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Speaker: Honourable Scott Reid, MHA

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The House met at 10 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Admit strangers.

Order, please!

Orders of the Day

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Order 2, third reading of Bill 15.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 15, An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that Bill 15, An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, be now read a third time.

All those in favour?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against?

Carried.

CLERK (Barnes): A bill, An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act. (Bill 15)

MR. SPEAKER: The 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 The Liquor Corporation 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.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I’m just looking at my Order Paper. Give me a moment here now.

There we go.

Mr. Speaker, Order 8, second reading of Bill 18.

That’s why I needed my Order Paper.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, that Bill 18, An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown, be now read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that Bill 18, An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, “An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown.” (Bill 18)

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The demise of the Crown is a legal form for the end of the reign of a sovereign king or queen, whether by death or abdication, retirement, et cetera, and transfer to the Crown to the sovereign’s successor. The term signifies the immediate and automatic transfer of sovereignty and royal prerogatives to the late king or queen’s successor, without any period of time between the close of the sovereign’s reign and the ascension of the successor.

Canada is a constitutional monarchy. Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, is Queen of Canada and Canada’s head of state. She is the personal embodiment of the Crown in Canada.

At the federal level, many people are familiar with the Queen’s representative in Canada, the Governor General, currently Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Julie Payette. At the provincial level in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Queen’s representative is the Lieutenant-

Governor, currently Her Honour, the Honourable Judy May Foote.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, as in other provinces in Canada, executive, judicial and legislative powers flow from the Crown. Examples of this include: for the executive, Members of the provincial Cabinet are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor on the advice of the Premier. Judicial: Provincial Court judges are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. The Lieutenant-Governor in Council signifies the Lieutenant-Governor acting with the advice and consent of Cabinet. Legislative: The House of Assembly consists of 40 elected Members and the Lieutenant-Governor. After a bill has passed third reading, the Lieutenant-Governor may provide Royal Assent in order to make the bill become a law.

There has not been a demise of the Crown – thankfully, in Canada – in over 65 years. The last demise of the Crown occurred when King George V died during the night between February 5 and 6 of 1952. Immediately upon his passing, Queen Elizabeth II ascended to the Crown and became the Queen of Canada.

Traditionally, the demise of the Crown had a number of effects upon the functioning of various parts of government in the United Kingdom. Parliament was immediately dissolved, legal proceedings were discontinued and various office holders who were appointed by the previous sovereign ceased to hold those offices. Over time, in the United Kingdom, various acts of parliament were passed to modify these legal effects of the demise of the Crown. Some of these United Kingdom statutes date back to the early 1700s.

In recognition of the historical effects of the demise of the Crown, federal legislation and legislation of many Canadian provinces exists, with some variance from jurisdiction to jurisdiction to clarify the demise of the Crown does not: one, affect the holding of public offices under the Crown in right of the province; two, affect the right or capacity of a person to practice, engage in or pursue a profession, occupation or calling; three, require a person to retake an oath of office or oath of allegiance in

respect of a public office under the Crown in right of the province or in respect to a profession, occupation or calling, discontinue or otherwise affect ongoing legal proceedings or dissolve Parliament or the provincial Legislature.

There is currently no statutory provision addressing issues arising from the demise of the Crown in Newfoundland and Labrador. The bill before the House of Assembly would provide clarity and certainty in respect of these matters so that, upon the demise of the Crown, these matters do not become outstanding questions. For example, for public office holders. Newfoundland and Labrador does not currently have a statutory provision that clearly states that the demise of the Crown does not affect the holding of any office under the Crown and that it is not necessary, by reason of demise, for public office holders to again take an oath of office or allegiance.

While the *Oaths of Office Act* does include a provision that a person shall not be required to retake an oath in respect to an appointment to the same office, there is no specific reference to the demise of a Crown. This bill includes provisions that the demise of the Crown does not affect the holding of any office under the Crown in right of the province, and does not require public office holders to retake an oath of office or oath of allegiance.

Professions, occupations and callings:
Newfoundland and Labrador does not currently have a specific statutory provision confirming that the demise of a Crown does not affect the right or capacity of any person in the province to practice, engage in or pursue any profession, occupation or calling. Three provinces, namely, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, have such a provision. Similarly, there is no statutory provision in this province that it is not necessary upon the demise of a Crown for a person to again take an oath of allegiance to the new sovereign in respect of professions, occupations and callings. This legislation will provide clarity in this respect for members, governing bodies and others.

Legal proceedings: Newfoundland and Labrador does not currently have a statutory provision that states that legal proceedings are not discontinued

or otherwise affected by the demise of the Crown. Such provisions exist at the federal level and in some provinces, including Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan. For surer clarity of law and to ensure that this does not, one day, become a question that a court must decide, the bill provides that the demise of a Crown does not affect any writ, action or other process or proceeding, civil or criminal, in or issuing out of any court.

Dissolution of the House of Assembly: the province does not currently have a statutory provision that states that the House of Assembly is not dissolved upon the demise of the Crown. It would be much clearer, and in line with all other jurisdictions in Canada, to have a statutory provision directly addressing this issue.

In summary, this bill will provide statutory provisions for Newfoundland and Labrador so the province is legislatively prepared for the demise of the Crown. It also achieves consistency with legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions. As a demise of the Crown can be a time of upheaval, providing clarity and certainty at such time is important for stability in matters of government and administration.

Now, Mr. Speaker, clearly, we wish Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II many, many, many more years of good health and a prosperous reign.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This bill really is about peace of mind and, as well, it's about certainty, clarity, precision and the law.

We were told in the briefing that this bill's title uses the word demise to, ultimately, mean transfer, and I think that is supported in the information that we have. Really, Mr. Speaker, it's about the clean succession from one monarch to another and that is included, really,

in this legislation and in our law now, once it's passed.

We were told also, and we know, that the authority of the Crown will transfer immediately. It's like an automatic process without interruption. For example, after the sovereign's death, for example, Charles would automatically become Canada's head of state, the moment his mother dies. Therefore, the monarch endures.

What about court cases and decisions referencing the monarch by name? Would Parliament dissolve? Would some people be out of their jobs? This legislation addresses that in theory.

Mr. Speaker, there hasn't been much opportunity to test this theory, though. Thankfully, we do not have much experience with changes in monarchs. The last time there was an abdication was in 1936 when Edward VIII was replaced by George VI, and the last time there was an actual change of monarch in Canada by reason of death was in 1952 when George VI was replaced by Queen Elizabeth II. Hopefully, the next transition will happen far into the future because there is no world leader who commands greater respect and admiration than the Queen and it is hard to imagine not having her there.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister has pointed out, there are many other jurisdictions – most jurisdictions, have brought forward similar legislation to provide for greater certainty and we, in the province, now are doing the same: Saskatchewan, Alberta, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, British Columbia, Ontario, PEI and Manitoba. I would submit that we need to also follow suit to avoid uncertainty and to provide that consistency.

The bill states that “the demise does not affect the holding of any office under the Crown in right of the province; (b) the demise does not affect the right or capacity of a person in the province to practise, engage in or pursue a profession, occupation or calling; and (c) a person is not required to retake an oath of office or oath of allegiance with respect to a profession, occupation, office or calling by reason of the demise.”

We see, if we look at the explanatory notes, it is made clear that the bill would “provide that the demise ... does not affect any writ, action or other process or proceeding, civil or criminal, in or issuing out of any court.” These will remain in full force because of this act, as if there had been no demise, no transfer of the monarch.

Finally, the bill would amend the *House of Assembly Act* to provide that the House shall not be dissolved by the demise of the Crown. It shall continue in the exact same manner as even if the demise had not occurred. Notwithstanding that, the Lieutenant-Governor may still, by proclamation, prorogue or dissolve the House when the Lieutenant-Governor sees fit. This is just as it is now, so nothing changes.

It seems like passing such a law in this province is a good thing to do – why not? Many other provinces have already done so, but the question might be asked: What would happen if we didn’t? It is better, I would submit to you, to remove any uncertainty than to test it.

Another question might be asked: Does this bill cover all the bases? Does any other jurisdiction cover bases that we are not covering? Some questions to consider.

Historians might ask: What happened in 1952 and even in 1936? But, Mr. Speaker, the records from those times are not as easily searched as the records of today. We also have a different kind of society today. We live in a time when people are more educated on matters of law, and more willing to challenge things in the courts, to ask the questions. The flow of information is greater. It is not a time for us to be risking any uncertainty, that’s where this law will step in to assure that we don’t have that uncertainty any longer.

I would submit it’s better to be clear and precise and certain and consistent than to risk the consequences of being otherwise. With this legislation, that happens; therefore, Mr. Speaker, we support this bill.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaking to the act (inaudible) here, it’s very important we continue on doing these, that we streamline the processes, especially in the more modern era as this is. To have to go through the process of having lawyers and judges and everything re-swear allegiance to the Crown, and especially where we have more judges and lawyers and more people working in the system probably than in 1952, the process itself would backlog considerably. Having an act like this that also brings us in line with the rest of the provinces is very important.

There’s not much more to speak to it on that. We’re following suit with our Commonwealth friends with this and we have to make sure that government and the legal processes are not delayed or backed up because of an event on the scale that that would be.

With respect to this, as a caucus we are fully supportive of streamlining the processes and making government work for everybody.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, it’s a pleasure to stand and speak to a bill. I really don’t have a whole lot to say that hasn’t already been said. I just want to, for the record, say that I do support the bill.

Obviously, what we’re talking about here is that Her Majesty is getting up in years. We all know – it’s inevitable for all of us – that at some point in time there’s going to be a change. So this just allows, of course, for her successor to be recognized in law here in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Of course, if we didn’t do it, we’re told that because of judges, lawyers and so on that have to swear allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, what would happen if she was no longer there and her successor was in place. Then that calls

into question a whole bunch of potential – I'm not saying it would be successful, but certainly there could be potential legal challenges on all kinds of cases before the courts, whether they be civil or criminal or whatever the case might be.

To ensure that doesn't happen, we're changing the legislation to say whoever the sovereign should be at the time, that it would be that smooth transition to the new king, I guess it will be – yes, it should be king, whenever that happens and it won't interfere with any of the running of the province, the judiciary and the courts. That's what we're doing. It makes perfectly good sense.

As the minister said, we certainly wish Her Majesty many more years of health, but when that time comes, as it comes for us all, we want that smooth transition.

Thank you.

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

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

I'm not going to belabour this too much, but this is an example of kind of living history, if you want to look at it, and it speaks to the nature of the constitutional monarchy and the Westminster system. We are in the situation of having one of the – if not the longest serving monarch ever and, in actual fact, the only head of state to have ever served in World War II left alive today. Whilst we wish her good health, the clock is ticking, Mr. Speaker.

It also speaks to the nature of oaths to the Crown, and they have evolved over the years. They were intensely personal. I refer you back as far recently as the nature of the Prince of Wales oath of accession where he described himself as her liege man of life and limb. It was personal; it was not to the institution of the Crown. The Member opposite referenced the fact that the monarchy endures even though the monarch may not.

All bets were off on the death of the monarch. Everything ground to a halt. The lack of personal oath to a new sovereign paralyzed the

legal system, it paralyzed the political system. There are examples through history of changes in monarchs where there have been significant disruptions. You can start as far back as you want, but in recent times there were changes in 1936 and in 1952 that were necessary as a result of that lack of oath to the Crown rather than the Crown and a person of a specific individual.

Again, I just felt I would like to add my two cents' worth to this and I think I hear all-party support for what is a necessary piece of legislation.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader, if she speaks now she will close the debate.

The hon. Government House Leader.

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

I thank the Member for Harbour Main for her remarks and thorough dissertation on this matter, and to the Member for Labrador West, the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands and the Minister of Health and Community Services.

As you heard, Mr. Speaker, there is recognition of the great work of our sovereign. We wish her good health and a long life, but this demise of the Crown refers to the transfer of the power of the Crown from one sovereign to that sovereign's successor. It's important that we have that certainty, that we have that clarity. I'm glad I have support of the House to move forward with this legislation.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that Bill 18 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: A bill, An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown. (Bill 18)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill has now been read a second time.

When shall this bill be referred to a Committee of the Whole?

MS. COADY: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 18)

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 18.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Bennett): Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 18, An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown.

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown." (Bill 18)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair recognizes the Member for Harbour Main.

MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: I only have one question on this act because it is a very straightforward one, but I'm wondering why now? Has anything happened that we need to be aware of to bring this legislation in at this point in time?

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

Thankfully not, but there is a recognition that this is an important piece of legislation and that we should move toward that. As I know, all Members of the hon. House wish long life and continued prosperity to her sovereign, but it is a recognition that this was needed within our legislation and therefore we've advanced on it at this point in time.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Seeing no other questions, 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: Clauses 2 through 4 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 to 4 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 4 carried.

CLERK: Be it enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor and House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows:

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: An Act Respecting The Demise Of The Crown.

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 Bill 18 without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Against?

Carried.

Motion, the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 18.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 18.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, the Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Order, please!

Before I recognize the Member for Lewisporte - Twillingate, I just wanted to note that we have circulated a new Order Paper for today. There were some errors in the first one that was distributed. I think the Members of the Public Accounts Committee was left off, so that has been changed, addressed and a new copy has been circulated. I just want to make Members aware of that.

The hon. the hon. for Lewisporte - Twillingate.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 18 without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee has considered the matters to them referred and have

directed him to report Bill 18 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

MS. COADY: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the bill be read a third time?

MS. COADY: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, report received and adopted. Bill ordered read a third time on tomorrow.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

From the Order Paper, Motion 3, I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Committees of the House of Assembly for the 49th General Assembly be reconstituted as follows.

Mr. Speaker, would you like me read them into the record again, or shall we dispense with that?

MR. SPEAKER: They're on the Order Paper and correctly on the Order Paper now, so I think we'll just refer to it as the motion.

MS. COADY: Shall I read them?

MR. SPEAKER: No, I don't think that's necessary.

MS. COADY: Okay, so they're before you.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works that:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Committees of the House of Assembly for the 49th General Assembly be reconstituted as on the Order Paper.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that the motion related to Committees of the House 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.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, the following motion as on the Order Paper, Motion 2:

WHEREAS in accordance with subsection 38(1) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, the Commissioner for Legislative Standards has submitted a report respecting his opinion on a matter referred to him under the authority of subsection 36(1) of that act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly concur in *The Parsons Report* of June 25, 2019.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that the said motion now be read a second time.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have received the report of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards. Mr. Speaker, this resolution comes by way of the House Management Commission. It is made up of Members from all sides of the House, from all three parties and is essentially a guide of the House of Assembly in manners affecting MHAs.

This report has been compiled by the Commissioner for Legislative Standards. He has

the opinion that there has not been any violation, and therefore no action is needed to be taken.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Commissioner for Legislative Standards for his diligence in this matter and his report. I thank him for his continued efforts on behalf of the province and, of course, on behalf of all of us in the House. This matter is now resolved by way of the legislative commissioner, and I say to the House that it is resolved and that they concur in this report.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to stand and speak on the report itself as a whole. I ask the Government House Leader: Who did this report? I'm not sure if she knows, but she should find out because the Commissioner himself said publicly that he doesn't have the ability or the expertise. I'm just wondering who comprised this report. Did he go out and get outside help for this report to be done?

I think before we even accept this in the House, we should at least find out who actually did the report, because when you have a Commissioner who publicly states that I don't have the expertise – so did he do this report? I think before we even concur with this here, that's something that we should actually find out. I ask the Government House Leader that brought in the report if she can actually confirm that it was done by Rubin Thomlinson or some expert outside because he already stated that he doesn't have that ability.

Before I go any further, I just want to clarify a few statements. Last week when I was speaking, it was to the best of my ability that I knew this, and then I was later confirmed by three people. I know I made statements that the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island, the Member for CBS and the Government House Leader – that they were going to bring something to the Management Commission. They agreed to do it, and I stated that they didn't do it, but the reason why was that the former Speaker refused to have

the meeting. That's what these three people confirmed to me, the Government House Leader – and I apologize to her – and the other two Members.

I just wanted to clear the record and withdraw those remarks from the record and say that I did write the Management Commission in June, but they never did have the meeting. I'll just let the public know that I did pass it on to this Management Commission this morning to deal with these serious allegations that I made.

I just want to make it very public that I wrote back in June – I'll tell you the exact date now. It was June 19. It was never ever dealt with by the Management Commission. I just resubmitted these here to this Speaker to have a Management Commission meeting because I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that these are allegations that I would like to have resolved by the Management Commission.

I just wanted to put that on the record, the Government House Leader and the other two Members, that I withdraw those remarks that it wasn't brought, that it wasn't your concern.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to table a letter. I'm usually not allowed to do it but I'm going to ask consent to do it. It's something I spoke about last week. So if I have leave of the House to table the letter in the House. I'm assuming I have leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Member have leave?

MS. COADY: Is it on this matter or ...?

MR. JOYCE: Yes, it's concerning this matter.

MS. COADY: This matter?

MR. JOYCE: This particular matter.

MS. COADY: To table a letter?

MR. JOYCE: Yes, it's a letter saying that the Premier was involved with the process, and I spoke about it last week.

MR. SPEAKER: Does that Member have leave?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

MR. JOYCE: I do have leave.

MS. COADY: If I may, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. COADY: It's hard to give leave for something of which we're not aware, Mr. Speaker. Is it pertaining to this particular report? The legislative commissioner has made rulings, so I'm not familiar with what is going to be tabled or the direction.

Perhaps the Member opposite could give us more in his discourse – which he has time available – and then we can see where this is going.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOYCE: (Inaudible) I read it in the record last week.

MS. COADY: Okay.

MR. JOYCE: I read it in the record last week, so it was already read in the record.

MS. COADY: I don't know –

MR. JOYCE: That's fine, I'll just distribute it. If I haven't got leave, I won't table it but I will give it out.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm getting a sense that the Member doesn't have leave at this point.

MR. JOYCE: Okay, I do have leave.

Thank you.

The reason why it's so important, as we know these reports – and this is another report that came back, and I just want to read into the record again, Mr. Speaker, and this goes to not just to this report, but all the reports. I just want to read into the record. This is from the Premier of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. This is a quasi-judicial person.

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to remind the Member of relevancy to this debate. I'm not sure where he's going or what the contents of the letter are, but I just want to make sure that he understands that we're discussing *The Parsons Report* and the debate is related to the facts and the information contained in that report. I just want to remind the Member of that.

MR. JOYCE: It is about the facts and the information because who was involved with the report is – when the report was done up – we are all under the understanding here in this House – and I will even give a date when the Premier of this province made a statement in this House that he had no involvement.

I have a letter, which I tabled, and I need to read for the record because it is from the Premier of this province. This relates to all the reports, and this happens to be one of the specific reports, because if his office is speaking to the Commissioner, how do we know it's not about this report? I just wanted to read: I can confirm there was limited occasions whereby my office contacted the Office of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards for estimates on timetables when reports might be completed.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to read into the record also the actual act that we have here. It's already in legislation when reports are put back to the House of Assembly. "Where a request for an opinion is made on subsection 36 (1) or (3), or where the commissioner conducts an inquiry on subsection 36 (2), he or she shall report his or her opinion to the commission which shall present a report to the House of Assembly within 15 sitting days of receiving it if it is in session or, if not, within 15 sitting days of the beginning of the next session."

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to have it for the record that there is legislation here for when this report must be put back to the House of Assembly. The Premier in his letter said it's for logistics, which has nothing to do with the act. I'm now asking the question to this House and to the people here that if the Premier was involved with an independent officer of the House of Assembly, and he confirms it, what effects did it have on the reports, if any?

I just need to put that on the record because, first, we don't know who completed the report. Bruce Chaulk himself publicly stated, I don't have the ability to do it. So who completed this report?

Now I know because I'm going back in August, September of 2018 when the Premier told me that the Joyce report of October 19 and Dale Kirby's report were coming out together. The Colin Holloway report, sorry. It was the Colin Holloway report, that two of them were coming out together. They did come out together.

How did the Premier of the province know that? Why was the Premier of the province involved with an independent officer of the House of Assembly?

Now, he can use the weasel words on occasion for logistics, but, Mr. Speaker, I have many occasions where this Premier – and I use one of the text messages and I ask the Minister for the Status of Women, were you on a phone call when text messages were about Mark Browne? I know you aren't going to lie.

MR. SPEAKER: Again, I want to caution the Member in relation to relevancy. We're dealing with *The Parsons Report*, and the debate has to be strictly related to that report.

MR. JOYCE: Okay, that's fine, but this is some of the reasons – when the Premier stands in this House I think it was November 5 and he said: I had no involvement. My only involvement was putting in the letter that it was done, but I had no involvement. Now, I have a letter saying that he was involved. So how can we accept all these reports in this House?

I'll get into the report, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to read a statement here when the report came in, Dale Kirby's report. The statement was made by Bruce Chaulk here, and the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands asked the questions about who did the report. On his statement, on Bruce Chaulk's own statement, he said: Rubin Thomlinson, they're the experts in doing this report, you'd be a fool not to accept it. You would be a fool not to accept it. That was the *Hansard*, that's what the person said.

So, here we are in *The Parsons Report*, and I'm going to read *The Parsons Report*, that's in this. I'm going to read this here, what this man, Dale Kirby, went through. I'm going to read this, what's in it: “*You're beautiful and I love you and he explicitly states that he does not dispute making the comment. Being collegial with someone does not permit, invite or condone such comments.*” That was the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave who said that.

