of people for economic development in my region. This is a plea for government to move forward with regulations, and put them in place so that industry can have an assurance that they can proceed properly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS mental health issues often start showing in adolescence, making it hard for young people coping with these issues to stay in school; and

WHEREAS ABE students come to the Waterford Hospital ABE program with mental health issues and negative experiences in the school system and need extra supports in order to succeed; and

WHEREAS the Waterford ABE program is not just an offering of college courses but a partnership between health and education to provide students with the counselling and learning supports they need to succeed; and

WHEREAS the Waterford ABE program also helps students transition to other college or university programs, and many of the ABE graduates have gone on to higher education and successful careers; and

WHEREAS if the Waterford ABE program is closed, most of the students will not transfer to private ABE programs but will instead lose the chance for education and a better life and will cost the system more;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to ensure that the Waterford Hospital ABE program remain in place.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the petition that I have here was a petition that was done by the students of the ABE program at the Waterford. We know that we have heard in the House that in fact the program has been saved but we still do not

know, and the students do not know, how they will be taught and who will be teaching them.

The interesting thing about this program, Mr. Speaker, is that it is a very specialized program with comprehensive wraparound services. It is a partnership that has been going on for thirty years. It is not a new program. It is not a pilot program. It has been going on for thirty years where we have the health sector and the College of the North Atlantic working together to help these very vulnerable students, students with very specialized needs, and they have been successful. That is the thing, Mr. Speaker, they have been incredibly successful. They have the expertise.

All we know right now in what has been said to the centre is that we have saved the building. The program will happen in the building, but there is no guarantee that the new instructors will have any experience or expertise, or specialized training in working with people with severe – we are not talking about minimal mental health issues. We are talking about people with very severe mental health issues who really need specialized teaching and specialized training.

We know that this program is important, the government knows that this program is important and has said they will remain at the Waterford Centre, but it is more than a building. It is more than a collection of computers. It is instructors who are experts in this area.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Your time has expired.

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

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

I have a petition: 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 students of the Adult Basic Education program at the College of the North Atlantic do not wish to attend privatized educational facilities; and

WHEREAS College of the North Atlantic has the most accredited Adult Basic Education program in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS students are concerned as to the availability of private institutions and whether or not they can accommodate additional students;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reverse this damaging decision to students and reinstate the Adult Basic Education programming at the College of the North Atlantic.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this may be the third day in a row that I have entered this petition. Today we had a noteworthy news conference, a release of a policy paper by the Canadian Federation of Students, a position paper, and that was dealing with the College of the North Atlantic cuts.

Basically, what we see here is that there has been a \$15 million cut which will eliminate twenty-seven programs across sixteen campuses, reducing the capacity by 702 seats. The figures they have here is that 143 jobs may be directly affected. Now, that may change with this new program, but again, we have well over 100 cuts here.

We have well over 800 students enrolled in the college's ABE program and many of them are individuals who are on the Income Support Program, people that this government's job is to transition them into the labour market. The fact is, we all know, according to the government's White Paper, that individuals on Income Support have barriers to their education; they sometimes come from the most vulnerable populations. Here we are putting them there, but using these

false calculations to show why the college has a lower graduation rate.

I think this ties into a number of issues in the department. Another one that was brought up was Income Support. When we talk about Income Support, the fact is there is no case management whatsoever going on and that ties right into this Adult Basic Education.

Again, it is a pleasure to stand and represent the people of my district and the districts across the Province when I enter this petition dealing with Adult Basic Education which affects every one of us across this Province, in the majority of districts of this Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for St. Barbe.

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

WHEREAS home care allows the elderly and people with disabilities to remain within the comfort and security of their own homes. Home care also allows people to be discharged from the hospital earlier; and

WHEREAS many families find it difficult to recruit and retain home care workers for their loved ones; and

WHEREAS the PC Blue Book 2011, as well as the 2012 Speech from the Throne, committed that government would develop a new model of home care and give people the option of receiving that care from family members; and

WHEREAS government has given no time commitment for when government plans to implement paying family caregivers;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to implement a

new home care model to cover family caregivers.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is a daily occurrence for most members – I am not sure about other members, but as recently as this morning my office dealt with two calls from people with issues, people who require home care, people who are approved for home care, people who have family members working in home care. In some cases, people who are just looking so that there is additional time for respite, just for people to have a day or two off in a week.

It is not reasonable to try to care for somebody seven days a week. If you are a qualified family home care provider, in one instance the mother is provided with five days – even though the recipient, the client, is entitled to seven days, the mother is eligible to work for five days and the next two days then are not covered because he is being covered by a family care giver who he is related to, which is completely unfair. This lady who is past sixty years of age is expected to work five days and then work two days without pay. Clearly, she would do this for her son; however, it is not realistic just to keep on going and going and going day after day after day, week after week after week, and not have time for a person to have time off for personal attention for things that he or she needs to do.

Even simple tasks such as getting out to buy groceries in small communities, getting out to do banking, getting out to have your vehicle serviced, Mr. Speaker. This is a plea from the people – not something that has been denied, not something that has not been promised but something that has, in fact, been promised. There is an appropriation in this year's Budget to cover this particular promise, but government is just simply not moving forward on it.

This is a plea from these individuals to get on with the promise, satisfy the concerns of these people, and honour the commitment that was made.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Orders of the Day.

### Orders of the Day

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, that the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to do from the Order Paper, Order 2, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3, Bill 7.

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

All those in favour of the motion?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

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

### Committee of the Whole

**CHAIR (Verge):** Order, please!

The Committee of the Whole will be considering Bill 7.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3". (Bill 7)

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 2 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 2 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 To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3.

**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. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I move, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, that the Committee do now rise and report Bill 7.

**CHAIR:** The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 7.

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, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

**MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman):** The hon. the Member for Lewisporte.

**MR. VERGE:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and they have directed me to report Bill 7 carried, without amendment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Chair of Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred, and have directed him to report Bill 7 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**MR. KING:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the bill be read a third time?

**MR. KING:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, report received and adopted. Bill 7 ordered read a third time presently, by leave.

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 7 do now be read a 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'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act, No. 3. (Bill 7)

**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 To Amend The Revenue Administration Act, No. 3", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 7)

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment and Conservation, Motion 4, pursuant to Standing Order 11 that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. today, Thursday, May 16, 2013.

I further move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Environment and Conservation, Motion 5, pursuant to Standing Order 11 that this House not adjourn at 10:00 p.m. today, Thursday, May 16, 2013.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that pursuant to Standing Order 11 that the House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 16, 2013.

It is further moved that the House do not adjourn at 10:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 16, 2013.

All those in favour of the motion?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those against?

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to debate Motion 1, Bill 3, a resolution respecting the imposition of taxes on tobacco.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn itself into a Committee of the Whole and that I do now leave the Chair.

All those in favour of the motion?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those against?

Motion carried.

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

**Committee of the Whole**

**CHAIR (Verge):** Order, please!

The Committee of the Whole will now consider Bill 3.

**Resolution**

“That it is expedient to bring in a measure respecting the imposition of taxes on tobacco.”

**CHAIR:** Shall the resolution carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, resolution carried.

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act”. (Bill 3)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

**MR. BENNETT:** Yes, Mr. Chair, smoking clearly is a really irrational act. Obviously it is completely irrational because a person consumes a substance and it results in a lifelong addiction, a very powerful addiction, something that has been said to be very difficult to break. While I have no issue with increasing the level of taxation on smoking and on cigarettes, I would like to know more about what this government proposes to do with the tax revenues for smoking cessation policies.

