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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.

Before we start today, I want to welcome some special guests to the gallery. We are joined today by a group of seniors who I had the pleasure, lunch time, of being entertained by them as they sang a song that they composed for their MHA, and another one that they had composed for the Premier.

They did a wonderful job of entertaining a group over lunch. There are forty of them. They are from Mary's Moving for Health Group, with their instructor Mary Smith, and their bus driver Andy Thorne.

Welcome to our galleries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: You all have a great voice, and I look forward to hearing a song about me the next time back.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we are going to have members' statements from the Member for the District of The Straits – White Bay North; the Member for the District of St. John's Centre; the Member for the District of St. John's South; the Member for the District of Mount Pearl South; the Member for the District of Cape St. Francis; and the Member for the District of Bellevue.

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Straits–St. Barbe Chronic Care Corporation for twenty-five years of providing vital housing and personal care from Eddies Cove East to Castor River South.

On May 14, the Ivy Durley Place Personal Care Home grew to thirty-six beds to include larger bedrooms, expanded offices, and an elaborate multi-purpose room named in memory of the late Clyde Roberts.

Mr. Roberts was a driving force behind the establishment of this entity. He believed in development, understood community, and was a tireless fighter for social causes that improved quality of life. He would be proud of the exceptional accomplishments made possible through continued hard work and dedication of our local people, ensuring our loved ones get care closer to home.

I want to thank board members: William Henry Hughes, Cyril Hughes, Joan Squires, Robert Genge, Miranda Thornhill, Reverend Harold Harvey, Belinda Gibbons, Yvonne Dredge, Gertie Genge, Fran Gros, Dwight Macey, and Olga Kinden. As well, Judy Way, CEO, for exceptional leadership, ensuing residential care remains the highest priority and the staff, volunteers, and former board members for sharing in this organization's success.

I ask all hon. members to commend the actions taken by local people to build more sustainable communities in the Straits.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, last night I held a Town Hall on Mental Health in St. John's Centre. I expected fifty to sixty people, but 300 came: concerned citizens, mental health and addictions organizations, consumers of mental health services, and folks from our own public mental health services.

We started with presentations from actors Mary Walsh, Andy Jones, and Mary-Lynn Bernard, and mental health activists lawyer Mark Gruchy, Roger Baggs, and Paula Corcoran. They were incredible.

After they spoke, everyone in the room broke into groups to discuss not only the gaps in service, but what we really need in our communities to address the complex issues of mental health. They worked hard. They worked together. They listened to each other.

A few quotes from the people who attended: “The silence is killing us”; “Prisons are our new mental asylums”; “We need access to services”; “Poverty is an overarching issue for mental health”; “When I need help, I need help now”; “Housing, housing, housing”; “Stigma, stigma, stigma”; and “We are not a burden.”

I thank the hundreds of people who came together to share and who dared to hope that together we can find solutions that work. We will be meeting again, Mr. Speaker. Bravo to these fantastic people.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This morning I had the pleasure to attend the Kids Eat Smart Partners Recognition Breakfast at St. John Bosco School. I was joined by my colleagues the Member for the District of Virginia Waters, the Member for the District of Humber West, and the Minister of Health and Community Services.

The purpose of this breakfast was to recognize the corporate sponsors of Kids Eat Smart. Without their support and the support of other generous sponsors, the program would not be able to fulfill its mandate.

Kids Eat Smart Foundation partners with schools, communities, volunteers, and sponsors to support nutritious food programs, organized by volunteers for school-aged children throughout the Province. The foundation’s mandate is to ensure that every school-aged child in Newfoundland and Labrador attends school well nourished, and ready to learn.

I thoroughly enjoyed the breakfast and was very impressed with the dedication of Kids Eat Smart. I would like to congratulate Mary Ann Reid, a student from St. John Bosco, who was chosen to prepare and present a speech during the recognition breakfast. She did a fantastic job.

I would like to ask all members to join me in acknowledging the tremendous contributions of Kids Eat Smart throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LANE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the pleasure to attend the launch of a wonderful project within my community. The 2nd Annual Racing with the Reverend project in support of the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador kicked off at the Parish of the Ascension in Mount Pearl, and was emceed by my former colleague and good friend, Mayor Randy Simms.

This project was first initiated last year by Canon David Burrows, who raced in the Targa Newfoundland and Labrador competition, raising much needed funds and bringing awareness to the issues around autism in our Province. This endeavour was so successful last year that he decided to do it again. Canon Burrows is a true inspiration to his parish and to our community as a whole through his many worthwhile endeavours, including this one.

It was also great to see Ms Elaine Dobbin in attendance at this event as spokesperson for the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador. As all members would know, Elaine has been a tremendous advocate for autism in our Province, and it was truly inspiring to listen to the passion in her voice as she spoke to the crowd at yesterday’s event.

I would ask all members of this hon. House to join me in congratulating Canon Burrows, the parishioners of the Parish of the Ascension, Targa Newfoundland and Labrador, the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, the corporate sponsors, and all of the volunteers who are responsible for making the 2014 Racing with the Reverend campaign a reality.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize a wonderful little girl from my district, Emma Smith, for her fundraising efforts on behalf of the Janeway Telethon. Emma is eight years old and a Grade 2 student at Cape St. Francis Elementary in Pouch Cove. The Janeway has a special place in all our hearts, and it is easy to see that when the Telethon can raise \$2.9 million with over 900 volunteers helping out.

Emma has done more than her share of help. With the support of her family, and Noelle and Bruce at D&L Convenience in Pouch Cove, where she sits for periods of time waiting for customers to come to the store to donate, she also collects recyclables. Emma last year raised \$1,349.51, so this year she set her goal at \$1,500.

Well, Mr. Speaker, she raised more than that – \$1,648.83. It is so encouraging to see young people working hard to help others, no matter if it is Shave for the Brave or the Janeway Telethon, it is just so great to see people stepping forward for the cause, and Emma has certainly done that.

I ask all hon. members to join with me in telling Emma Smith how proud we are of her for her willingness to help others in this Province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Bellevue.

MR. PEACH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize a group from Norman's Cove and surrounding areas, who is truly making a difference in the lives of many people.

The group known as Mary's Moving for Health was formed seventeen years ago by the public health nurse, Daphne Smith, who has since retired, and their instructor Mary, in consultation with Eastern Health.

Each Thursday morning, the basement of the United Church in Norman's Cove is filled with music and laughter by this active group of individuals. It is an atmosphere of a family gathering with the youngest member, Kelly Way, to the most senior member, Marion White. What is very impressive is that their instructor, Mary Smith, is at seventy-four years of age. Exercising, monitoring blood pressure, and staying physically active are very important in maintaining overall good health. Mary's Moving for Health is certainly contributing to the well-being of residents in and around the Norman's Cove area.

I ask all members to join me in thanking Daphne Smith and Mary Smith for starting this group and for their continued commitment to helping keep people healthy seventeen years later.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, every day thousands of police officers across our Province and across our country head out on their shifts to protect us – to protect our families and our children. They put their lives in harm's way to keep us safe. Their loved ones look forward to welcoming them back home again at the end of the day; but three RCMP officers in Moncton did not get to go home to their families yesterday. They paid a price that no police officer should have to pay.

Two other police officers, wounded in the line of duty, were rushed to the hospital; yet today, thousands of police officers across this country and this Province went out on their shifts once again, brave and unrelenting, because that is what they do. Where would we be without individuals as brave as this? Where would we

be without the police officers who keep our families safe?

Let us make this pledge: to stand by our police officers, to respect and honour them for what they do, to honour their fallen comrades, and to remember their families, who are heartbroken today.

We, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, are grieving with you. We have lowered the flags before the Confederation Building and all other provincial government buildings as a sign of our grief and as a sign of our profound respect.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you, and with the people of New Brunswick, who are in shock today and waiting anxiously while the police continue to do their work. May God keep all our police officers safe today and watch over them as they watch over us.

I would ask, Mr. Speaker, if all members would join together in a moment of silence.

[Moment of silence]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the Premier for the advance copy of his statement today and I, too, would also like to express my sympathies and those of the entire Official Opposition caucus to the families of the three RCMP officers who were killed and the two officers who were wounded in the tragedy that unfolded in Moncton last night. Our thoughts and our prayers are also with their colleagues, their fellow officers, and indeed all police officers across the country.

The loss of men and women in uniform is tragic, no matter when and where it occurs. Police officers put their lives at risk every day to protect others, as the Premier said. They are put in harm's way, and they look and wait for the return to the safety of their homes and to their communities.

So, it is unsettling today for us and for the residents to remember the residents of Moncton who feel unsafe in their own community. Our thoughts are with the community and everyone who is dealing with this heightened situation today in Moncton.

Moncton, New Brunswick, just imagine, a close-knit community, not unlike many communities that we have in our own Province. In fact, there are many Newfoundlanders and Labradors who live there. The RCMP Assistant Commissioner Roger Brown of the RCMP detachment in Codiac is from our Province.

Even in our Province, we can relate to the tragedy of violent incidents. Last October, two young people were tragically killed in a shooting incident in Conception Bay South, and the sense of fear that accompanies such violence is devastating and can have long-lasting impacts.

So, we must be grateful and be thankful for the safety of our Province. Today we stand as members of the Official Opposition as we remember and honour all members of the police force in uniform, people across our country who protect us on a daily basis. We give them thanks.

Thank you.

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

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

I thank the Premier for giving leadership in the Province today as we stand together to show our sorrow to the people of Moncton and New Brunswick.

On behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador NDP caucus, we, along with our colleagues in the House of Assembly, send our deepest sympathies to the families, the friends, and the coworkers of the three RCMP officers who were killed on the job yesterday in Moncton and, of course, our thoughts are also with the families of those who were injured.

We are so deeply saddened and shocked by the loss of these RCMP officers killed while doing

their job, protecting the public. I was shocked as I watched the news and saw the breaking news come across the screen last night on news world and this is what came up.

We want to send our sincere condolences to their families and colleagues who are suffering so much today and to the residents of Moncton, as the manhunt continues, we send our thoughts and prayers that there are no more deaths or injuries, that they are safe. This unbelievable situation is a heartbreaking reminder to us all that police officers put their lives on the line to protect us every day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to rise today in this hon. House to recognize a well-known individual who has spent more than thirty years in municipal government in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, born in St. John's, Ms Shannie Duff received an RN from the Royal Victoria Hospital School of Nursing in Montreal, Quebec in 1957 and received a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from Memorial University in 1975. Invigorated with a passion for volunteering and social activism, there was no doubt that she would go on to enter politics.

First elected in 1977, Ms Duff successfully won eight municipal elections, including that of mayor in 1990 and deputy mayor in 2009. Ms Duff was also elected as the Member of the House of Assembly for the District of St. John's East in 1989.

Mr. Speaker, over the years, Ms Duff served on the boards of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador.

Among her many awards and accolades, Ms Duff received the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal, honorary life membership in the Newfoundland Historic Trust, the Heritage Canada Foundation

National Award of Honour, and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. She was also appointed to the Order of Canada in 2003 for outstanding community service.

Mr. Speaker, just this past month, Ms Duff was also awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree for her remarkable record of public service and leadership from Memorial University. In addition, last weekend at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference, Ms Duff was presented with the Ann MacLean Award for Outstanding Service by a Woman in Municipal Politics. This award recognizes retired female municipal politicians who have shown exemplary service to their community and constituents, and who have taken an active role to mentor women who want to run for elected office.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. members to join me in thanking Shannie Duff, not only for her contribution to the City of St. John's, but for her considerable contributions to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of the minister's statement. We on this side of the House as well would like to congratulate Shannie Duff on receiving the Ann MacLean Award for Outstanding Service by a Woman in Municipal Politics.

She has had over thirty years in municipal politics. We all strive as politicians to, when you leave politics, be as respected as you were when you entered politics. I can honestly say that Shannie is probably even more respected now than she was when she first was elected.

She is always prepared to tackle controversial issues. She was prepared to tackle controversial mayors from time to time as well. She will always be remembered for her passion in the protection of our cultural heritage, our built

heritage in the City of St. John's. She was very, very strong in advocating for that.

She was well known and respected as a politician by provincial politicians, federal politicians, as well as municipal politicians throughout the Province. The accolades she has received are well deserved.

Congratulations, Shannie.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I am sure the minister will not mind me saying, I cannot thank you because I did not get it, but that is not your fault. I am pretty sure that was a glitch somewhere along the line. I am happy, delighted to see her being recognized by the minister. Shannie Duff has contributed so much to the Province and to the City of St. John's.

I was delighted yesterday as MHA for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi to recognize her as a member of Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi, of my district. I am delighted to see the minister today in his role recognizing her role in municipal government, and especially the reception of the Ann MacLean Award for Outstanding Service by a Woman in Municipal Politics. Yesterday I recognized her receiving the doctorate.

She deserves everything that we can say about her. I really do admire this woman and I am delighted to see her getting so much recognition in this House this week.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to note that this coming Sunday, June 8, is World Oceans Day. This day provides an opportunity

to reflect on the significance of the ocean to our environment, our culture, and to our economy.

To recognize this occasion, a special event will be held at the Marine Institute's Ridge Road campus on Saturday, June 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This no cost, family-oriented event will feature touch tanks that allow visitors to view a variety of marine species up close, information booths, face painting, and many other engaging experiences. It will also feature a reading of *Invasion of the Green Crab*, the third in a series of children's books produced by the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture aimed at teaching youth about marine environments and the creatures that live within them.

In addition to supporting the event, the provincial government holds World Oceans Day art and essay contests that engage youth from Kindergarten to Grade 9. This year's winners for each grade will be announced tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, this government has a strong appreciation of our Province's connection with the ocean and the importance of marine stewardship. We are the only provincial government in Canada that is solely funding its own offshore fisheries research. Since 2010, the provincial government has committed more than \$15 million to increase knowledge about the status of groundfish stocks and other species in a changing ecosystem and protect the sustainability of the industry. This includes the work undertaken by the Centre for Fisheries Ecosystems Research aboard the *RV Celtic Explorer*, a state-of-the-art research vessel that conducts offshore fisheries surveys and other oceanographic research.

In addition, in 2011 this government launched the Coastal and Oceans Management Strategy and Policy Framework, which provides long-term strategic direction on the sustainable use of the Province's marine resources and promotes public education in communities throughout the Province. In addition to supporting World Oceans Day festivities each year, the provincial government also assists beach clean ups and promotes other initiatives that increase young people's appreciation of our Province's coast and marine areas.

I want to thank the Marine Institute and all other partner organizations who came together to make this year's World Oceans Day celebrations possible. I encourage all hon. members to promote this occasion in their respective districts and help build appreciation for marine stewardship.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

There is perhaps no better way to celebrate Newfoundland and Labrador than World Oceans Day. The Atlantic Ocean has brought explorers and settlers to our shores, nurtured the great cod which has sustained us for centuries, and give an immense culture and enjoyment over time. As a fisherman, I spent a fair amount of time on the ocean. I appreciate the need to keep it healthy in order to sustain the precious resource that is adjacent to our waters.

I join with the Province, and indeed the world, in celebration of this special day to bring awareness to the importance of our oceans; but, we need to do more than celebrate, Mr. Speaker. We have to be ever vigilant and steadfast to ensure that any activity that takes place in or upon our waters is monitored and regulated. We must do more to produce strategies, like the Coastal and Ocean Management Strategy and Policy Framework. We must be committed on the day-by-day basis to acting on them.

I encourage all to commit to becoming caretakers of our oceans and to protect them for future generations. I cannot think of any better reason to care about our oceans than our iconic cod, a resource we almost lost; but hopefully it is truly on the rebound, and for that we are grateful.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. There is no doubt that World Oceans Day is extremely important, especially as a reminder to us all of the significance of the ocean to our environment, our culture, and our economy.

Actions, I remind the minister, speak louder than words. Since 2003, people on the South Coast of the Province worked with Parks Canada to create a national marine conservation area around the cliffs and fjords of the Central South Coast of the Island.

Parks Canada had approached the provincial government several years ago with an offer to do a feasibility study on the area and this government said no. I say to the minister, all these events are excellent and I am really glad they are taking place and I wish them all the best, the people who are involved, but they need a message from this government.

I ask the government: When are you going to do something concrete, like sanction national marine conservation areas, especially the one that they are looking for on the South Coast, to protect the unique marine environment of this Province?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, government today is amending the Labour Relations Act to replace card-based union certification with a secret ballot vote. Two years ago when the card-based certification was introduced, government also said they gave the employer the right to call for a vote on offer. At the time, government said that this was a balanced approach.

I ask the Premier: Since you are now returning to a secret ballot process, will you also amend the act to remove the vote-on-offer clause?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we recognize it is important to have a fair and balanced labour relations regime here in this Province. It is important to support the growth and prosperity we have seen since this government has taken office a little over ten years ago.

Mr. Speaker, we met with the Federation of Labour earlier this week, we listened to them, and we heard their concerns. The Premier met with the Leader of the Third Party as well in the last couple of days. Again, we listened to what she had to say. Certainly, one of the concerns was around the vote-on-offer provision that has not been proclaimed, like the Leader of the Opposition just mentioned. We have considered their arguments. We are bringing forth legislation this afternoon to address their concerns.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, Nalcor admitted that they have advanced \$15 million to the lead contractor, Astaldi, for the work at Muskrat Falls.

I ask the Premier: Since Astaldi is a multi-billion dollar company, why did Nalcor indeed have to advance \$15 million?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, yesterday at the annual general meeting the CEO for Nalcor, the senior executive, Chair of the board, and board

members made themselves available to the public for questioning. This question came up.

It was clearly explained that through the process, the upfront engineering and the continuous progression of the project, when we got to the point of awarding a contract – we are still going through some of the phases of the loan guarantee and finalizing the financing. Instead of the company expected to take the upfront risk with that, it was fair that Nalcor would pay upfront.

It is not additional money; it is just work all a part of the contract. It was explained yesterday upfront and all part of the process about continuing the project and continuing to build Muskrat Falls for the benefit of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It does not go unnoticed that the \$15 million advance to Astaldi occurred in 2013, but the contract between Nalcor and Astaldi was not really finalized until late October. So, it was only two months before these financial statements that were discussed yesterday were up until December 31, 2013.