But here's what the findings were, the factual findings. This is in the report. I'm reading directly from the report. Here's the factual findings that were in *The Kirby Report* that's put in here as evidence. It's actually astonishing what this man went through over this here. It's actually astonishing. I just want to read the factual findings of Rubin Thomlinson, the expert, which Bruce Chaulk hired, which he said he would be a fool if he went against. I just want to read it in for the record of what this man went through and what people in this House voted for, your colleagues voted for, your friends voted for. I just want to go through this, Mr. Speaker.

“The parties agree” – one second, I was looking for what disingenuous meant, but – “that while at the Liberal convention, they had a one-on-one conversation, although they provided different locations and context for interaction. I found MHA Kirby's evidence relating to this conversation to be compelling in that he provided details that did not paint him in the best light and which formed a more coherent story than that of the Complainant. I note that the Complainant did not deny the context provided by MHA Kirby in her reply, but rather stated that it did not justify the conduct. As such, I found that the way she initially presented the meeting in her complaint to be somewhat disingenuous.” That's the witness that this expert said, the person who made the complaint is disingenuous.

We have to keep that in mind. When he puts that in his report, that the person who makes the complaint is actually disingenuous, Mr. Speaker – and we'll go on. “I also note that her evidence during her interview, that a particular comment was not sexual in nature, did not align with her written reply that alleged that the same comment was ‘sexualizing talk.’ To that end, I have

preferred MHA Kirby's evidence on this allegation."

It goes on to say: "That is, I find that he made the comment in a friendly manner within the context of a casual conversation ... I do not believe that the comment was intended to be sexual in nature, nor do I believe that the Complainant genuinely perceived it that way at that time. I find that during this casual conversation, MHA Kirby told the Complainant that he wished to work with her and that her approach of working against him, his colleagues, and the Premier was not helpful to any of them."

Here's the sentence Bruce Chaulk puts in there – I just want to let Members know what you did to this man. Here's the comment Bruce Chaulk put in: "While this conduct may not have been intended to be sexual in nature I do find below that this interaction was a violation of Principle 5 of the Code of Conduct." That's the sentence Bruce Chaulk put in.

Here's the next sentence that the experts put in – the experts of this province put in: "With respect to the remainder of the specifics of this allegation, I do not find there is sufficient evidence to conclude that MHA Kirby specifically advised the Complainant not to submit her survey, nor do I find that he made the other alleged comments about her actions as an MHA on behalf of her constituents." That's what the experts found.

Dale Kirby was found in violation of Principle 5, even though the Commissioner said the person who initially made the complaint was disingenuous. He doesn't believe what she said. She changed her story, but yet Dale Kirby was failed in Principle 5.

I just want to go back to Principle 5. I'm just saying what this House of Assembly did to this guy. Dale Kirby's lawyer wrote Bruce Chaulk and said: What is Principle 5? I don't have to tell you. Here's why Principle 5 was developed. This is why I have to question why were things done. Even in my case – and I'll get into that, too, because the Commissioner has to come in question here.

Principle 5, it was the understanding that if you're in a Cabinet position or some position,

you can't give out information that's going to benefit your family. That's what we always thought Principle 5 was and there was nothing there. I'll tell you what I dug up. Here's what I dug up, Mr. Speaker. I'm going back to May 13, 2008, when this here was developed. I was in the House of Assembly in 2007 when we had discussions.

May 13, 2008, here's the guidelines that they were making up then for Principle 5: Members shall disclose all interests as required under House of Assembly; directorships, employment offers, gifts, hospitality, reimbursement of other material benefits on his or her knowledge, financial sponsorship, land, travel, the names of companies or other bodies paid or chairmanships or memberships. That's the discussions they had at the Management Commission back in 2008 about Principle 5.

Now, we found the person, Dale Kirby, in violation of Principle 5. Bruce Chaulk will not verify what Principle 5 was to his lawyer. Principle 5 was around what we always thought, and I always thought, was that you can't divulge information for personal gain for your family or whoever. I'm going back to *Hansard* in the general terms of what was done. Can anybody tell me in this House how you can put a man through what he went through for six, seven months when you don't even know what you were found guilty of? The evidence shows here that it has something to do about receiving gifts, about giving private information out to benefit your family.

For some reason, which is beyond me, Bruce Chaulk had to find something, so he said: You made a statement. The statement that was made that Rubin Thomlinson, the experts who were brought in, said her complaint was disingenuous, her statement changed, yet here's a man who went through torture for six, seven months over Principle 5, which was dealing with receiving gifts. Do you realize what you did? Do people in this hon. House realize what you did to this man? It is actually shameful, Mr. Speaker. It is shameful for what happened in this House.

I've got to say – and I'm going to bring this up – during the election, Dale Kirby came out with me for a week, campaigning, and I'm glad he did. He's a friend, he called, he said: What do

you think? Come on, bring it on. He was so happy to be – do you know why he was so happy? Forget about great campaigner he is, and we're having fun for a week. Do you know what the great thing Dale Kirby was so proud of when he left? When we knocked on so many doors and women answered the door, do you know what the women were telling Dale Kirby – which I told him I've been hearing all the time? She said these complaints in here puts the women's movement back. This is not about someone being abused or someone being sexually abused or someone being aggressive, this is just plain old – when he heard that so many times at the door, he felt so good, Mr. Speaker.

I have to ask here in this hon. House, Mr. Speaker – and I'll go through this report also – who did the report? I hope the Government House Leader can find that out or the Speaker through – sorry, it's not the Government House Leader. Sorry about that. The Speaker, through the Management Commission. Who did the report because he doesn't have the ability – remember, he said it publicly he doesn't have that ability.

How is this report derived? How did this report come about to this House? Who did he hire to do the actual investigation? That's what I need to know. How can we accept it until we know that? Because there was a big hullabaloo here back in April 25, 2018, all this big House of Assembly was rocked by scandal. Some of the allegations: putting two drinks on a bar tab. Yeah, really rocked by scandal.

There are other things I can bring up here, Mr. Speaker. I even use the Bruce Chaulk – and this is why it's relevant to this report because Bruce Chaulk apparently did this report. I have a note here, even from the Premier of the province that he made. It was Question Period, I think it was December 5 by the Leader of the Opposition when he asked him about some comments I made. The Premier of the province even said, as I always said, that Bruce Chaulk would never take into account or even call the Premier. He said the allegations against me; they even changed by the time they were first made.

What did Bruce Chaulk – who now apparently did this report and he's under scrutiny here. Why

didn't Bruce Chaulk investigate the allegations changed? Why didn't he do it? We have the highest person in this land, Mr. Speaker, who took the allegations, who publicly stated they changed by the time they got to him by the time they made it to Bruce Chaulk and he either wouldn't go as a witness or either Bruce Chaulk wouldn't call him as a witness. The rights of a Member of this House of Assembly – because Bruce Chaulk didn't do his proper work – was wrong.

Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of thing that we're faced with here.

MR. SPEAKER: Just as a point. We have a tradition of not referring to people by their names but by their role in this House. I would ask that the Member be consistent with that practice.

MR. JOYCE: Sorry, I didn't know I did it. I apologize for that, Mr. Speaker. I didn't know I did it.

That's the kind of thing when you look at this report, which relates to Bruce Chaulk, who apparently did this report – oh, sorry, the Commissioner for Legislative Standards. Sorry, I now know what you mean. I saw the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay smiling at me. The Commissioner for Legislative Standards – I'm sorry, I apologize.

You can see, Mr. Speaker, why I questioned this report that's being brought into this House. You see why I'm questioning it. The Commissioner for Legislative Standards stood in this House and statements that he made in this House – and this goes back to some of the reports that he actually went ahead and did.

When he stood in this House and he was talking about – and he was going on that a respondent can make a complaint, then he can get their lawyer or he can do their own writing. The part he forgot in this House of Assembly – and this is part of the report that has gone in there, Mr. Speaker, as part of this House of Assembly. It says, the respondent, upon every part of the – shall be given the opportunity to be present, a reasonable opportunity to be present. He said that in this House many times – many times.

Take a guess who was never interviewed. This is where this report comes in, because this is the man who did it, apparently. Take a guess who was never interviewed. Me. Then –

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the Member again that we're dealing with *The Parsons Report* and that we should stick to the content of *The Parsons Report*.

MR. JOYCE: You have to allow me leeway, because the person who did *The Parsons Report*, you allowed the question – the Commissioner's ability to do this here and the other things that he made, which is going to make up this report. You have to allow that.

If a person is out making these reports, you have to allow me the opportunity to explain why I feel this is flawed, when you can show other cases where he made statements in this House which were not true. You have to allow me that. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, if you're talking –

MR. SPEAKER: I ask the Member to take his seat for a little while.

The matter before us is *The Parsons Report*. The other reports have been dealt with by this House. I've been giving the Member a lot of leeway in terms of relating some other materials to the content of *The Parsons Report*, but the issues related to the other reports are related to the other reports and they've been dealt with in this House. The way they can be brought back to the House is on another different motion. We're dealing with the report before us now, and I'd ask the Member to relate his comments to this specific report.

MR. JOYCE: I'm going to ask you a question, Mr. Speaker, because I guess I'm a bit confused here. Any court that you see – and I know there's a lawyer here; for sure there's one – if there's someone who made statements in the past, are they allowed to be questioned to justify the report now? Sure, you are. So how can you say that these reports don't matter, they do matter.

If a report is coming in this hon. House, Mr. Speaker, and this certain person made this report, how confident are we that this report is accurate? I'm not saying it's not. How confident

are we that this report is accurate until we question what was said prior by the same – which I know and, by the act, people in this province know and I know the people opposite know weren't true.

You have to allow me that leeway, Mr. Speaker, because the questions that I'm going to be asking – and, again, I'll ask the House for what happened to Dale Kirby. I look at the Member for Baie Verte - White Bay. You're a good one, RNC. I'll ask you a question. What if, Mr. Speaker, through you – just think about this, what if a witness came in to you and you did a statement. Then you proved that this witness is disingenuous, changed the statement. You believe the other person and you took it to court and you tried to charge that person after your statement says this person is disingenuous. Changed the statement, we don't believe you; we believe this person, but we're going to charge you anyway. What would happen to you? How long would you stay on the force when it went higher up and you found out?

That's exactly what happened to Dale Kirby. Just to let you know, it's exactly what happened to Dale Kirby. Guess what? You all voted for it in a big hullabaloo here in this House of Assembly, in the big harassment scandal rocking this House, the big – rocking this House over a bar tab?

I know in the Member's statement she's – Dale Kirby, would he say to a guy, I love you. He says it to me all the time. I love you, man, like a brother. He says it to me all the time. How many people do we say here, love you, man? By the way, that's a violation now according to Bruce Chaulk. That's a violation now. Any of the guys here now we do each other favours or love you, man, thanks, violation, according to Bruce Chaulk.

That's what this man went through. This is going to be taken up in other venues. This is not dead by no means, but then again, I'm just hoping that the Management Commission is going to deal with what I put in about the Commissioner for Legislative Standards.

When you accept this report – and I know everybody is going to accept this report. I know that this is going to be just taken, see you later,

let's try to get this gone. Let's get this under the water. Let's just move on from all this here. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I have to stand up for my friend Dale Kirby because I can tell you if anybody that is reasonable went through the file of what happened to Dale Kirby, you'd be ashamed to say that you voted for it, because you never took the time to read it.

If something ever happens serious – you hit somebody, you sexually assaulted somebody – anything serious, I'm sure most Members here, if we ever did something that was that serious, we would walk out the door. We wouldn't have to wait to leave. When you get this situation, Mr. Speaker, that's in the report, how someone like Rubin Thomlinson who was brought down who said this man did absolutely nothing wrong. Absolutely nothing wrong. Then you have Bruce Chaulk who says – and he said in the report and I can track it down, I have it here – in the report, who says in a question in this House: I'm the expert because the legislation tells me I'm the expert.

I think it was the Minister of Justice who asked him the question: How many reports did you do? One. But he's an expert. Then you bring down \$120,000, bring Rubin Thomlinson down, do all the information, go through all the witnesses, get all the information, put it in there, that there's absolutely nothing to this here. This man is found in violation of Principle 5, which means accepting personal favours because you can't give out information that your family may benefit. That's what he was found guilty of. Can you imagine? Can you imagine what happened here, Mr. Speaker? It is actually unbelievable.

I have to say to Dale Kirby, keep your head high. We will get to the bottom of it, absolutely no doubt. I know in my case, Mr. Speaker, I'm vindicated. Win by almost 70 per cent as an independent. I'm fine. I am more than fine.

I ask you one question, Mr. Speaker. I ask anybody in this House and anybody who wants to listen: Name me one jurisdiction in Canada, just one – I'll even go a bit further than that – anywhere in the British Commonwealth where an officer of the House of Assembly goes into a Management Commission, makes a false statement, the former Speaker admits he made a false statement, and the Minister of Justice and

Attorney General of this province goes public and says he made a statement in our Management Commission that was later proven false, and there are no repercussions and the reports are still here. Name me one jurisdiction of the British Commonwealth, and that's exactly what happened here. Name one.

That's exactly what happened here. Bruce Chaulk walked into the Management Commission and said there's one person who refused to participate, and they were asked, who was that? It was Eddie Joyce, and I produced the letters from the lawyers that morning. The former Speaker turned and said to me: That's not what he said this morning; he said you were definitely willing to meet. Turned to Bruce Chaulk, he said: Oh, I forgot about those letters. I'll correct the record. The Minister of Justice and Attorney General went public, public, and the same person that was receiving this report, he said he made statements we found out later not to be true. What are the repercussions?

If any of us in this House makes a statement here that we can prove documentation that it's false, what do you have to do? Apologize. You have to stand up and apologize. You know the repercussions in this House? Dale Kirby kicked out of Cabinet and caucus, banished. Eddie Joyce kicked out of caucus and Cabinet, banished. All across Canada, bullying and harassment, but we have an officer of the House which has yet to be investigated for making statements to the – and I ask how many people on the Management Commission at the time were there? I think there are one or two.

Mr. Speaker, in the report that I made to you, you're going to see why – and I'm going to give it to the people on the Management Commission also – why this is so bitter. And this is why when you ask people what's the most bitter part about this here, is that when you have an officer of the House who made a statement – and the person who I have to give credit to, the Minister of Justice, had the courage to go outside and say what he said was wrong.

Whatever happened? Can you imagine an Officer of the House running into this House of Assembly and doing what he did?

Now we find out the Premier of the province was involved with the process. What involvement, I don't know. I'm sure there are other statements he made that I know for me, personally, and other things, that weren't true. They actually weren't true. There's documentation and people witnessed it. How can I believe it was only just on the logistics? Which I don't believe.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. JOYCE: Is it? I'll find out. How are we ever going to find out, unless this hon. House stands up? It's time to stand up.

I'll just use me again, Mr. Speaker, on the Principle 10. This is important, because this man did the same thing to Dale Kirby on Principle 5. I've read the guidelines that were back in 2008, what they were doing, the Management Commission when they were discussing it. That was around the discussions about getting gifts and land and making sure, you can't divulge information like that. That's what Principle 5 was.

Can you tell me what – someone is saying outside: b'y, we got to work together. You're embarrassing the Premier. Me and the government have to work together for personal benefit. The only thing someone can come up with is you're going to make a minister look good. Do you realize what this man went through?

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak a minute on Principle 10, because this, again, goes to the credibility that Bruce Chaulk made the statement in the report that Principle 5 – which, again, was shown. I'll just go back to Principle 10 where government employees – Mr. Speaker, I have it here. I can produce it very easily, and I can read it actually.

What happened was the Clerk of this House and Bruce Chaulk, when we applied under the Privacy Commissioner to get the Rubin Thomlinson report, both of them confirmed in writing that Members of the House of Assembly are not government employees. Principle 10 is between Members and government employees; yet he said I violated Principle 10. The same

way, he said, Dale Kirby violated Principle 5. The exact same way, Principle 10.

You go back to Principle 10, we're not government employees according to the Clerk and to the Commissioner himself, who made the statement to the Privacy Commissioner (inaudible) to Rubin Thomlinson. We are not government employees, yet he classified this here as the Member who made the complaint as a government employee, which is not true.

I'll just give you May 13, 2008, again. This was in *Hansard*. The person who made the statement was Roland Butler. Roland Butler was a Member of the Management Commission who developed this. Here's what Roland Butler said, Mr. Speaker, and this just goes back to the evidence that I'm saying about the report we're presenting here today, how much validity is in that report.

Another one I really like here, I think everyone of us, is the relationship between us as Members and the people in the various departments, the civil service. I have to say, prior to being elected I worked in the department of social services and how we must keep a relationship.

Back in 2008, that's what Principle 10 was all about. It was between government Members and government employees. Here it is in *Hansard*. The man who developed it said it is between government employees, between Members; yet when the Commissioner needed to find something on Eddie Joyce, he said Principle 10, government employees. The person who made the complaint is not a government employee.

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the Member, while Principle 10 was one of the items dealt with in this report, an explanation of what it is, is fine. But in relation to another report, I think we should, again, keep our comments related to this report and the relevant principles related to it.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, it is very relevant because we're going to be discussing this here and what principles were developed and how the Commissioner – it is very relevant. I don't know how it's not relevant when you have a person who's out making these principles and you're showing that it's not true. How do we know how relevant – what's in this report now?

Just on the last thing on that, Mr. Speaker – and I'll move off that then – we're going to be debating pretty soon the final report of the House of Assembly legislated specific harassment-free workplace policy. April 2019 that came in. I want the people – whoever wants to go to page 13, if you ever get time to read it. You know the funny part about that? It's strange, Mr. Speaker, you were the Chair of that committee.

Imagine now, Eddie Joyce was banished, was a big bully over Principle 10 across the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Even you in the report, as Chair of the report, Mr. Speaker – just by coincidence you're Chair of the report. It's stating that Principle 10 is between elected Members and government employees. It's right in the report that was going to be brought in this House.

How can anybody in this House, after you, Mr. Speaker – you know now, you even brought this in. How can anybody in this House, when something is brought in and you know is false – so any violation of Dale Kirby on Principle 5, which deals with gifts and land, is false. Any allegation now that was brought to this House and this House approved it and Eddie Joyce was found on Principle 10 – which you're saying yourself is between elected people and government employees. How can you stand for it?

You can see why the frustration with myself and Dale Kirby. It's in the report, yes; yet no one took the time to ask him.

When I asked a question here in this House of the Commissioner, when I asked the Commissioner in this House, he said Members are plural, but back in the debate in 2008 and back in your own report, it definitely distinguishes between elected officials. Even in the act, it's distinguished as elected officials and they distinguish employees.

So you can see why this House of Assembly jumped to a conclusion because of the hullabaloo. You can see why I'm so frustrated now that I know the Premier was involved with the process, which is very upsetting. You can see why I have a problem with this report being brought in here today and we just got to take it

and rubber stamp it. I just can't take it and rubber stamp it, I'm sorry.

It's very sad when you take a report and you just got to take it and rubber stamp it. I'll tell you why I can't take this report and rubber stamp it, because the House of Assembly took two reports – one, the Eddie Joyce report and, one, the Dale Kirby report – they took it and rubber stamped it. I can't do it. I personally can't do it.

Mr. Speaker, I just feel that it's a sad day – I just presented a case for this Legislature and the only person who ever stood up and had the courage was the Minister of Justice and Attorney General. I'm saying to all my colleagues and friends who I've been with a long while, now that you know the information that was presented to the House of Assembly when you made a vote, it's time to make a decision, then if you want to refer it back and do it, I'm fine.

We're going to be fine with all this here, trust me. Dale Kirby is going to be fine. Eddie Joyce is going to be fine. But I can tell you one thing, when you stand up in this House and you voted against people, now you know that the information you voted on is inaccurate, it was stretched – and even the people on the committee, Mr. Speaker, that you chaired, are saying what Bruce Chaulk put in that report on Principle 10 is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, you have to make a decision. As Chair of the Management Commission, when it comes to this report you have to make a decision. Now that you know Principle 10 is even in your own report, and once it refers to me – okay, Principle 10 didn't work for me, which now you, Mr. Speaker, in presenting your report, confirms what I've been saying all along, is that principle 10 does not hold – you have to take a stand, you and the Management Commission. Once you take a stand here on Principle 10 for the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands, which is me, you have to take a stand for Dale Kirby also. I'm not in this here for myself. Myself and Dale Kirby were put in this not because we wanted to, it's because of the hysteria that was created around all the bullying and harassment which never occurred, according to Rubin Thomlinson.

I see the Member smiling a bit. Yes, I would smile too, if I went up and charged someone for harassment for putting two drinks on a bar tab and got away with it – yeah, winking. She's over there winking, Mr. Speaker. She's over there smiling. That's the kind of stuff, the hysteria that this House created. That's the kind of hysteria that this House created.

I just want to say to the Members opposite, I just know you aren't going to stand up and do it. I know that. You should, because you know something, do you know who would be the first two that would do it for you? Eddie Joyce and Dale Kirby and you all knew it. The first two who would stand up over there would be Eddie Joyce and Dale Kirby if someone was in a mess and make sure you're treated right. Everybody knows that. You all know that. I'm going to have a problem accepting this report. I know it's going to be passed in the House absolutely, no problem whatsoever.

One more thing that was put in the report that I find ironic – and I won't get into it. There's no need to get into it because I'd be dragging another report into it. I won't do that today. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to sit down now and just let everybody reflect. Except for the Members that were just elected in 2019, just let you know this is what the Legislature was in here. This is the Legislature that existed back then and the complaints, something like laughing. Something about a school – I think one of the complaints was about a school. I'll lasso one and drag it up for you – that was the complaint. Putting two drinks on a bar tab when caucus was out, that was one of the complaints.