The Government of Canada in a production by Health Canada indicates that still as recent as

2011, in the order of 12 per cent of people between fifteen and nineteen years of age still smoke. Obviously all of the anti-smoking campaigns still result in a significant number of young people taking up smoking.

I would like to ask the minister: What anti-smoking program, if any, is in place or will be put in place with these funds to address people not beginning to smoke?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Finance.

**MR. KENNEDY:** (Inaudible) and it is the first time there has been an increase since 2009. If you look at R-15.01, the 2009 Statutes, the tax was calculated as nineteen cents a cigarette. Now we have raised it by 1.5 cents.

What we looked at, Mr. Chair, was the cost across the country. We looked at the other jurisdictions. After this increase, people will be paying 20.5 cents per cigarette. In PEI, they currently pay 22.5 cents per cigarette; Nova Scotia was 23.52 cents a cigarette; New Brunswick is lower at nineteen cents; Manitoba is twenty-nine cents a cigarette; Saskatchewan is twenty-five cents; and Alberta is twenty cents.

When we looked at how we would raise the tobacco tax, we decided that 1.5 cents a cigarette was a reasonable amount. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the latest increase was four cents a cigarette. Manitoba went from twenty-five cents to twenty-nine cents and Saskatchewan went from twenty-one cents to twenty-five cents. Nova Scotia went from 21.52 to 23.52 cents.

Mr. Chair, we looked at various types of taxation. As I have spoken about in this House on a number of occasions, and I expect to speak about it a little later on today, we looked at whether or not we would raise personal income tax. We looked at the creation of an extra bracket. We looked at whether or not we would raise the HST as has been done by some other provinces. We felt the effect on people, all members of our society, could be detrimental by raising the HST. We felt families especially would be affected and middle-income earners

would be affected by raising the personal income tax.

Then we looked at the issue of tobacco tax, and we felt this was an area where there has not been an increase in a period of time, that we could impose an increase. Mr. Chair, the money that comes from that will go to general revenues. That is the way this works.

The money that comes to us from the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation in terms of the profits that are made with the Liquor Corporation, they also go into general revenue. The theory behind going into general revenue is that then government can choose what services it wishes to fund. For example, Mr. Chair, with the Atlantic Lotto Corporation, we also get money from them and that goes into general revenue.

In terms of funding programs, that is left to the department in general to come forward, whichever department is affected to come forward. If they wish to see a program brought in, then that program comes forward in the Budget. Money is sought and the program can either be funded or not.

So, it is not as simple as saying, well what about – the Minister of Health will have to speak to the smoking cessation program. I understand there is money provided to groups who deal with smoking, such as the Newfoundland and Labrador – there is a smoking alliance, I think, and then the Lung Association. We should have actually, when I look at it now we could have probably raised it another couple of cents a cigarette.

From my perspective as the Minister of Finance, this is a way to raise money. It has not been done with cigarettes since 2009. We saw that this would not be a significant increase in terms of, compared to some of the other provinces with the four cent increases. It keeps us in line with other provinces, where Quebec and Ontario are currently the cheapest in the country. We did not raise the taxes on the grams, or the fine cut grams because that is already fairly high. So we decided to look at the cigarettes alone to

bring them in line with the rest of the – actually, they are still lower than the rest of the country.

It will generate, Mr. Chair, approximately \$8 million. I think the argument is no different than say with the Liquor Corporation, that there should be money go to a special program for people who suffer from alcoholism. We use our government funding, the general revenue, to support the Humberwood program in Corner Brook, but that is not only related to alcohol. It is also related to other kinds of addiction.

We also then fund the youth programs. We fund the new addiction centre in Harbour Grace that will again deal with all kinds of addictions, whether it be alcohol or drugs. I am not aware of people who are addicted to cigarettes going to these treatment centres but there is probably nothing to stop it if the principles to be applied are the same.

From my perspective, we are in a situation, Mr. Chair, where we have a significant deficit. The deficit is still very significant at \$563 million. We had to come up with ways to reduce that deficit and this was one of the ways we looked at.

As I indicated when we talked about the clearance certificate last week, when we talked about the Labrador Border Zone, we went through all of the programs in the department, looked at various types of taxes and fee increases. We looked at what would have an effect on different groups of people and we looked at what would affect people in our society as a whole.

I have oftentimes heard the members opposite talk about a smoking cessation program, but I do not know exactly what they are talking about. Oftentimes a lot of people who deal with addiction are dealing with it through other programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotic Anonymous.

This money will go into general revenue. The Minister of Health or any other minister then comes to the Minister of Finance during the Budget process saying these are programs we

would like to fund. I am not in any way diminishing the effect of tobacco on society. Certainly, Mr. Chair, if an increase can deter people, young people especially from smoking, well and good. What we have to look at when we live in a society, if you are going to have substances that are legal then people have to have the opportunity to make their own choices, whether it be with alcohol, whether it be with tobacco. People have to choose and they have the right to choose.

Now, we do know statistically that with alcohol especially, and the member opposite would know, who asked the question, we have seen what goes through our courts. We hear all the talk of alcohol and drugs in our courts but it is still a significant portion. At least when I was still practicing, a significant portion of what was occurring in our courts, the main drug that was causing a lot of it was alcohol.

We do not, Mr. Chair, because there are a certain percentage of our people who use alcohol who are going to become addicted to a substance or who are going to drink to excess, we do not thereby ban everyone from having that substance. Our society does not operate like that. I think we have seen from the prohibition back in the 1920s and 1930s that it certainly did not work.

In this case, we had to look raising revenues. I am aware also that there could certainly be an argument, well no matter how much we raise the price certain people are not going to stop smoking or stop drinking. That is fair enough, but if there are health related questions or smoking cessation programs, I am not aware of what the Minister of Health has looked at recently. I am not aware what is going on across the country, but in this particular case we tend to, as a government, look at addiction as a whole and prefer to use the monies that come into general revenue to build facilities that can have a significant impact on all members of our society.

Also, when you start compartmentalizing, because I will tell the member opposite, when I was the Minister of Health we did look at – it seemed at first glance to be a good argument that

money from gambling should go to treating gambling, that money from alcohol should go to treating alcoholism, but when you take a more global perspective, it does not really stand up.

During the Budget process each department will come in with their programs, whether they be Education, Health, Municipal Affairs, Environment, or Natural Resources and government has all of these laid out. The process will begin with the number of asks from each department and we will have a figure from each department as to what they are looking for. The departments will prioritize their requests.

When they prioritize those requests we will then look at what can be funded and what cannot. Sometimes we have to look at, well, what can take place this year and what can take place next year? What can we fund this year? So it is up to each department to determine where their priorities lie.

I think it would be, not necessarily as much inappropriate, as not consistent with the way budgeting is done in our government. The only government I am aware of in terms of how we budget, to say that we should have specific money go to this because we have a certain tax. It would become very difficult to run a government where that kind of argument was being made.

For example, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education come forward. They say these are the requests this year. These are the programs we have, and that is what we went through with this review. We looked at, what can we afford this year? What new programs do we need?

I do not think it is any surprise to members opposite that health care and new health care treatments are at the top of the list. They really become important. New cancer drugs and other drugs are always something every year. There are new ones that come up, at least since I have been here, and they have to take a significant priority.

Then you have to look at education, as we have been doing. Well, how do you keep the teachers in the classroom? I am not diminishing the arguments made for these kinds of programs. I am not saying they are not something that cannot be looked at. I am simply saying that from the perspective of this bill, this is a bill we felt we could now raise the taxes somewhat and I think we took a very moderate approach.