I ask the Premier: Have there been any other cash advances that have been made to Astaldi in 2014; and if so, how much?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, the upfront answer is certainly none that I am aware of. I would point out the process to the public. Nalcor's responsibility for this project in terms of contracts, discussions and awarding of contracts – they have been recognized by the independent engineer around their protocols and processes. I do know they have been recognized as well by major financial institutions across North America for their process, their diligence, and their commitment to professionalism.

We believe that through the contracts and awarding of contracts, they have done due diligence and they have followed process, Mr. Speaker. I can assure the member opposite that as a minister or a government, we are not involved in that in any way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, the minister will be involved with the monitoring and the project update as we are aware of.

Mr. Speaker, during this session of the House of Assembly, the Premier has committed to table many documents using, in some cases, the appropriate time. An example of these would be: the power purchase agreement for Muskrat Falls that has been signed since last November, we have not seen it publicly yet; the request from Humber Valley Paving to cancel their contract, that was a request that we have asked for in the House of Assembly; government's analysis of the 60 per cent work that was completed; and, Humber Valley Paving's company to request for the extension last fall.

I ask the Premier: Since this could be the last day in the House of Assembly, will you now table these documents?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I believe Ed Martin, the CEO of Nalcor, has indicated the power purchase contract and the final estimate of the cost of the Muskrat Falls Project would be released, we expect, by the end of this month.

With respect to Humber Valley Paving, the Auditor General is doing his work, and as we indicated, that when that is done – the documents are with the Auditor General – we will certainly table, where it is appropriate to do so, all documentation so the members of this House and the people of the Province can fully

know all the facts and all the particulars of that. I know the Minister of Transportation and Works is anxious that information be provided as well.

With respect to the analysis of the 60 per cent, it is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the government has an independent engineer – Stantec – and they are the ones who do the evaluation, and they provide their advice to the government, and the government would pay the value of the contract based on that advice.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Mr. Speaker, on May 22, the Minister of Finance told CBC News that school principals are looking for more autonomy and discretion in calling in substitute teachers; however, the NLTA School Administrators' Council, which represents all of the principals in the Province, has revealed that they were never consulted by the minister regarding the substitute teacher issue.

So I ask the minister: Did you actually consult with principals, as you informed CBC, or are you simply continuing this government's established practice of making it up as you go along?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, we take all collective bargaining very serious with our government since 2003. As a matter of fact, the proof is really in the pudding in regard to the number of contracts we have signed over the last number of months. We hold our teachers very valuable to us as a group that provides great education to our students and the future of our Province, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to work with our teachers in seeking an arrangement and a closure to that piece of work that has to happen in regard to the negotiations. We always bargain in good faith,

Mr. Speaker, and we will go through that process, as the minister has outlined.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Mr. Speaker, the School Administrators' Council issued a statement yesterday contradicting the claims of consultation made by the Minister of Finance to the CBC. In fact, the council has stated that it is actually satisfied with the existing practice for calling in substitute teachers in schools. So, in other words, they are not seeking any changes.

So I ask the minister again: Why is there a disconnect between her statements to the CBC and the stated position of school principals? Are you just making it up as you are going along?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, that is all a part of the collective bargaining process. The minister and her staff are willing to go back to the table twenty-four seven. Whenever they want to come back to the table and chat, well absolutely we will. We will chat in good faith and negotiate in good faith, and intend to do so.

That is all a part of the process in regard to collective bargaining. We will continue that process and have every intention of closing the contract with the teachers. We have good faith in doing so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador have some of the highest rates of strokes in Canada. What is more alarming is that the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada has just released a report, that out of all the Canadian provinces, residents of our Province have the least chance of surviving a stroke.

I ask the minister: Why is your government failing so miserably when it comes to ensuring people survive a stroke in this Province?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

No doubt, heart and stroke is significant and very important to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I just met with representatives this week. We had a good discussion and I look forward to meeting with them again.

We have designated centres throughout the Province that are designated as stroke centres. Of course, as I have said in this House before, one of the important things and actions that we must take as a government and as a service provider is to be open to new ways of doing business, better ways to make improvements, deliver a more effective and better service, and provide for better outcomes. We do that on an ongoing basis, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, it is certain that we have to make improvements given that we are last in Canada.

Elaine Dobbin was instrumental in developing the only provincial facility dedicated to programming and education for individuals and their families affected by autism. Yesterday, she publicly stated that government has not come very far in recent years in supporting those with autism.

I ask the minister: What does it say about government's approach to autism when our own advocates are publicly stating that government's approach is, and I quote, "shameful"?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

Autism, as well as any matter that is related to the health and welfare of the people of the Province, is held very important to us. I can tell you that in autism this year we have made some significant investments to improve the capacity for assessments for treatment and also to reduce wait times.

This year we have invested \$2 million and are creating twenty-two new positions in health services in delivery of health. Next year that will be annualized to \$3.9 million, Mr. Speaker. Those are significant investments we are making specifically to autism. Those recruitments are underway. Those positions are being developed, and we look forward to the outcomes that are going to be provided by these additional services and the investments that we are making.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, after privatizing Adult Basic Education last year the former Premier said in a year-end review she felt vindicated by the actual results. When we asked the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills what these results were, he said the program was cheaper.

I ask the minister: Is cheaper better? How can your government feel vindicated without actually evaluating the results of privatization?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, I get a great kick out of this House of Assembly in regard to some of our members just gearing into one part of the equation. That is not exactly what I said. Absolutely we are getting it cheaper, and that is fine. We have that responsibility as a government to fiscally manage this Province and its revenues and affairs.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we are getting good quality basic education from our private operators right

across this Province. I am flabbergasted that this hon. member is questioning the validity and importance of our private operators in this Province, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, I have a letter here from the minister, February 25, if he wants to review what he did say to me at that time.

Mr. Speaker, the minister also stated that success was measured by the fact that all students who want to take ABE now are able to do so.

I ask the minister: If students still have the same access, why was there 60 per cent fewer students enrolled in ABE in January, 2014, compared to before you privatized it?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, first off, I will say that the letter is in response to a specific question by the hon. member, not a generalized question like she would like to put out on the floor of this House of Assembly.

As well, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the numbers, people are finishing their programs. Less Newfoundlanders and Labradorians may very well want to avail of the program because we have created an economy where there is work – there is absolute work. We encourage these people to go back and do their ABE's, we encourage those people to attach to the labour market, we encourage these people to come into our offices and certainly take advantage of the many programs that we have to train up and become skilled labourers, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, when asked why there was less uptake in the ABE post-

privatization, the minister attributed it to the robust economy that he just referenced. Meanwhile, our unemployment rate remains virtually unchanged from last year and we are below the Canadian average in literacy and numeracy.

I ask the minister again: What is the real reason why there is such a decline in ABE enrolment?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, she is trying to attach the uptake in regard to the ABE program to certain areas of our Province that have high unemployment at this particular time, or any particular time during the year. You must remember we are a Province of seasonal workers as well, so you have ups and downs in regard to the unemployment rate in this Province. That does not mean to say they absolutely need ABE. As a matter of fact, it does not say anything to be quite honest with you.

You have to look at the trends in regard to employment in this Province and then you have to look at other things. There are a multitude of reasons why these people might not want to avail of ABE in this Province at this particular time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LANE: Mr. Speaker, moose sensors installed on the Trans-Canada Highway as a pilot project has not been in operation for a long time now. Many will argue that they never did operate properly.

I ask the minister: Have you completed the evaluation of the pilot projects, and when will the results be made public?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the evaluation is complete. Senior officials are going through that now to do the final report. I expect that to be completed in the very near future, and then we will decide our next steps forward. That will be done in the very near future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LANE: Mr. Speaker, moose-vehicle accidents have increased dramatically over the last couple of weeks. Media have reported eight moose-vehicle accidents in the past two days. A pilot project using moose sensors was one of the mitigating measures designed to reduce moose-vehicle accidents.

I ask the minister: How much money has been spent on the failed moose sensor project?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I agree with the member from across the way that it was a pilot project, as he stated. Pilot projects are projects that you do to see whether they will work and what value they have. We finished this pilot project. We finished the evaluation, and now we will do a report on that.

I would also like to take an opportunity right now, Mr. Speaker, to advise the general public who are in the galleries today, as well as those listening, that we are in a season right now where the cows are actually pushing away last year's calves. What they do is they are getting into the new season. The yearlings are now – and they are inexperienced moose, it is as simple as that. They are not familiar with what to do. As the cows push away the yearlings, you get more people (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. J. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, two days ago I asked the Minister of Justice if he had been briefed on a class action involving residential schools, he had no answers. Yesterday, the Attorney General told the House that the Province is not being sued in this case. This will come as news to the Province's director of civil litigation, a very capable lawyer in his own right, whose signature appears on the statement of defence and counterclaims that I am holding in my hands.

I ask the Premier: Since ministers entrusted with managing the legal affairs of our Province do not even know when we are being sued, will he now take a personal interest in this case and any others that may exist to protect the interests of the people of the Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Attorney General.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F. COLLINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned yesterday, the two parties to this action are the Inuit plaintiffs from Labrador and the Parliament of Canada, the Attorney General of Canada.

The Attorney General of Canada attempted to add the Attorney General of Newfoundland as a defendant and it was rejected by the courts. They then tried to name the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador as a third party, along with the Moravian Mission and the Grenfell Association as third parties. The plaintiffs again asked that we be severed from that action. Mr. Speaker, the court agreed.

Plaintiffs are proceeding only on a breach of judiciary duty, which is a federal jurisdiction, and the trial will go ahead in October without the Province there, Mr. Speaker, as simple as that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. J. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, it is easy to see why our Province makes such expensive blunders as mistakenly expropriating paper mills and releasing contractors from bonds and major capital projects if ministers responsible have such a poor grasp of matters involving the Department of Justice.

Most residential school claims are successfully proven in court with governments often being ordered to pay large damage awards, plus legal costs, in an adversarial court process that also re-victimizes many survivors.

I therefore ask the Premier: Will he now take a personal interest in this case and request an updated legal opinion on whether our Province should pursue good faith settlement negotiations to attempt to settle this case out of court?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Attorney General.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wanted to talk settlement negotiations he should talk to the federal Attorney General, not the provincial Attorney General because we are not at the table, as simple as that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

After years of lobbying by stakeholders, this government finally committed to introducing a full-day Kindergarten program in 2016, yet only budgeted \$1.5 million in this fiscal year.

With seventy-five schools needing major renovations, modifications and capital investments, and only two years to complete the work, I would ask the minister: Has a master facility and property plan been created to address the school capacity implications of the rollout, including costs and completion timelines?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: I want to thank the member for her question. It is a great idea, and I happen to have been the minister at the time who introduced the concept of full-day Kindergarten when I was a minister back in 2008-2009. I appreciate the support that you lent to my idea in the last year or so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Specific to your question, absolutely, we have considered every possible scenario that needs to be considered to bring full-day Kindergarten into every school, to every classroom, and to every student in this Province over the next three years.

The budget has been appropriated so that over that period of time we will make the necessary adjustments to facilities. Where need be, we will build on. We will add on portable classrooms if need be, and we have also budgeted money for extra teaching resources and physical resources to assist teachers in teaching the students.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS C. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take credit for the commitment that the government made by adding voice to the volume around supporting a quick rollout of Kindergarten. Rolling out full-day Kindergarten is a complex rollout. It requires increases in capacity, issues around class space, class cap size, human resources, team teaching options, and curriculum ramifications.

With a mere \$1.5 million allocated in Budget 2014 to ready the Province, I would ask the minister: How does he intend to make all these substantive changes in time for September 2016?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To add to the list of challenges, we also have to design bus routes and to add extra buses to accommodate extra students who come in the system. We also have to realign teaching duties, Mr. Speaker, because Kindergarten teachers who are half time now in Kindergarten, and half time in other areas, will be full time. So, there is a myriad of challenges that anyone who has been in the system acknowledge, and we are planning for that. That is why we have introduced this program.

I thank you for your voice. It is too bad you voted against it when you voted in the Budget last week to shutdown full-day Kindergarten, but we will be prepared. We have identified all the logistical issues. The budget monies have been appropriated to allow for us to achieve the plan that we want and to have the facilities ready, and have our teachers prepared and have the resources in school. That is a commitment we made, it is a commitment we will deliver upon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and Unifor have all publicly condemned government's decision to remove card-based certification of new bargaining units. This decision negates four years of tripartite consultations which led to the reinstatement of such certification in 2012.

I ask the Premier: What message is he sending to the labour movement by reverting to a paternalistic, repressive, Water Street merchant model that favours anti-union employers and the certification process?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, as I said in this House yesterday, the model that we believe in when people pick their MPs, when they pick their MHAs, when they pick their school trustees, when they pick their municipal leaders, or when they pick the people who are going to represent them in anything that is important in matters we feel that should take place with an election, a democratic vote, a secret ballot where people can go in and vote in accordance with their conscience, without coercion and without reprisals after. That is why we made that decision.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Federation of Labour and labour groups strongly support certification by cards, card-based certification. Mr. Speaker, people of goodwill can have differences of opinion. They can have profound differences of opinion, and this government supports the principle that people should be allowed to have a secret vote.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There has been no indication that any rationale exists for the abrupt reversal in the certification rules. Only a third of applications in the last eighteen months were automatically granted via the card check process and there is no evidence of irregularities or deficiencies in the process obtained since automatic certification became the law in this Province.

I want the Premier to tell us: What is the real motivation behind government's actions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I believe in picking the people who are going to negotiate a collective agreement for you. It should be done with a vote. I do not know how anyone can be opposed to a secret ballot with an election. That is how we do things in this Province.

I cannot accept the fact that somebody is going to say to me, if I was running in an election against the hon. member, if you were to say to me you have a piece of paper signed by four people who have promised to vote for you, I still want the election. I want people to go into a ballot box. I want a secret ballot and let them vote in accordance with their conscience. That is democracy. We have had people who have died for that right, and I think that is how we should run affairs in this country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I say to the Premier that signing a card and voting in a ballot box are both democratic processes and he is not recognizing that fact.

The Minister Responsible for Labour Relations has said that he has consulted with employer and workers in coming to the decision to get rid of card-based certification. I thought that happened during the tripartite process as well.

I ask this minister in the spirit of openness and transparency: Would he please tell this House who were the employers and workers with whom he consulted, and when did these consultations take place?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, after the amendments came in, in 2012, we did hear concerns from employers. We did hear concerns from workers. There was not a consolation process that was in place; but I would just like to point out to the leader of the Third Party, since 1994, secret ballot voting was in place in this Province. Since 1994, unionization rates in Newfoundland and Labrador are the highest in Canada at 40 per cent, higher than any other province in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to point out to the Leader of the Third Party as well that when it comes to secret

ballot voting, it happens in a decertification process. Mr. Speaker, fundamentally, what is different between the certification process and the decertification process? Secret ballot voting works, workers want it, and research supports it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier: Why does he support a move that will result in fewer workers in this Province having well-paying jobs and benefits, such as health insurance and pensions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, there is obviously no correlation there.

Mr. Speaker, what is important, we would not do anything to stand in the way of the right of organized labour to go in and organize their workplace, so they have the right to represent the workers. That is the only way you can have a level playing field. We support that, but it could be done with a secret ballot. It is very simple. I cannot see how anyone in this Province would have a problem with the secret ballot.

As the minister just said, we have the highest rates of union membership in this Province, especially in the public sector, and that is a good thing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, last night I held a Town Hall on Mental Health. Over 300 people attended. They talked about the huge gaps in mental health services in their communities. They know the Mental Health Care and Treatment Act is supposed to be reviewed every five years. They know the 2011 review did not

include them. Last night's meeting proved government is not listening.

I ask the minister: Will he commit to a comprehensive, true consultation process with public hearings across the Province on mental health services, with the intent to come up with a real action plan to address the needs?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

I would like to just point out to the House, and also the people of the Province, that the Department of Health and Community Services had representatives who attended the meeting last night. I have a short report, briefing, from those in attendance and some of the discussions that have taken place.

I would like to applaud those who attended and opened up very personal matters, personal to them, and opened up in a room full of people to share their views and their own experiences. It is very important to people, Mr. Speaker – I cannot overstate how important mental health and addictions is to the people of the Province.

I have seen some of the information and feedback. I have asked for further explanation and further review. I look forward to receiving that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre, for a quick question, please.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: Will he strike an all-party committee to address the crisis in mental health services in the Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to point out that through the four regional health authorities in Newfoundland and Labrador, there are 900 women and men who deliver and work in mental health and addictions and related services. We spend approximately \$100 million annually.

Also, very important to this discussion, is that we partner with ten community organizations throughout the Province. Actually, we provide about \$1 million to ten organizations throughout the Province that assist us and support what we are doing. We work with them, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice under Standing Order 11, that I shall move that the House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, June 9, 2014.

I give notice under Standing Order 11, that I shall further move that the House not adjourn at 10:00 p.m. on Monday, June 9, 2014.

MR. SPEAKER: Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the people of Corner Brook on the hospital in Corner Brook. I will just table the petition, but before I do I just want to thank the Premier for all the work he has done in the hospital in Corner Brook and around Corner Brook.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: I know, Mr. Speaker, we have differences of opinion. I have to say on the hospital and others we have differences of opinion – I always did with the Premier on a few issues – but I can never, ever question his commitment to the people of Corner Brook and Western Newfoundland. I can never do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, this hospital, as the Premier said, has to be done right. I know the action committee thanks the Premier from right back to 2007 to today for all the work you did on behalf of the hospital and on behalf of all the other things associated with the hospital, the university with their studies and everything else.

Mr. Speaker, this petition will be presented on behalf of the people, but I am sure the people who signed it are going to also want me to thank you for your commitment to them, the commitment to the health care, a commitment to Corner Brook. Like I said, the Premier is a good friend of a brother of mine; they go way back. Like I said before, I can never question your commitment. I just want to thank you also for the work that I know you have done for Corner Brook, you have done for Western Newfoundland and also, Mr. Speaker, the friendships that you made by helping people along the way. I wish you nothing but all the best.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Third Party.