The complaint about out in Gander. The strange part about that, Mr. Speaker, the complaint out in Gander, which Rubin Thomlinson said himself – the report said: disingenuous, not true, didn't happen. Don't believe the person who made the complaint. Yet the person, the respondent was found two weeks prior and I have to put this on the record, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks prior the same Member who made the allegation was up in his house playing guitar, stamping on the floor. We were all there two weeks prior.

All of a sudden, then, the big hysteria, you can't get something you want. The same with me.

You wouldn't cancel the compost, come on. The next thing I know the big complaints are coming out, boom, gone, big hysteria about bullying and harassment. Can you imagine what this went through?

Mr. Speaker, now that you know that even in your own report Principle 10 was violated by the Commissioner it's time for you now and the Management Commission to take a stand on this. It's time. Now that you know there were statements made in this House where the Commissioner for Legislative Standards – and he also said in this hon. House, and I could drag it out very easily for anybody because I do have a copy here. I do have a copy where the Commissioner made a statement in this House. He made a statement saying when I asked a question in this House, why did you interview everybody else except me.

The statement was made in this House – it is in *Hansard* and I have it right here, it's in your report – is because the rest of them didn't put in a submission. That is 100 per cent false. The three people who made a complaint against Eddie Joyce at the time, presented submissions that I received or they could never, ever file a complaint. The Commissioner sat in this House in that chair and I said: why did you interview the rest? They didn't put in submissions. That's why I never got interviewed because I put in a submission.

Not only did he not be interviewed, he walked into the Management Commission in, I think it was October 24 and said I refuse to participate. This is the same person, Mr. Speaker, who is presenting this report now. How much validity is in it? I don't know. I know my past experience – you have to be careful because I have the documentation that the statements that he made were not true.

When you present to the Commissioner a letter from your lawyer saying I'm willing to meet – even though my lawyer couldn't make it, I agreed to meet. He said: no, wasn't expecting you guys, wasn't expecting your person to show up at the meeting. After that, just to let you know, this is why I have this report here. It just goes back to how much of this can you believe. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, after that date,

August 1, just for that case alone there were four or five other interviews.

I just want to put it on for the record. Like I said, anything I say here is about myself and Dale Kirby, it's just not about me. We're tied into this. Dale and I are good friends. We're in constant contact. He's welcome in my house any time whatsoever because he is a strong friend. He was a strong friend to every person over there, by the way, just let you all know. You all know that anyway.

Mr. Speaker, there were three complaints made against myself. Every one was thrown out for bullying and harassment. They found one Principle 10, which now you have to deal with because you even said yourself in your report the relationship is not between Members. You have to deal with that.

Out of the three reports that were against Eddie Joyce, I was never interviewed for one of them – not one. Strange, not interviewed for one. I ask the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay, again, he's a former RNC officer: when is the last time you brought someone to court, charged them, got them in jail and never interviewed the person? Just think about it.

Then, I'll say to the Member – and I'll just use you for example, because you understand the process of it. Then, you go up to the Crown prosecutor and saying, oh yeah, that guy wouldn't be interviewed, but his lawyer came in – jeez, here are the letters that we were giving you, wanted to be interviewed. How long would you be in your job? That's what happened. That's exactly what happened.

Then once you get the issue of the Premier being involved, what his involvement was – and hopefully I'll find out eventually – who was involved, who contacted him, were any notes taken. Because if the Premier never called him personally – if it was somebody else from his office, which I know who it was one of them from the office – how do you know if no notes were taken? How do you know what was discussed? How can the Premier put in here that your rights weren't violated if he doesn't know if he wasn't on the call, if he wasn't over to the meetings, if there were meetings? How do you know? You don't.

Once you get a Commissioner who, in my opinion, stated in this House on many occasions: I'm independent. My independence is very important. Once you get your independence questioned, you have a problem. Once you get the Premier of the province stating in this House that he did file something under 36(4) but it's withdrawn and he makes a statement in this House, this is my only involvement. That's wrong.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of wrongs to this case and I don't think anybody in this House is going to stand up and say let's go revisit. I know that's not going to happen. It takes courage and I know that's not going to happen. I have to commend the Minister of Justice for the courage. I have to commend my friend, Dale Kirby, for not giving up the fight on this. Dale Kirby is just fine. He's putting in a new hot tub, actually – a \$40,000 hot tub I think. Dale Kirby is doing just fine, have no worry about that.

Who knows, if it didn't happen maybe the Member who filed the complaint, maybe they'd be up tapping on that with the guitar like they were two weeks prior to the complaint. Maybe, up tapping in that one too, two weeks before the complaint, guitar going in the kitchen. I was there, Mr. Speaker, but two weeks later when there's a big hysteria, oh my God, what a big bully.

It is laughable. I hear people laughing, but it is. That is a fact, by the way. Those are the facts. If it wasn't so serious it would be funny. If you never took a person and threw them to the wolves, it would actually be funny. But you're dealing with people's lives, you're dealing with families, you're dealing with someone like me who put in 28 years.

Mr. Speaker, I go back to the constituency scandal when the Green report came out. When they started this in 2003, 2004, the Auditor General, you know the longest person they went back to check on was me. The longest person they went back at the time to check on receipts was me from 1989 when I got elected and I continued on with Clyde Wells. I think they found one – there was a double bill on something. Someone sent in a bill \$137 or \$87, that was it. Fifteen, sixteen years, that's it.

I follow the rules. I always follow the rules. I might bend them sometimes but I never break them. Sometimes there's always a grey area that you can make a decision on, okay, I'll make that decision. You're not breaking the rules. You may say we can – and I think we all knew that.

Mr. Speaker, that is why this is so important to me, as someone who spent so many years being elected and so many years helping people out. This is why it's so important to me to bring up the facts here every chance I get, because once you're outside the Legislature no one wants to hear this anymore, except the people who really know me and the people in Humber - Bay of Islands. They do, they don't want me to give up.

I have to thank the people for Humber - Bay of Islands for their support. When you get elected almost 70 per cent as an independent – and when you think about running in the last election, if you knew how many people called me and knocked on that door: If you give up, we'll be so disappointed in you. That's the word I got: we'd be so disappointed in you; they'll win. That's what I heard.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, you win by almost 70 per cent as an independent, because of the people who say: Don't give up, this is all foolishness. When I showed people the actual cases of myself and Dale Kirby, the actual cases about it all, people were astonished that it ever got to that level – astonished.

Now you find out that the Premier of this province was involved, and the people of Humber - Bay of Islands said you and him were quite good friends. I said, all I asked of him was tell the truth.

I have it in *Hansard* where he said even the complaints changed from when they first went to him, April 25, which everybody said they didn't. Now the Premier of the province is saying the complaints changed, which I always said.

There are staff at the Premier's office who put in the notes about what the complaints were, and they changed. Do you know why? Because you had to develop something.

The Premier of the province is even admitting now what I always said. The complaints that

were first relayed to me by him, as he always said, they were all BS, about turning my back on people, sitting in a swivel chair turning my back, grunting as I walked by the Minister of Finance there. Those were the complaints made to me by the Premier of the province. He confirmed it here that they can change from April 25 to the date that they were filed.

Now, I ask the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay again, because you're an RNC. What would happen if someone walked in to you and made a complaint today, as an RNC officer, or any – I know there's a lawyer here also. What would happen if a person walked in and made complaints to you? You sat down and did them up, and the next thing you know, two months later, different complaints. What credibility is involved there? Seriously. That's what happened. That's exactly what happened.

Mr. Speaker, I see I have another few minutes left, and I won't belabour this point anymore. I'm just glad I got the opportunity to stand up again to defend myself and to defend Dale Kirby. I just want to let you know, Mr. Speaker, this is far from over.

I just want to thank the people from the Humber - Bay of Islands, and people around the province, not just – and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to single anyone out here in this House, but a lot of people sent me texts in this House and sent me other stuff saying, b'y, you got shafted. We didn't know all this. We didn't know all this was going on. You'd be surprised, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the people for that.

I understand you had to stand up because of the hysteria about this big bullying and harassment, it all took place here. I understand all that, but now that you have the facts it's time to take a stand.

The Minister of Justice and Attorney General took a stand, and I tell you, I'll never forget it. I admire his courage. When you say an Officer of this House of Assembly made statements that were proven false, and what are the repercussions? I ask the Members opposite: What are the repercussions? I ask the Opposition: What are the repercussions? Right now, there are no repercussions to it all. None.

It's sad. It is actually sad about what happened. Actually sad.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take my seat. I thank you again for indulging me in this here because it's a very serious matter that myself and Dale Kirby went through for six, seven to eight months. We went through this House and the debate. Then we had the Commissioner sitting here, Mr. Speaker, who wouldn't answer a question about it but made statements like: Oh, everybody else, they didn't present any reports. They didn't file their reports. You filed one, so I didn't have to interview you.

Under the act, it says under every step of the way the person shall be given every reasonable opportunity to be present. That's in this submission that I made to you, Mr. Speaker. That's in this submission I made to you.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the people from Humber - Bay of Islands for sticking with me on this. I thank them for the encouragement back when I was deciding if I was going to run or not. I was going to run, but they just made sure that I wasn't giving up on it. I want to thank a lot of people across the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador who feel that you - public life is good, by the way, let me tell you. Let me tell you something.

I went through - so did Dale Kirby - a rough time, but let me tell you, all the good things we've accomplished in 25, 27 years I've been involved was well worth it. I can tell you that. I don't regret getting in public life. I don't regret it one bit that I'm in public life, because there's a lot of good you do in public life that I'm so proud of, Mr. Speaker. A lot of times, when people, during the rough times you're there with them, they appreciate it. So I don't regret being in public life, not one iota.

That period, that six months, was tough on the family more so than me, Mr. Speaker. It was tough. I lost a good friend over it. I lost a good friend of the Premier of the province over it. It's all I ever asked the Premier of the province - and I'll make it quite clear in this House - it's all I ever asked the Premier of the province: tell the truth. That's all I ever asked. I would never ask one of my friends ever, Mr. Speaker, never to say something that wasn't true.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going sit down now and take my seat. I just want to thank everybody for indulging me. I know a lot of people didn't want to hear this this morning and I'm fine with that, but if you went through what myself and Dale Kirby went through, you'd understand why we got to push our cases as much as we can and put it on the public record exactly what happened.

Mr. Speaker, again, I know there's going to be no Division on this report. I know that, and I understand that: Let's push this through, get it through, it's not big deal. Personally, I have a problem, Mr. Speaker, accepting this report because I know of the past statements that were made by the Commissioner and I know, personally, the statements that were made to the Management Commission were false. I know statements that were made in this House of Assembly about how other people didn't put in submissions. I know about Principle 10. I know about Principle 5. So it's pretty hard for me to accept a report that's done by a person that you know that a lot of the facts that you have were just not factual.

Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat here today, and I'll say to Dale Kirby now, I don't think he's listening. I'm sure he's probably not. Hang in there, the truth will always prevail. I'll say to people over on the opposite side, the first two people who would ever stand up for anybody over there if you're in a mess, to get to the bottom of the truth, would be myself and Dale Kirby.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to take just a few minutes to have a few comments. I'm not going to get into the nitty-gritty and the details of the report. I'll reference the report, I want to speak more in general terms.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important that all Members of this House of Assembly, that we all reflect and we all realize that the situation that's occurred, whether it be with my colleague here, with our former colleague and with my college

from Harbour Grace, the former Member from the Clarenville area and so on, forgive me I'm forgetting the names of districts, but you get the point. There's been a number of people who have been involved on various ends of these reports and it's important to realize that this could be any one of us tomorrow. I think that's a very important point for all Members to remember. That could be any single Member tomorrow, it could be you, it could be I.

So, it is important, therefore, to ensure that we have the appropriate processes in place and that justice is being done. That everybody has an opportunity to have their – I'm going to use the term – day in court, and I have to say without getting into it, I'm not going to get into the merits of this report or the other reports or what one Member said and what some other Member said, that's been dealt with. The first two reports were dealt with by Ruben Thomlinson who are supposedly experts. They came back with their findings. We know what those findings are. I would have to agree with the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands, or I would want to know, as he wants to know, who did this report. I think that's a valid question.

That's not saying that the report is wrong or I don't agree with it or I don't believe it. I will vote to concur with the report, and it has no reflection on my colleague from Port de Grave or anybody else – none. But I think it is a valid question, because the Commissioner for Legislative Standards, he is right, he did say in this House of Assembly, as was read, that he would be a fool not to agree with the experts, and that he was not qualified. He said that in the House of Assembly. He was not qualified to do these reports.

As Members who might have been here, he was sitting or standing, whatever, right there on the floor of the House, and we were trying to ask questions – he wouldn't answer any questions which was very frustrating to me, as one Member of the House, I have to say – wouldn't answer any questions about process or anything else. But he did say and he did indicate that he was not qualified to do the report.

So, I think it is a very valid question, as I said, did he do this report? Again, that's not saying I'm against the report or I don't agree with the

report, but did he do the report? If he wasn't qualified to do the other reports, what makes him qualified to do this report?

Again, that's not about this report, this is about future reports. This is about if this is any other Member tomorrow, we need to understand who is doing the reports, who is qualified. Are they being done properly? Not for this one, but for future ones that could involve any of us. So I think that's very valid.

I also think, as I reflect and I'm trying to do the right thing here and say the right things, it's not to offend anybody in any regard, but I will say to the Member, at the time when all this went down, as he said, and there was all this hysteria and so on and the reports were being done and the accusations were being made and so on, I'll be the first to say, and I've said to him privately, I'll say it publicly, I was sitting here as an independent Member at the time when all this went down.

There were two Members over there that were in hot water, so to speak, and there were two Members – this Member in particular, I guess perhaps as a spokesperson for the Cabinet, playing that sort of pit bull role, that I played at one point in time with a former PC administration, who every day when I came in this House of Assembly, after I was kicked out of caucus, would be taking jabs, making remarks, bawling out, heckling, saying I was a coward for not supporting the budget and so on.

I'll be the first to say, I was not a member of the fan club, I really wasn't. So I didn't have a whole lot of sympathy in the sense when all this went down. I didn't have a whole lot of sympathy. I will be the first to admit that I did not dig in to the reports. I read the reports and I saw the findings of the reports, but then there were two principles cited, one section 4 and one section 10, I think the numbers are.

AN HON. MEMBER: Five and 10.

MR. LANE: Five and 10, sorry. I'm saying to myself, we have a process; we have an independent Officer of the House that's presenting it who is eminently qualified to be in that position, using experts that supposedly are experts in the field. Then he is coming down

with a report and then he is making a recommendation under section 5 and section 10.

Now, I don't believe – and I stand to be corrected – when he said guilty of section 5 or guilty of section 10, I don't think he quoted section 5 and section 10 and tied it together of how you were guilty of section 5 and 10. He just said here's what happened, I find him guilty of section 5; here's what happened, I find him guilty of section 10. I didn't go looking through the regulations to say: What does section 5 mean?

When the Member is saying here that section 5 has to do with you can't use your influence as a minister to give someone the heads-up where you can gain or family members can gain, financially, and so on. Then the other section that the other Member was found guilty of, section 10, which is involving members of public service of which we're not employees and that distinction, that's not something I looked up. I bet you it's not something any Member of this House looked up.

I can guarantee you – I am willing to bet – that not one Member in the House of Assembly at the time said let's look up that section to see what it says and see if what the Commissioner is saying here is correct. I bet you nobody did. I didn't. We kind of just went along with the report, felt that we had two guys that were – whatever happened there and guys that gotten under our skin at various times and we said: Do you know what? They had it coming – they kind of had it coming. I think that was certainly part of the sentiment at the time, but in reflection, we have to divorce ourselves from those emotions and from the politics and from the outside pressures. We need to be making decisions based on the evidence, based on the legislation, based on the facts and ensuring there was due process done and all the regulations and rules were followed and that everybody was treated fairly. Again, that is because it could be you or me tomorrow.

I have to say that now that it has been brought to light about the section 5 and the section 10, which clearly – I have now read it, I've listened, I've read it, I've looked at it – I can't see how the Commissioner could have drawn the conclusions he did on those sections of the act. I

really can't. I have to agree with the Member in fairness.

That has nothing to do with the allegations or what was said happened or didn't happen. That was all investigated, but those sections of that act that the Commissioner have put in there, I have to agree, I have a concern about how he got there.

MR. SPEAKER: I want to remind the Member that we're dealing specifically with *The Parsons Report*. We dealt with the other reports in this House. I want to remind the Member to keep his comments specific to the contents of this particular report.

Thank you.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the leeway and I apologize for kind of straying a little bit but, again, I feel it's all relevant to the final point I kind of wanted to make.

That point is that based on what has happened and has been brought to light, you have to question how these processes have been followed. You have to now question – I have to question – who has been involved. We have evidence that's been presented that the Premier was involved in having contact with the Commissioner for Legislative Standards. Yeah, he's showing me the letter he already read. Did he have contact on this report too? I don't know.

Again, it has nothing to do with the content of the report or if it was right or wrong, but was he involved in any way? Was there any influence that came to bear? That is a problem. That's a very, very serious allegation. If that happened – and I'm not saying it's happened, although he's saying he talked about timelines and everything else. He shouldn't talk about anything. There should have been no conversations, zero. Shouldn't have spoken to him at all. The fact that he did, it does raise very serious allegations.

I also have to call into question now some of these findings and I have to call into question the decisions of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards and whether he made these decisions in error, if it was a case of not knowing what he

was doing or if it was a case of knowing what he was doing and trying to find something. Was he directed by somebody to try and find something? I don't know, I don't know. But those are the allegations that are being made, and those allegations need to be investigated, as far as I'm concerned.

If we are to move forward, whether it be this case or future cases – I hope there are no more future cases, by the way, I hope there aren't – but if there should be a future case, then I think every Member in this House needs the reassurance that they're going to be treated fairly, that they're going to be given every opportunity to defend themselves and that they're not going to be railroaded with sections of the act that are not even applicable. That should concern us all.

Right now, my faith in the Commissioner for Legislative Standards, based on this new information that I really didn't know at the time – should I have dug into it and known it? Probably I should have, but I didn't. Neither did anybody else, other than the Members that were accused because obviously it was in their best interest to – I'm sure they read every single piece of legislation and every word in the report, obviously. Did the rest do it? I would say, no, they didn't.

I really believe that, yes, I will concur with the report. Not taking any sides with anybody on allegations or whatever. There was a process to deal with that; it's been dealt with. Recommendations are made. I understand there are going to be further processes out of this House of Assembly, and that'll be between the parties involved. Has nothing to do with me; I don't want anything to do with it, nothing. Sad that it's happening, sad, but I don't want anything to do with it. I'm not taking any sides with it.

I will say that I really believe the House of Assembly Management Commission now, based on the fact that we've got allegations of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards giving false information, and based on the allegations of the fact that now – or I don't know if it's even allegations; it's facts, actually, now – that there were sections of the act that were not applied, clearly not applied properly and needing to

understand were they not applied properly because the Commissioner doesn't know what he's doing, or not applied properly because it was intentionally done. Those are questions that need to be answered.

I certainly, as one Member, would recommend that the House of Assembly Management Commission needs to do an investigation not into the merits of the case, that's done. Not into the merits of the case and the allegations of who said what and who was right and who was wrong, but to look into the allegations of was the process followed properly. Was everybody involved treated fairly? Was there any outside interference by the Premier or anybody else?

Did the Commissioner for Legislative Standards do his job properly? Were the recommendations just? If the recommendations were not just, he needs to explain what happened, how it happened. Then we, as a House of Assembly, have to determine if this person is capable of doing that job. That's the reality.

We have to remember, the person holding that position reports to the House. We don't report to him; he reports to us. He is our employee, and we need to review what has happened to make sure that job is being done properly and I say once again, not just because of what has happened, but what could happen in the future to any other Member.

We can sit back and say, it wouldn't happen to me. All it takes is for a complaint, legit or not. I'm not saying the complaints were not legit or felt to be legit – I'm not saying that; I'm just saying that all it takes is a complaint and one of us finds ourselves in the same or a similar situation. If that was you tomorrow, I would say to all Members would you want to make sure that you were treated justly, fairly; had your say; gave your information; had the opportunity to respond to complaints and allegations; and to have an assurance that when the decisions are made, they're made by qualified individuals, that they can be substantiated and that it actually ties to a section of the Code that makes sense, that we're not just picking random things out of the air to have people found guilty of.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, again, I will concur with the report. It's not about the individuals

involved. It's not taking sides. That's been dealt with. I understand it's going further. It's about process, it's about fairness and it's about making sure that the person holding that office is doing the job properly. We have allegations that may not necessarily be the case. We also need to ensure that there are no outside influences, whether it be from the Premier's office or anybody else, having any influence whatsoever on this process that could impact any Member of this House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

MS. COADY: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm just looking for my Order Paper. Mr. Speaker, Order 5, Bill 9.

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

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, that Bill 9, An Act To Amend The Automobile Insurance Act, be now read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It's been moved and seconded that Bill 9 now be read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Automobile Insurance Act." (Bill 9)

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

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Mr. Speaker, in the last session of the House of Assembly I introduced a number of amendments to the *Automobile Insurance Act* in an effort to help stabilize insurance rates and provide the best product possible for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

With more than 376,000 vehicle renewals in 2018, automobile insurance is a topic that affects many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in all regions of our province and from all walks of life. The need for insurance reform was a message our government heard loud and clear.

In both our government's vision document, *The Way Forward*, and my mandate letter, direction was provided by our Premier to commence a review focused on identifying opportunities to help lower rates and also help bring stability to the automobile insurance industry. Mr. Speaker, the last review of auto insurance in the province was conducted between 2004 and 2005. In August of 2017 we provided the terms of reference to the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities, the PUB, to conduct public consultations as well as two independent closed claim studies. One closed claim study focused on rising automobile insurance claims costs and the other focused specifically on claims related to taxi operators.