I was aware at the time that we brought the Budget in we could have raised the taxes more. We were aware of what was going on in other provinces, but we did not want to. It is like raising the price of alcohol. It does not matter how much sometimes you raise it, people are not going to stop drinking. So that deterrent effect by raising the price is not necessarily an argument.

From the Minister of Finance's perspective, this is a tax that brings in revenue. It is tax that when we looked at it allowed us the latitude to raise money. It is a rather modest sum when you have a deficit of \$563 million, but it is \$8 million we expect can be raised. As I have indicated, we did not raise the price on the cans or fine-cut tobacco, as it is referred to, because that cost is already in line with or higher than the rest of the country.

I guess the short answer in a long-winded fashion is we do not earmark revenues that come from a particular source for a particular program. Could it be done? Possibly. There is no reason it could not be, but you would be looking at a more isolated picture as opposed to that global picture that is required as we try to do our budgeting process.

The revenue is collected, they go into the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and expenditures are made from that account. We look at the amount of money we have and that is why the amount of money we get from oil is so important. We look at the amount of money. That is why oil production is so important; that is why the price of oil is so important. These are the revenues we expect to have.

What can we do with those revenues? These are our expenditures. Are there new programs that we have to have this year? Even in this year's Budget you will see there are a lot of new programs. There is a lot of new construction because there are still places in this Province that obviously need schools, that obviously need long-term care facilities, and that obviously need roads.

It is always a difficult prospect in the Budget and part of the role of the Minister of Finance is to say to every minister – and I can tell you that the ministers come forward. They believe in their programs. No one wants to give anything up. I forget the questions asked by the Minister of Tourism today, but in terms of the marketing campaign, the Minister of Tourism fought vigorously and advocated strongly not to make those cuts. It is again a question of priority and perspective. In a Budget such as this year's, we had to make choices.

That is the reason behind it. In terms of any questions as to the actual programs we have, I will certainly see what we can do to have the Minister of Health answer any questions there.

Thank you very much.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for St. John's North.

**MR. KIRBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to take this opportunity to have a few remarks, ask a question about this, and to respond to the Minister of Finance.

We often call these sin taxes, taxes on items like tobacco and alcohol. In fact, if we had the unfortunate circumstance that we end up with a federal Liberal government again, they actually want to legalize marijuana. If they get their way, I assume they will tax that as well. Maybe somebody from the Opposition caucus can tell us what the plan is. That is what I understand the federal Liberals would do if they were the federal government. Like I said, I suppose they would tax that the same way as you tax alcohol or tobacco.

The reason we tax these sorts of things is because we know they have detrimental impact on one's health. There is a general acceptance in our society in Newfoundland and Labrador and in other societies that we should tax this behaviour.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** (Inaudible).

**MR. KIRBY:** No, I say to the Member for Labrador West, because there are consequences, negative ones, that are the outcome of things like smoking. The obvious one is health care, so you want to pay for the added health care cost that is associated with smoking. Of course, econometric analysis will show that is the case and we have to have a way to pay for it, similar to alcohol usage as well.

There is also recreation. So we tax tobacco and not only do you pay for health care, you pay for stuff like the West Coast Training Centre, which I understand the government is shutting down. Other things, like the hon. Member for CBS was talking today about investments in stadiums and those sorts of things, so we can get some money to pay for things like recreation and that sort of thing.

Also, perhaps this is not referenced very often, but I think people would accept the fact that there are costs to the justice system that are associated with alcohol, for example. So we tax alcohol and that helps to pay for it. We generally all agree on that. Perhaps smokers would disagree. Perhaps they would disagree with having to pay more, but that is just the way it is. We have to recoup the cost of smoking, if you will.

The Minister of Finance was talking about the nature of the addiction to nicotine. It is interesting. My first university degree was in psychology and I remember there was a course at Memorial University called Drugs and Behaviour. In that course I learned there were studies done in the United Kingdom back in the 1970s, I believe, that found nicotine was in fact more addictive than opium, I say to the Member for Mount Pearl South; more addictive than opium. Shocking, really, but that is the nature of

the addiction to nicotine. It is that powerful that people find it very difficult to quit.

The Minister of Finance was talking about he was not certain about these smoking cessation therapies we often reference over here on this side. Just to fill in some of the blanks on that, we are talking about things like the nicotine patch. In some jurisdictions, if you get a prescription from your doctor, you actually get the patch covered under your health care system; or in some instances that is covered by your Blue Cross or whatever your private medical insurance is.

Obviously in some provinces they also have – which we do not want to do here and this is not a suggestion for next year's Budget – a health care tax as well, like a levy that everybody pays every year, like \$100. Everybody would pay that. I am not suggesting we do that –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

**MR. KIRBY:** – but there is an acceptance that you would have that.

There is nicotine gum. Everybody is aware of that. There is a gum people can chew, basically, to prevent them from having these nicotine cravings and wanting to smoke. There are also oral tablets, so you can actually take a medicine through a tablet form that can help you quit. So these are some of the smoking cessation therapies that are out there. It is really important that we have them.

I know government used to talk about it, and I do not hear as much about it from government anymore, not since the last Premier left to go into the hockey business. We do not talk about preventative care as much, or as much as I would like to see. We can have taxes on things like tobacco that recoup some of the costs, I say to the Member for Gander district, but you are not going to recoup all of the cost, perhaps. The best way to save is to stop people from smoking, I say to the Member for Gander district. Stop smoking, and then that would save the money.

There are all sorts of things we can do, like investing in recreation, like the West Coast Training Centre, I say to the Member for Port au Port. Investing in that can help people live more healthily and to not have as much reliance on the health care system.

I do not want to belabour that too much, but I think if we are going to tax people for these things there is a certain onus on the Minister of Finance and on the government to ensure that these monies are used for that purpose. It may be difficult to do. It would be interesting to know whether or not government are looking at it in that way, I say. Whether they are actually saying this additional tax is going to be collected; it is X number of dollars. That is going to what? What is it that the public is gaining through that tax, specifically? We know it is going into government's coffers, but is it directed towards some gain that we will all have?

The other thing I would like to know is whether or not government does have a plan, and has looked at, in addition to levying an additional tax, the whole question of nicotine cessation therapies and smoking cessation therapies. Whether they are actually looking at whether there is a report or an analysis that has been carried out to see whether or not we can save on the front end rather than the back end. By that, I mean that we can save people's lives and save the health care system by making sure that they have opportunities to give up smoking. Is government actively looking at this whole question around smoking cessation therapies?

I know our leader, the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, has great passion about this issue. She has raised it in the House of Assembly in debate repeatedly since she was elected initially in 2006. I know my colleague the hon. Member for St. John's Centre, who is the New Democratic Party health care critic I say to the Member for Mount Pearl South, has raised this issue as well with me and thinks it is particularly important.

I think we owe it to people to give them an opportunity to stop smoking. I say to the Member for Mount Pearl North one time people would not believe that you were going to stop people from smoking in bars and restaurants. People could not believe that.

I tell you when I was a sea cadet, when I first went on a plane as a kid when I was thirteen years old – I will not tell you how long ago that was. When I went on a plane first people were smoking on planes. Smoking was that acceptable that people were smoking on planes. If you get on a plane these days, sometimes you will look down and you see they still have an ashtray there. That is a holdover from back then.

People did not believe you could stop people from smoking in bars, and it was decried. People were saying, oh, bars are going to lose money or restaurants are going to lose money. Nothing could be further from the truth. Anyone who patronizes local small business downtown here in St. John's or in your communities across Newfoundland and Labrador, you will know there has been no detrimental impact. People's minds are starting to change about smoking, the consequences of smoking, and the cost to us all.