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

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

WHEREAS strikes and lockouts are rare and, on average, 97 per cent of collective agreements are negotiated without work disruption; and

WHEREAS anti-temporary replacement workers' laws have existed in Quebec since 1978 and British Columbia since 1993, and successive governments in those provinces have never repealed those laws; and

WHEREAS anti-temporary replacement workers' legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

WHEREAS the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or a lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community, the local economy, and the well-being of its residents, as evident by the use of temporary replacement workers currently by Labatt and in past years by both Ocean Choice International and Vale and Voisey's Bay;

WHEREUPON we, the undersigned, petition the House of Assembly to urge government to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, we have been receiving, both in the past and in the present, ongoing petitions with regard to the use of temporary workers. We are aware of the long strikes that have occurred in this Province because employers such as Vale and Labatt have been able to use, what we call, scab labour, Mr. Speaker – workers from other workplaces, sometimes workers who have been actually trained, forced to be trained by the workers who are out on a picket line. We know that where we have the anti-worker replacement

laws in BC and Quebec, they have been successful, Mr. Speaker.

They are not afraid to say in British Columbia that during a lockout or strike, authorized by their labour code, an employer must not use the services of a person, whether paid or not, who is hired or engaged during the period during which you have people on strike. They are not afraid to say that an employer may not hire people who work ordinarily somewhere else for that employer, in a place where that employer has workers who are on strike. If they are not afraid to do that in British Columbia, Mr. Speaker, why is this government afraid to do it here? What is it that stops this government with regard to anti-worker replacement legislation? Once again, it is the same thing that is stopping them with regard to what we are dealing with in Bill 22.

They are not listening to the workers. They are not listening to the needs of the people who are doing the work in the workplaces; they are listening to the employers. We know that the anti-scab issue never, ever got on the table of the tripartite discussions that used to take place which no longer take place. We know – and it has been confirmed by the Premier to me in the meeting I had with him – that employers are no longer at that table because they choose not to be there. That is not true for labour.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: 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 government has the responsibility to ensure that Internet access is broadly available so people have a right to be able to access the Internet in order to exercise and enjoy their rights to freedom of expression and opinion, and other fundamental human rights; and

WHEREAS Pines Cove still remains without broadband service, despite both adjacent communities of Shoal Cove East and Green Island Cove have service; and

WHEREAS residents rely on Internet services for education, business, communication, and social activity; and

WHEREAS wireless and wired technologies exist to provide broadband service to rural communities to replace slower dial-up service;

We, the undersigned, petition the House of Assembly to urge government to assist providers to ensure Pines Cove is in receipt of broadband Internet service in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, it would cost a very small amount, approximately about \$20,000 to provide broadband Internet to Pines Cove. A simple switch of the exchange codes to a 475 and provide through that exchange with the excess capacity, they would be able to develop and get high-speed Internet if that proposal was put forward.

Working with the providers and working with government, I think that is something that is possible, given a major project of drilling and the cable crossing that has happened. You have hundreds of millions of dollars being spent in the Strait of Belle Isle that is going to be happening there in relation to the Muskrat Falls Project. It is right in this community's backyard. It certainly makes sense.

I think that when we look at broadband Internet and the wireless technologies, the capacity that exists – and I know that the minister believes that we need to move forward in the knowledge-based economy. Federally, there is money through the Broadband Canada initiative that was announced in the Budget.

Partnering money and leveraging money from the feds and the Province, and working with the providers, we can make sure that we have a stronger knowledge-based economy where we can give them the tools so that business can set up in rural areas, so that residents who are living

in rural areas have very strong opportunities when it comes to education, when it comes to social activity.

I have nine communities in my district that still do not have access to broadband Internet, and many more communities that have the absolute slowest possible speeds available and that some households are at capacity. This is not good enough in 2014, but I do think that if we work together, we can solve these issues, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS there are extreme overcrowding issues in St. Peter's Elementary and Mount Pearl Senior High, a direct result of poor planning by the Department of Education; and

WHEREAS the solution imposed by the English School Board to deal with this now crisis situation will have a devastating impact on many students, families, and teachers at Mount Pearl Senior High, Mount Pearl Intermediate, St. Peter's Elementary, and Newtown Elementary; and

WHEREAS there are other less disruptive solutions which can be introduced to alleviate this overcrowding, including capital investment as preferred option, as well as catchment area realignment; and

WHEREAS the English School Board was not provided with the financial flexibility by the Minister of Education to explore other more suitable options; and

WHEREAS the government has intervened in board decisions in the past such as in 2005 in Bishop's Falls during a by-election, reversing the closure of Leo Burke Academy;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to intervene in this matter, commit appropriate resources to the English School Board, and instruct them to develop more suitable options.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have presented this petition now numerous times, and unfortunately this will be the last opportunity I will have at this sitting of the House of Assembly, assuming that this is our final day – and I believe it will be.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, this was not the right decision. It was a decision that really the board was forced to make because they were not provided with any resources from the Department of Education, and it is a shame that we have gone down this road.

I have raised this numerous times. I have spoken to the minister. I am told there will be no change. On behalf of the residents who I represent, on behalf of that Grade 4 student in my district who took the time to go door to door in his neighbourhood and collect numerous signatures, I committed to him that I would continue to present this petition, and that is certainly what I am doing.

I will certainly be working with the parents, the students, and the teachers next year with the new configuration, but I would say that it is a shame that we are going down this road. It did not need to happen, should not have happened, and I certainly do not support it, and neither do the parents and families I represent.

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 the Family Violence Intervention Court provided a comprehensive approach to domestic violence in a court setting that fully understood and dealt with the complex issues of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS domestic violence continues to be one of the most serious issues facing our Province today, and the cost of the impact of domestic violence is great both economically and in human suffering; and

WHEREAS the Family Violence Intervention Court was welcomed and endorsed by all aspects of the justice system including the police, the courts, prosecutors, defence counsel, Child, Youth and Family Services, as well as victims, offenders, community agencies and women's groups; and

WHEREAS the recidivism rate for the offenders going through the court was 10 per cent compared to 40 per cent for those who did not; and

WHEREAS the budget for the court was only 0.2 per cent of the entire budget of the Department of Justice;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to reinstate the Family Violence Intervention Court.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, again, I have presented this petition on behalf of thousands of people from Newfoundland and Labrador who see the merit and the effectiveness and the benefit of the Family Violence Intervention Court. Again, from your average citizen to police officers, to lawyers, we know that the judiciary supported it. We know that the support was there with those who know better.

I have been presenting this for over a year now and as we draw a close to this session of the House, I find it absolutely heartbreaking, when you think of the number of families who could have been served by this court over the period of this year. I know that the hon. members on the

other side of the House know that to be true as well. We all know that to be true. What we do not know to be true is why in God's name was this court cancelled when we knew it was so effective?

Not only, Mr. Speaker, does the court need to be reinstated, it needs to be expanded. It can easily be expanded because the infrastructure is there. I know the every member across the House knows how serious this is. I know that every member across the House wants the best and the most effective tools to deal with the root causes of domestic violence. I know that to be true. I know that to be true on this side of the House as well. I know that to be true in the people across the Province because everyone is touched my domestic violence. Everyone knows that this was a good program.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

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

I am very happy to stand here today in the House to present this petition.

The petition of the undersigned residents humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS private and community ambulance operators provide ambulatory and paramedic services to the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador and are compensated for these services by the government; and

WHEREAS the contract for ambulance operators expired in March of 2012; and

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador completed a review of ambulatory services in the Province, which review was completed August, 2013 and publicly released October, 2013; and

WHEREAS ambulance operators agreed to hold off from negotiations with government until the ambulance review was complete, and showed good faith; and

WHEREAS government's current position in negotiations has been heavy-handed and will see cuts in ambulance services across the Province;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House to urge the government to negotiate a fair deal with ambulance operators that ensures the safety of our ambulance professionals as well as the patients in our Province.

Mr. Speaker, I have presented this on a number of occasions and it is interesting to note that we have gone through two sessions of the House of Assembly since this report was actually received and reviewed, and still there is not a deal. It is absolutely amazing.

I have paramedics calling me, e-mailing me every day, not just from my district but from all over this Province who are wondering about the status of their job. The way it is looking right now it does not look like there is going to be either deal reached as we move into the summer. That is quite unfortunate, given that every single one of us in this Province can probably rest in comfort knowing that ambulance operators and paramedics are out there waiting for that call in case it comes. We hope we never have to make that call, but we know they are there.

What scares me is to know that government's funding model may change this so that if I call, that call might not be delivered or answered in time because of the emergency services. That is unfortunate, and that is what I am hearing from operators.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling on government, go to table, get back to the table and get this done, get a deal done that does not reduce emergency service in this Province.

Thank you.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe it is your incredible fondness for me that has allowed me to be recognized to present the petition.

Mr. Speaker, to the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled:

WHEREAS Saint Luke's cottages has been using the continuum of care model since it opened. It entails priority access to long-term care beds, as clearly stated in the Saint Luke's handbook which is given to all tenants. Further commitment was confirmed in 1995 under the single entry system established by Eastern Health. This allowed cottage tenants to join Saint Luke's if they were no longer able to function independently regardless of their level of care; and

WHEREAS Eastern Health has arbitrarily changed its practice in recent months, level 2 cottage tenants are being forced to leave and live in personal care homes when placement is needed. This breaks the commitment to the continuum of care model; and

WHEREAS we became aware of this change in practice when a ninety-three-year-old tenant, who lived in Saint Luke's cottages for thirteen years, was forced to find other living arrangements after returning from hospital. This incident has caused other tenants to worry about their future. Saint Luke's Homes is committed to the continuum of care model, however it is being abolished by the decisions made by placement services.

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the government to request that Eastern Health and the provincial government direct the staff at placement services to continue to honour the existing agreement and past practice to have the tenants of Saint Luke's cottages move over to Saint Luke's Homes when they are no longer able to manage or live in their cottages.

Mr. Speaker, about a week or so ago I made the Minister of Health aware of the fact that I had these – and I know that he is looking at this. I know that Saint Luke's is looking at building another building on Old Topsail Road which will be started this year, which hopefully will allow them to better care for those who are ready to be considered level 2 clients as opposed to having to go to a personal care home.

I am hoping that government will look at this and allow Saint Luke's to continue with the process they have had in place for several years and allow those tenants at Saint Luke's cottages to move on to Saint Luke's Homes as opposed to going to a personal care home, for at least the next year, I would say, until the new building on the Saint Luke's property is built allowing for them to go there instead of a personal care home.

Mr. Speaker, the residents at the cottages all know each other. They are familiar with each other and they are comfortable with the other tenants around.

I know you are giving me the indication that my time is up. I look forward to presenting another petition.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS DEMPSTER: 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 humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the Strait of Belle Isle is a very important transportation link between Labrador and the Island of Newfoundland; and

WHEREAS both commercial and residential traffic is continuously increasing because of the opening of the Trans-Labrador Highway and increased development in Labrador; and

WHEREAS the existing ferry service can no longer effectively handle the traffic; and

WHEREAS there have been many interruptions in the ferry service, especially during the 2014 winter season.

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to complete a comprehensive feasibility study for a fixed link

across the Strait of Belle Isle that would include a geological assessment and a full cost analysis.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, ever since the House sat for this sitting in March month, I have been on my feet petitioning and calling upon the government to conduct a full feasibility study to see the merits to determine the viability of a fixed link that would connect us in the Big Land to the rest of the Province, and the rest of the country. Until that happens, we will not be equal.

It amazes me, every single day this topic is still getting traffic in social media. Every day I have people messaging me saying, are you still calling on that. We know there was a pre-feasibility study that was carried out eight years ago, but, Mr. Speaker, it is time now. It is something the Combined Councils every year puts forward. It is something community leaders in that region have been calling on. It is something that will benefit the people. Other colleagues here in the House have been calling for the same thing. The Northern Peninsula, The Straits – White Bay North, St. Barbe, and indeed the whole Province will benefit from this.

The federal government passed a resolution to support the construction of 138. Once that happens, we know we are going to be scrambling to catch up. This has been a very, very difficult year. We know there is an RFP out right now calling on a new ferry. I know we need a new ferry for the interim and I have voiced some concerns in the House earlier this week on that.

The minister assured me yesterday that by not indicating the ice class it means, according to Transport Canada requirements, it will have a class A1 or will exceed that. I certainly hope he is right because also with that ferry we do not see any added horsepower there. It is the exact same as what we see currently in the *Bond* and the *Apollo*. We heard many times this year from the Coast Guard that they did not have anything to work with in the ice. There was no power to push.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to petition for a fixed link.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The member's time has expired.

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you.

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

MR. SLADE: 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 humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the community of Bristol's Hope is expressing ongoing concerns regarding the need to make repairs to Beach Road which has been severely damaged by storm waves, and this has caused major concern to the community of Bristol's Hope as it pertains to fire protection and safety; and

WHEREAS the lack of repairs by government constitutes a fire and safety hazard to the community since the residents will be trapped in if a fire ever took place; and

WHEREAS this damaged roadway is also creating an environmental concern as the Atlantic Ocean has washed over the road and out into a freshwater pond where the fish in the pond are threatened;

WHEREAS this area serves a capelin run each year, which attracts many great local residents and tourists to the site;

WHEREAS the federal government refuses to assist with this repair as they deem there is no associated fishing activity to justify investment;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to respond to pleas from the community residents to have this roadway repaired to prevent further damage, and to further urge government to maintain regular maintenance on the road thereafter.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, again, I brought this up here several times during different debates. The people in that area are not asking for a lot here from government to repair this road. This road has been traditionally taken care of by the Department of Transportation. Over the last couple of years, it has just sort of been neglected.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am here speaking on behalf of the residents in the district – and certainly Bristol's Hope is a part of my district. I would just like to see government manning up here now and do the right thing here by the people in that area. I am more concerned – it is a heavily wooded area, Bristol's Hope is, and the concern of a fire taking place there and for the people in the community to be cut off from north side to the south side of that community is what gives me the greatest concern.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I will take my place now in this House.

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS cellphone service is essential for business development;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the

House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to partner with the private sector to extend cellphone coverage throughout Gros Morne National Park and the enclave community of Trout River.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem unseemly to let what may well be the last day we are here go by and not present a petition on behalf of the people of Trout River for cellphone coverage.

Trout River is a fabulous community. It had a lot of attention in the last little while, but it still really needs cellphone coverage. I expect to be there on July 1, Canada Day, but also what we recognize in this Province is the day of the July Drive. It is a very patriotic community of 650-700 people. They would appreciate and expect to have the same services as the rest of Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KING: As per Standing Order 32, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, we move to Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House do now move to Orders of the Day.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

Orders of the Day

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

MR. KING: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, pursuant to Standing Order 11, that the House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. today, Thursday, June 5, 2014.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House do not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. today on Thursday, June 5, 2014.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move as well, pursuant to Standing Order 11, that the House not adjourn today, June 5, 2014 at 10:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House do not adjourn at 10:00 p.m. today, Thursday, June 5, 2014.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I am calling from the Order Paper, Motion 3, I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs:

WHEREAS section 42.1 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act provides that the Information and Privacy Commissioner is to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council on a resolution of the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS section 42.2 of the act states that a commissioner may be reappointed; and

WHEREAS the appointment of the current commissioner, Mr. Ed Ring, expires on June 24, 2014; and

WHEREAS it is proposed that Mr. Ring be reappointed as the commissioner for a term of two years;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Mr. Ed Ring be reappointed as the Information and Privacy Commissioner for a term of two years.

MR. SPEAKER: You heard the motion.

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased today to speak in support of this motion. As stated in the motion the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act provides for the appointment of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and a reappointment term of two years.

Mr. Speaker, Ed Ring was appointed Information and Privacy Commissioner for Newfoundland and Labrador in an acting capacity on December 18, 2007, and was confirmed in the House of Assembly four months later on April 10, 2008. The ATIPP Act provides for the appointment of a commissioner for a term of two years. Mr. Ring was reappointed as Information and Privacy Commission in 2010 and again in 2012.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide a brief summary of Mr. Ring's notable career. Mr. Ring spent thirty-four in the Canadian Armed Forces Army, serving with both the Regular and the Reserve components. He began his service in 1969 and was commissioned in 1973 under the Regular Officer Training Plan. Mr. Ring graduated from Memorial University in 1973 and was posted to his first unit in Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, New Brunswick. He went on to serve in a number of provinces in Canada as well as England, South Wales, and West Germany.

During his career, he progressed through the rank structure being assigned to progressively

more responsible and demanding positions, culminating in his appointment as Deputy Commander, Land Forces Atlantic area in 2001, on being promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. Mr. Ring retired from the military in December of 2003.

He is currently the honorary Lieutenant Colonel of 5th Canadian Ranger Patrol Group. He was appointed to that position in December 2011 for a three-year term. The Randers and Junior Canadian Rangers in Newfoundland and Labrador have a total of forty-four patrols and a total complement of 1,400 persons.

In 1992, Mr. Ring transferred to the Reserve Component of the military at the same time he began his employment with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Mr. Ring served as the Director of Policing Services with the Department of Justice for four years. In 1997, he moved to the Public Service Commission and initially worked as a staffing officer from 2002 to 2007 as Director of Appeal and Investigation Division.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ring's impressive career and knowledge about access to information and protection of privacy legislation is something that is acknowledged by both government, as well as both Opposition parties. They, too, have praised Mr. Ring and have voiced their strong support of his previous reappointments.

When Mr. Ring was reappointed in 2010 and again in 2012, both Oppositions spoke loudly in their praise and support of Mr. Ring's appointment. Mr. Speaker, I hope members opposite will do the same today in support of this motion.

His exemplary record as Information and Privacy Commissioner speaks for itself. We are thankful for his oversight and steadfast commitment to the right of access to information and protection of privacy in this Province.

Throughout Mr. Ring's tenure as commissioner, he has provided a critical role in overseeing the access to information and protection of privacy regime in this Province. He has offered his support in providing access to information, such as the Open Government Initiative, as well as his observations in areas where government knew it

could improve, such as timelines for responding to access requests. Because of Mr. Ring's evaluation, we have been able to significantly improve our response timelines and the overall administration and application of the ATIPP Act.

We take the comments from Mr. Ring, as our commissioner, very seriously. We are thankful for his oversight, and we looked forward to continue to work collaboratively with Mr. Ring as the Province's Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to support the motion to reappoint Mr. Ed Ring for another two years as our Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to stand here today and speak to this motion.

It is a pleasure for us in the Official Opposition to support the reappoint of Mr. Ed Ring. Obviously, he has served in this capacity now for some time and brings a wealth of experience, as laid out by the minister. Obviously, as the commissioner he plays a significant role in ensuring that privacy laws are followed within the Province and completes investigations when there are complaints. He has taken a balanced approach in the protection of information as well as defending the public's right to know.