The PUB's report on their review of the auto insurance noted that even with the highest premiums being paid in this province compared to the other Atlantic provinces, the total private passenger premiums paid by consumers for the past number of years were not sufficient to cover industry costs for the business. This highlighted the increased pressures on both consumers and industry, Mr. Speaker. It also showed us that we didn't arrive at our current reality overnight and we weren't going to be able to solve high insurance rates overnight either.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, we developed a plan, each element of which focused on addressing the priorities of consumers in Newfoundland and Labrador. As I said last spring in this House, whenever we talk about skyrocketing insurance rates, it is also important to have a discussion

about road safety and good driving habits. It is imperative that the driving public in our province exercise care and control when they are behind the wheel.

Increased safety on our roadways contributes to lower accident rates. This, in turn, has an impact on our automobile insurance rates. We need to truly understand the link between the two in any discussion of automobile insurance in Newfoundland and Labrador. Over the past several years, we introduced a number of measures that are aimed at improving safety. We have strengthened legislation around impaired driving, distracted driving, excessive speeding and street racing provisions and included a new provision for stunting in the *Highway traffic Act*. We enhanced Move Over provisions, updated the act to reflect legalization of cannabis, introduced a one-metre rule and we are currently working with the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators on a national work plan for commercial motor vehicle safety.

We made amendments to the *Highway Traffic Act* which came into force in 2018, which placed the onus on the driver to prove the vehicle they were driving was insured at the time the proof of request was made. As recently as last week, Mr. Speaker, we passed Bill 5 in this House to introduce further amendments to the *Highway Traffic Act* to enable the use of camera technology on our roadways as another means of improving safety.

Mr. Speaker, time and time again, we are made aware of incidents whereby a driver is pulled over with no licence or registration, no insurance and unpaid fines. Before amendments were made to the *Automobile Insurance Act*, it was mandated that all insured drivers carry uninsured automobile protection to cover them in the event they're hit by an uninsured motorist. In this province, the benefits of up to \$200,000 were available for any one accident.

Uninsured drivers impose costs which must be paid by those of us who are insured. This results in higher premiums being paid. In fact, the PUB report noted that over a five-year period from 2012 to 2016, over \$26 million in damages were paid in which an at-fault driver was reported as either uninsured or unidentified. In its report, the PUB also noted that several US states have

adopted the principle of no pay, no play, where uninsured drivers are prohibited from receiving compensation or filing a lawsuit for non-economic losses such as pain and suffering. We amended the act to prohibit access to the uninsured automobile fund for losses by uninsured motorists. This included a 30-day grace period for individuals who, either through error or some unforeseen circumstance, may have inadvertently had their policy cancelled and are working toward renewal.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, the amendments we made do not impact passengers, cyclists or pedestrians who may be injured in an automobile accident. Rather, it sends a message loud and clear: Auto insurance is mandatory and other drivers should not have to pay the cost of someone who refuses the responsibility of maintaining an insurance policy.

Subsection 45.1(3.4) of the *Automobile Insurance Act* states: "This section applies only in relation to injuries sustained on or after the date this section comes into force." Since the bill was passed last spring, we realize that the wording in this section requires some clarification. Given that this is not a new section that is being enacted but rather a pre-existing section that is being amended, the wording required an amendment. Instead, subsection 45.1(3.4) should state: "Subsections (3.1) to (3.3) apply only in relation to injuries sustained on or after subsections (3.1) to (3.3) come into force."

This amendment came into effect August 1 of this year. The language required correction so as to avoid an injustice to the uninsured who suffered injuries prior to August 1, 2019, but have not yet applied to Facility Association.

Mr. Speaker, I have stood numerous times on the floor of this House and said that it is incumbent upon us as a government to continuously review our legislation to ensure it is modern and easily understood, in an effort to ensure it best meets the needs of the people it serves.

As I previously stated, the provision which prohibits uninsured drivers from accessing the uninsured automobile fund and receiving compensation for non-economic losses came

into effect on August 1, 2019. The amendments we have introduced today will help ensure that this section of the act is appropriately applied for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

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

I would like to thank the minister for the briefing that we had, and the officials as well. When we went over to the briefing, it was pretty quick because there's not a lot of information there, just a few changes.

Just to read out some of the stuff that we went through: In 2019, the Public Utilities Board reviewed this. It was something that came up. The review was comprehensive, and two bills were introduced to the House of Assembly to amend the *Automobile Insurance Act*, Bill 3; and the *Insurance Companies Act*, Bill 6. Both bills received Royal Assent in April 2019.

In April, Bill 3 amended section 45.1 of the *Automobile Insurance Act* to prohibit the owner or driver of an uninsured automobile from applying to the Facility Association for damages arising out of the operation or care or control of the automobile. This is commonly referred to as no pay, no play, as the minister had referred to.

Department officials explained to us that it was pre-existing, that the reference to the section coming into force was not appropriate. The amendments in the proposed Bill 9 will correct that error.

We're not going to prolong it too much. We have a couple of questions when we get to Committee. We'll certainly appreciate the minister's response on that.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I won't take up too much of the House's time. This is a technical amendment, to fix an error that was found when the act was introduced in the spring. It clarifies the *Automobile Insurance Act* to correct a referencing error. This is just good housekeeping here. We won't take much time and we'll get to Committee. We support this fix so that we can make sure that people who are not insured are not dipping into any funds and that.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not going to belabour the point. I just want to say, for the record, that I will be supporting the bill.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Service NL, if she speaks now, she will close the debate.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to thank my colleagues from Ferryland, Labrador West and Mount Pearl - Southlands for indicating their support of this change and that it is, in fact, just an amendment to do some housekeeping.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that Bill 9 be now read a second time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Automobile Insurance Act. (Bill 9)

MR. SPEAKER: The bill has now been read a second time.

When shall the bill be referred to a Committee of the Whole?

MS. COADY: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Automobile Insurance Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill 9)

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

MS. COADY: Mr. Speaker, considering the hour, I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation and Works, that we recess until 2 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: Before I recess the House, I just want to remind Members, I think we've received an invitation – I think the group is called Drive Electric NL. They have some cars out in the front of the building. I just wanted to remind Members of that before I recess the House. It's related to the motion that we're going to be debating this afternoon. I just wanted to make Members aware of that.

The House is recessed until 2 o'clock today.

Recess

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Admit strangers.

Order, please!

In the Speaker's gallery today, I would like to welcome David Young and his father Steven Young. They're joining us this afternoon for a Ministerial Statement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: We also have several guests visiting us this afternoon in the public galleries. I would like to welcome representatives from the Canadian Blood Services: Juanita March, event coordinator and Gordon Skiffington, territory manager.

I would also like to acknowledge Skye Taylor and Thea Cammie, both with the Association of Early Childhood Educators Newfoundland and Labrador. They are visiting us for a Ministerial Statement.

Also here for a Ministerial Statement, I would like to recognize: Kimberly French, president of NLAR, the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Realtors and eastern regional director of the Canadian Real Estate Association; Janice Briffett, director at large and chair of NLAR REALTORS Care committee; Bill Stirling, CEO of NLAR; and Ed Hollett with NLAR as well.

Also, I'm pleased to welcome Jon Seary, Adrienne King, Joe Butler and other members of Drive Electric NL, along with Marian Templeton of the Automobile Dealers Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. They're joining us in relation to a private Member's resolution this afternoon.

Also, I'd like to note that Jon Seary is also the grandson of our first Speaker here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Also, I want to mention that we have some birthdays here on the floor of the House today as well. The hon. Member for St. John's Centre, it's his birthday. I'm not sure exactly what age.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Also, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment, it's his birthday.

AN HON. MEMBERS: No, wrong Derek.

MR. SPEAKER: No? Oh, the Member for Lewisporte – Twillingate. Sorry, the other Derek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today, we'll hear Members' statements from the hon. Members for the Districts of Exploits, Humber - Bay of Islands, Mount Pearl - Southlands, Conception Bay East - Bell Island, Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune, and I understand the Member for Humber - Gros Morne will be asking leave to do a Member's statement as well.

The hon. the Member for Exploits.

MR. FORSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On Monday, May 20, 2019, a traumatic accident changed the life of Ms. Judy Newhook. Judy was doing a renovation project, using a chop saw, when she completely severed her left hand. While Judy was frightened and weakened, she cried for help, and her neighbour, Mr. Gary Regular, appeared in front of her. Gary shouted to his wife to call for an ambulance. He then ran into the house, grabbed some paper towels and a butter knife. He immediately tied the fabric to Judy's arm, creating a tourniquet to control the blood flow, and used the butter knife to tighten the tourniquet. As the blood flow slowed, Gary retrieved the severed hand and placed it on ice until the ambulance arrived.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like for all Members in the House to acknowledge the quick actions of Mr. Gary Regular.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, we all know volunteers are the heart and soul of every

community. While they are often involved in raising money to support their own organizations and programs, there were many times they reach out to help others in need.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize one such group, the Meadows Recreation Committee. On Saturday, September 28, the recreation committee held its first annual Shannon Tucker memorial ball hockey tournament. Shannon passed away on September 3, after a brief battle with cancer, at the age of 30. While Shannon grew up in Meadows and most of his family still reside there, he resided in Baie Verte for the past three years where he was a volunteer firefighter in Baie Verte and in Meadows.

Players throughout the Bay of Islands, and a few from the Northern Peninsula, came together to show their support for the family and this great cause.

The success of the event surpassed even the committee's expectations with \$2,000 raised that day. All proceeds raised were put towards a scholarship that has been set up for Shannon's eight-month-old daughter, Alexis.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating the Meadows Recreation Committee and everybody involved in making this a truly successful event in Shannon's name.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Mr. Speaker, this coming Saturday, hundreds of players and coaches from the Mount Pearl Minor Hockey Association will be hitting the doorsteps throughout the City of Mount Pearl, as well as the Southlands and South Brook areas, as part of their eighth annual Big Give Community Food Drive.

Once again this year, they will be joined by a number of other sport and community groups, as well as many individual volunteers. In addition, to door-to-door collection, there will be food bins set up at Mount Pearl's four grocery stores

throughout the day. All food and monetary donations will be in support of our three local food banks located at St. Peter's Parish, Mary Queen of the World and the Salvation Army.

This is a tremendous initiative, which not only fills a very real need, but also teaches these young players the importance of sharing with others and giving back to their community. I certainly encourage all citizens to please give generously to this very worthwhile initiative.

For residents who may not be home on Saturday morning, I encourage them to place their non-perishable items in a plastic bag and hang it off their doorknob or lay it on their front step and a volunteer will pick it up when they canvass the neighborhood.

I ask all Members of this hon. House to join me in commending the Mount Pearl Minor Hockey Association for taking up the challenge to ensure that nobody goes hungry in our community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I stand today to acknowledge an organization that is not only important in my district, but in all districts of our province. I speak of the Royal Canadian Legion movement.

The Legions in our province represent tens of thousands of veterans and volunteer legionnaires who daily volunteer to ensure support for veterans and their families, while also educating educational institutions, youth organizations and the general public about the role past and present members of our various branches of the military have played and continue to play in ensuring the protection of our freedoms.

Legions also are key contributors to our communities they are situated in through their involvement in other community activities such as schools, community events, social agencies and their contributions to the economy of the provincial Legions. In our province, they

employ hundreds of individuals, offering dozens of programs to citizens and generate tens of millions of dollars in resources each year.

A few weeks ago, we witnessed the true value of our Legions and their volunteers with the nearly 100 Remembrance Day ceremonies organized or sponsored by a branch of the Canadian Legion in our province.

The professional, classy, respectful manner in which our Legions honour our veterans on Remembrance Day is a testament to the volunteer members of this great organization.

I ask all Members to join me in this House in congratulating and thanking the members of the Royal Canadian Legion movement in our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

MR. LOVELESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to recognize a noted citizen of Gaultois, Mr. Adolph Crant.

Mr. Crant was born in Gaultois in 1938, went to school there at a one-room school at what people of the area called School House Point. He became a teacher in 1959 and worked with our young people for over 40 years in Gaultois in a profession that, according to Mr. Crant, he came to love.

His community was a vibrant one back then with Gaultois being in the centre of the cod fishery.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Crant always believed that the people of the area and the residents of Gaultois were a memory worth preserving, and he decided to take up his passion for the history of Gaultois and its people in paint – and paint he did.

His memories have been preserved in paint and have become a visual history of Gaultois. In June of this year, I had the pleasure to attend the grand opening of an exhibit of his paintings and

his book, his visual history of Gaultois, titled, *The Golden Town*.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. Members to join me in congratulating Mr. Crant and thank him for his preservation of the memory of our people and the history of Gaultois, the Golden Town.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier, by leave.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to pay tribute to a community leader and a dear friend of mine, Clyde Williams, known in Deer Lake as Stump.

Clyde was widely known for his involvement in hockey in this province, and he was an avid volunteer and a fundraiser in the Deer Lake area.

Stump's man cave was famous. A common drop in place for friends, and it could happen at any time during the day.

Clyde will forever be remembered for his commitment and passion in the roles he took on, from being a husband, a father and a grandfather, right down to organizing a local golf or hockey tournament. Clyde gave you everything he had and he always had your back.

At Clyde's funeral on October 30, tributes were read out from those thinking of Clyde's family. One tribute in particular that Clyde would be proud of was a message from Kyle Dubas, of course he's the general manager of Clyde's beloved Toronto Maple Leafs, who sent condolences to his family.

Clyde met Mr. Dubas just recently in St. John's at the training camp. He had a brief conversation with Clyde, who left a lasting impression on Mr. Dubas. It was regarding Clyde's vision on how to fix the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Mr. Speaker, today, I ask all hon. Members of this House to keep his wife, Jean, his children: Chuck, Luke and Beth and their families, in our thoughts and prayers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statement by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

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

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Mr. Speaker, November 18 to 22 is Realtors Care Week, designated by the Canadian Real Estate Association and the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Realtors.

Realtors volunteer their time and raise money for causes and charities close to their hearts. Some of the activities they will be participating in this week include supporting a local safe haven for women and children experiencing domestic violence, collecting food and money to support a school lunch program and volunteering at a homeless shelter.

On behalf of my hon. colleagues, I commend the members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Realtors for their volunteer service and encourage the people of the province to support realtors this week, and throughout the year, in their efforts to build stronger communities.

Mr. Speaker, we will soon bring forth proposed changes to the *Real Estate Trading Act*. I would like to thank members of the association for their tremendous effort and their focus on helping bring about improvements for their industry. The proposed legislation will better protect the real estate profession and consumers, now and in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

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

I thank the hon. minister for an advance copy of her statement. We, in the Official Opposition,

are pleased to recognize the launch of Realtors Care Week. I understand that realtors across the province, and indeed across the country, will be engaging in a wide variety of volunteer activities to support various causes in these communities.

Certainly, there is a deep tradition of helping others throughout our province and I commend the members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Realtors for getting involved in their communities in this way. I know their support is valued by many individuals and groups across this province.

I wish all realtors great success in the activities they have planned to mark the Realtors Care Week.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of her statement. It is fitting that during this week we recognize the good work of realtors. This House has taken up the important and meaningful work of modernizing the *Real Estate Trading Act*. This is to protect customers and bring legislation up to date with the best industry practices.

I join the minister in congratulating realtors for their volunteer and community work as well.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize November 20 as National Child Day.

Blue ribbons have been distributed to all hon. Members to promote awareness of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This year is the 30th anniversary of the Convention which protects the right of all children to be free from discrimination, violence and neglect. It means, for example, that all children have inherent rights to live and grow with dignity and respect and that they have a right to an education.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity to visit Family and Child Care Connections to join in their special playgroup to celebrate National Child Day. Our government recognizes that child care and the early years play a critical role in the healthy development of children and the well-being of families.

Through the Operating Grant Program, we are establishing more affordable child care spaces with 60 per cent of child care services across the province currently participating in the program. I am also pleased to report just over 1,100 families receive a child care subsidy. Of these, 589 who attend centres under the Operating Grant Program receive free child care.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all my hon. colleagues for wearing a blue ribbon today. In doing so, you are demonstrating your commitment to the children of our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

MR. PARDY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the hon. minister for the advance copy of his statement. Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House join the hon. minister in recognizing National Child Day.

Mr. Speaker, as a former teacher and administrator for many years, I had the privilege of watching hundreds of children grow and develop. My fondest memories are of nurturing

the dignity and respect, which is a critical part of healthy development and growth.

We, too, agree that child care in the early years plays a critical role in the healthy development of children and the well-being of families, but, Mr. Speaker, we have one of the most expensive child care systems in the country. Young families are often burdened with enormous child care bills in order to work and participate in society. Some parents actually exit the workforce to care for the children. While I acknowledge government's efforts, clearly more needs to be done.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. Members to join me in recognizing today, November 20, as National Child Day.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

As a parent, a grandparent and a former teacher, I know how important children are in our world. Nelson Mandela said: There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children. I join the minister in recognizing National Child Day and I applaud the government's measures to extend child care and parent subsidies to more families. I hope the subsidy will extend to more families in the future.

However, if we truly value our children, then we must also take steps to eliminate child and family poverty and to ensure that all children have the supports to thrive in the school system and in their communities.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House to encourage all able Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to consider donating blood.

Blood donations are important to maintain an adequate supply of blood components and products, such as red blood cells, platelets and plasma, for transfusion to patients who need them.

Blood components and products are a critical part of medical care used in surgeries, medical procedures, cancer treatments and trauma. It takes many donors to ensure adequate supply for hospitals. It can take up to five donors to save someone who needs heart surgery, 50 donors to help save just one person seriously injured in a motor vehicle crash and eight donors per week to help someone going through treatment for leukemia.

Mr. Speaker, nine-year-old David Young of Paradise, who was diagnosed with Burkitt's leukemia in March of 2017, has received more than 25 blood and platelet transfusions. This little fighter is the son of Steven Young and Melanie Murphy. Melanie, I might add, is an employee in my department. We have followed David's journey, and I am happy to report he is now in remission. There are many stories similar to David's in this province, where blood donation has been the gift of life.

Every two seconds of every day, someone needs blood. Since blood cannot be manufactured outside the body and has a limited shelf life, the supply must be constantly replenished.

Mr. Speaker, that is why it is so important that everyone who can, considers becoming a blood donor.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement.

On behalf of the Official Opposition, I join with the minister in encouraging all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to consider giving the gift of life by donating blood. I also would like to commend all those individuals in this province and across the country who donate on a regular basis to help ensure there's an adequate supply of blood components and products.

The story of David Young of Paradise should be an inspiration to us all to consider donating blood. I'm so pleased to hear that this young man is now in remission. This is a great example of how donating blood is the ultimate gift, the gift of life.

As the minister said, every two seconds of every day someone needs blood. There is no doubt that the demand for blood is great. We need to do everything we can to help meet the demand by giving blood. I'm proud to say I donate on a regular basis. It just takes a commitment of a small amount of time, but it can make a huge difference to those who are in need.

Mr. Speaker, let's all consider becoming a donor and give the gift of life. As it is said: It is in us to give.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement and I join the minister in encouraging all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to consider donating blood.

Blood donations are an essential part of our health care system and every donation can help save a person's life. David Young's story is one of so many that show the difference that donating blood can make.

I am happy to hear that David is in remission and I wish him a speedy recovery. Stay strong, young man. You are an inspiration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. CROSBIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Joint management with the federal government enshrined in the Atlantic Accord as the cornerstone of the oil industry gives our province an equal say in the offshore has brought \$22 billion in revenue and generates jobs in industry.

Will the Premier guarantee residents of this province that as a result of the passing of Trudeau's Bill C-69, he will not be making any amendments to provincial Atlantic Accord act? Yes or no.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, if I say no, it could mean that safety could be jeopardized for offshore workers. We've seen amendments to the Accord over the years to improve safety, as an example, of the workplace for those offshore. What I will not be doing is seeing erosion to the benefits for the people of our province, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: We have demonstrated that I would say, Mr. Speaker, with the recent signing of the Atlantic Accord and strengthening the joint management for residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Let's keep in mind that Bill C-69, that the Leader of the Opposition is mentioning, is an improvement of what Stephen Harper put in

place in CEAA 2012. I assure you that no one will want to go back to what was put in place in 2012. It is an improvement, Mr. Speaker, but we are seeking even further improvements in Bill C-69.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: The Premier informs the House and the public that he won't be agreeing to any erosion of benefits. Does that include erosion of joint management rights?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, as I've just mentioned with the Atlantic Accord agreement that was signed in April of this year, we've seen enhancements of the Atlantic Accord. We will always continue to fight for benefits for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Quite often in this House in the last few days, I've heard Members opposite talking about Bull Arm, talking about Newfoundlanders and Labradorians first and those jobs. Mr. Speaker, what was sent to me again – and reminded of last night, where I saw the House Leader for the PC Opposition right now launching a ship in Romania in languages that weren't from Bell Island, I can assure you, but the jobs were not in Newfoundland and Labrador, but in Romania. We will put Newfoundland and Labrador first, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Well, I notice, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier has not said he will defend our joint management rights.

The Premier knows that federal Liberal Bill C-69 requires his Liberal government to water down joint management of offshore oil. Trudeau has given newly appointed Natural Resources Minister Seamus O'Regan the mission of instructing the Premier on how to water down the provincial Atlantic Accord act.