I think some positive things have been done in the past. I think in some way, whether people like it or not, this additional tax sends a message. It sends a message that smoking is a detriment to one's health. In the least, government and those of us here in the House of Assembly elected by people across Newfoundland and Labrador, we do not think it is acceptable and there has to be a consequence because of the cost we all bear as a result of smoking.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** I forget your district name.

**MR. JOYCE:** Bay of Islands.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Bay of Islands.

I apologize.

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Chair, I understand you forgot who I was. That is what happens when you are right quiet and no one even notices that you are in the House. That is one of the drawbacks of not being involved in all the bantering back and forth in the House of Assembly. You only stand up to speak on important issues.

Mr. Chair, I am going to have a few words on this Bill 3 for a few minutes, but before I do, I just ask for a small bit of leeway for a second. As we know, this may be our last day in the House for the summer. I just want to wish everybody on both sides of the House a safe and happy summer. I hope that everybody, all their families, and all the residents around have a safe summer.

Mr. Chair, we hear some of the squabbling going back and forth, and sometimes people, we as parliamentarians, get very passionate. I know there were some times that there were questions brought up about members. I said it before and I want to say it again, and this is a prime example of this, Bill 3: I do not think there is any member in this House of Assembly who is not trying to do the best for their constituents. I honestly feel that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. JOYCE:** There are times we banter back and forth and times we get passionate and that just shows our passion. I can assure the people out who are listening today and the people from Bay of Islands and the people from Corner Brook, at no time would I ever question anybody's integrity and motives in this House, Mr. Chair. I really, honestly, truly feel that we may have different ways on how to get about issues. There are a lot of times that we argue on ways, but sometimes, at the end, we always think that it is best for the people we represent and the reason why we are so passionate about some issues.

This is one, Mr. Chair, Bill 3, as we know it is to raise tax on smoking. None of us in this House – and I am sure there may be a few people who indulged before in smoking, or maybe still do -

there is no one in this House can say that if this can discourage any youth or anybody from smoking that none of us are supportive.

Mr. Chair, I will be voting for this here because I think it is an issue much bigger than just raising the cigarettes by one point five cents; this is an issue of health. This is an issue for all the people in Newfoundland and Labrador and this is an issue for our youth. If we can in any way discourage any youth – sometimes we hear the comments why don't you raise it so high that people cannot afford to buy cigarettes. I go back a few years, Mr. Chair, when I was knocking around and smoking was much more prevalent than it is today.

I had the blessing that I never smoked. I had a real good friend by the name of Bobby Hearn, and the two of us tried making one, one night. It was down in St. Lawrence, at soccer. We were fifteen years old. We tried it and both of us got sick, and neither one of us smoked after.

Mr. Chair, I am lucky that I never smoked at any time. Mr. Chair, I understand the problems that people have once they started the addiction, the physical addictions to smoking.

On health care itself, the cost on health care because of smoking is great. We all know that smoking causes cancer and it is a very big drag on the health care system and the dollars in Newfoundland and Labrador because of this.

Mr. Chair, cessation is something that we should also look at as a government and as a Province to try to help in some way to curb the smoking. Mr. Chair, this is something that we can try and if it works – which it does work; it is just that we have to implement it. We can decrease the smoking which hopefully then will help in the long run in our health care funding, Mr. Chair, all throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, which will bring down the burden on health care and the cost of health care.

This bill here is a tax on cigarettes which none of us disagrees with. Absolutely no one here disagrees with this increase I am sure because, Mr. Chair, it is going to help hopefully, decrease

smoking. It does add a very small bit of revenue to the Province, but the intent here is to try to decrease smoking.

I know over the years, Mr. Chair, I go back, and I think it was Dr. Hubert Kitchen who brought in the banning on smoking at bars back years ago. I know the big uproar at the time. The big uproar saying oh you cannot do that –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

**MR. JOYCE:** - it is going to ruin the industry. Everything is going to be ruined if you bring in the banning of bars.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

**MR. JOYCE:** Mr. Chair, those were some of the steps that were taken back then. I know all throughout, there was always steps made by all levels of government, and all governments try to curb smoking and try to help mainly the youth,. If there is any way that we can use some of the funding raised. I know there is an education program by the Lung Association and by this government to try to help youth not to get hooked on cigarettes at a very young age.

Mr. Chair, I know the Minister of Tourism today announced the Canada Games going to Quebec. Once you get people involved with sports that usually helps because of the peer pressure and people in the sports. We have to find a way to reach the young people so that as they get older they do not have to kick the habit if they do not get involved.

If there is any way for the minister here to use some of this funding to even bulk up the funding that you are using for the youth to prevent youth from smoking at a very young age – and also, Mr. Chair, in the long term if we can help adults to get away from it. I am a firm believer that the majority of people before they realize that they are addicted to it, and once they realize it, the majority of people will love to be able to kick

the habit of smoking, would love to be able to do it.

We, as a government, have to ensure that we can do whatever we can, as parliamentarians, to help people to try to get away from smoking, to kick the habit, which is a very difficult habit to do. When you speak to anybody who smoked, and anybody who smokes would testify to that.

Mr. Chair, this bill here I will be supporting. I will be voting for this today. If I was the first one to say that if we raised the taxes there would be no more smoking in the Province, I would be the first one to vote for it. I think it would help people's health in the long run, it would help our health care system, and it would also be better for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Chair, I am going to have my seat. Once again I just want to assure the people of the Bay of Islands and Corner Brook that when you see us bantering, it is all because we are passionate.

I just want to wish everybody a great summer. Please be safe in your travels because I know a lot of the ministers and a lot of government members will be travelling back and forth. Have a safe summer. We will see you all back again in the fall.

Mr. Chair, above all and I will just say in this closing about this bill, I know a lot of times we ask questions back and forth. This is not a personal issue when we banter back and forth over different bills. This is passion. This is to try to get to an end goal which is going to be best for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Sometime we disagree, but this is not personal. These are just issues and we just have a different philosophy in how to get there.

Mr. Chair, I just wanted to wish everybody a safe summer and your families. I will see everybody in November.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Finance.

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I heard the Member for St. John's North talk about the nature of cigarette smoking and the nature of the addiction. While I do not know if perhaps there is empirical evidence on that, but there is no question about the seriousness of the addiction.

What we have, Mr. Chair, is a situation where many of the addictions such as alcohol, drugs, and gambling can lead to people getting entangled with the legal system. At first glance you would not think that could happen with cigarettes. We do not see it as much in this Province now as we saw at one point, but there is a significant black market in relation to cigarettes. There had been significant penalties imposed a number of years ago trying to discourage people from the illegal selling of cigarettes.

That is not again the primary reason here. I do not disagree with what I heard the Member for the Bay of Islands or the Member for St. John's North suggest. In terms of prevention, we would all like for a situation whereby the health care system could be saved money.

There reaches a point as a government where you have to sit back and say how do we use our revenues as best we can? It becomes very difficult to distinguish from the types of taxes when you have taxes on tobacco and they should go to smoking cessation, taxes on alcohol should go to alcohol treatment, profits from Atlantic Lottery should go to gambling. You cannot do it like that, Mr. Chair, because that is making judgment calls on what type of health problem is more important than the other

A lot of times with addictions, Mr. Chair, you will see someone who is addicted to one substance, whether it is alcohol and, or drugs, it can be also smoking. Someone who is gambling can be addicted to alcohol. There is a crossover between them.

What we have to do as a government is look at the treatment of addictions as a whole. We have to look at the treatment in terms of our health

care system. We will also see where you addictions, whether it is tobacco combined with alcohol or drugs combined with alcohol, there can oftentimes be mental illness. There are symptoms that sometimes you do not know which is which. If you remove the substance, you might remove the depression; however, the depression may remain.