It is nice to see, when he sees there is a need that he takes the matters to court, and that is a part of this as well. These things do go that route and Mr. Ring does that job very, very ably. He is independent, he is unbiased, and this is obviously good to see.

There is only one thing I would say, is it is unfortunate, we feel the appointment should have been longer than two years and that comes back to Mr. Cummings' review that was completed in 2011. One of the recommendations he made is that the

appointment should be a five-year term. That was something I think is done in other jurisdictions. Again, that has nothing to do with Mr. Ring. We are supporting Mr. Ring. This is just our position or belief on the actual appointment.

We support the resolution. We congratulate Mr. Ring on the reappointment, and we look forward to working with him during his next term.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I too am pleased to stand and speak to this resolution with regard to the reappointment of Mr. Ring as the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

He certainly has shown us that he is a man who is forthright and a principled person since being in this role since 2007. He has indicated to all of us I think how importantly he takes this role and how seriously he has dealt with it. He has also shown himself to be able to act in a politically neutral role, and he showed that in particular when he did not back down from having to do what he thought was right in taking the government to court. He is definitely committed to the defence of citizens' rights to freedom of information.

I, too, want to mention that in the review that was done by John Cummings and released in January, 2011, with regard to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, we do have a strong recommendation from the commissioner saying that we should have section 42.2 of the act amended to provide for a five-year term of the commissioner.

That was a recommendation from the commissioner himself. The reason he made that recommendation, the reasoning that he gave in his presentation to Mr. Cummings was that the term of the commissioner should be seen as politically neutral and if the term were to span more than one government, then one would get

the sense of neutrality of the officer. Mr. Cummings really agreed with that reasoning.

It is too bad the government has not seen the light on this one and made an amendment to the act to make the term a five-year term. In the meantime, since that has not been changed, it is a two-year term, and I am delighted to see Mr. Ring back in this position.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: You have all heard the motion.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

The motion has been carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move at this time, seconded by the Minister Responsible for Labour, that notwithstanding the Standing Orders or usual practices of the House, that Bill 24, which has been circulated today, An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act, And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2, when called today shall be deemed to have had notice given and to have been put and adopted for first and second reading.

When Bill 22 is called for debate in the Committee of the Whole today, Thursday, June 5, 2014, that debate on Bill 22 will be considered at the same time as Bill 24, and a vote in Committee of the Whole on both bills shall then be conducted in succession.

Following approval of both bills in Committee of the Whole, Bill 22 and Bill 24 shall be called in succession for third reading and each shall be voted on without further debate.

Mr. Speaker, I move that motion with your consent and with leave of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the minister have leave to introduce the motion and all parties are agreed to this?

MS MICHAEL: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party on a point of order with respect to the issue before the House now?

MS MICHAEL: Yes, I need clarification from you, Mr. Speaker, on what it means to say without debate in the motion that has just been put forward by the Government House Leader.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. the Government House Leader want to speak to the point of order?

MR. KING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, if I may just offer clarification.

What that means is, as we do with any other bill, once we approve, we get into third reading and members speak and we vote on third reading. There is no further debate on normal bills. What I am saying is this bill will follow the same normal practice. Once everyone speaks in third reading, the bill is voted upon in third reading; then we treat it as we do all other bills.

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

MS MICHAEL: Yes, just further clarification, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to make sure that in third reading there can still be debate before the vote on third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader to the point of order being raised.

Go ahead.

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

Maybe I will park my notes and just speak to it. The leave here we are asking for is that first reading and second reading is deemed to have

been done today. We will start the process as though those are done.

We are going to go into Committee and we will debate Bill 22 and 24. We will come out of Committee. We will go into third reading, the same as we do with all other bills, and we will debate them in third reading should someone wish to speak. Once we vote upon third reading, my statement is intended to suggest that it is the same as other bills that no further debate will occur.

MR. SPEAKER: I want to make sure I understand. The House is giving consent for – there will be an acknowledgement that there will be potential for debate in third reading.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Essentially, we are starting the process at the Committee level. The leave we are asking for is that first reading and second reading is done. There are no other changes being asked here. We start in Committee and we treat it as we do all other bills and we treat it the same way in third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. The reason I am seeking direction from the House is because this is a departure from normal procedure and it can only be done with unanimous consent. Yet, the wording I have before me would suggest that there be no debate in third reading. I want to make certain that the request before the House that consent has been given is not the same as what I just heard and what I have before me.

Just to repeat for clarity, there will be debate. Everybody is agreeing that there will be a debate on Bills 22 and 24 in third reading, but Bill 24 will not be debated in second reading.

There is unanimous consent. With that, I now call upon the Government House Leader to call the bill.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I would like to call from the Order Paper, Order 1, Bill 15, An Act To Amend The Mineral Act.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment and Conservation, that the said bill be now read a third time.

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

Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill, Bill 15, now be read a third time?

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 Mineral Act. (Bill 15)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill is now read a third time and 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 Mineral Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 15)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bills 22 and 24.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

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!

If members of the Committee are ready, we will begin the business of debate. We will begin with debate on Bill 22, An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act". (Bill 22)

CLERK: 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 through 14 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 through 14 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

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

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

I am very happy to rise and to speak to clause 3 in Bill 22, an act respecting labour relations in the Province. We know that for our caucus here, we have some particular problems with this particular clause in the act. We have some concerns about what this means for the workers in our Province, particularly how this was undertaken with the lack of consultation with labour in the Province.

So I would like to, at this time, move that clause 3 of the bill is amended at the proposed

subsection 47.1(3) by deleting all the words and commas after “taken” where it secondly appears and substituting the words and commas “in a neutral location agreed upon by union, employer and the board, or by mail, at the time the board determines.” I so move this.

CHAIR: We have an amendment by the Member for St. John’s Centre. Do you have a written copy of the amendment?

MS ROGERS: Yes.

CHAIR: We will take a brief recess to consider the amendment.

Recess

CHAIR: Order, please!

I have considered the amendment, and the amendment is not in order.

The Member for St. John’s Centre I think had about seven minutes left.

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for that ruling. I am happy once again to stand and to speak to this issue. Mr. Chair, what we are talking about in this bill is workers’ rights to organize. One of my concerns here – aside from the fact that government violated its own process where there was a tripartite committee – is that it took a long time to establish that tripartite committee and to come to an agreement. After four years of deliberations it came to an agreement on something that really worked.

The mystery to me, Mr. Chair, is why is government attacking its own good labour legislation?

CHAIR: Order, please!

I would ask the member to point out which section of the bill she is now speaking to.

MS ROGERS: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am speaking to section 3 about the card-based certification issue. Mr. Chair, at this point we know what government is proposing by having a

secret ballot vote, it is that those who do not turn up for the vote, those who do not vote in fact are counted as a no vote.

Now imagine, Mr. Chair, if that happened here in our Legislature. Imagine if that happened in our elections. How many of us would be here sitting in this House today? If the fact that the electorate, the population who votes, if they did not show up to vote, what would happen, if the fact that they did not show to vote was counted as a no vote?

The way we conduct our elections at this point is that the only votes that are counted are the votes that are cast. It is a first-past-the-post system. That is not what we are dealing with here. We are dealing with something that is quite different.

For the government to talk about this is open democracy, transparent democracy with a secret ballot is not true. As a matter of fact, it is a very, very weird kind of democracy. Imagine though if people who did not show up to vote were counted as a no vote against an incumbent. A lot of us would not be here today, and it certainly would not be a true representation of the will of the people by the fact that people did not show up to vote.

This is about our workers’ rights to organize. This is about their right to be in a union. So, how does that come about? The card-based certification system, which has been in place in North America for years, since the 1930s and 1940s, is one that has worked well. We know it is one that has worked well in Newfoundland and Labrador because we do have a high percentage of union workers.

With the system we have it allows unions to stabilize work places. The process that is in place – imagine now people in a workplace. The lawyers do not have a right to say whether or not a person – I mean the employers do not have a right. It is not their purview to have the right to decide whether or not their workers should be unionized. That is the right of workers to decide.

The process of unionization is a very careful process. I think what we are dealing with here is

the mythology of the ugly union, the demonization of unions -

CHAIR: Order, please!

The member is speaking to clause 3, which deals with the certification process. I would ask the member to speak to the certification process.

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

The process of card-based certification in fact is so that unions and union organizers can speak individually to people. It is not about intimidation, it is not about fear, and it is not about threatening because a union holds nothing over the worker. It is in fact the employer who can decide whether or not a person will be fired or not.

It is about their livelihood. We know the prosperity that we experience today in our glorious Province is because of the hard work. It is on the backs -

CHAIR: Order, please!

Again I would ask the member to be relevant. The certification process, you can speak to the process.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Chair, the union rep or the union organizer spends time with individuals explaining the benefits. It is not about intimidation. It is about do you want to be part of the union and what is that about? It is about better working conditions and safer working conditions. God knows we need that in our Province in some of the types of work that we have and the types of projects. It is about do you want to be part of the union? It is about pensions. It is about health care. It is about benefits for all our workers. It is about ensuring people are treated fairly and justly.

That is the process we are talking about. We are talking about offering the possibility to our workers to have better working conditions and to have better benefits, which we all benefit from, which all of our communities benefit from.

So, Mr. Chair, by circumventing that or adding another level onto that process, makes it that

much more difficult. It was kind of interesting to hear the minister stand up and talk about all the research that has been done.

Well, Mr. Chair, I have a pile of research here showing that card-based certification, in fact, is the most just, is the most fair, way of offering the opportunity for workers to join a union, because we know that workers have a right to join a union. It is not the determination of employers as to whether or not workers can unionize.

So the card-based certification -

CHAIR: Order, please!

I remind the member that her time has expired.

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

With leave or by agreement of the party leaders, I would ask if the Premier could have a few minutes to address the House, if we could suspend debate for a couple of moments.

CHAIR: Does the Premier have leave?

AN HON. MEMBER: By leave.

CHAIR: The hon. the Premier, by leave.

PREMIER MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am grateful to the party leaders and the members opposite. I am going to be running to catch a plane to go to Corner Brook and I will not be here when the House closes today or tonight.

It is something of a tradition that we have in this House, and I believe a very nice and important tradition, before each sitting of the House adjourns, that all of us members convey best wishes to one another for a safe and enjoyable period away for this Chamber as we go back to our districts, to our families, to our friends, and

spend time with the people who elected us to be here.

The tradition today is especially important to me, given the fact that this is the last time I am going to address the House as Premier and, I would suspect, it may be the last time I will address this House as an MHA.

I have become very fond of this transition of extending good will because it reminds us – we all know about the differences that exist between us, but this tradition reminds all of us and it reminds the people who are watching us on TV and in the gallery that despite the heated debates we have, each and every day that we are open here, all of us share something in common that is more important than the things that divide us.

The forty-eight of us in this Chamber collectively represent all of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. District by district, people exercise their fundamental democratic right to choose the members who will stand for them in this place, and it is done in a democratic ballot.

Others preceded us, and others will follow us; but, at this moment in time, we are the ones who have the honour of being the forty-eight to carry that enormous burden on our shoulders, striving to fulfill the hopes, the dreams and the aspirations that the people have for this Province, the Province that we all share and we all love.

Mr. Chair, people have spilled blood to defend this place and the values that define us. They gave their lives to give this place a future, and the future now rests in our hands. How profound a gift is that? No wonder we argue so vociferously at times. Our Province's destiny is shaped by each and every choice that we make right here.

When I accepted the responsibility to serve as the Province's eleventh Premier on January 24, I knew and we all knew it was going to be for a relatively short period of time. I also knew that as brief as it would be, nothing stands still for government and leadership would be required throughout this period. The term that I would be here would span the swearing-in of a Premier, the sitting of the House, a Throne Speech, a

Budget speech, a suite of legislative initiatives, and any number of other events that arise. I knew that we would have the opportunity to continue fulfilling the mandate which our government was elected for in 2011, and I also knew that my perspective and values would shape my own actions in this role.

As I said the day I was sworn in and as I said when I spoke in the Budget, my highest priority would be justice, but justice in a fundamental sense; to ensure that we spread opportunities fairly, irrespective of the different factors that divide us such as location, gender, age, ability, illness, wealth, prestige, power or any other measures that would be used to subdivide us.

Fundamental justice is about narrowing some of inequalities, narrowing some of the inequities by raising up the vulnerable from the disadvantaged position that they are in, and giving them a legitimate opportunity to get in on the success that our society, thank God, is generating today.

As I stated when speaking on the Budget, we worked very hard during the process to make good choices that would deliver worthwhile outcomes by impacting the lives of vulnerable people. We wish we could have done more, but no government can do everything that it would like to do because there is a limit to our fiscal capacity, and we all know that; but I truly believe that in this process we have made sound choices that have the potential of benefiting many our people and many vulnerable people.

Another priority was to raise the bar of accountability. That is very important to me personally, and I know it is important to every member in this House. The ATIPPA review, the ATIPP review, the whistleblower legislation, the electricity system review, the Muskrat Falls Project oversight, the Open Government Initiative; these are just some of the examples of choices that I believe the people were right to call for. I, as a private citizen, would have expected the same thing of the government. I kept that perspective in mind so that I would not lose focus.

Another important priority for me is that we have to always honour our veterans, the ones who spill blood to secure our freedom. As a son of a veteran, I developed an awareness of the

magnitude of those sacrifices at a very young age, as have so many people in our Province. The crowds at Memorial and Remembrance Day celebrations are getting larger. I believe that the Honour 100 Initiative will enrich our awareness of that tremendous legacy of sacrifices, and those lessons will echo through every generation still to come. Every retelling is the first time for some person to hear it, so let us never tire of remembering.

Mr. Chair, how thankful we are that there continues to be heroes who are ready to step forward to save lives. We are seeing that in Moncton today. The greatest love is to put your life on the line for someone else. We must always remember the many heroes who have done just that. There are no words in any language that are powerful enough to say how much we appreciate what they have done for us. When we run out of words, we honour them with our silence. When we are silent, we can hear the sound of our own breathing. That sound reminds us that we have life because others have sacrificed their lives for us.

Finally, of course, let me say it is a priority to continue to growing our economy, investing, innovating, modernizing, diversifying, training, capitalizing, laying the foundation to lure investment to all regions of the Province, and all industries that offer promise for our people. That growth, in turn, makes possible the vital social programs that our people want and need.

I want to thank the people of the Province for their support over the last few months. I especially want to thank the people of Humber East, the people of Corner Brook, Massey Drive, Steady Brook, Little Rapids, and Boom Siding Road. I want to thank them for the support and the great team of people who help me serve them to the best of my ability.

Let me also thank my family. Public service, as you all know, demands a great deal of family members. I think they find it tougher than we do because we learn to develop thick skins and we can laugh things off. It is tougher on them. That is true for every one of us. It is not any exaggeration to say that they serve alongside us.

I want to thank everyone in this Chamber, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the

NDP, and all your respective caucuses, the Speaker, the Table Officers, the Pages, the House staff, and the security people also; and, of course, I want to thank my own caucus and Cabinet. I quite literally would not be here without you, and I thank you for your support, which is something I will never forget.

To anyone who is watching today and who is seriously wondering if they should seek public office, my advice is simply this: run. Now, whether you think that means run for office or whether you think it means run for the hills, it is up to you, but if you are ready to make a big commitment, as you all know, and to take on a major challenge, I think you will find public service to be deeply, deeply gratifying.

It has truly been a privilege for me to serve. I remember years ago when I was a student at Memorial University and we had a model Parliament, I remember taking part in that down at the Colonial Building and wondering if I would ever do it for real. I am glad I had the chance to do it for real.

If I have been able to make a difference in someone's life through my service here, then I can stand down with an immense feeling of gratitude for all those who have put me in a position to make that difference, and for that I offer a sincere thank you.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

CHAIR: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS MICHAEL: I would just like to, formally, on behalf of our caucus – I am sorry that there are just two of us here today, but I know if Mr. Murphy were able to be here he would join me in thanking the Premier. It is not so much while you were Premier, because that was such a short period of time.

Of the seven years I have been here in the House, I have been here with you. I have told this to you personally and I am going to say it publicly. In your different roles as minister and the different roles that you were in, especially when you were the Minister of Finance and Justice, I found you very fair to work with. I

want to recognize that publicly. We agreed during those days on more than what we disagreed on, that is my memory. I will not repeat publicly a couple of times something that I said to you but we did agree very often more than what we disagreed on.

I am afraid today, unfortunately, we are leaving the House with a major disagreement. That is the way politics is, I guess, but that does not take away from me the good times we had in terms of working on some issues together. We saw eye to eye on VLTs, for example, and you did take some steps to try to get those brought down. We saw eye to eye on a number of things. I think today we are not seeing eye to eye on something that for me is very crucial; but, as I said, that is life. It is unfortunate.

I am hoping between now and the first weekend of July, perhaps you can continue listening to things that have been said. You still have decision-making powers and I encourage you to think about some of the issues we have brought up here in the House in the last few days, like the Family Violence Intervention Court and even like what we are passing here today. You still have powers until you step down as Premier. You still are Premier, so I encourage you to think further about some of the issues we have raised.

I really do wish you well and I thank you for the service that you have given to the Province.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will be brief, because I know the eleventh Premier has a flight to catch. I know what it is like to run through that airport on Thursday afternoon.

I do want to take a few minutes just to thank you for the work you have done as Premier and wish you all the best in whatever you do. I can guarantee one thing I know – because I know you well enough – it will include a book and it

will include a golf course, which is very close to where you live. I wish you all the best in no matter what it is.

I have had the privilege of being in the airport many evenings on Thursdays as we go back and forth. The Premier was always working. You would see his newspapers or his books, and he was with his highlighters, making notes, and getting himself prepared for whatever the next issue would be.

I say to the Premier, I know politics was not always your first choice too. I can remember many discussions we had in your office as we knew each other in the past, in a previous life in a professional manner. The Premier did some work for us through his office in Corner Brook. I can remember many interesting discussions around politics I will never forget.

He comes by that naturally. He comes with a very strong legacy. I know when the Premier speaks about his passion for seniors in particular – because I have heard it from seniors across the Province, the respect they have for the Premier.

I know the legacy, he comes by that naturally because I knew his father. His father and my grandfather obviously worked on many campaigns together. Ironically, we took in a different direction over time, but the legacy is there. I know as a constituent in the district where your father served, he would be very proud of you if he could see you here today in the chair that you sit in.