When does the Premier expect to get his instructions from this minister?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, we'll see what the announcement says, I think, at around 3 o'clock today out of Ottawa who the next minister of Natural Resources will be, but I can assure you this, Mr. Speaker, it is a minister in Ottawa that will work with Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: Very unlike what we've seen from the Leader of the Opposition and his friend, Stephen Harper. Mr. Speaker, we couldn't get meetings at that time.

We've made tremendous ground in the relationship with Ottawa, working closely with Newfoundlanders and Labradorians for the benefit of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you now that we will stand up, first and foremost, for the benefit of Newfoundland and Labrador and not see erosion of joint management because it does bring benefits for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Now we get kind of an answer.

The Premier has admitted that equalization treats us unfairly and should be changed.

How can the Premier ask for more money from Ottawa, given that in March, Minister O'Regan forced the Premier into a chicken-feed agreement that failed to renew the Atlantic Accord offset payments and required him not to complain?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, first and foremost, the Leader of the Opposition has no idea what he's talking about, again. He missed rate mitigation by \$150 million because his math was wrong; now, Mr. Speaker, his understanding of the Atlantic Accord is also wrong. Sixty per cent of – or \$2.5 billion coming to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, first and foremost, is not chicken feed.

It might be chicken feed for people who live with entitlement, but it's not chicken feed for hard-working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and there will be more benefits.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER BALL: But I can tell you, when the royalties come and the benefits come for Newfoundland and Labrador, there will be a legacy, not like Muskrat Falls, that those billions of dollars will go into.

We will create a legacy for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians; create jobs here, Mr. Speaker, to the benefit of the people in our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, everything I just said in the preceding question is factually true, and former Premier Peckford, the author of the Atlantic Accord, should recognize chicken feed when he sees it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROSBIE: Trudeau gave Minister O'Regan the mission to convince us that giving up our rights is good for us.

How much money has the government budgeted for a propaganda campaign to convince Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that watering down the Atlantic Accord is good for them and won't cost jobs?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult, I know, for people in this province to

be able to listen to questions that we've just seen here.

A propaganda campaign, Mr. Speaker? Are you comparing this to the one that spent thousands and thousands of dollars on Muskrat Falls? Is that the type of campaign that the Leader of the Opposition is talking about?

Is he also suggesting that I should be taking advice from Brian Peckford from BC, Mr. Speaker? He doesn't even pay taxes in this province. Maybe that's where he's getting his advice from, because I can tell you I don't need someone who felt that Newfoundland and Labrador was a great place to grow cucumbers back in the late '80s. That's not the advice that I would say – the only chicken feed I would see is the leftover cucumbers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, casting doubt and character points against a distinguished former premier of this province is not becoming on an existing Premier. Last June, the father of the Atlantic Accord, Brian Peckford, wrote an open letter to this Premier in which he pointed out that if the concept of joint management, which informs 30 of the 68 sections of the Atlantic Accord, can be violated, others, like royalties – as if the offshore royalties were on land – can be too.

Will the Premier take Peckford's advice and tell Trudeau's messenger that he will defend jobs and hope by challenging Bill C-69 in the courts?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, any premier that sits in this office I have great respect for – I really do. As a matter of fact, I gave credit to former Premier Peckford for his work on the Atlantic Accord. I'm on record – actually, I showed up at his book launch. When a lot of Members of the Opposition today weren't there, I was there. I do have respect for people that sat in those offices.

Mr. Speaker, as regard to standing up for Newfoundland and Labrador, I will always do that, but when I say that, either with the negotiations with the Atlantic Accord – and take advice from anyone that would have sat in this chair, but we have to do it with the respect of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and that is what I will always do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

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

There's a resident in my district that has been diagnosed with stage four cancer and is currently undergoing chemo treatment and also requires cataract surgery. This individual cannot change his colostomy because he's losing his sight and is told that the wait times for cataract surgery are more than a year or a year and a half.

Minister, do you think this wait time is acceptable for an individual in this situation?

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

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

With regard to the specifics of a case, obviously we have a tradition and an expectation here of privacy and confidentiality, so I won't get into any specific details. In terms of prioritizing urgency of surgeries, that is a discussion between the primary care provider and the ophthalmologist.

Having said that, from a systems point of view, Mr. Speaker, we have money allocated and agreement with the NLMA around a program to transition cataract surgeries into private clinics. That is nearly ready. We are just waiting for some details around accreditation and around safety issues. Once those have been documented, we will be in a position to open that up to greater access.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a year ago the minister announced that he was changing the policy to allow eye surgery to be done in private clinics, but this change is still not implemented today.

I ask the minister: Why is this change taking so long while individuals, like my colleague's constituent, face going blind?

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

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

I was in the process of completing my answer when I ran out of time. We have a schedule with the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. The financial piece is in place. The money is there. This is simply an issue of standards of care, standards of practice and accreditation.

Once that is dealt with, Mr. Speaker, we will be in a position to launch this program. This will increase access by roughly the demand that we anticipate of the order of something like 3,000 to 5,000 cataracts extra per year. We are waiting and it's an issue of safety and standards.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These standards and safety have been in play for a number of years. What's been asked by professionals, including surgeons like Dr. Justin French and Dr. Chris Jackman – they've lobbied extensively for eye surgery to be performed in private clinics. This will improve access to wait times, something we all agree is critical, especially for those people currently on the wait-list. I understand that changing the MCP billing is one of the stumbling blocks.

I ask the minister: When will this administrative change be put in play so that we can get into servicing people who are going blind because we're not providing this service.

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

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

The standards have been in place for a long time, but only in relation to regional health authority facilities. They are subject to stringent accreditation standards and they are also subject to the *Patient Safety Act*, which we passed last year. We are in the process of dealing with accrediting new facilities and standards around that.

We have worked with the physicians that the gentleman opposite has referenced and we are still in the process of sorting out the issues around safety and quality. Once those are done, it would be simply a matter of changing the regulation with regard to MCP and that will not take very long at all. This is an issue of safety; it is an issue of standards. Once that is sorted out, we're ready to go, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

MR. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, the minister recently provided an update on the hiring process for the new CEO of the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation. This process has been ongoing since January 2018 when the former CEO was fired and replaced by the current CEO who the former CEO had fired the month before. On television the minister said he had received an update from the Independent Appointments Commission.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: Is he involved in the hiring process and, if so, in what capacity?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I can say unequivocally that we are not involved in the hiring practice, Mr. Speaker; we referred it to the Independent Appointments Commission. I think it's only reasonable to ask for an update of the PSC on where this stands. I understand that they're still accepting applications.

I was quite pleased to be able to open to anybody in the province who feel that they are qualified to fill this position that they should apply to the IAC. I think that's a message to anybody because I'd like to see somebody homegrown, Mr. Speaker.

I can absolutely assure you it's an independent process by the Independent Appointments Commission, which is a commission that our Premier put in place to stop the patronage of the former administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

MR. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, the minister went on to encourage more applications for the CEO position because I quote, one of our most attractive appointments through government.

I ask the minister: Why is this one of the better appointments? Shouldn't compensation all fall under the same policy?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's an exciting agency of government, Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation. They handle a number of very exciting products. It involves some level of travel. It is new products which have just been legalized by the federal government. We have cannabis edibles coming on stream as well.

I think it is one of the most attractive appointments in this province, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't take away from the fact that the appointment of that position will be recommended through an Independent Appointments Commission.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

MR. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, this process started well over a year ago, yet the minister is now pleading for more applications.

Has the minister personally seen the names of those that have applied? Is he making this public plea because he is not satisfied with the candidate list of good Liberals?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, you wonder why I find it difficult to believe we can get collaboration from the other side. This is why, Mr. Speaker, because of the absolute blatant types of comments that the Member opposite just made.

I can absolutely assure you, Mr. Speaker, it is an Independent Appointments Commission. I have not and I will not interfere with that process. But I can tell you the reason it's taken as long as it has, we were absolutely up front when we made the temporary appointment of an interim CEO, that it was to see through the implementation of a brand new product, the largest policy change our province has seen in decades and we just have edibles coming on next month.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Food Banks Canada released its 2019 HungerCount and the findings don't look good for Newfoundland and Labrador. From 2018 to 2019 the percentage of food banks in this province reporting increased demand was 59 per cent, the highest percentage of any province.

When will the government acknowledge it is driving people to desperation through its lack of proper growth, taxation and poverty programs? The problem is only getting worse.

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

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member for the question.

I will tell him that this government is committed to reducing and preventing poverty. It was just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned in this House that since 2016 we have been continually growing the dollar figure in poverty reduction initiatives. I believe it was \$250 million in 2016. We are now up to \$286 million in more than a hundred poverty reduction initiatives.

We are spending money to help communities, especially certain rural parts, around food security; groups like Food First NL, Healthy Living, Mr. Speaker, in my department going out to help people with community gardens and things like that. On the bigger picture, we have the low-income supplement, \$123 million put aside reaching 155,000 low-income people in this province and 47,000 seniors.

MR. SPEAKER: I ask the minister to conclude her answer.

MS. DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, there's more to be done and we'll continue to work toward improvements.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In this province nearly a quarter of food bank users are single-parent families. Only Saskatchewan's figure was higher. One of the report's recommendations was affordable child care, which might allow some of the single parents to work and earn a better living.

When will this government acknowledge its child care program is not working for families in poverty?

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

MS. DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, Canada has an official poverty line. While we're not where we need to be, I just recently saw the statistics and I was encouraged to see that in 2015 it was 12 per cent, in 2016 it was down to 10.8 per cent and in 2017 we were down to 9.7 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, while it's not where we need to be, I believe it's encouraging. I've talked about the initiatives we've taken a number of times, and we're seeing a continual decrease over the last two or three years according to Canada's official poverty line and we'll continue to work towards that.

When it comes to poverty, it's a whole-of-government approach. It's about getting people better educated, Mr. Speaker, our \$60 million over five years with our Education plan and *Towards Recovery*.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister's time is expired.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, community care homes are small homes that provide a family-like setting to individuals with mental health challenges allowing them to stay in the community. The operators of these family-owned homes who have been providing these essential services for generations have raised concerns about inadequate funding and insufficient programming, but nothing has been done. They feel like their voice is lost and their concerns are not being taken seriously by the department or Eastern Health.

Minister, what are you doing to ensure these homes remain viable and continue to provide the essential residential services to these vulnerable individuals?

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much for the question.

Mr. Speaker, these homes do, indeed, provide a valuable service and we have had representations from individuals and groups who represent these homes. We have engaged with officials through them to explore further exactly what their challenges are because it may be partly about the money, but we are making sure that dialogue happens, and it continues to this day, Mr. Speaker. It's an ongoing process.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These homeowners are frustrated with the lack of answers they have gotten from your department, Minister, and Eastern Health – and, frankly, so am I. Action is needed to ensure these vulnerable residents can remain in these homes.

I ask the minister: Is this inaction really part of a plan to close down these homes? If so, where will these residents go if these homes are not there to care for them?

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

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

I think some of that question ended up in a rather speculative realm. We, in the department, have no intention of doing anything other than supporting these homes. We do this through the regional health authorities. They are the people who make the clinical determination of where clients should be placed. We will continue to work with both the homeowners, their representatives and the regional health authorities to ensure their longevity and the provision of a quality service, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, Nunatsiavut Government is calling for an independent police investigation into the death of a 23-year-old Inuk woman because they feel her death was not properly investigated. Have we not learned anything from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry? The history behind all the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls was due in part to the lack of proper investigation. The numbers were allowed to go on and on, unchecked, written off because they were Indigenous women.

Can the Premier answer how this can happen again to another Indigenous woman, no true answers?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to pass on my condolences to the family and the friends of this young woman. It's a very difficult time for all of them. I did speak with the president a couple of mornings ago. I understand now that the RCMP has responded and they are doing an investigation.

I do appreciate, also, the concerns that the Member opposite has expressed. The chief medical examiner is involved, and I think right now the appropriate thing to do would be to let the investigation unfold, and these concerns then will be addressed once the investigation is completed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for responding to my inquiry regarding the late Mr. Lloyd Fudge.

Considering that son Lloyd Fudge Jr. had to carry his deceased father for two hours out of the wilderness, I ask the minister: Does he believe the protocol should change as a result of this tragedy?

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

MR. WARR: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for the question.

Certainly, what she has explained to us over the last few days in the House, I mean, it's an unfortunate incident that happened on the South Coast, Mr. Speaker. We engaged the services of the RCMP as soon as we could. The proper protocol was in place. Certainly, I understand where she's coming from with regard to her question and I'll certainly take it under advisement and ensure that the department is well aware of your questioning.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Labrador has a homelessness problem, a mental health crisis, a suicide crisis and a recent rash of tragic deaths. It is clear this government has not been doing enough to help.

I ask the Minister Responsible for Labrador and Indigenous Affairs: What concrete, new initiatives are being undertaken to address these issues?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, when you look at the incidents and the circumstances that you've mentioned that the Member opposite is talking about in Labrador, Mr. Speaker, there is engagement with industry leaders, with Indigenous leaders, with community leaders in Labrador. From 2015 to 2019, we had two Cabinet Members and we had a parliamentary secretary dealing with issues in Labrador. There has been significant personal resources that have been invested to deal with some of the unusual circumstances that we see within Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, there have been many investments into infrastructure that were not like we had seen within other areas of the province, like the Trans-Labrador Highway, like the wellness centre, like the early childhood education, addictions services and on and on, the list can go on and on.

I will tell you, this government is in tune with the circumstances in Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works: Will he commit to installing public Wi-Fi hotspots on the depots between Labrador West and Goose Bay, like is in Southern Labrador? It's an important step forward into communication and safety on the highway.

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

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

It is something that the hon. Member and I have had opportunities in the past to discuss. It's certainly something we're looking at.

Mr. Speaker, one of our red book commitments out of the May election this year was a new public radio system in the province. As we're soliciting proposals for that public radio system, we're also requiring the bidders or the people interested in that proposal to actually put forward how they would help us increase the cellular network throughout the province.

So, absolutely, Mr. Speaker, safety on our highways is of the utmost importance, and it's something that we'll be certainly looking at.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West, just time for a quick question.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, media in Labrador is reporting that shipments of perishable goods sent to Nunatsiavut have been frozen or damaged.

Does the Minister Responsible for Labrador Affairs and Minister of Intergovernmental and Indigenous Affairs think this is acceptable in light of food security issues, and what is he planning to do about it?

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it's not acceptable. Anytime anybody receives freight in this province, whether it's on the Avalon or whether it's in Labrador or whether it's on the West Coast, that freight is supposed to be received in the state that it shipped. The company is responsible for that freight. The company has offered to replace the freight or reimburse the value of the freight.

I can assure the Member opposite that the people on the North Coast that need this freight, this freight will get to them, at no cost to them, and at no cost to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. The company will be held responsible.

I had a call lunchtime with Minister Mitchell from the Nunatsiavut Government. We discussed this problem, this issue we're facing right now, and we met yesterday with the Combined Councils of Labrador. This is not acceptable and we will hold the company accountable.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, affordable housing is a major concern for low income families in the Corner Brook area and across the province. Every week our office receives calls from individuals looking for subsidized housing.

There's a wait-list for units especially for the one- and two-bedroom units.

I ask the minister: What steps are you taking to ensure this issue is being addressed in the Corner Brook, Bay of Islands area?

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

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for the question.

I can tell you that safe, stable and affordable housing is a fundamental concern for this government. We've taken many steps, Mr. Speaker, starting with the federal-provincial \$270 million agreement that the Premier and myself and the Minister O'Regan signed in April, over nine years.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, we're doing a review of all of the housing stock. I just did an interview actually with *The Telegram* about an hour ago. We are the largest landlord in the province with just under 5,600 units. There are lots of pressing needs. We have some units in certain areas, Mr. Speaker, right now that we need to do some maintenance and repair on.

What I'll tell the Member is I'll take a look out in his district and I'll see what the issues are and we'll apply maintenance services there where possible. I'll follow up and get back to the Member.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl -Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd say to the Premier before I start, yes, I voted for Muskrat Falls, as did your Minister of Finance. So on to my question.

Obliteration of project timelines, doubling of cost, intentional lowballing of cost estimates, hiding of risk reports, failure to live up to fiduciary duties, DarkNL, despite all of this, members of the Nalcor executive team are allowed to part ways with the corporation

without cause along with hefty cash payouts funded by the ratepayers of our province.

I ask the Premier: What degree of negligence, incompetence and/or malfeasance would one have to be guilty of in order to be fired with cause? In the case of the, now former, chief financial officer of Nalcor, what portion of the \$900,000 payout would the ratepayers not be on the hook for had he had been fired with cause?

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to stick to the facts of the matter in this case. There is no legal case for cause I understand, Mr. Speaker, therefore, the individual under discussion has a contract, a long-standing contract, a pre-existing contract that goes back to the 2000s, Mr. Speaker. He's been paid out according to that contract.

I can say this, Mr. Speaker, it is this government who's cleaned up the mess of Muskrat Falls, it is this government who initiated the public inquiry and it is this government who sent a reference question to the Public Utilities Board.

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.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Pursuant to Standing Order 11(1), I hereby give notice that the House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on December 2, 2019.

Further, pursuant to Standing Order 11(1), I hereby give notice that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on December 3 of 2019.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given

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

MR. BRAGG: Mr. Speaker, I rose in this House yesterday to answer a question by the hon. Member for St. John's Centre in which I referred to a permit of the environmental assessment. Indeed, I was wrong in that respect, it was a water resource permit. I want to state that today for clarity. Yesterday's question was related to the water resources permit, not the environmental assessment.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Further answers to questions for which notice has been given?

Petitions.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: We have time for one quick petition.

The Member for Bonavista.

MR. PARDY: Thank you, my hon. Member.

Mr. Speaker, Heritage Collegiate in Lethbridge had a teaching position held back in May of this year for an intermediate class with an enrolment of 33 students. Fortunately, no students transferred out and a substitute teacher was assigned in September while the position was advertised for October. The result for these students was and is a lack of consistency and continuity, which has unnecessarily negatively impacted their learning.

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to request that the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District abandon the practice of holdback process and adhere to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's allocation formula at the end of each school year, based on the student enrolment at that time.

This is my second time with this petition, Mr. Speaker, and if I may quote the minister's response from November 4 *Hansard*: "As most of us have already heard, this was a stipulation in the contract that was negotiated through NLTA, and it had to do with a seniority clause that they had negotiated in their contract." When people ask me in the District of Bonavista how everything is going, I'd often say that every day is a learning day.

In following up to that response, I couldn't find anything related to the seniority transfer clause, which I would like to know how the holdback process would be tied in with it. The other thing, I couldn't find anything related to a specific article in the collective agreement that related to the holdback process as well. In fact, there is no reference in the collective agreement related to the class size caps. I know that probably the minister, if he could now, he may be able to address it with his officials to find out the answers related to those situations.

Just to conclude, I referenced Lethbridge or Heritage Collegiate. It happened to a lot of schools. The school of which I was an administrator in it happened as well. I can speak first-hand to the chaos within the system.

This holdback process has been going on for over 10 years. It has created a whole lot of disruption in the system. I would like for the minister to explore the facts and look at the data over the last 10 years. If they held back or used the holdback process 10 times, what does the data show for those 10 occasions? There might only be two where the holdback process was activated where the classes would remain as they were.

The data ought to be able to provide us a way forward that could abolish the holdback process and create something which is more user

friendly for the educational system. I think the school system would be much better off as a result.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: A response from the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. Member and I have had conversations over this. Certainly, I concur with his comments.

When I talked about the agreement, Mr. Speaker, I talked about the fact that when you look at classes, there is a date where we have to set certain teacher allocations for classes. Really, if you have a class of grade five going to grade six, we base it on numbers previous to the upcoming year. We leave room for that to either deplete or to grow, depending on what the actual class size is.

The Member makes a great point in going back over data. I will take the Member's comments under advisement, Mr. Speaker, and I'll report back to the House.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Orders of the Day

Private Members' Day

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to our Standing Orders, it being Wednesday, Private Member's Day, I'm going to recognize the Member for Lake Melville to present his private Member's motion.

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

I move, seconded by the Member for Mount Scio, the following private Member's resolution:

WHEREAS *The Way Forward on Climate Change* highlighted increasing electric vehicle

usage within the province as a priority for this government; and

WHEREAS increasing access to electric vehicle charge stations will encourage the transition to electric vehicles;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House supports the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in its efforts to establish a network of electric vehicle charging stations across the province.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the guests that we have in the gallery here with us today from Drive Electric NL. You've introduced them but I want to do that again because these folks and many others with Drive Electric NL have been working tirelessly in a lobby of sorts, to government and anyone else who would listen, of the merits and advantages of being an electric vehicle owner.

Joining us today we have Jon Seary, Adrienne King and Joe Butler with Drive Electric NL. We also have Marian Templeton; she's with the Automobile Dealers Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. We've just had a great little display out in front of the Confederation Building; several of the Members joined us. We had some nine models of different kinds of electric vehicles. These were all presented; we even took a test drive. Some of us had an opportunity to have a little spin. I had my own car out there.

It was a lot of fun but, also, I think it was most informative. I think what we're going to get out of today, I expect to have a lot of good contribution to the PMR itself, but I think we're going to raise the dialogue on this, the whole aspect and opportunity that are and is electrical vehicle ownership.

The gentleman and everyone else with Drive Electric NL recently presented – they had a submission on October 18 at the Public Utilities Board. That was on the Muskrat Falls rate migration hearing. They made a series of interesting comments about electrical vehicle ownership and so on. Specifically to that PUB hearing, they indicated that the absolute priority in terms of the opportunity that this province really needs to now pursue is to deal with the

lack of public fast-charging stations. They saw this as the most important hurdle to overcome electrical vehicle uptake in the province.