So as a government, 40 per cent of our money is going towards the health care system. The Minister of Health and her officials are the ones who are in the best position to come forward and say these are the programs that need to be funded and these are the priorities we have. If you did not prioritize within the health care system, and I can say this, Mr. Chair, from my two years there, then you will have no money left for anything. That is the nature of the health care system.

So I do not disagree one bit with the preventative aspect. I do not disagree one bit by trying to discourage smoking, the power walls, the cigarettes now having to be kept behind certain screens, and the discouraging young people of smoking; but people still do. I am not, again, like the Member for Bay of Islands, naïve enough to think that raising a tax on a cigarette by a cent-and-a-half is going to stop smoking; nor am I naïve enough to think that if you doubled the price you are going to stop. This is a generational attitude, I think, that has to take place.

I think it was the Member for St. John's North who talked about the smoking on the airplanes. We can all remember that. Anyone can remember going into a bar twenty years ago and all it was, was smoke. You see how society changes. Now, people who smoke, there are very few places left for them to go. There are no smoking rooms anymore that I am aware of, Mr. Chair. You certainly cannot smoke on an airplane or in an airport. People become sensitive to it, quite to the point now – I do not smoke myself – if you go into a hotel room where someone has been smoking, you can smell the cigarette smoke.

Part of it is going to take time. I do believe children today in school are, from an early age – I know that the police forces, I think both police forces, at least the school that my children went to here down at Bishop Field in St. John's, they went in and did the DARE program, the drugs awareness, and it was a very good program. At an early age, they are telling children about the impacts of drugs and alcohol. I do not know if tobacco would have been a part of that. I know teachers would always be talking about that. Then you have parents, Mr. Chair, who are much more open about the effects of alcohol and drugs.

I really believe, and I think the Member for St. John's North is right on this, if someone has an ongoing problem with alcohol or drugs you can get so sick, to the point where you lose your job and you lose your family, whereby it will kill you. Cigarettes take place much slower over a period of time and people certainly obtain enjoyment. I am not aware of people losing their jobs because they did not show up for work for smoking. You probably have to go out, have a smoke break, and find a place to have a cigarette, but it does not have that same impact as quickly.

Obviously, we have people who develop cancer. If you look at what is in a cigarette, there does not appear to be anything very healthy in there. It seems to be full of poison, but one could say the same about alcohol. Do we ban all of these substances? Government cannot get into that, Mr. Chair. We cannot be at the point where we can say you can no longer drink alcohol because a certain proportion of the population will develop a problem. Most of the people who consume alcohol, they get up, they go to work, and they have a glass of wine with their dinner. There is no reason that these people should not be able to enjoy that because of the risk posed to certain members of our society.

What we have tried to do as a government, again, is take the more global picture over the last number of years, as we try to deal with the amounts of money we put out into community groups, Mr. Chair, in terms of helping with addictions. When I was the Minister of Health, I

met with the Lung Association and there was another smokers group, the Smokers' Helpline. I was personally somewhat skeptical about the effectiveness of the Smokers' Helpline, but apparently it is very real. They would get lots of calls so we continued to fund that program.

When I was the Minister of Health, I did meet with the – I forget which group it was that talked about smoking cessation, the types of programs mentioned by the Member for St. John's North. Certainly, these were looked at, but again, I cannot emphasise it enough. I am not saying it is fair, I am not saying there is anything fair, but there is still an attitude out there that people who smoke, drink, or use drugs choose to use those substances. Therefore, somehow or other they are the victims of their own addictions.

That question of whether or not the addiction is a disease, I do not know how accepted that is in the medical community. I know the American Medical Association accepts it as a disease, but we are still not at that point as a society. So if you were to say to the majority of people in our society, should we use money to pay for people, it could be diabetes, it can certainly be cancer, all kinds of other diseases, they will say no; the person who smokes or drinks are not the ones we should be using our money for.

Again, these are societal attitudes that will change over time, hopefully. As you cannot smoke, or the lower the number of places you can smoke, hopefully it will become more difficult. There is no question of the costs to the health care system of smoking. I saw this, the minister, and I do not know if she has the current statistics, but the cost of absenteeism through alcohol and drugs in our work system throughout the country is in the billions of dollars.

We are seeing lots of great work out there. There are lots of community groups. The Canadian Mental Health Association, for example, does great work. We have seen Senator Kirby's group in Ottawa, the Canadian Mental Health Commission, who do great work throughout the country.

So, it is going to take time. This tax here is simply, from my perspective as the Minister of Finance, a way of raising money. We looked at raising the HST and said we are affecting everyone then. Certainly, the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation raised the prices of alcohol. So, as the Member for Bay of Islands said, this is not going to stop people from smoking, nor is that the intent from the Minister of Finance's perspective. It is a way of raising money, and it is \$8 million.

How that money is used, and how the Minister of Health comes forward with the various programs that she wishes to fund this year, is a decision that has to be made with her and her officials. I can tell you, from my experience over in health, there are great doctors over there and great advisors, and decisions are made based on what can benefit the people of our Province.

Those would be my comments in relation to this bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I am happy to stand and speak to this bill. I think with this new tax, in fact, what is happening is it is creating an incredible opportunity for us. Many of us know about the dynamics of smoking because many of us in this House have smoked at some point in our lives. Particularly my generation, or the generation before, many of us started smoking when we were quite young and there was an encouragement to smoke.

The interesting thing is most of us have to learn to smoke. Most of us can remember that first cigarette. We would be coughing, sputtering, and getting dizzy. It was not a natural thing to smoke, and in fact we had to get used to it. Then once we got used to it, by the time we got used to it we were hooked, and we do know how addictive cigarette smoking is.

Many of us talked about it as enjoyable. As a filmmaker I did a national program on audiovisual aids to help quit smoking and I called it smokescreens. Basically, it was looking at some of the best cessation audiovisual materials around the world and also the books that help people to quit smoking.

As we learn to smoke, we also have to learn how to quit smoking. When we look at how socially unacceptable it is to smoke now, smokers are almost like pariahs in our community. Who is still smoking? The people who are still smoking are certainly the hard-core smokers. I can remember I was a hard-core smoker, but I quit smoking a few times in my life until I got it right. I always still think that you are just a puff away from a pack a day.

I quit once by going to a smoking cessation program called SmokEnders. I was working at the National Film Board of Canada in Montreal at the time and everybody in our unit did the smoking cessation program together. For some of us, it was the only way we could quit. We needed help to quit. Again, you need to learn how to be a non-smoker again because most of us started smoking when we were in our youth. We did not even know what it felt like to be a non-smoker as an adult because none of us had ever experienced that.

That lasted for six-and-a-half years until I came back home. Most people in my circle were smoking and the next thing you know I was smoking again. Then the second time I quit, I quit by using a smoking cessation aid. I used the pharmaceutical Zyban and it really helped me because we know the addiction of nicotine. Some studies have said, in fact, nicotine addiction in some ways is almost harder to kick than a heroin addiction. I am not so sure how scientific that is, but we know that has been tossed around.

The people who are smoking now are your real hard-core smokers who, regardless of social mores, regardless of the social pressure, and regardless of all the education out there, are hard-core smokers. Often, too, they are people who want to quit, but they do not know how.

Again, we do not automatically smoke. We get used to smoking and then when it is time to quit, for some of us, we do not know how to quit.