I congratulate you on the great work you have done for the Province. It has not always been easy. All of us have to make difficult decisions and choices over time as we sit in those chairs. I admire you for the compassion and the respectfulness you have shown for people of all political parties.

Sir, as you leave today, I am not sure what the future will hold for you, but I wish you all the best from the Official Opposition and all the members we have here, and indeed everyone in Newfoundland and Labrador. The great work you have done and the courage you showed in 2003 in stepping forward in some very difficult times. I can remember those times. I admire you for that, and I thank you.

I have had the privilege of sharing in some community events because we share neighbouring districts. I see and have felt the respect that people have for you, and not only in your district but around the Province. I wish you all the best and look forward to seeing you somewhere in the near future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Order, please!

The business of the Committee will continue. I am going to take us back a little bit, though, for a minute. Typically when clause 1 is called, that is when there is wide-ranging debate on the bill that we are discussing. Clause 1 has been called and passed.

We called clauses 2 through 14 inclusive, and the Member for St. John's Centre spoke. So I am seeking some direction. She spoke on clause 3, so I do not know if we will do this clause by clause or if members – okay, so members of the Committee, is there anybody who wants to speak to clause 2?

Shall clause 2 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 2 carried.

CHAIR: Clause 3.

Shall clause 3 carry?

The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

Before the member starts, I am going to remind all members of the rules regarding relevance in Committee, and I am going to read from O'Brien and Bosc page 927, "The relevancy rule stipulates that debate in a Committee of the Whole must be strictly relevant to the item, clause or amendment under consideration."

As Chair of the Committee, I am going to be holding all members strictly, as much as possible, to that. Whatever clause we are debating, that is the clause on which you must speak while you are being recognized.

The hon. the Member for Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

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

Yes, I do want to speak to clause 3, because clause 3 is repealing sections of the act that deal with the card-based certification. We now have a restructuring of the system because of that. So I do want to speak specifically to the whole clause in terms of what it is repealing and how it is being replaced.

I would like to point out that card-based certification goes back quite a long time in North America. It started with the Wagner Act in the United States in 1935, which was passed by the U.S. Congress and was designed to create better labour relations. That act actually became sort of the model for what we did here in Canada as well.

There are three major principles that are in the Wagner Act, and that is workers have the right to organize unions of their choice, workers have the right to be free of employer interference or control in organizing, and employers are required to negotiate with unions. These were three major principles that came out of the Wagner Act.

In 1935, the card-check certification procedure was established in the United States as part of the Wagner Act as the way to make sure these principles were upheld and then we adopted it in Canada. I think it is extremely important for us to know that the card-based certification was the way to make sure that workers were able to exercise their right to organize, they were able to exercise their right to be free of employer interference, and it made employers deal with unions.

This is why I find it very confusing that something that has been so well established in labour relations is now under attack in our Province, because we do have a high rate of

unionization in comparison in the country. Up to 1994, we had the card-based certification. It ended in 1994, it came back in 2012, and it has been proven in the last two years that it is working. Why would we remove something that was at the heart, the very basis of organizing, going back to 1935? This is what really astounds me.

One of those principles, the principle of being free of employer interference or control in organizing is one of the things that is problematic when you look at the changes that are being made here. When we look at section 3.(4), “Where a vote is taken it shall be taken no more than 5 days, excluding holidays and weekends, after receipt by the board of the application for certification.” Then subsection (5), “Notwithstanding subsection (4), the board may in exceptional circumstances extend the time for the taking of the vote by the number of days which it considers appropriate.”

So, the board has the power to extend. There is proof, there is all kinds of proof, a lot of research has shown that once an employer knows they have workers who want to be unionized, unfortunately – I wish this were not the case but it is the case – we very often have employers who become engaged in trying to convince their workers not to join the union and they use, very often, intimidating tactics in doing that.

One of the latest studies which talks about this is a study from a group of people from the University of Illinois, Chicago, called: Undermining the Right to Organize, which was written in December, 2005. We are not talking about grapes of wrath behaviour going back to the 1930s. We are talking about the present, that this is still going on.

In the last few days I have been speaking with people who have been part of situations here in our own Province and in our own city where they tried to be involved in becoming a union and where there was intimidation used by employers. Having only a vote as the way to go in calling this democracy is wrong, because the minute the board receives an application, everybody of course is given the notification, so the employers know there has been an application.

From that moment on – whether it is five days, excluding holidays and weekends, or an extended period of time because the board in its wisdom decides to extend the time – you have the employers now with all this time to try to dissuade. Believe me it happens, because people say it is the union that uses tactics. The union has no power in this situation. The union cannot do anything to a worker who does not want to become part of a union; but, if an employer says to the employee: Well, if you join a union and I have to let people go, you were the last one hired, you are going to have to go because you were the last one hired. That is the kind of thing that happens.

The employers know how to use intimidation to have workers back down. There are all kinds of cases where that is shown, where that is known to happen, both within our own Province as well as within the country. We have large corporations that are known to make sure that people do not get unionized in their businesses.

For example, it is well known that Walmart will close out a whole store rather than deal with unionized workers. That is the kind of thing that happens. When we have only the vote, and the vote has its period of time when the employer can be looking at how they are going to intimidate, how they are going to make sure people do not choose a union, this is problematic; whereas with the card-based certification, first of all, people are not under the eye of the employer.

I am told by union organizers, if people do not want to sign a card, they do not mind saying to a union organizer: No, boy, I do not believe in unions; I am not signing the card - and they walk away. That is what happens. There is no coercion and people do not mind saying I do not believe in it; however, in most cases, the majority do believe in it and they want it. They feel free using the card-based certification to do that.

We have really good rules in our current act with regard to the card-based certification. We have all kinds of safeguards to get at people who say that it is not democratic and it is not free. The very fact that 65 per cent of those identified as the bargaining unit have to sign the card, that in itself – when the labour movement said yes to

that, to the act, that showed a real sense of confidence by them. They were not afraid to say okay, let it be 65 per cent and then if the percentage of those signing the cards is between 40 per cent and 64 per cent, then there is a vote.

The way in which this is talked about is as if you have unions out there knocking people over the head and saying sign a card, sign a card, sign a card. As I said a minute ago, this is not the grapes of wrath. It is certainly not the grapes of wrath for the unions. They are very, very fair and they are sophisticated in how they do their organizing. They know the rules and they live by the rules. They know they cannot use intimidation. They know what is expected. It is not to their benefit to use coercion and intimidation.

What we have here, in the name of what I do not know, is throwing out what was recognized in 1935 as the process that would create better labour relations. We are throwing out the procedure that was going to ensure that workers were free, the procedure that was going to ensure that their right to organize was not in any way taken away from them, to ensure that they would not have employers who would be able to intimidate them and keep them from joining unions.

How can we justify? I know that over the years here in Canada there have been some governments that have pressured by employers, by the corporate sector, to chip away at the card-check certification. We are aware of that. We have had cases right across Canada where there have been amendments made, but it is interesting to note that one of the provinces where that happened, where they did drop the card-based certification, went back to it, and that is Manitoba. We did it ourselves two years ago. Once again the question becomes: Why would we do that?

We know in 1994 when the Liberal Wells government amended the act so that once 40 per cent of eligible employees signed union cards and unified the certification application, a second voting process had to be followed. That blows my mind.

It is like saying to us we have a general election. One of the three parties in this room wins the

election and they say no, but you have to go through a second election now. That is the way it was. That is what we had changed in 2012. It seems to me to hear the government say we are moving ahead – we are moving backwards. We are definitely moving backwards. We are undoing, through this piece of legislation, something that was at the heart of the whole move towards improving labour relations first in the United States and then in Canada going back to the 1930s.

When I look at this section and understand what it is doing, I become very, very concerned. When we look at the democratic process, for example, holding votes – and I know it says that it can be both by mail as well as holding votes in a place. Getting to people who are in disparate workplaces – for example, you take home care workers.

Home care workers work for agencies. Some work for themselves and for their client. Those who are hired by agencies work for agencies, but their place of work is not where the agency is. Their place of work is out in the homes of the people they are working with. Or they might have clients who are in some of our long-term care facilities.

They do not have a workplace where all of the workers come together. The ability to get those people together to hold meetings and to try to organize them is very, very difficult. The one-on-one card signing really is much more democratic for people in that kind of a work situation than it is for people who are in one workplace together.

The same is true in the construction industry. In the construction industry, their workplaces change continually. Then that, too, works against people getting organized and people trying to organize workers. Once again what we have here in this bill is actually something which is less democratic than what we currently have, because democracy is exercised in many ways – and I did quote the other day, and I am going to quote it again, the associate professor from Osgoode Hall Law School at York University of Toronto who talked about both processes have a democratic process to them, whether it is the card-based certification, or whether it is going into a ballot box and voting. They both are part

of democracy; but in looking at how to help workers vote, deciding on which one to use, it should be: What is the best for the worker? What is going to help the worker really exercise his or her rights? What is going to ensure that they are free and that they have the opportunity to vote?

What we have heard the labour movement say, the movement that represents tens of thousands of workers in the Province, is that the one that really works for workers in this Province is having the card-based certification. We have to look at places where they went back to card-based certification where they dropped it, like Manitoba, and ask why – and why did we drop it two years ago? Because it proved, the government believed, and was part of a four-year process that convinced them that it was the best way to go.

So it is very disturbing to me that here we are today taking a major step backwards and calling it democracy, when it is not democracy. I see it as autocracy.

Thank you.

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am very happy again to be able to stand and to speak to this clause of Bill 22. It is difficult to imagine why this government at this point would want to attack the system of card-based certification – a system that is designed to make it possible for workers to exercise their rights to join a union. I believe what the government is proposing in fact interferes with that right. I am not sure what this government at this point in its history, when we see the number of large-scale resource development and projects happening across the Province –

CHAIR: Order, please!

I ask the member to speak to clause 3 and the process of certification. What the member thinks otherwise is not important to the debate we are debating right now – it is not relevant, I should say. So, to clause 3:

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

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

The amendments that clause 3 proposes serve one basic function: They make it harder to form a union. I am not sure why government at this point would want to make it harder to form a union, and we know that the basic approach to forming unions in North America, standardized in the post-World War II period, was that a union would be formed if a majority of workers in a workplace demanded one. That is what the card-based certification process is.

CHAIR: Order, please!

The member is continuing in her relevance – I would ask the member for the second time to speak to clause 3, the process of certification.

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

The process of certification that we are talking about is the card-based certification. That is what we have at this point. What government is doing now is adding on an extra level which makes it much more difficult, in fact, to be able to form a union.

We know that the purpose of the union, the purpose to have the card-based certification, is so we can allow our workers to certify their workplace, to decide whether or not they want a union, whether they want to belong to a union. That is what the certified card-based system is. It is giving our workers a process in which to exercise their right to join a union in their workplace.

The process is about someone from the union meeting with individual workers, perhaps sometimes groups of workers, and offering them the opportunity to join the union, with all the benefits that it has. It is a process that is free of coercion. It is a process that is free of intimidation. It is a process that is fair and just.

The process that the government is proposing at this point is not fair and just; it actually circumvents the process that has been established. That was established by the

tripartite committee, the strategic partnership, in order to be able – that was as a result of a lot of consultation, and consultation by experts.

Mr. Chair, I wonder – and the relevance of this is: How did government get to the point to decide that this particular process of card certification is not working?

CHAIR: Order, please!

Again, I would remind the member to be relevant. How government got to the process is not a part of clause 3. What is a part of clause 3 is the process and the member can speak to that process. I have warned the member three times.

Are there any other speakers to clause 3?

Shall clause 3 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, clause 3 carried.

CLERK: Clause 4.

CHAIR: Shall clause 4 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, clause 4 carried.

CLERK: Clause 5.

CHAIR: Clause 5.

Shall clause 5 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, clause 5 carried.

CLERK: Clause 6.

CHAIR: Shall clause 6 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, clause 6 carried.

CLERK: Clause 7.

CHAIR: Clause 7.

Shall clause 7 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, clause 7 carried.

CLERK: Clause 8.

CHAIR: Shall clause 8 carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye’.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay’.

Carried.

On motion, clause 8 carried.

CLERK: Clause 9.

CHAIR: Shall clause 9 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 9 carried.

CLERK: Clause 10.

CHAIR: Shall clause 10 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 10 carried.

CLERK: Clause 11.

CHAIR: Shall clause 11 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 11 carried.

CLERK: Clause 12.

CHAIR: Shall clause 12 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 12 carried.

CLERK: Clause 13.

CHAIR: Shall clause 13 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 13 carried.

CLERK: Clause 14.

CHAIR: Shall clause 14 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 14 carried.

CLERK: Be it enacted by the 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 Labour Relations Act.

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: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

We move now to debate Bill 24.

CHAIR: We will now move to debate on Bill 24, An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2.

A bill, "An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collection Bargaining Act No. 2". (Bill 24)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

In and of itself, this is a fairly useless bill because the bill is repealing something that was passed in this House in 2012 and which was never enacted by this government. Now, because of Bill 22, which is a travesty, they are deciding, well, we are doing something positive here now, we are going to repeal something that some people had a problem with, repeal the vote on offer which was something that employers

wanted when the changes were made back in 2012.

This vote on offer which is forcing a vote of members, once an offer has been made during a negotiating process, is something that favoured employers, there is absolutely no doubt about that. It was a concession that was sort of given throughout the four years of consultations and negotiations that went on with regard to the Labour Relations Act changes. In actual fact, with the card-based certification gone, this is not related to the card-based certification in terms of a system, but it was sort of the thing that was given to the employers by government as a way to assuage them when the card-based certification was agreed to in 2012.

Now that government has chosen to listen to employers totally and they have removed the card-based certification, what we are repealing becomes something that is meaningless anyway because employers now have what they wanted in the first place. I cannot allow this to be here in this House and the repeal happen without pointing out to people what is going on here.

This, like I said, in and of itself, is nonsense and this government could have chosen to have, at any point, repealed something that they kept on the books for eighteen months, but they did not. Now, instead of acknowledging that they have really gutted the changes that happened in 2012, when it was recognized that card-based certification was the way to go and this government talked about how democratic the card-based certification was and how democratic their changes were, and used that language and talked about how we were modernizing our Labour Relations Act back in 2012, if they believed that then, then they now have to acknowledge that we have de-modernized and this is the final step in that de-modernization of what they did in 2012. The hypocrisy of this government, who could talk in 2012 about the act that has just been ripped apart and talk about democratic process –

CHAIR: Order, please!

I would ask the member to confine her comments to the bill.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My comments to the bill is that government is putting this bill out and thinking this is an olive branch. This is not an olive branch. This is just getting rid of something that is now useless because the employers have everything they wanted. I hope this government is happy with what they have done because I am telling you I am not happy with what they have done, and neither is the labour movement in this Province happy with what they have done. Workers are very upset with what they have done. They have made it more difficult for workers to now unionize. Thank goodness this is gone, but it is meaningless anyway.

I think that is all I have to say to this, Mr. Chair, because I am so absolutely disgusted with what is happening in this House today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

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

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

I am happy to speak to Bill 24.

CHAIR: Before the Member for St. John's Centre continues, though, I would remind members in the gallery that they are not to show any favour or disfavour with anything that is being said on the floor. If the disturbance were to continue I would have to ask members in the gallery to leave.

The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre to continue.

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

I am standing to speak on Bill 24, on the vote on offer. The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour represents 65,000 workers here in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, people who work to take care of our children, who work to teach our children, who help dig the resources from the rocks in our Province, who are part of builders of prosperity.

I think this is a sad day in our House of Assembly when we think there has been such wonderful work done through a tripartite committee to ensure the benefits and the protection of our workers, and this government at the last minute, at the very last minute, throws before the House a bill, through the previous bill.

Then, with what they are laying before us now, to reverse the work that was done in good faith, to reverse the work that done with integrity, with goodwill to protect the workers of this Province – we all benefit from the work of the workers of this Province. It is a sad day to end this session on a bill that betrays the workers, our brothers, our sisters, our mothers, our fathers, of Newfoundland and Labrador.

CHAIR: Order, please!

I would ask the member to confine her comments to the bill.

The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre to continue.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

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: A bill, An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Service Bargaining Act No. 2.

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. Speaker.

I move at this time, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that the Committee rise to report Bills 22 and 24.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bills 22 and 24 carried without amendment.

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 the District of Lewisporte.

MR. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bills 22 and 24 carried without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to report Bills 22 and 24 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. Bills ordered read a third time presently, by leave.

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to now call from the Order Paper Bill 24.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour, that Bill 24, An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2, be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that the bill shall now be read a third time.

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

Since this is the last chance we will have to speak to Bill 24, I would like to avail of the opportunity to have some more to say.

As I have already indicated, the bill itself is a repeal, and not even a repeal of something that was operating in our Province. It is the repeal of something that was passed in this House two years ago and which, in actual fact, was never proclaimed.

For the sake of people who are watching, you can have legislation passed, have it debated, have it discussed, have it passed, and then sit in a department, sit on a desk, and if government for some reason or other does not want it to happen, then they do not proclaim it. It does not get proclaimed by the Lieutenant Governor, therefore does not become legislation.

What we are repealing here today, the vote on offer, which has to do with the negotiating process when people are in negotiations, is something which is forcing another vote on top of negotiated agreements; a vote that goes to workers and forces them individually to vote on what has been negotiated. This was something that when it came in, in 2012, it came in because of negotiations that were happening at that time. I have spoken about that a bit earlier, but there could be people watching now who were not watching before. The negotiations that went on in 2012 were negotiations that involved real breakthroughs for the working person, the breakthrough of having card-based certification be brought back into our system, which was something that was extremely important.

Obviously, we know from discussions that have happened in the public realm, and not secret stuff, that there were many employers who were not happy when that was brought back in. The vote on offer was something they fought for and they received in order to make sure that the card-based certification happened. While the labour movement, the representatives of the working people of the Province, were not totally happy with the vote on offer, they sort of said: Well, okay, we have the card-based certification; we will say yes to this.

We will never know why government did not go ahead and proclaim it. They have never really said why they did not go ahead and proclaim it – they did not. We do not know why. We do know that we have had an incident here now, this week in this House, a real steamrolling going on of bringing in a piece of legislation to undo what happened in 2012. The repeal, this Bill 24, is happening because of that.

In actual fact, Bill 24 is useless now because the employers have what they want. The employers now know that they have a system coming in, the voting system by ballot, whereby they are going to have a bit more power with employees. They are quite happy about that.