Speaking specifically to the PMR – and you’re going to hear a lot of acronyms, I would suspect, today and some different terminology – I wanted to talk about what we mean by electric charging stations and, specifically, the faster ones. There essentially are three levels of charge. I have an electric vehicle that I purchased in January of 2016. I live about 25 minutes’ walk from here, so most days I will walk if it’s nice, which actually happens more often than it used to. If I have to drive, I will commute with my car.

Over the run of a week, I may have to charge that vehicle up a couple of times. I just plug it in to my normal 120-volt outlet that’s sitting there right in the garage. That’s what we refer to as a Level 1 charger. When we say we don’t have many chargers in the province, anywhere there’s electricity, anywhere you have an outlet you have a charging opportunity, depending on your vehicle. Most of them are equipped with a simple plug, as is mine. I just plug it in; there’s my Level 1 charge. It takes a little while but it certainly accomplishes the job if you have a while.

We also have now in the province – I think only in Newfoundland, not in Labrador, but throughout the province we have several dozen of what are called Level 2 charging stations. These are at a 240-volt system. Many people have them installed in their homes. Without getting too commercial, there are hotels, there are dealerships that also have Level 2s. Some of them are free of charge. There’s one sitting in the Avalon Mall, for example, that I cut the ribbon on a few years ago. You can go in and access those for a certain fee. The average EV takes about three hours to charge up.

Where we’re going and what we’re talking about specifically in this PMR is the concept of moving to what are called Level 3 fast-charging systems for electric vehicles. These run at 480 volts. They’re quite expensive to install, so it is a big commitment. Nevertheless, when you have access to one of these devices, you can fill up an electric vehicle in some 15, 20, 30 minutes. It’s very rapid, very fast and away you go. With the ranges of the current electric vehicles nowadays,

you can easily essentially perform like anyone else with an internal combustion engine. For example, you would drive for three or four hours, stop at a fast-charging station, refuel while you’re drinking your coffee, jump back in the vehicle and off you go.

As I said, I’m not going to take my full time because I do want to leave time for my colleagues, but I just want to give you a little description of why I’m standing and very proud to escort this PMR today, as an EV owner, and those in the audience are also EV owners, but I think there is also a lot of interest.

Today, what’s going to happen is we’re going to speak to a lot of different reasons. I’m going to keep track of them. I have about 10 on my back page, so I’ll see how many the Members get. I will compliment them on what they’ve done, and if there is anything missing, I certainly will be adding to it.

I just want to take a final second just to say, I bought my vehicle in January 2016. I only use it for the Northeast Avalon because I’m limited in terms of how far I can go, unless I want to stay the night, charge and then go again. I have driven 15,100 kilometres in four years. That’s not very much, just a few thousand a year, but over that 15,000 kilometres, I have used less than \$300 worth of electricity.

My car essentially costs about 72 cents to fully fill it up with electricity – 72 cents. There are some tremendous financial advantages. There are certainly great opportunities for addressing greenhouse gas emissions in this province – each car is emitting some five tons – and then we’re going to get into some other great reasons.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat right now because I’m anxious to have as many people have an opportunity to speak as they can.

I thank you right now. I look forward to wrapping up the debate.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LESTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak and support this private Member's motion. It's something that we are taking initiative to encourage government to do today that, obviously, will affect the positive outcome for our future generations.

When we look at our impact on our small little globe that we call home, largely it has been as a result of our desire for convenience – convenience to be able to travel from one place to another at the most efficient and possibly time-efficient time. That's what we have to look at. Establishing the infrastructure for electrically powered vehicles has to be done in such a way that is efficient and convenient for people to do.

I know some people outside this Legislature may be looking at us and saying, well, here we are talking about transitioning to electric vehicles, yet we have largely an oil-based economy. Interestingly enough, a country which also has a very large oil-based economy, being Norway, they have one of the highest per capita ownerships of electric-based cars. The government there has taken many approaches to encourage the use of electric-powered automobiles, and it's working out quite well for them.

So despite our involvement in the oil business, because we're switching to electricity for the power for our cars and vehicles, that is by no means turning our back on oil and the development of our oil resources. It just means that we are looking to reduce our impact of our everyday commute on the environment by switching to electric.

I myself do not have any experience in electric vehicles, but I have to say, I was intrigued with the style and the similarity to the fossil fuel-powered vehicles out front. In my other life, in the farming industry, there are now electrically powered tractors.

In China, a fair bit of the freight is now transferred by electricity. Unfortunately, in China their electricity is largely derived by coal, whereas in our province, thankfully to our natural resources and our ability to tap into our hydroelectricity potential, largely through – and

while usually the name comes up in this House as a negative, it's going to come in a very positive light when you say Muskrat Falls and electricity. Without Muskrat Falls, we would be no better than China. We would still be relying on the Holyrood Generating Station to produce the very electricity that we would need to power our electric cars.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not a hundred per cent.

MR. LESTER: Not a hundred per cent, but, no, I am ashamed to say that Holyrood is part of our province – not the Town of Holyrood, but the Holyrood Generating Station. That was a very well-kept secret, that that was one of the top 10 polluters in North America. We should all be collectively ashamed of that, that it went on this long.

So when we look at what we, as a province, and what past governments have done to transition from Holyrood, we have to take that positive outcome of having the electricity available to us and being produced in such an environmentally friendly way, and further enhance it by the transition to electric-based vehicles.

But as I said, go back to my comment about being convenient and efficient. When we talk about reducing our fossil fuel consumption or our carbon output, we often refer to the carbon tax. That was a very Pigouvian tax – does anybody know what a Pigouvian tax is? It's a tax that is put in place to deter people from certain activities. It has nothing to do with a pig; it's just Arthur Pigou was the man who came up with that concept – because pigs are very efficient animals, by that way.

Anyway, on to the Pigouvian tax. Instead of encouraging people through positive reinforcement, the carbon tax has been a negative reinforcement, but do you know what? In this province, unfortunately, we don't have a big option to not burn gasoline or burn diesel fuel. All the goods that come in this province are largely transported by the consumption of those fossil fuels.

Really the carbon tax itself has only been another grab of cash out of everyday people's lives. We have to move to a situation where we can provide people with a positive alternative to

burning gasoline, to burning diesel or to burning propane. The establishment of infrastructure which would make it more convenient to have electric vehicles has to be a mandate, and hopefully, through this PMR, we will see a more positive mandate of establishing charging stations throughout our public roadways.

Realizing that there's only so much money to go around, to put these programs in place, we can't stretch it out for the maximum coverage, we have to stretch it out into the point where it's efficient for those who own electric vehicles to use the charging stations at their convenience and through their availability.

We look at tourism as one of our biggest attractions and possibly a fantastic way to increase the amount of revenue coming into our province. It's all new money. When a tourist comes to our province, everybody knows the money that they're spending here is not recirculated. It's money that they are bringing to our province that was earned somewhere else. Those kind of investments are fantastic.

Part of our attraction of tourism is, of course, our clean environment, our pristine geography, and we want to be able to also combine that. How are we at one side of our mouth saying that we're going to promote tourism and promote the clean environment and pristine environment that we have, yet we're going to encourage people to come here by road and burn fossil fuels?

We're going to have to be very strategic in how we set up the charging stations, set up the infrastructure required, because I know as a traveller – probably not so much now – when you're travelling down the road with a carful of youngsters in the back, they're asking over and over again, are we there yet, are we there yet? It's not going to be very pleasant broke down on the side of the road with no electricity because your battery is dead.

We have to be very, very sure about how we invest in these charging stations, put them not only where they are efficiently located, but also where it makes sense and they're convenient for people to use them. As I said, a couple of breakdowns on the side of the road because you're out of gas is only going to involve somebody showing up with a jerry can and

giving you \$5 or so to get you to the nearest gas station; whereas if you are out of charge, that presents a whole new challenge.

So we're going to have to look at the maintenance side of it, too. Tow-truck operators and the roadside assistance people, they're also going to have to up their game a little bit and put infrastructure in place to bring along remote charge packs. It's something that would be able to be swapped out with batteries or charge them on site or whatever it may be because, as I said, that's going to be a stressful situation, and any new technology or new concept has to be successful from the very start.

Many great ideas and great concepts have never gotten off the ground because they were inappropriately approached and the public opinion turned really quick.

In closing, I'd like to refer to something I've often thought about. Back in the early 1900s, the American horse owners had their annual general meeting in California and the subject came up about the automobile, gas-powered automobile, and everybody around the table said, no, it's only a passing fad. Don't worry about the automobile, the horse will always be the mode of transport forever.

My advice to the skeptics out there about electric-powered vehicles, think of the words of those horse owners. Today, we are hopefully going to support this legislation, the PMR, to make it basically more convenient for people to own electric vehicles. It is the way of the future, not because of want but also because of need. We have to be better with our environment. We have to reduce our costs on this little planet we call home.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Bennett): The hon. the Member for Mount Scio.

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I've very pleased to second this private Member's resolution today. I have an electric

lawn mower, I'm very excited to say; not a car, but a lawn mower – I really love it.

When I tell people how much I love my electric lawn mower, they assume it's one of the ones with a cord, and they say: How do you actually mow your lawn with a cord? Because in the olden days you had to move a cord around as you mowed your lawn. So I always reassure them that I have a battery-powered electric lawn mower, not a plug in one.

I want to reassure the people listening today, that when we're talking about electric cars and electric charging stations, you plug them in to charge but then you can unplug and the battery holds the charge and you can drive away, just like my electric lawn mower without a cord the whole time.

I've mowed a lot of lawns in my day growing up. That was part of my responsibility. My family had lots of grass. Why do I love my electric lawn mower so much? It's quieter, I don't have to wear earplugs – or I still wear earplugs but not as intense ones. I don't have to buy gas. I don't have to do the strange ritual where you have to press the choke a few times and then pull your arm off while you're trying to start the electric lawn mower, and then you flood the choke and you have to leave it for 10 minutes and try again. I don't have to do that, which I love.

Then there was a game that I played with my dad every year where he would change the oil in my lawn mower and then I had to pretend like I was watching and pretend that I was going to do it next time. I could have changed the lawn mower oil if I wanted to, but I did not want to. Now that I have an electric lawn mower I do not need to do that, which is very exciting.

My next vehicle is going to be an electric car, which I'm also excited about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you.

As we dive into this resolution, I'd like to present some numbers on the industry that we're talking about. The federal government, their target is that by 2025 electric cars will make up

10 per cent of all new car sales in Canada. That's pretty ambitious. When you look at the United States, in 2018, 2.2 per cent of all of their cars sold were electric cars. You think 2.2 per cent is small but that is a huge number of cars, about 106,000 electric cars sold.

The percentage of the market share of electric cars has grown significantly over the last four years. From 2014 to 2018, the market share of new cars grew from 0.4 per cent to 2.2 per cent. So more than 50 per cent increase year on year, which is a significant increase. Electric vehicles – not hybrids, the fully electric vehicles – are gaining market share significantly in the United States.

Our Scandinavian neighbours, Norway – shockingly, in 2018, 49 per cent of their new cars sold were fully electric vehicles which is incredible. This is not very far away. This is here.

I think if the next car we buy is not an electric car, I think the car after that will be an electric car. By the time we get to our second car, they'll probably be driverless and there are whole other PMRs associated with driverless cars. I guess the big question for me is are Canadians, and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in particular, ready for vehicle electrification? What is reasonable and prudent for the province to do to encourage adoption of this new technology?

As my colleague mentioned, Canadians want to see lower prices and they want to see charging stations available. I was doing some research. There was a CTV online news article in August. The policy director of Clean Energy Canada explains that there's a direct relationship between electric vehicle sales and available charging stations.

Consumers are waiting for the price of electric vehicles to go down. In a survey, 31 per cent of Canadians said this is the main reason why they have not yet bought an electric car, is the price. The second reason is sufficient charging stations so that they can continue their driving habits and patterns with minimal disruption. It's important that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador help enable this important change in our economy.

I was very surprised to learn how many electric charging stations we have across the province. We have 34 at least. I'm very pleased there are four in the economic powerhouse District of Mount Scio – four fast-charging stations. We have one at the BMW dealership, we have one in the Avalon Mall underground parking garage, one in the Avalon Mall parking garage west and one at the Health Sciences Centre, which I was not aware of, which I'm pleasantly surprised about.

Mount Scio happens to be tied with the District of Humber - Gros Morne for most charging stations. So I take that as a personal challenge. Maybe Mount Scio can have the most fast, electric charging stations of any district. We'll see how we get next year.

Of the 34 electric charging stations already in the province, I was chatting with my sister this morning and I explained I had to talk about electric vehicles today. She was very enthusiastic and said at the school she teachers at there are two electric car charging stations. So this is already a part of our society.

When I think about what our province is going to need in the next 10, 20, 30 years, placing charging stations in strategic places across the province is absolutely the right decision. We don't know what transportation is going to look like in 30 years, but I can guarantee that the technology we'll be using hasn't even been invented yet.

I feel strongly that we should be investing in this and doing this right now. When I look at the business case or what are the benefits, obviously, we need to invest so that consumers can invest in their cars when they're ready. As I mentioned, with 50 per cent growth year over year, over the last four years, of electric car sales in the US, in 10 years all or nearly almost all new car sales will be electric car sales. So this is something we need to get ready for.

The car dealerships in Newfoundland and Labrador are investing already in charging stations, as we see in the 34 list. Our government wants to be ready when our consumers are ready, and with charging stations, more electric cars on the market, demand going up, supply going up, advancements in battery and charging

technology and more electricity than we can use, we should lean in and embrace this new technology.

Let's look at the operating costs because we talked about the purchase price. The purchase price is more but it's coming down. The operating costs of an electric vehicle – I found a study that compared the Golf with the e-Golf. The average running cost in the US – these are US numbers unfortunately – is 21 per cent of what it costs to run an e-Golf rather than a Golf; \$2,245 a year versus \$475 a year. Those are US dollars. On average, 21 per cent of the cost to run an e-Golf per year than a Golf.

AN HON. MEMBER: One-fifth.

MS. STOODLEY: Yes, one-fifth of the cost.

As the price goes down, charging stations will go up and we'll see more consumers driving them here in the province.

From the government's perspective, there's *The Way Forward on Technology*, also known as the Tech Sector Work Plan and in consultation with NEIA, the Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Industry Association, we have objectives in there related to clean technology. I notice the Minister of TCII and the Minister of AESL regularly give shout-outs to our booming tech sector. So installing charging stations will help us catch up and become leaders in this industry.

The specific objective I'm talking about is to "Identify and develop opportunities to leverage clean technology and related supports for development and adoption within industries." One example I'd like to highlight is Mysa. They're not in the electric car market but they're certainly developing clean technologies to help us better use our electricity. They're developing a product that will, hopefully, be available worldwide.

Then also, as I'm sure the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment will speak about, *The Way Forward on Climate Change in Newfoundland and Labrador*. There are three key focus areas of that: CO₂ mitigation, green economic growth and adaptation. These are all

very exciting and I'll leave those to the minister to highlight further.

Last night, I attended the NAACAP AGM. NAACAP is the Northeast Avalon Atlantic Coastal Action Program. They're very concerned about the environment. One of the key issues they were discussing was around car idling in the city and on the Northeast Avalon and what we could do either at a – there were municipal leaders there or anything we could do at a provincial level, around car idling. Then it was decided that it won't be a problem soon because we'll all be driving electric cars. NAACAP were very excited about our transition to electric cars.

The new industry will bring new opportunities for consumers, entrepreneurs and researchers in our province. So, for example, as the demand for heat pumps has gone up in Newfoundland and Labrador, I imagine the heat pump installation business is doing pretty well. As our economy shifts, so will the demand for help installing fast-charging stations in your house and buying a fast-charging station. These are going to be new opportunities for people in the province. Whether it's at your workplace or your apartment complex, those facilities will need to be kitted out with fast-charging technology.

There will be research opportunities in how electric cars work in harsh conditions. I know we have a team at C-CORE building a world-class harsh environment research facility that we are proud to support.

Then another initiative is free parking, for example. In some cities in Canada you have to pay to park no matter where you go. If you go to the grocery store or the shopping mall you have to pay to park. For example, in Vancouver what they're trying is you get free parking in the electric vehicle parking spaces if you have an electric car. So there are different ways that we can incent customers – not customers, that's my former world – consumers to shift to electric cars.

Last month, I visited the UK, I was at the grocery store and, obviously, there are the accessible parking bays or parking spaces, then there are spaces for pregnant mothers and for children, and then the next range were the

electric spaces. In that area, there were two or three different sets for different apps or different types of charging stations. So the different brands and the different apps were all clearly outlined on the pavement. You could see the advancement of where we might be in five or six years in terms of the options for our consumers.

I was thinking about, for myself, when I'm looking at an electric car, my parents live in Grand Falls-Windsor, so I'm going to drive to Grand Falls-Windsor from here to visit them. Can I get from my house to their house in the range of an electric car? I was thinking, in terms of the opportunities for the industry, Clarendville or midway points, there are going to be whole new types of industries there where people stop for an hour.

You might run in to one place and get a sandwich and a coffee, but now you might want to spend an hour while your car charges. Imagine if you can book a spot, for example, in a certain town and say I'll be in Clarendville from 2 to 3 o'clock, I'm going to book in a charging space right there and have lunch while I'm there. It creates a whole kind of different dynamic for different places around the province, potentially.

Also, an important component will be electronic waste and how we recycle the electronic components of electric cars. I know the metallic components of electric cars and batteries, rare earth minerals, there's going to be a whole industry in how we better use those and recycle those. Even things like garages. My Jeep is going into the garage tomorrow. The types of skills we need are going to change, and there will be increasing opportunity for entrepreneurs and for people in the province.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely excited about the advancements in electric vehicles and I can't wait to purchase my electric car. In the meantime, I'm just going to have to enjoy mowing my lawn with my electric lawn mower.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to thank the Member for Lake Melville for introducing this private Member's resolution. I'm a great supporter of electric cars. I support what they stand for, especially now when we're looking at the crisis with global warming and carbon emissions. It's very, very important for us to take action as a government.

I think a way to actually increase the use of electric cars would be by having more charging stations. That's what people have said to me is: Why would I go out and spend all this money when I won't be able to charge it? I was over in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick – my niece was getting married last month – and I was really surprised at the number of charging stations they have. It does increase the availability.

Just looking at the bigger picture, too, I will say, for us here in the Opposition, we are opposed to the Trudeau carbon tax. People says to me: Lela, how can you be opposed to a carbon tax when you support reducing carbon emissions? You're resistant to the use of fossil fuels. I say that we need to reduce our carbon emissions, but basically putting a carbon tax, I don't think actually will help reduce the emissions. I think that's more or less a money grab, and it would just increase costs without actually making affordable options available to the masses, especially the middle class and the people on lower incomes. It's very, very important for us, as we have to be fair to everybody, right?

If you look at gasoline and diesel, which is one of the greatest fuels consumed now, when we're looking at vehicles and other industries as well, vehicles in my area, up in Torngat Mountains, vehicles, ATVs, boats, we also use a lot of generators. All of this is through gasoline and diesel generation. It's very, very important for us to make sure that we address those issues.

Looking at lower income and our most vulnerable, people actually struggle now to maintain a vehicle. When you're looking at people in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, it's really, really hard for some people to actually be able to afford the gasoline or the diesel to put in the car. They'd love to have the option of having the cost that the Member for

Lake Melville talked about, but without actually being able to afford electric cars those options are not open to them.

Yes, we need to switch to greener options but we need to make sure those options are affordable. I know of a –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. EVANS: I know of an accident where somebody was killed and his relative was really, really upset because he was driving around with tires that really he shouldn't have had on his vehicle – bald tires. I've known of accidents where people were involved, as a university student, where people weren't maintaining their brakes, but it's just because they can't afford these costs.

When you talk about electric cars, the cost of maintaining electric cars is really expensive. If we're going to look at this as a viable option for us, an alternative to help us control the global warming crisis, we need to make sure that people can afford to not only purchase an electric car, but to be able to maintain it. If not, we're not going to make the switch which is really, really important to us.

Now, looking at my area, Torngat Mountains, climate change is probably the most – I'd say of all the regions in Newfoundland and Labrador, my region, Torngat Mountains is probably the greatest impacted, and also my friend over in Lab West and Lake Melville as well, those areas. How does global warming affect us? We're getting much warmer winters. What happens is the ice doesn't freeze as quickly so our transportation and our hunting is restricted. In the spring, we lose the ice quicker so our transportation is restricted again. I talk a lot about marine transportation, but in the winter, snowmobile transportation is a good alternative for us.

Also, snow; we're getting a lot more snowfall because of global warming. When I was campaigning, it was a bit of a joke, when I'd go in if I didn't really know somebody – I kind of knew them, I know most of the people in my district, generally, but if it was a little bit

uncomfortable or awkward, we'd talk about the snow.

I remember two seniors in their home actually got me to go over and look out the back window which was shovelled out. They said that's were our shed is. I couldn't see the shed. The peak of the roof is about 20 feet off the ground. It was covered in totally. They had their sons shovelling out the windows so they could actually have a bit of sunlight.

Climate change is actually having a direct impact in my community, in my district now. It's very important for us to realize that. What people in my district – and I'm sure in Lab West and in Lake Melville – were probably asking for, all we're asking for is regular winters. We see the impact. When I say we're actually in a crisis, I think I know what I'm talking about.

Not very long ago – I think it was in 2012, January 7 – I was walking down the road in Nain. The reason why I remember that is because I was walking down the road in January in Nain and I could hear the ocean; it wasn't froze over. The only ice that I could see was on the beach with the rocks and it was January. I had no mitts on and I had no cap on. In actual fact, in January in a regular winter you can't walk down the road in Nain without actually wearing mitts, cap and scarf, the whole thing. Everything is froze over and people are actually walking and skidooring on the ice.