I can see that some of my colleagues are agreeing, and shaking their heads. It is a tough one. It is really, really a tough one. People often feel that smoking calms their nerves; when in fact what happens, because there is an addiction to nicotine, and the nicotine is in your system, you start to get antsy again and a little bit anxious again because the nicotine is wearing off, so you take a cigarette to counteract that withdrawal symptom. In fact, smoking is not calming your nerves.

You speak to a lot of people who are going through stressful times and they say they smoke because it calms their nerves, or people who have quit and are going through a really hard time start smoking again because they say smoking calms their nerves. In fact, what is happening, having a cigarette affects the symptoms of withdrawal from the last cigarette. That is what it is. It is like that vicious cycle.

A lot of people need help. Some people did not need a whole lot of help with quitting smoking, but some people do. I did and I know a lot of people who did get help, whether it was through a pharmaceutical or through a smoking cessation program.

The tobacco companies very deliberately targeted their advertising to hook smokers. It is very interesting when you look at the history of that. Once they had totally saturated, in North America, the male smoking population, then they specifically started to target women as smokers and so they adjusted their ad campaigns to entice women to smoke. As a matter of fact, they used to pay movie stars to smoke in ads so that they could encourage women to smoke.

The other thing that they used to do is they used to pay doctors who would tell women, yes, if you are pregnant, smoking will help calm your nerves. It is quite interesting the whole history. That is one of the projects that I did as I looked at the whole history of advertising for tobacco products and how it affected women.

One of the things again is that I think this tax offers a great opportunity. It offers the government an opportunity to have a real input in helping with smoking cessation. Not only is it the hard-core smokers that we are dealing with now, but it is also youth. We are seeing an increase in the number of youth who are smoking. Young women, because they think it is going to keep them thin; guys, because they think it is cool and groovy and tough. There has been some great advertising directed toward youth about not smoking, but they are smoking. You go by a schoolyard and just a block off the schoolyard the kids are out there, they are smoking. Our young people are smoking.

We have a responsibility. We have an obligation. We can, because the thing is once they start smoking when they are young tobacco and the paper they are geared, they are made to get people addicted. It is a business. It is a big multinational, multi-billion dollar business, their intent. Cigarettes are the only substance that are sanctioned, that are legal in our society, the only substance that if used as intended will harm you. Imagine that, if used as intended it will harm you.

I believe this is an incredible opportunity for this government to do something. Maybe not use all the money, use a little bit of this money to help with smoking cessation.

When the Minister of Finance talked about some of the community groups that are out there that help with addiction issues and mental health, why not look at something like the Canadian Mental Health Association in Newfoundland and Labrador, or one of the community groups and give them a contract to do smoking cessation groups? How much would that cost? I do not think that is going to cost very much. It means having a facilitator once a week for a two-hour session where people can come and – that is how I did it – you are taught how to quit.

How much would that cost? I do not think that would cost very much. We can have them around the Province. What better way to spend our money. That is an incredible investment. It is an investment in our health care program

because we know – I am sure that the Minister of Health has it at her fingertips exactly what is the cost to the health care system of smoking-related diseases and smoking-related health care problems. I am sure she knows that inside out.

The amount of money to contract one of our community groups to do smoking cessation programs would be so minimal and the returns on it would be vast, the returns on improvement in health, and the returns on our health care system. We are not talking about the government controlling it. We are not talking about the government taking people's choice away. We are talking about – let's face it, as a society we make a lot of money on smoking in terms of the taxes, but the cost to our health care system far outweighs what we are bringing in.

Let's do it. It will not take much money. It is so doable. This is so possible. Just a little bit of initiative, a little bit of leadership from the government and this is so doable. Imagine if people want help to quit, that they will be able to go to a group and they will be able to get that help from an expert. It might be as simple as one group one night a week in St. John's, one group one night a week in this community, one group one night a week in other communities. We already have our addictions counsellors; they are already there. It just means two hours once a week. Imagine, for the people who want to quit being able to get that help. It is easy to deliver.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIR:** The Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

**MR. A. PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am very happy to stand here and speak to Bill 3, the amendment to the Revenue Administration Act. Certainly, I do not want to belabour many points, but I feel I would be remiss if I did not add a few points to the record just in my role as the critic for Health and Community Services.

I am going to say the same as many members on the government side and certainly the members

who have spoken in our caucus, in that it is hard to argue against an increase in taxation when it comes to cigarettes. We all know the detrimental effects and anything we can do to decrease it is a step in the right direction. Now, I believe this to not be a step for that reason. It is a form of revenue generation. Again, if it does add to people's inability to smoke, then that is a great step and certainly what we have to do.

One of the points I wanted to make, and it is something myself and the Member for St. Barbe have discussed, is when we talk about smoking and smoking cessation. We look at an agency like the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. That is a group that as a huge amount of revenue and it is from what one might call a vice, and that would be gambling. Like any so-called vice, you are going to have people who become addicted. It is an addiction and it is a disease.

ALC takes a portion of the revenue they generate, I believe it may be 1 per cent, and they put that back into services to combat addiction to gambling. So they are giving back. They realize the services they provide may cause addiction. Therefore to be socially conscious and accept responsibility, they put some money into that. I think this is a case where that might be something we should look into as well.

We already generate a tremendous amount of revenue off the taxation of cigarettes. Maybe it is something we can start putting a specific dollar figure or percentage into smoking cessation therapies. That is something agencies in this Province have spoken out about and something we, as a caucus, have spoken about. We feel the need for a complete, across-the-board smoking cessation program. It is my belief, in terms of the upfront cost, the preventative cost, will be far outweighed by the cost we save down the road when it comes to hospital stays and people going into the health care system.

I do not need to belabour the health conditions that are caused by smoking. Everybody knows them. Everybody sees the pictures. Everybody has family who have been affected by it, but if we could do something a little more to make it

so that people can quit. Again, we all know that trying to quit smoking on the first try is not easy. Many do not succeed. Many cannot do it the first time; it takes a second time and a third time.

If we can do anything to aid in that through the use of the smoking cessation therapies and medication, then I think we need to start funding that. I know there is a cost upfront, but I believe that cost to be minimal compared to what you will save on the back end in the health care system when it comes to people being hospitalized and the treatment and the diseases that we are contracting through the use of tobacco.

I do not want to have a lecture here on the number of people who are smoking in this Province, the amount of people being killed, but needless to say, Mr. Chair, it is still too many. We have too many, and whatever we can do to make it harder – I think if you would ask a large portion of those people who are smoking, a lot of them do not want to smoke. They do not want to be doing it but they are addicted.

There are some who smoke, they enjoy smoking and they have no intentions in quitting, but there are a lot who are smoking, did it at a young age and it is hard to stop. It is certainly the mental and physical addiction and the conditions. They want to quit. They want to get out of this. Even though this may hit them in the pocketbook – although it is pretty small, about twenty to twenty-five cents – I think they would like to see some funds into treatment that they could avail of to help them in their quest to stop smoking and have a healthier lifestyle, and hopefully a longer lifespan, a lifespan that is going to be spent with family and friends.

The Liberal Party, at our policy convention we actually passed a resolution that smoking cessation should be covered for all people in the Province. I think it is a financially responsible step. The cost that is incurred upfront will be far outweighed.

Mr. Chair, I do not want to continue on too long with this. I think everybody knows our position as it relates to smoking cessation. I know the

minister is well aware of it and I know the department is trying to combat this and deal with it. I urge them to continue on. We are all going to work together to fight this. Nobody wants to see people smoking. We do not want to see any more of our taxpayers' dollars going into health care for people smoking and neither do the smokers.