For them, it does not matter now. They obviously have said to government: Get rid of it; it does not matter to us. Government does not care, so they are getting rid of it.

MR. KING: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader, on a point of order.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are currently debating Bill 24, the contents of which relate to vote on offer. The member is talking about union certification and other issues. The Standing Orders that guide us, particularly from the House of Commons on page 626 are very clear, and I quote: debate must be relevant to the strict contents of the bill.

I would submit and ask for your consideration that unless you are talking specifically about the

repealing of vote on offer and whether you support doing that or you do not, then you are actually not relevant to debate here in third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party, are you speaking to the point of order?

MS MICHAEL: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order, but I do remind all members we are now speaking to the bill in third reading so we have the same rules that apply as if we are dealing with in second reading. We are able to talk to the principle of the bill at hand, which is an amendment bill, and not the main act itself – the Labour Relations Act is not in question here. It is a very precise amendment, so I would ask members to use the same latitude as we used in second reading, which is the principle of the bill, and not the principle of the parent act that is being amended.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to talk about some of the limitations on the vote on offer and why I am very happy that it is gone. I do not think it ever should have been there, but the vote on offer is really a very arrogant and paternalistic thing actually, because it really does not trust the unions to work within their system with their members when it comes to knowing that they have the support of members. That is probably the thing about the vote on offer – the worst part about it that really causes me all kinds of problems.

It is like the unions are negotiating, they are the elected representatives of their membership, when they sit at a table they know that they have the good of their members at heart. They know what their members are saying to them. They would be crazy to do otherwise.

For example, if union representatives go and start negotiating and are trying to do things that their membership do not want, well, two things are going to happen: one, their members are going to vote against what gets negotiated at the table; and two, when the time comes to vote for their leadership, they are going to get rid of them.

The vote on offer is something that really questions the leadership in the unions and it shows a lack of trust. It is, in and of itself, an intimidation. It is, in and of itself, a way of intimidating people who probably do want what has been negotiated but now are fearful. This can certainly be more so the case with smaller bargaining units. It may not be the case with a huge bargaining unit, but it is certainly the case with a smaller bargaining unit, Mr. Speaker.

I am glad to see that it is gone. It should never have been there, so yes, let's get rid of it. I think that the government knows that. I think the government is aware of the fact that it is useless now because of other decisions that have been made, but in and of itself it is not something that we should have had anyway.

When we talked about this bill coming in, one of the reasons I agreed with the Government House Leader about bringing the bill in and letting it go through is that I did not want it anyway and it is useless; let's get rid of it. As the Government House Leader said, as we talked: Well, we could just say that we will repeal it next fall. Do you know what? We cannot trust that, so I am happy to have this bill here now to repeal it officially and no longer have it as something that is hanging over the heads of workers in this Province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CRUMMELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to comment on the bill before the House here now and correct a couple of things the member opposite just spoke about. The vote on offer was not a concession, Mr. Speaker. It was a non-consensus item within that deliberation, the consultations that took place in 2009 through 2012. So, I just want to correct that to make sure that the people at home fully understand that. It was not a concession, Mr. Speaker.

The question: Why didn't we proclaim it? Mr. Speaker, we made it very clear, I thought, over the last few days that the Labour Relations Board was looking into building up the rules and

regulations about the process. They had to do some work around that. It went back and forth to us and actually they finished the work just a short while ago, but during that time period we were reconsidering what was going on with the card-based certification. We were not in a hurry to go and proclaim this act, but there was a period of time for the last year-and-a-half that work was being done around vote on offer to put the rules and regulations in place.

Mr. Speaker, we must ensure that we do have a fair and neutral labour relations environment here in this Province, and we do have one. Vote on offer would not have changed that, in our opinion. That is why it was ready to be proclaimed and that is why we brought it forward in the last deliberation of 2012.

Mr. Speaker, we are making this move today with what we think is for the right reasons. The fair and balance – we listened to the unions and we listened to labour. They do have their points, Mr. Speaker, and valid points. Employers have their points as well. There is always going to be some give and take, to and fro, and conflict, just by the nature of that dynamic in that relationship, and we understand that.

The unions in this Province are welcomed, Mr. Speaker. They have done good work here and they will continue to do good work for the people of the Province, for the people they represent.

We have the second highest wages in Canada, Mr. Speaker, weekly wages, and it is because unions are here. We want unions to be here. They have made everybody's lives in this Province, who work here, better.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we are doing here today, we think is the right thing. We spoke to the Federation of Labour earlier this week about the concerns about Bill 22. We had some very frank discussions. We agreed to disagree on card-based certification versus secret ballot voting. They did bring up vote on offer. The Leader of the Third Party brought up vote on offer with the Premier as well.

We listened to what they had to say. We paused and reflected and said: Do you know what? We have an opportunity to bring some balance to the

legislation, and, Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing here today. We are doing it for the right reasons. We certainly believe in that. We have a climate here in Newfoundland and Labrador that is fair for the workers.

One last thought, Mr. Speaker. Last year the Labour Relations Agency had been successful in achieving that goal. On an average, 98 per cent of all disputes were settled. There were very few strikes in this Province last year. Over the last six years, a 95 per cent success rate. We heard the member talk earlier today about Quebec having a 97 per cent success rate. We had a 98 per cent success rate in the last twelve months, and a 95 per cent success rate in the last six years. So our labour relations climate here in this Province is good. We need it to be that way, Mr. Speaker, to make sure we take advantage of all the opportunities we have in front of us.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today that we are at this place at the end of the day. Again, we are doing it for the right reasons. We are doing it for the people of the Province and we are certainly doing it for the workers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I am not quite sure when the Minister of Service NL says that he is listening to labour. That is not the impression we have gotten in terms of the consultation that has taken place over both the vote on offer and the previous bill that we have been speaking about today.

There was no consultation. That process of consultation to come to these conclusions has been violated, has been disrespected, has been ignored. That is clear. We know that. We have heard from the labour organizations in this Province who represent the majority of workers here in our Province, that either the minister is being disingenuous or he does not fully understand the ramifications of what is being done here today. The ramifications of what is being done here today are serious and will have a long-lasting impact on the workers of this

Province, on the workers he is betraying by betraying the process of getting to this particular bill – both bills that are presented to the House.

MR. KING: Relevance.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader can call out relevance all he wants. I guess he wants to be in your chair. He has been doing that all afternoon, calling out relevance. Maybe he wants to be in your chair, I do not know. I am standing in my chair speaking on behalf of the people of the Province.

MR. KING: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader on a point of order.

MR. KING: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

I rise again to speak back to the member's commentary. My understanding is we are speaking to Bill 24, which is about vote on offer. My understanding from reading the rules of Beauchesne and Bosc from the House of Commons is this very much speaks to the content of this particular bill.

The member's diatribe about the rules of the House and the role of the House Leader is irrelevant to the debate here. I would ask the Speaker to give consideration to the relevance of the member's contents to the debate here in the House today.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Again, I want to remind members, we are speaking in third reading. I want members to confine their comments to this particular bill.

I understood earlier today we talked about, with the unanimous consent of the House, where Bill 22 and Bill 24 would proceed together in Committee and be dealt with separately in third reading. That was a procedural consent by the House. That consent does not extend to intermingle the debate between the two bills. The subject matter of both bills are different. This is Bill 24 we are dealing with in third reading now. I would ask members to confine

their comments to Bill 24 and only Bill 24, and not try to tie the two of them together because they are separate bills, please.

MS ROGERS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that instruction.

Bill 24, An Act to Amend an Act to Amend the Labour Relations Act and an Act to Amend the Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2, repeals sections 13 and 22 of the 2012 Bill 37, which amended the Labour Relations Act, and sections 2 and 4 of the Public Service Collective Bargaining Act. Section 13 added a whole new section, 83.1, which followed a first vote on offer. It was never proclaimed, as was mentioned earlier in this House this afternoon. In 2013, the minister was quoted as saying he just did not get around to it but that he would look at it in the new year.

In our briefing on Bill 22, officials refused to give a reason for why it was not proclaimed. We do not know why it was not proclaimed. We know it was there. We do not know why it was not proclaimed, for the same reason we do not know why some of the issues that are before us in the House today are.

First vote on offer allows employers to have a one-time opportunity during collective bargaining to request that employees vote on the most recent employer offer. The vote would be supervised by the Labour Relations Board. The employer can, only once, bypass a union negotiating committee and send a contract offer straight to the union membership for a vote. That is what it is about, Mr. Speaker. If accepted, the offer becomes a collective agreement. It is about bypassing the union process.

This provision is similar to the Ontario act and those of other provinces. From the Ontario Minister of Labour Web site, any time before a strike or a lockout, the employer can ask the Ontario Minister of Labour to direct a vote of the employees in the bargaining unit to accept or reject the employer's last offer on all matters remaining in dispute. Now upon receiving this request, the minister is obligated to direct such a vote, except in the construction industry where the minister's authority to direct a vote is discretionary. Now, neither the request to the

minister, nor the holding of the vote affect the time period set out in the act. In situations where strikes and lockouts are prohibited, an employer is not entitled to request a vote under section 42 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995.

Also from the Ontario Labour Relations Act of 1995, this is section 42, it is a vote on employer's offer as well. Section 42.(1) "Before or after the commencement of a strike or lock-out, the employer of the employees in the affected bargaining unit may request that a vote of the employees be taken as to the acceptance or rejection of the offer of the employer last received by the trade union in respect of all matters remaining in dispute between the parties and the Minister shall, and in the construction industry the Minister may, on the terms that he or she considers necessary direct that a vote of the employees to accept or reject the offer be held and thereafter no further such request shall be made."

"Time limits and periods not affected (2) A request for the taking of a vote, or the holding of a vote, under subsection (1) does not abridge or extend any time limits or periods provided in this Act."

Unions say, Mr. Speaker, that this vote on offer actually undermines the collective bargaining process, and that makes sense. It totally makes sense. It interferes with the process that has been negotiated and set up by the unions, by the employers, and by government, and by the workers. By the workers who have willingly decided to join this union and, therefore, decided to respect a collective bargaining process.

The employer, the government, and the Labour Relations Board have accepted to respect and honour and abide by a collective bargaining process, and vote on offer transgresses that. It is a violation of that agreement, and it rarely expedites labour disputes. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it causes confusion. It causes unrest. It causes division.

We know, in this Province, we have the most peaceful working situations. We have a successful relationship of union and workers, and employers and the government. It works well. They work well together. We do have a peaceful labour relation here in this Province.

That is why we have so many unionized workplaces, why we have so many unionized workers.

In fact, vote on first offer, what it does is that it often results in strikes or prolongation of strikes. That is not what we want; we want peaceful work situations. One union spokesperson said that a final offer vote is final only in name; nothing precludes improvement through further negotiation to the so-called final offer. It is all about respectful negotiation. It is all about respecting our workers. It is all about conciliation. It is all about making it work so that people can get about and do their business and that they can do it peacefully, safely, fairly, and be treated with justice.

If this offer by the employer is rejected by the membership, nothing precludes the improvement of offers. People can go back – unions can go back to the table on behalf of their workers.

This government supervised votes are rare, as the employer takes a risk that its offer bypasses the union leadership and that it will be rejected. Members of unions, Mr. Speaker, willingly join and they know the benefits. They respect that process. They are adults who have come to a process willingly, because they know the benefits for themselves, for their families, for their communities.

That is what this is about. It is about the present working conditions. It is about the future working conditions. Vote on offer violates every agreement that everyone at the table has come to. There has been a long process coming to those agreements. There are negotiations based on trust, there are negotiations based on integrity, there are negotiations based on honesty, and vote on offer, again, violates that whole process and undermines that process. It destabilizes the work environment, which destabilizes the economy, which destabilizes any profit that a company will have. Good-working, well-working companies, large-scale development projects, as we see in Newfoundland and Labrador, are unionized workplaces; and they would not want to violate the agreement that they are also part of. So, for those reasons, vote on offer is not a solution. As a matter of fact, it makes it more problematic; it does not lead to labour peace. In

fact, it does quite the opposite. So, for those reasons, it makes sense that the government at this point would withdraw that, would amend this through Bill 24 and take that off the table.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat meaningless when we think how it may be related to other amendments that government is proposing, amendments that also do not lead to labour peace, that do not strengthen the unions, and thereby not strengthening the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador who are part of the prosperity that we are all so proud of. Part of the prosperity that government keeps touting. Part of the prosperity that is about our future. We know how important it is to have labour peace in our Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: You have all heard the motion. It has been moved and seconded.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2. (Bill 24)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill has now been 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 An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 24)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this time I call from the Order Paper, Bill 22.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour, that Bill 22, An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act, be now read the third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this bill be now read a third time.

Is it the pleasure of the House –

The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are in third reading now for Bill 22. I would just like to make a few comments as we finish off debate here this afternoon.

Fundamentally, we are talking about the secret ballot process versus card-based certification. That is fundamentally what we are talking about here today. When we have a look at that – I hear comments from the other side about how the secret ballot process can be anti-democratic and there is some conversation around intimidation and coercion by employers in that process. Mr. Speaker, it does go both ways. We have legislation in place within the Labour Relations Act that prohibits intimidation and coercion, and provides a mechanism for complaints to be filed with the Labour Relations Board.

Mr. Speaker, we need to be cognizant of that. We need to understand no matter what system you have in place that these unfortunate things can occur through the certification process or any kind of process, but certification in particular.

I just want to call out a few things as well about the secret ballot process and what it means to workers. There is a mound of research on this that clearly shows that workers throughout Canada, throughout Atlantic Canada, throughout Western democracies want information, Mr. Speaker, before they make important decisions in their workplace, and they want the secret ballot process in place for certification and decertification.

The secret ballot is a fundamental symbol of our democracy. How can you argue against that? I have heard commentary in workplaces that it is not democratic. Let us talk about that. If there are issues around a democratic process through

the secret ballot process not happening in the right way, let us have that discussion, how can we improve that. We are not afraid of having that discussion. That discussion can happen, Mr. Speaker, with unions, with employers to make sure that employees are not intimidated or they feel intimidated at all.

When you look at card-based certification, Mr. Speaker, it is similar in some ways – and it will probably be a bit of a stretch, but – I am going to go back. The decertification process, Mr. Speaker, is basically employees sign a petition. They will sign a petition and you need 40 per cent of the membership, you have to validate it, and you have to bring it to the Labour Relations Board and apply for a decertification process. Then automatically the five-day window comes in and then a secret vote. That process is in place right now. That exists right now. It has existed for more than two or three decades in Newfoundland and Labrador. In that process you are signing a petition.

Yesterday, I ran into a friend of mine who lives in my district. She said, you are on the news a lot lately. What is that all about? I explained to her what was going on, the debate that was happening around secret ballot vote versus card-based certification. I sort of explained to her like card-based certification, you are at home or you are in your workplace and you have union organizers who can say sign a card, which is a perfect tool in a democratic society. Sign a petition, signing a card, a perfect mechanism in a modern day democracy. There is nothing wrong with it at all, Mr. Speaker.

I said to her that you could have incidents where intimidation could happen. She said, do you know what? I was at my desk in my office the other day and there were four or five people who were going around with a clipboard and wanted me to sign a petition. They are my co-workers. They are all in the same space I am in. They were saying, Mary sign – not her name – the petition. We are just getting everybody to sign up in the office. They were stood up on back of her and they were just joking and laughing.

Mary looked at the petition to sign; she looked at it and she said to herself, I do not believe in what we are doing here. I do not believe in this petition. There was nothing overt in what these

people were doing standing around, it was just: Mary, sign that and we are going to go to the next person and sign it off again.

There was no overt intimidation, but do you know what, Mr. Speaker? She did not want to sign that. Do you know what she did? She signed it. She signed it because she thought she would be ostracized by her co-workers if she did not do that, because everybody in the office were doing it. She was not intimidated but to herself she felt that if she did not sign it she would not be part of the group and she would be ostracized. They would be looking at her afterwards if she said: No, I am not signing that; I do not believe in that.

She said: I get it. I can see how that can happen in a workplace, where you just have to sign something and it becomes a fact. She said if I had to go in a back room somewhere and cast a ballot, and there was a voting process, my X, by myself with the ballot box, boom, done.

Fundamentally there is an argument on the other side as well, Mr. Speaker, so we need to understand both sides of the equation. Yes, there can be opportunities for intimidation and coercion in a secret ballot process, but there are rules and regulations and legislation and mechanisms. There are teeth in that legislation. There are orders that can be directed to make sure we can balance that.

I just want to say again, there is no perfect system, Mr. Speaker. There are many good employers out there who are great employers and there are some you are going to have to keep watching closely. The same, I suspect, with union organizers. There are great union organizers, good people, integrity, respect, but maybe some are not like that. That is why we have legislation. That is why we have regulations. It goes both ways, Mr. Speaker.

What fundamentally is the best process to determine what is going to affect your life for many years – and the secret ballot works. It has been proven to work, Mr. Speaker. It has been in this Province for over twenty years. We have the highest rate of union certification in any province in Canada; 40 per cent of workers in Newfoundland and Labrador are unionized, and that is a good thing, Mr. Speaker. There is

nothing wrong with that whatsoever. I am proud to stand up here in this House and say that, because I think it brings our wages up and it is a good thing for the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, we are all going to have to live together, we are going to have to work together. I do not think this is as big an issue as some people are making it out to be. I really think the secret ballot is going to work fine again, Mr. Speaker, like it has for the last twenty years. That is why our government has decided to revert to that. I am proud to stand here today and say democracy is here and the secret ballot process is here as well.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I am happy to be able to speak once more, and for the final time I guess, to Bill 22. I am glad the minister spoke to the things he spoke about because that is exactly what I wanted to speak to as well. It is the way in which the secret ballot system is being touted as the be-all and end-all.

I know in our political system and in other systems, what the meaning of the secret ballot is, but we are not dealing with the same thing when we are talking about how you vote when you are becoming unionized. An example that was used with me the other night by one of the members of government was: Well, you understand, Lorraine, how voting works.

I have two friends and they are both running, one for one party, one for the other. They want me to vote for them and I do not want to tell them. I can go into the box and they will never know which one of them I voted for. That is why we have to have the secret ballot, but you cannot compare that kind of voting to what we are talking about here. It is not people who are involved. You are making a choice of whether or not to join a union.