To me, the reason why I remember that is that was the date I realized that, really, we are actually suffering from global warming. It is a crisis and we have to do something about it. Which is one of the reasons why I advocate and which is one of the reasons why I support the private Member's resolution from Lake Melville. We need to make sure that we actually take action.

Let's look at reducing carbon emissions. It's important to have electric cars and actually have them consumed en masse so they can become more affordable, but we have to make sure we're not taxing the poor. If we're going to expect the poor and the middle class to actually use a more environmentally friendly source of energy, we have to make sure it's not out of their price range. I think everybody here really can't relate

to that. I don't think there's a single person in here that actually worries about whether or not they can afford to get their brakes done or whether or not they actually get their tires changed.

The thing about it is we have to remember when we're making legislation and when we're looking at strategies on how to deal with this global crisis, that we include options that are available to our middle class and to our working poor. Really, I think if there's a major problem or if we can actually point out what the problem is, it's actually the consumption of fossil fuels. Now, we can talk about greener electricity, for example, hydroelectricity. It's supposed to be greener, but we just learned from Muskrat Falls – I can't help but bring up Muskrat Falls.

When trees are flooded and vegetation is flooded, the thing about it is the rotten vegetation will release methane, which is a greenhouse gas, into the environment, so we have to be responsible as well. In actual fact, I was looking at some studies and they're showing now that we have underestimated by 25 per cent how much methane is being released by the damming, by the generation of electricity.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. EVANS: We need to actually look at that as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Stay relevant to the bill, please.

MS. EVANS: Of course, when we're looking at the so-called greener electricity – and I reference back to Muskrat Falls where we didn't do the clearcutting that we were going to do – what's the effect on the food chain? You can't call hydroelectricity green unless it's done in an environmentally friendly way and it doesn't actually create more problems than it solves.

Of course, we all learned from Muskrat Falls the methylmercury released and bioaccumulation in the food chain, therefore, my district is impacted again. The people of Rigolet, especially; and, of course, the people in the Lake Melville District as well, Mud Lake, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and North West River, they're greatly impacted by that.

When we're looking at energy sources and we're talking about cleaner ones, we have to make sure it's not going to be at the expense of our middle class. I'm going to point out, we can't find solutions that are actually going to be at the expense of Indigenous people, at the expense of our food chain. If we're going to look at hydroelectricity, we have to make sure it's clean and it's not going to impact the population.

In actual fact, I stand here in the House of Assembly today to say I support hydroelectricity. It's very, very important. But when I look at hydroelectricity – especially up in Labrador when I look at Upper Churchill, I look at Muskrat Falls now and I look at Gull Island – the thing about it is the people in my district have only paid for that. They're going to pay for it through higher electricity costs, they're going to pay for it through methylmercury poisoning in the food chain.

Does the hydroelectricity generation get to my district? No, we don't actually have any of those sources come to our communities. We have to rely diesel, which is, of course, contributing to the problem. When we look at it as a government, as a province, we have to make sure we're looking at all solutions. It's very, very important for us.

I will say again, I don't think the Trudeau carbon tax is the solution. I think we actually have to start looking at making sure that our energy consumption is moving away to more environmentally friendly, less impact to the environment. When we look at the different alternatives, we have to make sure there are incentives out there for change as well. We really need incentives.

If you look at it, how can a person afford an electric car? How can a person afford the maintenance of an electric car if we want them to move towards electric cars?

Getting back to my district and getting back to all of Labrador, we have to make sure that, too, if we're going to rely on any kind of electrical solution, we got to make sure it applies to our area. What about batteries? Because the biggest problem with batteries in my district and in Labrador is when a battery gets cold it loses its charge really quickly.

We used to joke a lot when I used to go out in the field as a biologist, doing water surveys and things like that, hydrology surveys. We spent a lot time in the water, downloading data on a laptop computer, and we used to have to bundle up the laptop, we would have to put heating pads in it just to keep the batteries from going dead. So it's very, very important here. In my district, if the electricity source fails people's lives can be in jeopardy because of the harsh environment. We have to make sure the solutions are appropriate.

Also, coming into the House now, we're elected MHAs. When we actually look at alternatives, we have to make sure they apply to our middle class, our working poor and, of course, our most vulnerable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

It's getting hard to hear.

Thank you.

MS. EVANS: One of the things, too, I would like to point out, when we're looking at our most vulnerable and we're looking at the cost of electricity, there are a lot of people, even in St. John's – the capital of Newfoundland and Labrador – there are a lot of people in Newfoundland, especially our elders, that can't afford to turn up the thermostat in the winter. They're going around bundled up with sweaters on, caps on their heads, socks.

Do you know something? Everybody in this House can afford an electrical car. I could go out and buy one now. Do you know what I mean? I can actually incur that cost, but we have to look at people who can't afford that.

We have to be responsible here, but I gladly support this bill and I actually am very, very grateful that it's being introduced, because we need to switch people off fossil fuels. The only way we're going to get people to buy electrical cars is if they can recharge them and if the battery technology improves so they last longer. We have to have an option that works for people or they will not take it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs Environment.

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

I thank the Member for Lake Melville for introducing this private Member's motion today and I thank the people from Drive Electric NL for being here today.

I won't reread it, Mr. Speaker, but I'll get to the last of it:

“THEREFORE BE RESOLVED that this hon. House supports the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in its efforts to establish a network of electric vehicle charging stations across the province.”

I'm glad to say, and I'm proud as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment, that is a position we have taken very seriously. I don't know if you guys remember *Field of Dreams* by Kevin Costner years ago, “If you build it, they will come.” Well, Mr. Speaker, they're already here. They're up there in the gallery today – nine different vehicles, I think, from nine different manufacturers; there may be eight, so I may have to be corrected there. They came to the Confederation Building today to show us their vehicles.

The hon. Member for Lake Melville is probably the first person I know that purchased a fully electric vehicle. The first time I got a ride in it a little while ago, I was grinning like a fox, Mr. Speaker, because I was thinking we're going to have to push this thing. I can only think golf cart. I know there's an RNC presence out in the building and I hope no one is listening, but that thing can move.

Today, I got in – I don't mind saying. I guess we shouldn't promote but it's always great. I got in the Tesla. Tesla seems to be the flagship for innovation when it comes to electric vehicles. Everybody else is online. I went on it last night and I found 26 different vehicles available right across Canada.

You may say that's not available to me because there's no dealership in our province. The young gentleman who took me for a ride today in his Tesla told me exactly how he got it. He sat down to his iPad and ordered his Tesla. They told him when it was going to arrive in his driveway. On the day that it was supposed to be here, it shows up and he was passed the key.

If you think about electric vehicles, just think about how far we've come in our purchase of them. So never think because this is not a dealership right here in our province – I think there were two Teslas today in our parking lot.

AN HON. MEMBER: Three.

MR. BRAGG: There were three there? To me, that's like – for someone, if there's no dealership here, it's amazing. I'll try to name them. I know Chev was there with their Bolt. BMW was there with their vehicle. Hyundai was there and Audi was there with their vehicle.

AN HON. MEMBER: Ford was there.

MR. BRAGG: Ford was there with their vehicle?

AN HON. MEMBER: Nine different kinds.

MR. BRAGG: There were nine different kinds. Eight vehicles, nine different kinds. I can't make the math out of that, but if that works in electric-vehicle terminology, so be it, Mr. Speaker.

Being the minister, of course, for us a cleaner, greener economy is definitely going to be our way forward. We're investing \$2 million. We're working with Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. They are going to build 14 stations across this province. Now, that's going to be 14 stations with two different charging levels. There's going to be the high-speed one, the Level 3; and the Level 2, the lower speed one. The high-speed one, 30 minutes you can get a full charge for most vehicles.

I think they're working out the details now for where they're going to need to be because obviously you wouldn't just want to put them on a cold corner somewhere. You need a place where someone can go to use the washroom, freshen up, get a coffee, whatever the case might

be. We are moving throughout the province with that. Now, in saying that, Mr. Speaker, we are really happy that we're moving through the province with these stations, but I was given a list of nearly 14 current stations that are in the province right now. You may think that they're all here on the Northeast Avalon, but indeed they're not. They are already spread throughout this province.

In my own district, Fogo Island - Cape Freels, the Fogo Island Inn has a charging station. That can tell you where they're to. Marystown YMCA, off the Trans-Canada, so if we can charge you all the way, you can get down the Burin Peninsula; you can go to Marystown. In Torbay, Public Works. Municipalities have taken this in stride. The municipalities are going out to the recreation and their municipal buildings and they're putting in those charging stations. Like Panasonic, slightly ahead of our time, they are right on our time with this, Mr. Speaker. Industry and municipalities are already on side.

The Minister of TW is sort of giving me little snip remarks: I might buy one. I'm really interested in the new electric truck that Ford is bringing out. Ford is bringing out an F-150 with a range of 500 kilometres and can tow up to 3,500 pounds. Now, I wouldn't want anybody to misquote me on the part of people who manufacture these vehicles at Ford because they may not be able to tow the 3,500 pounds 500 kilometres, but they have the ability to do it.

For a person who drives a pickup truck, to know what the consumption of that is, to move to a vehicle that takes my carbon footprint and eliminates it and cuts it back, that's a pretty big move. If you look at where we're to, this is a global concern. The Member for Mount Pearl North presented a petition here last week talking about climate change. This is our action. Everyone needs to take action on climate change. I know the Member for Torngat was concerned about the cost of this. Cost is going to be associated to everything, but if the ones who can, do, it would make a difference for everyone else who can't.

So, will everybody here tomorrow rush out and buy an electric vehicle? Maybe not, Mr. Speaker, but when you hear the price range gets

down in the mid-\$40,000 range, that makes it appealing to people. I'm looking at the gentleman up there. In a two-electric-car household, the savings are up to as much as \$5,000 a year in gas consumption alone. Now, that's \$5,000 of cold, hard cash. So you have to make what? Who's the mathematician here? The Minister of Finance, you want at least \$7,500 to clear \$5,000? That's a big difference. That alone is a payment on a vehicle, what you would save. So, there's a great initiative for people to get out and get into the electric.

I kid you not, I joked early in the game when the hon. Member for Lake Melville brought his electric vehicle. I said: What's the range? He said: 250 kilometres. I said: Order me two. I'll leave one in Clarendville so I can get home and back, right? I need one on the charging station. It's a bit of an ongoing joke with us, but the range now is 500 kilometres. Most everybody in this House who drives, drives within the range of 500 kilometres, except for the Member for Baie Verte. He's definitely going to want two. Because you're, what, 700 or 800 kilometres?

This is where we've moved in the last couple years. For this private Member's motion, for us to be able to do this, to move this forward and to be a part of our plan, to move toward a cleaner, greener economy, I think it's something that every person here who can, should. I won't promote anymore the types of vehicles you can buy because there are multiple types of vehicles, but they're all there. A gentleman told me today, you can lease one; you talk about an option. I'm going to be a salesman after this. Where's the Member for Ferryland? I'm going to need a few points after this.

What a great way to clean up our greenhouse gas emissions. Because our biggest contributor - I think it's 34 per cent come from transportation. Thirty-four per cent of our emissions contribute to the greenhouse gas emissions in this world. That's a lot, and we can change that. We can change that, every single one of us. Like I said, I can't say this enough, for those who can afford, should.

Now, I know we need to see where we're to. Anybody buying a vehicle, you have to look at the warranty, the life expectancy and all that sort of thing. But the Member for - who mentioned

about the gas stations? Put up your hand, so I know who you are. He's gone right now. No, he's still back there.

The Member for Mount Pearl North talked about gas stations and breaking down for gas. I can tell you right now about an incident where a Member broke down for gas and I came to the rescue. So, you have friends in this world. But let's just think about it. Any of us who live off the Avalon. Do you remember the time when you could throw a stone from one gas station to the next, to the next, to the next in this province? Right now you're talking 60, 70 kilometres you need to go most times for a gas station. We're going to bring it down to be about the same thing. I think it's every 65 kilometres we're hoping to put a charging station along the Trans-Canada.

If you're a tourist who decides that you want to come visit Newfoundland and Labrador, we will have the means that you will come and you will not break down. If you do, I'm going to tell you now, there's somebody with a booster pack, because the CAA will have a pack that's going to boost you up in no time, no doubt about that. But we're going to have the technology, we're going to have the infrastructure in place for that.

I'm pretty proud of that, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you. To be a part of that, to know that when you buy this electric vehicle – and we will, everybody here, when we go to the homes, when we get to that age and our grandkids come visit, you won't hear them come up with a big vroom, vroom. They're just going to come in silently in the driveway because 90 per cent of these people will be driving an electric vehicle. It is going to be the way of the future.

It seemed like years ago, if you got on to some futuristic movie, they talked about an electric vehicle and we all smiled at that, because the best thing we had was probably our watch that we knew ran on a battery. To realize right now you're going to be able to leave here and you're going to go right to St. Anthony in a vehicle and you're only going to need to charge that vehicle a couple of times along the way, the cost of that is going to be a lot less than a charge – for a full-size pickup you're looking at, what, \$120 to \$150 for a fill-up? The most you're going to look at, from what I've heard, to charge up those

vehicles, based on today's rates, is about seven bucks to charge your vehicle. That's a big difference. You can get 500 kilometres for \$7.

I know again, the Member for Torngat Mountains – and the former Member before that, him and I used to joke, because he said: I have a lot of pavement. I know that we're probably a long ways out from the ATV, the snowmobile and the all-terrain vehicle scenario of all this which would be the main component.

She talked about her reliability on gas and diesel. I realize that. We have a diverse province and we're spread out all over the place, but wherever there's a road in the future – and I'm safe to say, right now, you can find your way across this province; you may be a little slower getting charged. The charging of your own electric vehicle is like charging your cordless phone at home. It doesn't matter, you're going to get in a parking lot, you're going to go and you're going to plug your vehicle in.

Lab West, I know you guys are used to plugging in your vehicles, been doing it for years. If not, they'd never start down there in January and February.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAGG: If we're going to introduce electric vehicles, Lab West is going to be the place to go because they're already wired to think we plug in. Some of us may actually break down on the road but we won't be the first and we won't be the last.

The garage that we go to – can you imagine the mechanic that looked and saw your first pickup, which was big enough you could get under the bonnet, close it and change the plugs? Now you're going to look at the same person, hook up and say there's no motor here. That's what I noticed today. I don't know about any of you guys, I went to the parking lot today. When the bonnet was up, I saw maybe one vehicle where actually the motor should be up in front and there was an electric set-up, but everything else is under the seat.

The other thing about those vehicles is safety. As one of the people who owned the vehicle said, I dare you try to roll it over, because all the

weight is down where the tires are. The centre of gravity for the vehicle is so low – and I don't advise this – but you can make a very extreme turn and a very extreme maneuver in these vehicles and not roll them bottom up.

The other thing – and my time is running out – I'm going to promote this Tesla because when I got in that car today I was blown away. I know I'm not allowed to use props but there was an iPad there as big as this small flat screen TV, in which the driver said I'm putting this on auto now, we're stopped at the lights and I'm putting this on automatic, autopilot. He adjusted (inaudible) to the front vehicle and when the vehicle in front moved, he folded his arms and we went through the light, around the corner and around the corner.

It's like when you're teaching your child and you need that brake on your side. I couldn't believe the car was actually – the technology in the vehicle was absolutely amazing. If you see me in an electric car pretty soon, it's because, number one, my wife freed up the money and allowed me to do it and, number two, I think it would be your best investment that you could ever make that would influence how you would lower your part for climate change.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm reminded of John Mellencamp's "Peaceful World" the line in it says: "If you're not part of the future then get out of the way."

Certainly, lunchtime today we saw the future very clear in a variety of forms. Certainly, a wide array of electric vehicles outside at lunchtime. Like the Member who spoke before me, I'm looking for the pickup truck that will get me into a fishing area and out again without being sidelined along that way, or that I'm going to need a very long extension cord.

It was very impressive to look at these vehicles out there. Obviously, the reliability is improving.

The range is increasing. We're seeing that already. The owners I spoke to are satisfied with it. They're even domestic models out there that are made here in Canada, I guess, and are probably a little bit more affordable in some ways.

Very clear, too, is that fuel and oil consumption becomes unnecessary. You don't need oil to lubricate the engine. You don't need gas to power it. You don't need the transmission fluid, so when you look the amount of oil-based products that we need, they're no longer required in the car. Other resources are needed, of course.

The owner I spoke to indicated that the cost was about the same, because we don't often factor into it the cost of gas and the wear and tear and the maintenance and the oil changes. We just think of the cost of the vehicle, but if you look at the cost of the vehicle, plus the cost of vehicle that uses an internal combustion engine, then they balance out. I think that's how we have to start selling it.

I guess it's a bit of a chicken and an egg in many ways as to how do we move forward on this, because it's about having the necessary services along the way, the charging stations, to make it viable. Then, again, if we don't have the cars, why put the charging stations in?

I'm reminded, I think it was the book *Seabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand talking about the owner of Seabiscuit who made his living, at the time, when the age of the automobile was on America, so automobiles were relatively new. I would assume that the transition to the automobile world faced similar challenges. Well, can we rely on it? What's the range? How much is it going to cost? Who can afford it? It's like anything else, once it starts to catch on, the price starts to come down to where people can afford it.

Growing up, I remember one car per family usually. I'd challenge you now to see how many families own just one car. Actually, I heard one statistic: There are more cars in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador than there are people. The fact is it's going to be expensive up front. It's like airfare, the same thing. At one time air travel would have been out of the range

of most people, but it's not. Anyone can get on the plane just about now and go to wherever they want.

I do believe that as they become more prevalent and as people become more accustomed to them, we're going to see an increase in it because if anything else, they're quiet and they're efficient for getting around in the city. It's safe to say that the next vehicle I buy is very likely going to be an electric vehicle, especially if it can get me all the way up to the Pinware River during salmon season and back again. The key thing is going that stretch up the Northern Peninsula or along the Trans-Labrador Highway, so that you can get from one end to the other without worrying about running out of juice in this case.

We think this resolution is a move in the right direction and we support the motion, but we think more can be done. The transition to electric vehicles and the requisite charging stations are just two of the aspects of the need to find energy efficiencies and wean ourselves off a carbon-based economy.

Efficiency Canada is a national voice for an energy-efficient economy and it examines the policy of many of the provinces across the country. It has given our province the poorest grade across Canada. Actually, we tie with Saskatchewan when it comes to energy efficiency. It's not very impressive but I think this motion is going to be going in the right direction to improve that grade, which is why it's a positive motion.

The agency went further in their report and noted that by consistently not looking for energy efficiency in effect the province has a policy of wasting energy. In fact, the agency recommended that many more ways of energy efficiency can be achieved, including the adoption of electric cars and the installation of charging stations. That alone, I think, puts us on the right track.

The agency also echoes the recommendations of Synapse offered in their report to the PUB on rate mitigation. That was a policy to try and get a handle on the crippling Muskrat Falls power rates poised to come online soon. In other parts of the country electric vehicles are looking at ways of reducing the carbon footprint and

greenhouse gas emissions. In our province it also becomes a way of hopefully dealing with skyrocketing power bills.

Now, we know that Hydro has a plan – and that's been referenced here a few times – of 14 charging stations that will stretch along the Trans-Canada Highway from Port aux Basques to St. John's, but what about Labrador? That's the key thing. There needs to be a plan for electric charging stations in Labrador. Upper Lake Melville, Churchill Falls, Lab City and Wabush all currently benefit from low-carbon renewable Churchill Falls power. When I was president of the Teachers' Association I had the opportunity to visit that plant. It's a remarkable piece of engineering.

Paving the Trans-Labrador Highway is nearing completion. I drove that when it was a dirt road. I will tell you that the rented vehicle that we drove in, I wouldn't buy it so much after because I think the speed limit was 80 – I'll leave it at that. Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro needs to include Labrador communities in this network of charging stations, given the abundance of renewable power that does exist.

It will be interesting to find out, maybe from the Minister of Natural Resources – to inform the House about the status of Nalcor's efforts to electrify their in-house vehicle fleet. I understand from my colleague, the Member for Labrador West, that Nalcor is already using electric vehicles in Churchill Falls.

We also know that the federal Liberals in their 2019 budget included an incentive program for drivers to switch to electric cars and have all gas vehicles off the road by 2040. We know that the rebate is \$5,000 off the cost of electric vehicles, \$2,500 off plug-in hybrids, but they apply only to cars that cost more than \$45,000. One thing here for this government, will we be considering further rebates or other incentives for people, especially lower income people, to purchase electric vehicles? Those are some of the concerns that we would have.

The big thing for us is that the province must benefit from this. Part of the issue of installing charging stations throughout the province is ensuring that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador benefit from this initiative. We do not

need another scenario where a private corporation seeks the bulk of profit from a public asset to go to them and then out of the province.

We see Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro getting into the business, but will government allow others to participate in this business opportunity? We're not talking about big private businesses like big oil or big cannabis who will profit from selling their product elsewhere and benefit themselves; we're going to start selling electricity to ourselves. If we're going to do that, we should see the benefits of that.

To that end, I would like to propose an amendment to government's motion. I have copies of it here, Mr. Speaker, and I'll read the proposed amendment as follows:

In the last clause of the motion, by adding immediately after the word, province, a comma and the words: Any financial benefits of which would be returned to the people of the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will recess as we review the proposed amendment to the motion.

Recess

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

We have reviewed the proposed amendment and ruled it to be out of order, as it expands on the scope of the motion.