I hope we can work together on that. I hope that is something we do see in the near future. When it happens and if it happens, I will be the first one to stand up and applaud the department for bringing in this initiative.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this legislation. If this is indeed my last opportunity to speak to legislation this session, I just say again it is an honour to stand here and speak. I hope everybody realizes the tremendous privilege it is for us all to be here. I encourage them to all enjoy and have a very safe summer.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIR:** The Member for St. John's East.

**MR. MURPHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It gives me pleasure to speak for a couple of minutes on this motion. I take a bit of a different perspective on this having been a smoker for a number of years. I carry the curse, I guess you could say. I started when I was maybe thirteen or fourteen years old, and I have been smoking for a long time now.

A couple of times I have quit, been successful I guess for a little while, and end up right back at it again so to speak and carrying that package of nails. Still everyday I consider taking that package and throwing it away again, knowing what it is probably doing to me and probably what it is doing as regards to the influences on everybody else at the same time, but most of the time I think I probably hide away and have one. Sometimes it is out back of the building, but still while you are addicted to it – and speaking on that perspective with the fixation with it, I do not know what it is that still drags me back to it but it is hard to shake. It really is.

On that perspective, I would like to probably bring that perspective to government. I was thinking, for all the years I have been smoking and I guess dealing the last year-and-a-half or two years now with budgets and how much money government is making off the tobacco tax, I can see the perspective that some of the members have been talking about when it comes to the necessity of redirecting some of this money to cessation aids.

Now, for me, I look at it in this regard, that it is easy for me to get out there and buy a pack of smokes. I do not have to worry about dollars. We do not have to worry about dollars here, so to speak. A pack of cigarettes to us is cheap when it comes in that context.

It is not, how shall I put it? It is one of these things that bother me but still at the same time I cannot shake it. As much as I try, for some reason I end up back on it. For some reason every time I quit I have ended up starting to smoke again during an election campaign. I do not know why, but it is three times now I have quit and three times I ended up picking them up during an election campaign. Irony of ironies that is the whole part.

Looking back on the number of years when government first talked about tackling cigarette smoking and everything, I go back –I think it is 1989 when they actually first started talking about serious bans on tobacco. For example, smoking on airplanes I think was a direct result of several incidents where fire investigation officials could not find the cause of some fires.

One fire that really sticks out in my mind where they really could not nail down the cause was on June 3, 1983. Stan Rogers died on an Air Canada Flight 797 in Cincinnati. The investigation from the Transportation Safety Board, at that particular time, really did not nail down a concrete cause next to where the fire had started down around the lavatory area in the back of a DC-9 flight that was coming out of Kerrville, Texas. Stan Rogers, a great Canadian artist as he was, succumbed to injuries sustained I guess you could say. He died on that flight when it made the emergency landing in Ohio.

Having said that, that is when the real debate started up when it came to smoking inflight because they could not nail down the cause. At the end of it I think they did come up with something as regards to what happened with the wiring.

Then we advance, of course, to 1989. Then there was a total ban of smoking on the flight because of that debate. I think it was that particular flight. Then we ended up, I think it was that same year where they actually had the ban instituted into restaurants and everything.

At the same time, looking at government revenues over the years – and I am getting a little bit off-track. The last three years particularly were noticeable to me when it comes to the taxation on tobacco; in 2012, \$136 million; 2013, \$137.8 million. In 2013-2014 the estimated projected number, and I will say this figure particularly to the Health Minister, \$146 million estimated that government is going to collect in tobacco taxes this year.

There is a lot of money there. There is about \$10 million in the difference between 2012 and 2013-2014 estimates. If that is being the case, \$10 million extra over and above what we had in 2012, there is a lot of room here for manoeuvre that the government can use to take some of this money and put it towards smoking cessation.

I say that on a smoking perspective, Mr. Chair. I wanted to bring that point forth to the Finance Minister and to the Health Minister at the same time. This involves all of us who are smoking now as well as those people who are not smoking, people who are exposed to it at the same time.

One of these days I hope to give it up again. I think I am getting pretty close to the end of my rope when it comes to smoking. I have gone from a pack-a-day smoker I think it was last year, probably down to about a half a pack now, sometimes a little bit less. Sometimes I just walk away from it and leave it. It is an ongoing fight - just to tell everybody what it is like - it is an ongoing fight for all of us out there who are smokers.

I commend Mr. Coady and his anti-smoking crusade that he is on out there. Keep up that fight because all of us out there who are smoking, I think when we sit down and we look at that pack of smokes and that BIC that is there on the shelf, at the end of the day, I do not think we really want to be smoking. We can use all the help we have. I just wanted to pass that along on that particular perspective when it comes to smoking.

I do not think we really want to, but it is some hard to give it up. I hope the government really sits back and considers the fact that because we have an extra \$10 million in revenue here from the tobacco tax, they can take a small chunk of that and put it into smoking cessation aids. I know the time I was off them, that year-and-a-half time frame before the last election, I never felt so good. I would like to get back to that again. All the help you can give me and everybody else who is out there smoking would probably go a long way to preserving our own well-being.

Anyway, I thank you for the time, Mr. Chair, just to say those words.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**CHAIR (Littlejohn):** The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MS SULLIVAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I am happy to stand for a couple of three minutes today and talk a little bit to this issue. Like all speakers before me, obviously we do not want to see our population in Newfoundland and Labrador suffering under the smoking addiction we all know so much about. I understand all I have heard today in terms of how difficult it is to quit sometimes as well. I certainly understand the frustrations of people who find themselves caught in those webs of doing something they do not want to be doing.

Having said that, there is also some good news here we can talk about. Over the last decade,

and I have the document here in front of me, tobacco use among youth ages fifteen to nineteen has been reduced by over half. I think that is something that is very significant, Mr. Chair, and it is something I think we can all be very happy about. Tobacco use among individuals fifteen years of age and over has been reduced to 19 per cent, compared to 28 per cent in 1999, so again, positive outcomes.

I think of some of the many pieces of work we have done here in the Province around education, around the legislation we have put in place, Mr. Chair, and certainly around school and community programs that have been implemented that I think have really made a difference, particularly in our younger generations. I certainly hope that is going to continue to happen. In terms of legislation, of course, we all know that we have amended our tobacco control legislation back in 2005, and there are bans against smoking in public places.

When it becomes more difficult for a person to smoke somewhere, then that can only help in the sense of keeping people away from it. When you make it a difficult process for them, then obviously the desire to want to get rid of that cigarette becomes greater in the person who is facing the issue. We have bans in place now that prohibit smoking in cars, as well, Mr. Chair, and the Tobacco Control Act that was implemented in 2010 restricts how cigarettes can be displayed as well.

Mr. Chair, I think it was just last week or the week before – I lose track of time once I am in here in the House – I met with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and we have agreed that we are going to continue to sit down and talk around this issue and put particular programs in place, or particular conversational dialog in place, first of all, to help us move forward on this issue. It is a very important issue to all of us, Mr. Chair, and it is not one that we are ignoring on this side of the House. It is one that we continue to pay attention to. We do that particularly with our contribution to the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco, where we make an annual contribution of \$210,000 a year, Mr. Chair, and \$225,000 a

year to the Newfoundland and Labrador Lung Association.

So, we have put in place many measures that will support those people who want to try to get rid of this addiction in their lives. As I have just said, we will continue to work with organizations such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation. I am very happy with the conversations we had just recently, and I am looking forward to continued dialog with them around this issue that I believe is important to all of us.

So, Mr. Chair, having added that little bit to the conversation, I, too, will take my seat in this House of Assembly today.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Justice.

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I move, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, that the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 3.

**CHAIR:** I am sorry, Mr. Minister, we have to carry the clauses first.

That would help, Sir.

**CLERK (Ms Murphy):** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** Clause 2.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 2 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 2 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:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act.

**CHAIR:** Shall the long title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report Bill 3 carried 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 Minister of Justice and Government House Leader.

**MR. KING:** Mr. Chair, I call from the Order Paper – kidding.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, that the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 3.

**CHAIR:** It is moved by the hon. minister that the Committee rise and report progress.

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, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

**MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman):** Order, please!

The Member for the District of Port de Grave.

**MR. LITTLEJOHN:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 3 carried without amendment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Chair of Committee has reported that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that the bill be introduced to give effect to same.

When shall the report be received?

**MR. KING:** Now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, report received and adopted.

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

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the resolution be now read a first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and second that this resolution be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those in favour, ‘aye’.

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** Be it resolved by the House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows: “That it is expedient to bring in a measure respecting the imposition of taxes on tobacco.”

On motion, resolution read a first time.

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment and Conservation, that the resolution be now read the second time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the resolution be now read a second time.

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

All those in favour, ‘aye’

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those against, ‘nay’.

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** Second reading of resolution.

On motion, resolution read a second time.

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act, Bill 3, and I further move that the said bill be now read the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act, Bill 3, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. the Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce Bill 3, and that the said bill be now read a first time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act", carried. (Bill 3)

**CLERK (Ms Barnes):** A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act. (Bill 3)

On motion, Bill 3 read a first time.

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded once again by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 3 be now read the second time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act. (Bill 3)

On motion, Bill 3 read a second time.

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 3 be now read the third time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 3 be now read a third time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act. (Bill 3)

**MR. SPEAKER:** This bill has now been read a third time, it is ordered that the bill do pass and that its title be as on the Order Paper.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 3)

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

**MR. KING:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just to take a moment, if I might, as we are nearing the end of this session to, first of all, thank all members in the House for their co-operation over the last number of weeks and months as we went through a lengthy and interesting debate for sure on the Budget. There were lots of differing perspectives and views offered, but certainly all of them contribute to the debate in the House and I thank members for their contribution.

As well, of course, since the last sitting we have had a change in the House with the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair having left and recently being elected as the federal MP for Labrador. I take this opportunity to congratulate her and wish her all the best on behalf of the people of the Province and the people from the riding in Labrador.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, not to prolong it, but I certainly want to wish everybody a safe recess. Unlike lots of jobs, people tend to think when we leave the House we are off for the summer and not a lot to do, but members are very busy in their districts, and busy doing constituency work, attending events, meetings, and those kinds of things.

I know it is not going to be a huge break for a lot of people but I do wish, on behalf of the Premier and government, everyone a safe and happy summer, and a productive summer. Hopefully their travels will be productive for them, but also take a little bit of time to relax and enjoy some time with family and friends.

Finally, of course, I want to thank staff in the departments all throughout government for the hard work they have done on behalf of the people of the Province, on a daily basis, to make sure government continues to function. In particular this session, where this is what we normally refer to as the Budget session. There was a lot of effort, a lot of staff members worked a lot of long hours and put a lot of time into making sure that government was prepared and in providing information through Estimates and other means.

I want to say thank you to them, and, of course, the Pages and staff here of the House of Assembly. As usual they are very diligent in their duties and very supportive of all members in the House. I want to say thank you to all of them and certainly wish all of you a safe and happy summer as well.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. BALL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, would like to join the House Leader in congratulating our staff, our Pages, our Table Officers for the great work they have done during this session, and indeed, for the various departments.

For us in Opposition and for the departmental staff going through Estimates on a committee level – this is a process, I would say, Mr. Speaker, that we consider to be one of the nice things about this job. It is just not about the Question Period that you see here on a day-to-day basis at 3:00 o'clock where it can get a little testy sometimes. As we know, we have experienced it just as recently as today. All of that aside, we do all this because we work on behalf of the people we represent in a desire to make this Province a better place to live.

To all of the people who are watching, I am sure they are going to miss us over the next few

weeks. Indeed, we will be in our districts and going around this Province doing the work we do as elected officials, as I said, making this Province a better place to live.

I pass on my best wishes to all hon. members. I wish them a safe holiday, a safe summer attending festivals and doing the things that we do around the Province. I look forward to seeing the ministers and various MHAs. If you are in the District of Humber Valley, make sure you give me a call. It is a great place to be, and I would enjoy seeing you there and hosting you. I will do the same as I travel around the Province over the summer.

Mr. Speaker, thanks again to our Pages. Some of them will not be returning, so I offer my best wishes and a great future for the great work you have done. I hope you will look back at this with a very fond memory.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MR. BALL:** Thanks again, Mr. Speaker, and happy summer to you and your office as well.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

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

I am happy to join with the Government House Leader and the Leader of the Official Opposition as well in recognizing that we are bringing right now this session to a close. I think we will all acknowledge it has been a tough session, but we have gotten through it. I think that there have been times that there were difficult moments, but we all know what we are all trying to do here.

While we may have different opinions of how to get to where we are going, we all are here for the good of the people who have elected us. We are here for the good of the whole Province. We all

recognize that of one another I think. I think we all respect that in one another.

I want to thank all of those who have been here helping us in the House itself; you, Mr. Speaker, and your staff, the Table Officers, the Commissionaires, our Pages, all those behind the scenes in our offices. We know how hard they work.

I want to thank also the Legislative Library because there are many times during a session when we need to look up information through the library. I have to say the staff is very helpful. Even with the cutback that they have had to endure, they were always there for us during this session.

It is going to be an interesting time. We all know that we are headed into a by-election in Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, so I guess we will be bumping into each other there as well. We all will be expecting that. I wish everybody well as we enter into a by-election.

I would like to acknowledge that Ms Jones did leave here in order to run for the federal by-election in Labrador. I wish her well as she enters into a new phase of her political life.

It has been a good session. Everybody drive carefully as we hit the roads because we are all going to be on them. It is the moose time as we know. Have a good summer. Work well, but also remember we need to be good to ourselves, too, or we are no good to anybody else.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before I entertain a motion to adjourn, I just want to, as well, add my thanks to all of you for your co-operation during this session, and for your spirited debate and contribution to the issue at hand. I want to take the opportunity to thank the staff who have supported the work I do as Speaker, and the other presiding officers for the work they do on your behalf, whether it is the Table Officers,

Pages, Hansard, Commissionaires, or the people in the Broadcast Centre.

I want to acknowledge at this time, as well, Elizabeth Gallagher, whom you have seen in the House for the last couple of days.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Elizabeth has come back from retirement. This is the second time we have had to take her out of retirement to give us a hand. Elizabeth, thank you very much for your dedication, your service, and your support in helping us through this circumstance we found ourselves.

I wish all of you a successful summer and I look forward to rejoining you again in the fall as we embark on another session of the House.

The Member for St. John's South.

**MR. OSBORNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Myself and my entire caucus would like to thank you for recognizing me. I would like to thank the Pages, those in Hansard, obviously, the Legislative Library, the Commissionaires, and the Table Clerks. Obviously we have had a tough and busy session.

From my perspective, I have had the co-operation of those on this side of the House and some on the other side of the House. I would like to thank the Government House Leader for keeping me informed, as he does the other House Leaders on this side.

I guess this is the time where the Roadrunner and Wile E. Coyote punch the clock and wish each other a good summer season. I know we are all going to be busy. I wish everybody a safe summer as they travel throughout their districts and the Province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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

**MR. KING:** Mr. Speaker, at this time I move, seconded by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, that the House do now adjourn.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It has been moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

This House now stands adjourned until the call of the Chair.

On motion, the House adjourned to the call of the Chair.