If people are telling us – as they are – that being able to sign cards really does show the will of the individual, that this is what the individual wants, then why is that not democratic? It has been deemed as democratic. The secret ballot is not a sign of democracy. It is part of our democratic process but so is the signing of cards part of our democratic process, so is signing a petition part of our democratic process. All of that is part of our democratic process.

What we do know is we have all kinds of experience from those who are involved in organizing who tell us that very often the secret ballot system favours employers by providing them with an opportunity to intimidate the employees into voting against the union. That has been proven. That has been experienced.

I mentioned earlier this evening that I have met with people who have told me how they experienced that. It goes on all the time. In some workplaces, especially smaller ones, secret ballots are not all that secret. If you are dealing with a smaller local, a smaller group of people and they are working together in a fairly tightknit workplace, they are all aware of how each other is thinking.

In actual fact, one of the experiences that was shared directly with me was somebody who was in one of those workplaces and how those who were thinking union were being intimidated by the employer very, very directly. Here in this Province, here in this city. We are not talking about somewhere else in the world. This is going on all the time.

Secret ballots are not so secret. Employers can pick up in small workplaces who is thinking what, who is voting for the union, and they find their ways to intimidate. Besides that experiential and antidotal information, there are many studies that have indicated that employer and manager intimidation goes on, and it goes on regularly.

A survey of managers at Canadian workplaces where organizing had recently occurred, and this is an article in the *National Post* in which Sara Slinn, the Associate Professor from Osgoode Hall, whom I have quoted before, that study found that 94 per cent of managers had used anti-union tactics, and 12 per cent had used

illegal and unfair practices to try to keep the employees from forming a union.

Now, this is academic study – somebody who is a researcher, somebody who is not part of that union or part of that workplace, but an academic researcher, and that is what they have found. Labour relations research has uncovered many cases of employers intimidating employees with threats, coercion, and bribes.

A study from the American Center for Urban Economic Development of unionization campaigns, they found that 30 per cent of employers fired the workers involved. That is what happens; they fire them. We have had that experience in Canada, for sure, and I am sure we have had it here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Forty-nine per cent threatened to close or relocate the business if workers voted to form a union. I quoted earlier today; Walmart is famous for that. Fifty-one percent offered bribes or special favours. Here is what will happen for you if you do not vote for the union – 51 per cent; and 82 per cent of employers hired special consulting teams to co-ordinate anti-union vote campaigns.

That is the kind of stuff that goes on. We may think: Oh, no, it is not like that here. Well, it is like that here. We have employers in this Province who are like that. We are no different than anywhere else. That is why we have had three of the longest strikes in our history taken place over the last couple of years in this Province – because we have employers like that.

More studies have shown that the introduction of mandatory vote procedures significantly reduces probability of certification. So that is very, very interesting. There are studies that I have looked at, too, that have shown that where there was card certification and then there also had to be a vote and you had a period of time in between, that people changed their minds in between – not because they really changed their minds, but because intimidation was used to the point that they were afraid to vote. Even that was a secret vote, and they still were afraid to vote.

Another study by Queen's University Law of Faculty showed that switching to the mandatory vote procedure encouraged unlawful employer

conduct, deterred workers from joining, and resulted in fewer union applications and fewer successful certifications – and that is here in Canada.

So even though it is illegal to intimidate workers in a union vote, they are getting away with it elsewhere. If they can get away with it here, they will get away with it here as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have been reiterating points that are extremely important and I want to reiterate, once again, that we can put an end to these regressive amendments that government is attempting to have passed in this House of Assembly this week for the Labour Relations Act.

We would like the Premier to ask his minister – I have asked him this before – to go back to the table with Bill 22; it is still not too late. We can work with government to create amendments that allow the people of this Province the right to unionize and to have legislation that is faithful to the original intent of the work, and consultations that the strategic partnership was involved in.

I therefore move that Bill 22 be not now read a third time, but read a second time six months hence.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and that is seconded by the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The House will take a brief recess to consider the resolution before the House.

The House sits in recess.

Recess

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I have had an opportunity to review the amendment. The amendment is incomprehensible, really, in that – and I just want to share it with the House. The amendment moves that Bill 22 be not read a third time, but be read a second time six months out.

The bill has already been dealt with in second reading, so the motion to amend will not be in order.

All those in favour of the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

The motion has been voted on and carried in third reading.

MS MICHAEL: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS MICHAEL: The bells rang for a very short time. I could not even take care of a personal need in the length of time that they rang.

MR. SPEAKER: When the Leader of the Third Party proposed an amendment in third reading, the Speaker indicated that we would take a brief recess to consider whether or not the motion was in order. I returned to the Chamber in a short period of time and rang the bells to summon the members back to the Assembly.

Members have a responsibility, when we are in short recess, to make themselves available. It is unlike an adjournment; it is a short recess, and we ring the bells to remind the members.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act. (Bill 22)

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 Labour Relations Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 22)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I move, seconded by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, that debate on Bill 22 and 24 is deemed to have taken place in accordance with the Standing Orders of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader, does he have leave or unanimous consent of the House to adopt the motion?

I am hearing no objection.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I would like to call from the Order Paper, Motion 1.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider a resolution relating to the raising of loans by the Province, Bill 23.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

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 (Littlejohn): Order, please!

We are now debating the related resolution and Bill 23.

Resolution

"That it is expedient to bring in a measure to authorize the raising from time to time by way

of loan on the credit of the province a sum of money not exceeding \$600,000,000.”

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands.

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am just going to stand for a few minutes to speak on this bill. As we know, it is a money bill, so I have the freedom to speak on a few issues. Mr. Chair, I will not be long.

Once again, we are in closing and I want to wish everybody a good summer. I know a lot of the ministers and a lot of the people across that I have worked with in the last four or five months, we did make some differences in the Bay of Islands, Corner Brook area. I just want to thank the government also for working with me as the Member for the Bay of Islands on that.

I brought up a couple of times, Mr. Chair, about Frenchman’s Cove. I do not know if the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs is aware of it. I just want to bring up a little incident in Frenchman’s Cove. It was on May 13 at 12:05 o’clock that the pagers went off for the fire department in the Town of Humber Arm South. At the time, Mr. Chair, people were running to the fire. The fire department were getting geared up.

Mr. Walter Butler from Frenchman’s Cove was on his way home from Corner Brook. Someone stopped him and said there was a fire at this certain house. He knew the house. They said there was no one home. Mr. Butler was aware that there was an apartment in the house. He ran to the house and he kept beating on the windows and the doors until he got the four people out of the house. Just for the record, within fifteen minutes the whole house was engulfed – the whole house.

Mr. Chair, I just want to recognize Walter Butler for the courageous work that he did, and to the fire department of the Town of Humber Arm South for being there, ensuring that there was no other damage done to the area. It is the kind of acts like that that we all become proud Newfoundlanders of each other.

So, Walter, a job well done. As Walter knew, there were two adults and two children in the house. With Walter’s actions, with the fire blazing, he got those four people out. I just want to recognize that. Good job, Walter, and good job to the Humber Arm South fire department and to all the residents who chipped in after to help out the people who had to move. I just want to recognize their kindness also.

With that, Mr. Chair, I will take my seat and wish everybody a happy summer. I hope everyone has a nice, safe summer and all the best.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Shall the resolution carry?

A bill, “An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province”. (Bill 23)

CHAIR: Clause 1.

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

I do want to use the opportunity of Bill 23 to talk because this bill is a pretty significant bill, which is a bill that will approve borrowing up to \$600 million. I would like to note that in 2011, the noted provincial economists, Wade Locke, warned all of us – he did it publicly – that while Newfoundland and Labrador had been enjoying Budget surpluses six out of the past seven years before that, he warned that the Province was still sitting on a potential debt crisis. So, the fact that despite all of the oil revenues and a timely warning by an expert – because he did give warnings – we stand here today debating a bill to borrow \$600 million, it should not come as a surprise to anybody.

Three years ago, Wade Locke predicted “the provincial debt will rise from \$8.5 billion today,” – that was three years ago – “to \$17.2 billion in a decade if aggressive steps aren’t taken to mitigate the problem.” He warned at

the time: Decisions would have to be made soon to avoid a worst case situation.

The current government is talking about the Budget that we are dealing with as a bump in the road. That government will be back to surplus next year, but they have been wrong before. They have been wrong before with regard to deficits and they have been wrong with regard to surpluses.

In February, 2013, government warned the public the Budget could be \$1.6 billion in deficit in both the 2013-2014 fiscal year, and the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Come Budget day a month later, it was a lot smaller than that. Showing government was not in control of the situation. The actual Budget revealed a much smaller problem of a \$900 million deficit, a difference of \$695 million. This government has not been great at estimating where things are going to go. They have not been great at being correct about their deficits, and they have not been great in being correct about the surpluses.

This is the first loan act since 2004, and it is interesting that in 2004 that loan act was also for \$600 million. This bill rescinds the 2004 act. Government basically is looking to borrow \$1 billion in all, but this piece – and we were told in the briefing, the \$600 million is a major chunk of the \$1 billion and the government will find other ways to borrow money.

I found it interesting the other day, one of the MHAs from the government side stood and talked about how government has not been borrowing. Well, I would recommend to all MHAs on the government side that they go to the back of the Estimates book, look at our consolidated revenue funds, and see all the borrowing that goes on, because the borrowing goes on through short-term loans. Well, short-term – loans that can be twenty, thirty years long, and they come due at different points in time. This year there are loans that are coming due, two major ones.

The government has always borrowed, that is part of running the government. So let's not make something of it that it is not. Yes, this time it is a particular borrowing that is going on, but the Financial Administration Act makes provisions for government to borrow money in

specific instances. For the repayment or rollover of existing debt, payments made to sinking funds – that is some of the funds I am talking about – and payments to pension plans to cover unfunded liabilities. The Financial Administration Act does permit borrowing in those instances. Government can also borrow money for the short term, and it does that. It does it regularly.

Recently, government has been buying ninety-day treasury notes to the tune of \$38 million a week. That is borrowing. That has been going on. In all this year, the Budget will commit \$286 million to that process. That is added to the \$600 million that we are talking about in this loan act.

Almost \$300 million of the \$1 billion that government needs to borrow this year is slated for debt maturity. As a matter of fact, yesterday, June 4, one of those debts matured. I said there were two. The one yesterday that matured was for \$300 million. That was the first one, plus there is \$50 million that has to be paid this year committed to sinking funds. Government is always borrowing and government is always paying back.

Government this time, they are saying up to maybe \$1 billion. What they are asking is for us to approve the \$600 million. They may not borrow the full \$600 million but they do need a cushion. They need a cushion against possible contingencies. They have to have a certain amount of money in the bank that can be accessed. That is one of the reasons why they have to get the approval for this \$600 million because our cash is running out. We are running out of cash. You have to have cash on hand, and we all know that as individuals. We have to have cash on hand. So part of the borrowing that government is doing right now is to make sure there is cash on hand.

We also have to recognize, why are we where we are right now in this Province? One is because of the big, what I would call liability which government calls investment, that is Muskrat Falls. The money that is going into Muskrat Falls from the public purse. That is one of the reasons we are borrowing. That is one of the biggest reasons why we have to borrow. Of

course government does not tout that all the time, but it is a fact.

The Finance Minister noted some time ago that he would have to make tough decisions. That was last year when we were talking about the 2013-2014 Budget – tough decisions. There was a local columnist who noted when politicians talk about tough decisions it is a signal that somebody else is going to get bad news. It is going to be tough for somebody else, not for the government.

Last year, the tough decisions meant that 2,000 public employees lost their jobs. I have to ask this government, after more than a decade in power with unprecedented revenues, how can the government's finances be in such a shambles? How can we be assured that their predictions for next year are going to come true? We cannot be.

Why are government's solutions to save money on the backs of vulnerable people, people requiring long-term care, vulnerable children needing group home care, people in desperate need of dental denturist work? Government is going around saving small pockets of money all over the place on the backs of people who need programs while they are borrowing money to make up for the way in which they are investing in Muskrat Falls, to use their language.

After all these years that this government has been in, why have we seen nothing done for universal child care? They are managing to do it in Quebec and other provinces. Why can't we do it? We do know that is an economic driver, having a child care program. I have mentioned that many times in this House.

Why have we not seen universal home care based on need, a proven way to address health care costs? It would be a benefit. You will not see it in one Budget. You have to have a long-term vision but there is absolutely no doubt, in every place that it has been brought in, if we really invested – and this would be a real investment – in home care as part of our health system we would have fewer health care costs down the road.

That is the kind of gutsiness I want to see from a government, not just the gutsiness to build a

Muskrat Falls and say: Oh wait, wait, wait; it is going to be for your good.

I like the gutsiness that says if we put in home care now we are going to see savings in five years' time or ten years' time and we are going to have healthier people and we are going to have happier people.

Government is borrowing \$1 billion, \$500 million of which is for Muskrat Falls. That is a reality. They are doing that while they are ignoring the needs of the people of the Province, as well as our looming deficit crisis. I want to tell the people of the Province it is not just this year's Budget, we do have a deficit crisis that is looming. What I would like to know, and we never get it, what is government's long-term fiscal plan?

I see my time is up, Mr. Chair. I may speak again.

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?

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

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

I am very happy to stand and to speak to the bill, and since it is a money bill I do have some latitude. I do not think relevance will be a problem.

I would like very much to invite all the members of the House here this evening to get a copy of an article that was written by Hans Rollmann of *The Independent*. It is an incredible article, and it is about what we have been talking about here

today. It is about Bill 22. It is about the whole card certification program.

Hans Rollmann does not have an axe to grind. He is neither a union member nor – I think he is an independent worker. The wonderful thing about this particular article is that it is almost like a primer. It is like a primer about really what is card-based certification, what is the role of the union. The title of it is: Tories set to revoke labour law, workers' rights. He says government is attacking its own good labour legislation, and it makes no sense. He said card-check certification is effective, democratic, and a basic right that must be protected.

I know, Mr. Chair, that for a lot of us our constituents are going to say: What was that all about? They are going to say: Why would some people be against the democratic process of a secret ballot? Why would somebody be against that? Why would somebody be against – people who know, who truly understand how the process works would say: Why would government circumvent the card-based certification? Why would they do that when it worked well, when the unions were consulted? But, they were not consulted on this one. I do not know why that is, and I keep wondering.

This happened so quickly, and I think: How did the Minister of Service NL come to the conclusion that this was in the best interest of the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador? Because the problem with this is that it is not in the best interest of the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador, it is not at all. What was on his mind? What was he thinking to come to this decision? He must have had a reason. Who was he listening to?

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour represents 65,000 workers across the Province. We all know people who are unionized workers. We know the unions in the Province are not a problem. We know we have family members, friends, constituents who are union members, who are part of the Federation of Labour. We all know that.

After establishing a process of consultation and strategic partnership, why would this government, with no warning, violate that process? Why would they turn it around like

that? Why would they ignore it? It seems to be such a violation of trust. It seems to be such a violation of what was set up and agreed to. Why do that now? I cannot imagine what the justification would be. I would love to know what the justification is.

The Minister of Service NL said that some workers spoke to him. Was it five workers? Was it 500 workers? Was it 5,000? Was it the 65,000 workers who are represented by the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour? The 65,000 workers who are members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour who respect the union process, who have trust in the union process, who have trust in the relationship that labour has established with this government? Did he speak to those 65,000 members? Did he speak to those 65,000 workers of Newfoundland and Labrador?

Because you can be sure the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour did speak to its 65,000 members. They are the voice of those 65,000 members. Why would this government at this time not only turn a deaf ear to the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour but not even call them to the table, to not even let them know what they were doing? Why? Why now?

It is a sad day in our House for labour history. It is a really sad day, and when I see our union organizers who work on behalf of the people – they do not work on behalf of themselves. They are working on behalf of the workers, workers we know, workers who keep our Province going, workers who make prosperity for us all. Why is this government turning their backs on those workers now?

One of the lines from Hans Rollmann's article – and I really encourage people to read it because it is a fantastic overview of the history of labour in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is also a fantastic overview of labour legislation since World War II. It is very interesting. It is not a long article. It talks about really what card-based certification does in this Province. He raises why it is important, how the process works, and he also raises the questions: Why interfere with that process now? Not only does he raise questions, he also provides some very interesting answers.

What he also said is one line that has stood out for me, “Bad policy will lead to bad outcomes”. We have had a pretty good relationship in our Province with labour. We have had an incredible history of labour in our Province, whether it be through the fishery, whether it be through resource development, whether it be through the people who take care of our sick, whether it be through the people who teach our children, who fix our roads, who ensure that our House here works well, that ensures our procedures as legislators, that we may be able to do our work here today. It is curious again why the whole consultation process was violated. To what end? Why? To what end?

The amendments that were put before us today serve one basic function. Perhaps this was the minister’s intention, perhaps it was not. Perhaps it was not the minister’s intention but the result of this is they will make it harder to form a union. We know what that means in workplaces, particularly when this government talks about the wonderful resource development that we see on the horizon.

What they have done, this government has committed itself to openness, to transparency, to accountability. They have said they are going to listen. The Premier, one of his strongest messages – our current Premier, the strongest message he gave was that he was going to listen, and no one listened to the representative of the bulk of workers in our Province. They did not even let them know something was going on that was so fundamentally important to how unionization happens in our Province. Again, how many people stood up and talked about how proud they are of the great percentage of unionized workers here in our Province?

This government also talks about how important democracy is, and very soon we are going to have a new Premier who has never been elected to anything, has not even been elected to be a representative of his party. He has not passed through any democratic procedure. He has not been voted on for anything, and he is going to be crowned and be our Premier. This government is saying that what Bill 22 is all about is democracy and a free and open vote, and we are going to have a Premier who was not voted in. Boy that is kind of interesting.

Mr. Speaker, again, this is incredible, as Hans Rollmann said, an incredible U-turn made by this government. They have skipped a whole process –

CHAIR: I remind the hon. member that her speaking time has expired.

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

CHAIR: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

There are some more points I want to make, especially under Bill 23. It is a money bill and this is our last evening in this House for a while. There are things that have gone on in here that I want to make some reference to and make some, I think, important points about.

One of the things during this session that happened was I brought in, with the support of my caucus of course, a private member’s motion with regard to minimum wage and the fact that the government did not accept, in 2012, the recommendations of its own advisory committee with regard to what to do with minimum wage. All the private member’s motion dealt with was following the recommendations of the advisory committee that government set up.

Bring the minimum wage up to where it should be since 2010, when workers who were on minimum wage first got to \$10 an hour. There has been no change in that now for four years. It will be four years in the fall, no change at all. Doing what the committee suggested, first of all, doing an increase that will bring it up to the wage loss level. The second recommendation of the committee and the private member’s motion said this, then go ahead and use the CPI, the Consumer Price Index, as the thing that would then deal with inflation and do increases every year based on the Consumer Price Index.

This government and the Official Opposition both voted against that. Yet, this government talks about caring about people living in poverty. It talks about poverty reduction strategies, yet it does not get the fact, the point,

that the way to reduce poverty is to put money in people's hands, and not just take the bills and put them in their hands. These are people who are working. These are people who deserve to have better income. These are people who, if their minimum wage went up, would be adding to the economy. Because they are still in the low-wage bracket and people in low-wage brackets cannot save money, they are constantly consuming and using their money. It is a benefit to the economy to have people on minimum wage with higher wages.

The other thing that government does not seem to understand, there is a real connection between minimum wage, which is generally in the non-unionized sector, and unionized work. Most of the minimum wage workers in our Province are women and young people. They are involved in industries which are undervalued by our economy. They are involved in retail, for example. Women in particular are involved in child care; they are involved in home care. In our Province those jobs are undervalued seriously, mainly because women and young people do those jobs.

I want to use an example. Let me back up a bit. I do know that even though we have unionized workers in some of those industries – for example, we do have some unionized home care workers. I do know their representatives, their unions would love to be able to negotiate much higher wages for them but the fact that our minimum wage is so low, it sort of dictates. It is the mark of dictating what you can fight for, what you can negotiate, what you can try to get.

People who are becoming unionized, new people becoming unionized in some industries maybe are not getting as big a wage as they should be getting because in the non-unionized sector the minimum wage is so low. You bring up the minimum wage and everything rises, everything moves up. Things become better for everybody. Why government does not see that – it is not going to hurt government to have minimum wage go up. It is not going to hurt government at all.

I have mentioned before in this House that if you do other things to help very small businesses, if you do things like lowering the small business tax, small businesses can be supported so that

they can carry the rise in the wage level. It is essential to do that. I say to this government, after what we have been through today here in this House: Don't you really care about people? Don't you really want the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador to be better off? Why would you not want everybody unionized?

Imagine everybody receiving a better wage. Imagine everybody having a health plan added on to our public health care system. We all have one. We all can, without thinking about it, for example, avail of services that our public health care system does not pay for.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MS MICHAEL: We can avail of massage therapies because of our health plan. We can avail of physiotherapy because of our health plan. We can avail of quite a number of services that our public health care system does not cover.

Why would we not want workers unionized with health care plans so that they too could do the same thing? Why would we not want everybody unionized so they could have family days, for example, which is part of a lot of unionized workplaces? Why would we not want unionization for our workers when we know the studies are there, the proof is there that the average wage of unionized workers is way above the average wage of non-unionized workers? That is a fact. That is a statistic that is true. It is not something that somebody is making up. The proof is there that this is the case. That is true for all unionized workers. It is especially true for unionized women. The statistics are there.

Why would this government not be wanting to enable unionization rather than do what they were doing in the House this week, and this day in particular, taking away a proven process for certification of bargaining units, the whole use of the signing of cards, which, as I said earlier in the day – and maybe people watching will not have heard that earlier in the day – which goes back to 1935 in North America, first of all in the United States, and then taken up here in Canada.

The recognition that card certification actually benefits the workers. It protects the workers.

This government makes all kinds of promises, as it says all kinds of wonderful things, but it does not deliver. They talk about openness and transparency, yet they brought in legislation into this House today without any openness and transparency.

Talking about consultation; when I asked the Minister Responsible for Labour Relations who were the employers that he consulted with, who were the workers that he consulted with, how many consultations there were, what were the consultations, he admitted it really was not a consultation process. Yet he stood up and said: I spoke to employers and I spoke to workers, but it really was not a consultation process. You bet your bottom dollar it really was not a consultation process. What happened leading up to 2012 was a consultation process, but this was not a consultation process; he said it himself.

What did he do? He bumped into people like Mary. That is not consultation. That is not consultation at all. I am embarrassed by a minister standing up and saying that. Yes, we all use anecdotal information, but you do not say that the use of anecdotal information is consultation. Because I bump into somebody and have a two-minute conversation, that is not consultation.

Consultation means getting stakeholders involved. Sitting down with stakeholders and making sure that everybody who has a stake in what is being decided are at a table. This government has not done that. This government has totally gone against everything, but maybe they do not care.

The Premier who was here and left the House today will no longer be in this House. They have somebody coming in who does not know the political system, so maybe they do not care. Maybe they are saying we have no control over what is going on now, so let it all happen.

Well, I am really very concerned and scared about what is going to happen after what I saw in this House this week and what I saw here in this House today. I hope they are going to think about it. I really do; but, do you know what? I

do not think they will, Mr. Chair. They are quite arrogant about the decisions that they have made here today.

Thank you very much.

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: Clauses 3 t 6 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 3 to 6 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clauses 3 through 6 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 Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province.

CHAIR: Shall the long 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 Bill 23 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 resolution and a bill consequent thereto, carried.

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 23.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 23.

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 hon. the Member for the District of Port de Grave.

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Ways and Means have considered

the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that they have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of Ways and Means reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the 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: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, that Bill 23, An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province, that the resolution be read a first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded 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 against, 'nay'.

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 to authorize the raising from time to time by way of loan on the credit of the province a sum of money not exceeding \$600,000,000."

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, that the resolution be now read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this 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'.

CLERK: The second reading of the 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 Fisheries and Aquaculture, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province, Bill 23, and that the said bill be now read the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill, An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province, Bill 23, and that the bill be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. the Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce Bill 23?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board to introduce a bill, "An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province", carried. (Bill 23)

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province. (Bill 23)

On motion, Bill 23 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 Advanced Education and Skills, that Bill 23 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'.

Carried.

CLERK: The second reading of Bill 23.

On motion, Bill 2 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 Transportation and Works, that Bill 23 be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that Bill 23 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: Third reading of Bill 23.

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province" read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 23)

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I understand we are waiting for the Lieutenant Governor to take us through the next piece of the proceedings.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will take a very brief recess, and I ask member if they would just stay in the Chamber, please.

Recess

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has arrived.

MR. SPEAKER: Admit His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

All rise.

[His Honour the Lieutenant Governor takes the Chair]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: It is the request of His Honour that all present be seated.

MR. SPEAKER: Your Honour, it is my agreeable duty on behalf of Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, Her Faithful Commons in Newfoundland and Labrador, to

present to Your Honour a bill for the appropriation of Supply granted in this present session.

CLERK: A bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2015 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service." (Bill 11)

HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR (Frank Fagan, CM, ONL, MBA): In Her Majesty's Name, I thank Her loyal subjects, I accept their benevolence, and I assent to this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the General Assembly of the Province has at its present session passed certain bills to which, in the name and on behalf of the General Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

CLERK: A bill, "An Act Respecting Public Interest Disclosure". (Bill 1)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Vital Statistics Act, 2009". (Bill 3)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Mental Health Care And Treatment Act". (Bill 4)

A bill, "An Act To Repeal The Printing Services Act". (Bill 5)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The City Of Corner Brook Act, The City Of Mount Pearl Act, The City Of St. John's Act And The Municipalities Act, 1999". (Bill 6)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Health Professions Act". (Bill 7)

A bill, "An Act To Amend Various Acts Of The Province Respecting The Publication Of A Summary Of A Decision Or Order Of An Adjudication Tribunal". (Bill 8)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act". (Bill 9)

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Buildings Accessibility Act". (Bill 10)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 2”. (Bill 12)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act, 2000”. (Bill 13)

A bill, “An Act To Establish And Implement A Province-Wide 911 Telephone Service For The Reporting Of Emergencies”. (Bill 14)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Mineral Act”. (Bill 15)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Student Financial Assistance Act”. (Bill 16)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act And The Tax Agreement Act, 2010”. (Bill 17)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Fish Processing Licensing Board Act”. (Bill 18)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Dispensing Opticians Act, 2005”. (Bill 19)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act, 2000 No. 2”. (Bill 20)

A bill, “An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act”. (Bill 22)

A bill, “An Act To Authorize The Raising Of Money By Way Of Loan By The Province”. (Bill 23)

A bill, “An Act To Amend An Act To Amend The Labour Relations Act And An Act To Amend The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act No. 2”. (Bill 24)

HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT

GOVERNOR: In Her Majesty’s name, I assent to these bills.

[His Honour the Lieutenant Governor leaves the Chamber. Mr. Speaker returns to the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated.

That concludes this session of the House.

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party, do you want to address the Assembly?

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

Well, we have had quite a session, I think, this time around. We have all worked hard. We have had a few nights when we have been here much later than I think any of us wanted to be, but we do what we have to do to get the work done. I think that is what is really important, getting the work done for the people of the Province, and that is what brings us all together.

There are many things we disagree on but I do believe, even though we all have different ways of getting there, we all do have the good of the people in the Province at heart. We have, as I said, different ways of seeing how that can be done and we all have different roles to play. I have never sat on the government side so I do not know what that is like, and I will acknowledge that, but we all have a role to play here in this House. The people of the Province have elected us, so we work hard to try to get across the points we believe people expect us to get across. I think we respect that in one another.

We have had some significant things happen this time in this spring session, not the first time but significantly having an all-party committee set up to specifically deal with the shrimp quota, I think was very important and very significant. I thank the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture because he did a good job in leading that committee. Unfortunately, I do not think anybody could have changed Ottawa. That is something we have to acknowledge here, that the decisions that were made there, and the latest decision – whether it is appropriate or not I am going to say it – by the Federal Minister of Fisheries with regard to no compensation because of the ice and our harvesters not being able to get out there is absolutely awful. I hope we all, ourselves, learn from that and hope that we would never make comparable decisions here in this House that could affect so badly the people who are out there trying to make a living in our Province.

I am proud of the fact that we did have the all-party committee on the shrimp quota. Perhaps it is a time for us to reflect on that as we come back after the summer break. Who knows what is going to happen before we all come back into this House. I hope we can use that experience this year as an example of how we can find ways to work together and look for different ways to work together. I think I will put out there, one of the things that would really make me feel good as a member of this House is if we really were to make operative all-party systems here, all-party committees to deal with serious issues.

Having said all of that, Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for all the hard work. I thank the Government House Leader and the Official Opposition House Leader for the work that we did together, at least trying to get things moving smoothly here in the House.

I want to recognize everybody who helps us do that, the Table Officers, of course, the Pages. Thank you very much for keeping my glass of water without ice filled all the time. That is a little extra task. Those we do not see, the Broadcast Centre, Hansard, all our people in our caucus offices who are there doing the research for us and helping us with our notes, et cetera. I thank you, Speaker, and your deputies for trying to keep us going here in this House as well in good order.

I wish everybody best wishes as we all work hard over the spring and summer. We all know what our schedule is like but enjoy it. I know I do, and I am sure everybody does. I really do enjoy getting around the Province in the summer and meeting people throughout the Province. I look forward to the invitations I get, I look forward to the travel. Let's work hard and have fun while we do that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will just take a few minutes as we wind up another session of the House of Assembly. I

want to reach out and start with you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the session, the support you had with your deputies and officers, and include the Sergeant-of-Arms. We have had a great time. We have noticed you have grown into the role now, so we appreciate the work you have done. Of course, the Table staff who have kept us in-line many times.

I often wonder what goes through your minds when you sit there and you listen to the debate back and forth, both the official debates and the unofficial debates that occur within the House of Assembly. You guys are sometimes caught in the middle of all of this. Of course, our security outside who are constantly there letting us in this place early in the mornings and late in the nights, whenever it is. They seem to be always there with a smile on their faces. We appreciate the work they have done.

The Leader of the Third Party did mention our Pages, and I really cannot say enough to say thank you for the great work you have done. Many of the Pages I have seen in the past who have served in this House of Assembly that we have met, they went on to talk about the great experience and the great memories they have had as they have worked here in this House. I am sure us as well, as MHAs in the chairs that we sit in, we have many great memories of the work you do. I encourage you; I look forward to seeing some of you back hopefully in the fall. We really want to thank you for the work you have done.

Indeed, the group at Hansard, what a fabulous bunch who obviously just continue to be there through some of those long sessions. Our Commissionaires, of course, out in the lobby. How many times when we would go in the evenings would they say: How much longer are you guys going to be sitting? Because they, too, obviously their lives are changed and affected by some of the decisions we make here. They are always there, so we really want to reach out and say thank you to them as well.

I want to thank my members of the Official Opposition here. Through all of it, I must say this has been a great session for us. I really want to appreciate and thank you for all of your support and the work you have done. By extension, the staff we have in our office up

there, I really want to reach out and say thank you for the work they have done in supporting us in the work we have done here on a daily basis.

To all my colleagues here in the House of Assembly, as it has been mentioned and we continue to mention – of course, earlier today with the Premier as he exited, we have a role to do here. The debate, obviously as it continues back and forth, but I really respect each and every one of you for the job you have done.

I realize that from time to time we will have a differing opinion on certain things. I admire the work you have done and I respect you for what you do for all of us making this Province and the improvements that we all want to make to enhance the lives of every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian. I appreciate that.

The Leader of the Third Party mentioned the all-party committee. I, too, want to especially recognize the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. We had our trip to Ottawa. We were not successful on the first trip but I anticipate there will be many more opportunities to see, as we continue to work this file, hopefully we can make a difference. I think that type of unity that we have seen from this House of Assembly and all members – it was not lost on the people we met in Ottawa. It once again showed that all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians can come together on a single cause. I look forward to seeing more of that in the future.

I will finish up by wishing everyone a good summer. I am sure some of you we will meet at some festival. No matter where it is, enjoy your summer. I wish you all a pleasant break with your families and friends.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for an opportunity to have a couple of comments on behalf of government and the Premier.

Like my colleagues, first of all I want to say thanks to you and to your trusty deputy and deputy chair of committees for the great work you do, despite some of the challenges that I and my colleague there and his deputy throws at you on occasion about relevance and points of order. You do a great job in here and we appreciate that. Of course, our Pages and our other staff, some of whom are here and some of whom are in the Broadcast Centre and other places. I want to thank all of you for your commitment and your dedication. We certainly really appreciate the work you do. The work we do, of course, is very much dependent on the support we receive, so we acknowledge that.

I want to take a minute as well and acknowledge, on government side, a couple of departing colleagues. Very recently, my friend who used to sit right here, Minister Shea, of course, retired last week. I publicly want to wish her all the best. She has been one of very few people, actually, who served in Cabinet her entire career as a politician. I want to pass along publicly our best wishes to her. Of course, our Premier who is not quite finished yet but spoke today. I want to pass along the best to him. Both of these are in the class of 2003. Both came into Cabinet at the same time and are big losses to our government. Particularly when the Premier leaves, he will be a big loss. I want to say thank you to them.

I want to say thanks to members opposite for the kind words we heard expressed to the Premier today in response to his regards. I think it was a class act to pay tribute and recognize, politics aside, of the contribution he has made to the Province. I thank members who made any commentary towards that vein.

Also, generally speaking, I want to thank all members of the House. Of course, my own colleagues here in particular who provide their support to the Premier, as the Leader of the Party, and to me as the leader of government here in the House. I want to thank them for their co-operation.

We, too, like I am sure you guys do, have our testy moments in the caucus room when the famous question is: When are we getting out of here? That is probably the question I have come to hate the most in this House; because, as my

two colleagues across the way, the House Leaders of the parties would know, it is hard to tell sometimes; and even when we do know, we do not want to tell sometimes because the best laid plans can go awry.

I do want to thank my colleagues for their co-operation and support and, of course, members opposite because, as we say, it takes all of us here together to make things work and to make things run – not always smoothly, but to make this House run. We are heading somewhat toward an election and our nominations have started, so I want to congratulate members opposite in particular who have secured their nominations; two, in particular, who have been contested: the Member for Cartwright, and the landslide in St. John's North.

For people watching this at home, we are having a joke here. I have to qualify that, because sometimes we forget the cameras at home. We are having a bit of fun here. I want to congratulate the two of you in particular because you were contested. It is great to see that you have secured your nominations, had the support of your constituents, and I wish you luck.

We will be starting some of ours soon. So, I wish all members who are planning to return the best of luck as they go through their nomination period; and, finally, a good summer to everyone. As the Leader of the Opposition said, many of us will likely cross paths throughout the summer, in different parts of the Province, at different festivals and whatnot. In spite of our adversarial debates sometimes, many of us do become very good friends throughout this process. I look forward to seeing many of you, but I do wish you good health and an enjoyable summer, above all else.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Before I call for the motion to adjourn, I want to take this opportunity to have a few words myself. I want to thank all of you for your co-operation in making my job as Speaker and that of the other two presiding officers much easier as we guide the process in this House.

I want to take this opportunity as well to thank all of the people who support what happens here, from our Pages to our Table Officers, the Sergeant-at-Arms to the Broadcast Centre, and to Hansard, the Library, and the Commissionaires, all of those people who make this happen. The Leader of the Third Party made a reference to the people we seldom see, but I just want to share some information with the House.

You may have seen a couple of weeks ago, a camera crew and a reporter here for a couple of days; because there is an interest in what takes place behind the scenes here. Sometime in the next couple of weeks, and again to be rebroadcast, as I understand it, on July 1, there will be a televised program about how this House works. Not what the members do on the floor of the House, which is televised every day, but this is a behind the scenes look at what goes on in the preparation for the House.

There were discussions with people in Hansard. We had one of our Pages who did a tremendous interview with the reporter and did a fine job in representing her and her other colleagues; people from the Broadcast Centre, people from Hansard, people from the Library. So, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador will get a better appreciation for the tremendous amount of work that goes on with those people supporting what takes place on the floor of the House of Assembly, which is what most people see generally. I will send a little note out to members advising them when that is being televised so you can have a look at that yourselves. That will be one time for us to showcase in a very public way the work that goes on by all these people.

I want to take this opportunity as well to wish all of you the best wishes for the summer. Enjoy yourselves. This is an opportunity to spend some time in our districts. I look forward to seeing you all back here in the fall for the next session. Enjoy your summer, and I assume now the Government House Leader will make a motion to adjourn.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I call from the Order Paper....

[Laughter]

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, and the Leader of the Opposition, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: This House now stands adjourned until the call of the Chair.

Have a great summer!

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