The hon. the House Leader for the Third Party.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I accept your ruling on it. From our point of view, what we're looking at, we think this is a great idea. We have no idea of how this is going to roll out. I would assume with charging stations, Mr. Speaker, that probably, initially, the models we've heard, where you could probably stop in to a Tim Hortons or stop along the way and plug in your car.

I'm reminded of when ATMs first came in, there was no charge for them, but quickly, sooner or later, somewhere along the line, there was a fee attached to each time you use an ATM. I would assume that somewhere down the road, even for

these charging stations, there would be charges applied to them.

What we're looking at here is that if indeed this is a truly provincial initiative, that whatever profits or money that is accrued comes back to the province. Originally, when we looked at – as a recommendation to the government, even though the motion is ruled out of order, we deliberately left the motion vague for the reason that we didn't want to be prescriptive or to tie whatever party is in power to choose a specific action. We do have organizations, such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation, where basically the funds come back to the province, the money comes back to the province. It's not about giving money to Loblaws or to another organization where the wealth is going out.

We own Muskrat Falls, we own the debt that comes with it, I think it should come back to us to make sure that we're paying down, contributing towards, not only reduction of greenhouse gases, but also to the debt that's associated with Muskrat Falls.

We had a motion here recently about making sure that Newfoundlanders are first considered for jobs, for publicly-funded jobs, I think that was in the same vein.

So, whether it's a co-operative, like Mountain Equipment Co-op or the Newfoundland and Labrador Credit Union, we had in mind here, we hope that in adopting this motion that the province will take the spirit of the amendment in mind so that we find ways to look after our own first. That we take care of the taxpayers and the ratepayers. I think we can truly expand this to make it even more – provide more of an incentive to people who want to make use of electric vehicles.

Regardless of whether the amendment is passed – it was ruled out of order – we still support this motion. It's still, from our point of view, a very forward-thinking and forward-looking idea. I think in many ways the Member who moved it has already demonstrated he very much wants to be part of the future and let's not stand in his or our way.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

It's been a pleasure today to hear all sides of the House talk so strongly to the commitment to electric vehicles, indeed to electrification and to opportunities within Newfoundland and Labrador. I want to join in that discussion today.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very, very important. I do have responsibility, as Minister of Natural Resources, for electricity provision in this province, and while there are challenges with Muskrat Falls, in the bigger picture, I have to say that we're moving towards 98 per cent renewable energy in the province.

The people of the province have an expectation, of course, that we'll keep rates as low as absolutely possible. As the people of the province know, we've actually worked very, very diligently and will continue to work diligently to put in place rate mitigation, Mr. Speaker, so that we do not have to see rates doubling, which would have happened if we do nothing.

It's good, as part of our plan, of course, Mr. Speaker, we do have electrification as part of that. I can tell the Members of this House some of the things that we're doing with regard to electrification.

One of the things I wanted to start with is how glad I am that my colleagues put forward this resolution. I can say that in Natural Resources we have put in place in our very own building on Elizabeth Avenue, we've installed two Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. COADY: We're really quite proud that we were able to do that. These charging stations are up and running and are open to both employees and the general public.

It's worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro has recently

purchased an electric vehicle to add to its fleet for use by employees for business and operations use. So we are making progress.

Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro is actively working to bring the province more in line with electric vehicle accessibility levels that you see across the country. Increased use of electric vehicles will help to reduce carbon emissions, of course, and support electrification issues.

I was very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to see in this year's budget by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador an allocation to pursue, in partnership with Hydro, the installation of electric vehicle charging stations. The government is now in the process of securing locations across the province. I do have a list, including in greater St. John's, of course: Kelsey Drive, Merchant Drive and Danny Drive – they're looking at those. Some of the list of proposed sites: the Holyrood Access Road, the Trans-Canada Highway at Whitbourne, Goobies, Port Blandford, Glovertown and Gander. They're also looking at areas in Bishop's Falls, Badger, South Brook, Deer Lake, Corner Brook, Stephenville Crossing, Port aux Basques and Doyles. We also know that there are 34 public charging stations already located across the province, and, of course, I've already mentioned what we're doing at the Natural Resources Building.

So very pleased to see this happen, the transition to electric vehicles and converting to electric heating, of course, good policies, not just for our climate, but also good policies for electricity rates. As the Public Utilities Board and its consultant, Synapse, have highlighted, growing the local market for electricity creates better value for ratepayers than current export markets. We also know that international trends happening with electrification go beyond buildings and cars. Other places around the globe are looking at electrification for aircraft, for buses, for ferries, for cruise ships and more. I sit next to the Minister Transportation and Works every day and I'm reminding him that this is the future. So I'm sure he'll take that into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to also note my hon. colleague, the Member opposite who mentioned about the – he put forward in good intent, the

Member for St. John's Centre, in good intent, he put forward a motion – and it seems to have moved from my pages – that basically wanted to add the words: Any financial benefits of which would be returned to the people of the province.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that Members here on this side of the House will heed his good advice, will heed his words. I know the minister responsible for the environment and climate change will heed his advice, will listen to him intently. I see sidebars happening even now as we speak, Mr. Speaker, so I know that they are taking due note of this concern. As we move forward, I'm sure that we will take every intent, the good intent, that the Member for St. John's Centre brought to this House and to this debate this afternoon, would listen to those good words.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we talked a little bit about how good electrification is. I've spoken about where the stations will be across the province. We've talked about recognizing the need to ensure that Labrador is figured into the plans for electrification. I've been in a vehicle in Labrador City that is an electric vehicle. It was a Tesla, I believe, and it was an absolutely beautiful vehicle, so I know the people of Labrador are definitely interested in electric vehicles. As my colleague remarked, they are used to plugging in their vehicles, but most importantly, they are very interested in electric vehicles for multitudes of reasons, one of which, of course, is the impact to the environment. Electric vehicles do offer comfort, they do offer an opportunity to save money and they do help with the environment, Mr. Speaker.

Here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we want to continue with the trends and build a strong, renewable future here in our province. To do this and to maximize every opportunity, we're developing, of course, a renewable energy plan. I wanted to speak a little bit about that this afternoon. We want a clear and sustainable long-term vision for our province for the use of our renewable energy. The Department of Natural Resources has already consulted with people in the industry, a lot of stakeholders. Like we have a plan for oil and gas development, like we have a plan for mining in this province, for growth, development and encouragement, we also are developing a plan for renewable energy and how we would be able to utilize those assets in this

province that we have in such abundance, Mr. Speaker.

Here I'm thinking about – a colleague opposite also mentioned, from Torngat Mountains, she talked about hydroelectricity and run-of-river opportunities and opportunities for wind and opportunities for solar. These are some of the renewable energy opportunities, and what a better way than to harness them to utilize for electric vehicles. But not just for electric vehicles, there are other import substitutions that we can do. We can also export that renewable energy as well.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to speak clearly on this to identify the focuses, the intent of government and working with industries across our great province, across Canada and around the world to lower greenhouse gas emissions, to reduce waste, conserve energy. I think it's something that we all, in this House of Assembly, are very supportive of.

I've heard hon. colleagues today talk about renewable vehicles and how that will be the future. We're advancing that and I'm, again, pleased that I'm hearing from this hon. House support of that direction, support of the fact that we've allocated resources to ensuring that we have that network across the province and growing that network across the province and ensuring that those that do make the purchase of an electric vehicle have charging stations at appropriate points.

I did read, Mr. Speaker, that some of these vehicles have a range of about 500 kilometres, which is incredible. To think of how inexpensive it will be for people to utilize those vehicles. Transportation is one of the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, and we know that not just in Newfoundland and Labrador but globally.

If we could change the transportation to utilizing more electricity, more renewable energy options for electricity, it would be a game changer, I believe, when we talk about climate change. Making sure that we're using renewable energy is a game changer. Making sure that we're using electric vehicles, electrifying our businesses and our buildings around the province, I think, really does speak to the direction and the opportunities

that present itself to Newfoundland and Labrador.

I know that there are others who wish to speak so I'll take my seat on that to say how pleased I am that this resolution was brought forward, how pleased I am that Natural Resources is working to electrify even more and working towards more available renewable energy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

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

I commend the Member for Lake Melville for bringing this PMR forward.

We have a common friend, Mike Goodyear. He's a big advocate here in the province for electric cars and he took me in his Tesla six months ago. I fell in love with it right away, comfortable, quiet, get across the Island, in Grand Falls-Windsor to St. John's here for \$8. What's there not to love, you know what I mean? It's something that we definitely support from this side. Environmentally, it's absolutely fantastic.

One thing that I would urge as we move forward about this is the placement of the charging stations. Of course, we can say all day long, 14 of them across the Island on the Trans-Canada is absolutely fantastic, but maybe we could look into putting some inside the municipalities where we want the tourists, for instance. Tourists just don't have to be from outside Newfoundland and Labrador. We have tourists inside of Newfoundland and Labrador that travel around to different places.

I would urge that we could look at the placement of these charging stations, for instance, in Grand Falls-Windsor. Instead of a 20-minute, 30-minute charge on the highway, grabbing a coffee, sitting and just waiting for your car to charge, we could put it down towards the Corduroy Brook trail, the Exploits River so some of these people that are travelling across

the Island, they can actually stop and see our municipalities, see what we have to offer, instead of just going from Port aux Basques to St. John's. Then they could see there's much more to offer than the highway.

Of course, they're looking for different places anyway, but they might not know about certain little places, little nooks and crannies across the Island where these could take them inside. So instead of 20 or 30 minutes sat down at Tim Hortons or at the Irving on the highway, we could get them inside of our municipalities and: Wow, well look, here's one of the largest salmon rivers on the East Coast and it's absolutely beautiful, so let's grab a rod and reel and go salmon fishing or walk the Corduroy Brook trail in Grand Falls-Windsor or Red Indian Lake up towards Buchans, Millertown, that way.

It's absolutely fantastic, but I don't want to miss the opportunity of just putting a charging station alongside the highway, in the middle of a municipality where there's – I know they have to go there as well, but if I got somebody coming to our province here, and they're going to spend 30 minutes or an hour or two hours with the lower level charging stations, I'd like for them to plunk down and take a look at what we have here in the province. I don't want to miss that opportunity, and that's the biggest thing.

I'll only take another minute here, or two, but we do have a couple concerns. For instance, if we ever do get to the point where you have 3,500 cars plugged in at the one time on the Island, that's a lot of electricity being used. I want to make sure that we can afford this in the upcoming years. The infrastructure is there and we can build it. If we have one charging station inside the Avalon Mall underground parking lot, and there are 17 people lined up to use it, we want to make sure that there's enough of those to go around in the bigger places and whatnot.

Of course, we talk about the weather and how cold it can get here. At minus 25, your battery is not going to last as long.

The other thing – just one last point before I take my seat – is the education. I would also urge the government to educate the people of

Newfoundland and Labrador about these charging stations, about the electric vehicles. Maybe put something on the website just to let them know. Because myself, before I experienced the great experience I did have in the Tesla, like the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment, I thought to myself, well, are we going to push this thing? Is it going to go 35 kilometres an hour? I had no idea, but when I sat in one it was absolutely a fantastic experience.

Coming from oil and gas, where you see the big F-350 trucks all jacked up, to go into something like that it certainly opens your eyes. You know what, these are powerful vehicles and they're fantastic vehicles and they're comfortable. And to get from Grand Falls-Windsor to St. John's on seven bucks instead of \$80 or \$90, who's going to say no to that?

So it's something that we absolutely support, but I would urge the government to educate the people of the province. Let them know what it's like. This display out here this afternoon was a great example. We need more things like that to let the people know what they're getting themselves into before they shut it down, like I did at one time before I had my experience. So we absolutely support this PMR.

I also give kudos to the Member for St. John's Centre with his amendment. I thought it was a good amendment as well. That's the way we want to keep everything here.

I'll take my seat now. Kudos to the Member for Lake Melville. Like I say, just educate the province about it so everybody knows what they're getting themselves into.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville, if he speaks now he'll close the debate.

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

Thanks to all of my colleagues, and those watching in the audience and at home. It's been interesting. As I hoped, I was really looking

forward to hearing the cross-section of the people that represent this province that are in this House, and the cross-section of ideas and contribution to the debate was quite fascinating.

Just a couple of notes and messages that have been sent in. The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services informed me that there will be 10, Level 2 charging stations at the new Corner Brook hospital.

Thank you for that, Sir, that's great.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TRIMPER: Do I hear 12? It's just like a little bidding war.

Also, a special shout out. When I was sitting in the Speaker's Chair, I was always liking to acknowledge the folks watching at home. To Mr. Kel Kelleher from Springdale, thank you for your cheers from the sidelines. And yes, Sir, we're going to do our best here.

What I thought I'd do is walk through a lot of the arguments. Some of it I'm going to repeat, but I'd also like to address some of the maybe concerns or little inklings of, well, let me just see, that were out there. So let's just go through some of that.

First of all, in terms of quieter and safer and low maintenance, absolutely. It is a pleasure to drive. For those of you who had a chance today – and, again, I thank our friends from Drive Electric NL – any time you want a spin, just come and see me, we'll go for a cruise. It is very much more advanced, and as someone said, the way of the future; the future is here now and we should take advantage of it.

It's also very fascinating today. In the display you could see, in the variety of models that were available, it's everything from a sports car to a little commuter car and, as you're hearing about, to pickup trucks, to buses and even cruise ships. The electrification of our transportation system is happening now and it's quite exciting.

I wanted to talk about price. I heard some concerns about price. Part of the strategy today in putting the placards in each of the vehicles that were there, yes, there were some higher end,

some more expensive vehicles that were available, but there are also others very comparable to any kind of internal combustion engine vehicle that you're looking for – Volts, some of the smaller ones. I'm just sitting with my colleague here from Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune. He's looking at one for his daughter, and I was just identifying to him where he can go and find a used or even a new car for less than \$30,000, and very affordable. It's no longer an issue.

If you looked at the fact sheet that Drive Electric NL had sent to all of us, and you look at the back of the page there, it was talking about the lithium batteries. That's a fascinating chart, because when these electric vehicles were launched in their newest wave back in the '90s, it was the cost of those batteries that were driving up so much of the individual unit cost. As you can see, in some 10 years, we are now at a 90 per cent less expensive cost per unit of these lithium batteries, so at 10 per cent of what we were. That's what's bringing the price down rapidly.

The other exciting thing, I just heard somebody talking about battery capacity. The ranges in these batteries, the technology is moving so quickly. For example, my car has a range of 135 just on the base batteries – I get a supplement – but now, if I were to buy that same car just a couple of years later, it's actually twice that: 270. That's the kind of doubling of efficiency.

In terms of cold weather, they do just fine. Mine, I find sometimes if it's sitting here all day and I'll leave after a nice, fun day in the Legislature, I'll go out and check it, it may be down some 5 or 10 per cent from when I parked it. That's on a super cold day in St. John's – which, frankly, isn't that cold. Nevertheless, there's a slight deterioration, but it really is going to become less and less noticeable as time goes on.

My colleague from Mount Scio, with her lawn mower and her considerations about some of the facts that she talked about in terms of the efficiency of driving these vehicles. Most of the stats you'll see online, electric vehicles on a comparable basis – the Golf, I think you mentioned, it is about 20 per cent, one-fifth to one-sixth of the cost to operate. So a dramatic saving for those who are operating.

I want to talk about climate change. My colleague from Torngat Mountains, I just want to refer her to the – go to *The Way Forward* report on climate change, under the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency and, indeed, you will see there some very scary numbers.

For everyone in the province, but for us in Labrador – she was talking about where I live in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and where she is representing up in Torngat Mountains – by 2050, projections are with a do-nothing scenario or sort of a status-quo scenario that we have right now, the winter temperature in Nain will increase by 7.3 degrees. That's terrifying for a region that, frankly, with very little road infrastructure, relies on ice as their road for so many months of the year, 7.3 degrees warmer means it's almost – forget it.

It will be six degrees warmer in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Here in YYT, in St. John's they're projecting a 3.4 degree difference in temperatures; it will be that much warmer. These are pretty scary numbers. So, yes, we do need to act.

I'm going to throw a bouquet over to the Official Opposition. I think over the last four years I've heard the party talk a lot about their concerns around carbon tax, and it seems to be a common theme across the country. I'm going to throw you a suggestion, to go to the United Nations climate report on pricing carbon, 2018. This is an international collection of climate change scientists from all over the world who have collectively ruled on the effectiveness of carbon taxes and pricing carbon for addressing this serious problem. You will get all kinds of wisdom and insight in there, and I think it will help you a lot.

Another interesting feature about moving from an internal combustion engine vehicle to one of an electric vehicle – a normal car, for example, will emit about five tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year. So by switching to an EV, that's five tons less you're putting out into the atmosphere.

This province right now has about 390,000 registered vehicles. You can imagine if we were starting to move thousands, tens of thousands of

vehicles into an EV regime, you can imagine, as somebody – I forget which one – was indicating that – I think it was the minister, yes – 34 per cent of our provincial emissions come from the transportation sector. So if each one of us stood up and said, yeah, okay, I'll move to an EV, that's five tons less per year. A dramatic contribution to this collective goal that we all need to achieve.

Another interesting factor that I found in there, in addition to safety which some had referenced, was about energy security and reducing our reliance on gasoline and the fluctuating prices. Electricity prices tend to remain very stable, very predictable and a much more stable way to go in terms of fueling your transportation.

Certainly, as my colleague for Mount Scio was alluding to – and some others have talked about – the entrepreneurial innovation opportunities that are out there. As we move people from the oil and gas sector, from gas stations and so on, it's moving to systems that will provide, whether it be charging stations to the new types of technicians that will be needed now to work with electric vehicles. While there's going to be a shift, it certainly is going to create many more opportunities for our economy.

Somebody had been talking about charging stations and will we have enough. Again, more to incenting the economy, Nova Scotia last year put in 12 Level 3 charging stations. Already, two companies have stepped up and put in other Level 3 charging stations. This is a pattern we tend to see across Canada, as jurisdictions move to do this, is the private sector jumps in. So the government stimulating the economy and saying we'll step forward; the private sector is coming right along. There's great opportunity there.

I liked some of the discussion around tourism. My colleagues from Drive Electric NL shared with me a letter from a rather famous travel writer on EVs and travelling throughout North America, who had indicated his challenge of coming to the Island part of the province and, indeed, to the mainland part of the province and the lack of superchargers or Level 3 chargers. This PMR today and the move of government to allocate the \$2 million to get going with these 14 faster charging stations certainly will do a lot to help. This is a pilot. With the support I feel in

the House and hopefully with the design of what we can do in the years coming forward, further investment will get us further access to all parts of this province and I look forward to that.

I wanted to make sure that I gave you some more numbers. I'm watching the clock but I wanted to give you a suggested scenario that was presented by my colleagues at the PUB hearing just a month ago. They put forward a very interesting rate mitigation argument. I'm going to adjust it a little bit but I'll explain what I'm doing. I'll take Mr. Seary's Tesla. To operate let's just say 20,000 kilometres a year, that would use about 5,000 kilowatt hours of electricity.

You start working with the math – and I told you about the 390,000 passenger vehicles. We tend to see sales of about 30,000 new cars each year. Say we were to get half of that or even a third of that, 10,000 new cars a year were bought and they were electric vehicles. You start to apply 10,000 by 5,000 kilowatt hours using a full operation mode, you can start to see a great opportunity for revenue back in to this province. As some have suggested, they have some concerns around power. Well, we have a great deal – a bit of excess power available through Muskrat Falls and we need to find ways to consume it. Moving to a green, clean and very efficient system of electric vehicle-ification will certainly address that.

The numbers that my colleagues had worked with – they were assuming that if all vehicles went to an EV, it could be in excess of some \$270 million of electricity would be purchased by EV owners in this province over each year, year over year. Certainly that's a very aspirational target, but let's just look at a fraction of that and then, again, imagine the contribution that we would see. Contrast that with the fact that right now our 390,000 cars are burning up \$900 million worth of gasoline a year. There are definitely some great opportunities.

Back to my colleague for Mount Pearl North and his Pigouvian taxes. There's no question that if we can find ways to incent the safe and sensible operators of vehicles in our province towards EVs, we can all make a very good positive

contribution. Whether it be Pigouvian or other arguments, there are plenty that are out there.

Finally, wrapping up with my colleagues, in the four areas that they had identified as being of concern to them – here I go – zero emissions standards, jurisdictions like California and Quebec have moved in this direction. Providing subsidies – there are several provinces in Canada that do this. The federal government now does this. Encouraging dealers, because the demand is out there now and we are going to need, as a jurisdiction, to convince dealerships to start bringing in the cars so that they can be available for sale, and then they be provided with good servicing and so on.

Number one that Drive Electric NL and other organizations like them have identified that is needed in this province is to establish a faster, high-speed charging network. I'm very pleased that as part of this PMR, that's what it was all about. It is pilot study. These 14 systems that will be allocated – and I thank the Minister of Natural Resources for her outline of that. I see and feel that the future is very bright. There's a great opportunity and there's also a solution there.

I want to make one final comment on the amendment and my colleagues over there; I must say I won the bet over here. I said, no, that's going to be out of order. I wanted to say to my good friends in the NDP that I get the point of your amendment and I can say to you, as I just explained about rate mitigation, I do feel that the financial benefits will be there for all the people of the province and everyone who owns a vehicle will also feel that benefit.

Again, to quote one of my colleagues from Drive Electric NL, moving to acquire an electric vehicle, can you think of any other technology that one would acquire where you not only benefit yourself, but you'll benefit all those around you? That's truly the case whether it be revenue towards rate mitigation, towards a cleaner environment or towards safer highways.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

It being Wednesday, in accordance with our Standing Order 9(3), the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon.