



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FIFTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

---

Volume L

SECOND SESSION

Number 83

---

HANSARD

*Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA*

Monday

November 4, 2024

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**SPEAKER (Gambin-Walsh):** Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Before we begin Routine Proceedings, I would like to observe an ancient parliamentary tradition. I have the pleasant task of formally welcoming two new Members of the House of Assembly today.

First, I wish to welcome the Member representing Baie Verte - Green Bay, Lin Paddock, who was duly elected in the election of May 27, 2024. I have been advised by the Clerk of the House that the Member has taken the Oath of Allegiance to the Crown, as required by the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the Oath of Office, as required by the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* and has signed the Members' Roll.

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

**T. WAKEHAM:** Madam Speaker, it is my honour to present to you Mr. Lin Paddock, MHA for the District of Baie Verte - Green Bay, who claims the honour to take his seat.

**SPEAKER:** Let the Member take his seat.

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

**SPEAKER:** Thank you.

Again, as in ancient parliamentary tradition, I now welcome the Member representing Waterford Valley, Jamie Korab, who was duly elected in the election of August 22, 2024. I have been advised by the Clerk of the House that the Member has taken the Affirmation of Allegiance to the Crown, as required by the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the Affirmation of Office, as required by the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* and has signed the Members' Roll.

The hon. the Premier.

**A. FUREY:** Madam Speaker, it's my honour to present to you Mr. Jamie Korab, the Member for Waterford Valley, who claims the right to take his seat.

**SPEAKER:** Let the Member take his seat.

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

**SPEAKER:** In the Speaker's gallery today, I would like to welcome Denise Parsons, wife of former Member of this hon. House, Kevin Parsons, as well as his children, David and Nikki, and other family members.

We have a new Page starting today and I would like to welcome Riley Tucker. Riley is from St. John's and is studying political science at Memorial University.

Please proceed.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Thank you, Speaker.

With heavy hearts, I and my caucus – and many thousands of others – are paying tribute to Kevin Parsons, a cherished colleague and friend who served as the MHA for Cape St. Francis from 2008 until his retirement in January 2021.

Kevin was one of the kindest and most respected politicians I've ever met. Like his dad, who represented the district a few years before him, he was devoted to his constituents, working as hard for them as he would for his own family.

Elected in 2008, 2011, 2015 and 2019, he served in various roles, including parliamentary secretary and Opposition shadow minister. Before entering provincial politics, Kevin was mayor of Flatrock and

had a 27-year career in the office equipment industry.

He was a pillar of the local sports community, holding multiple roles, including president of the Flatrock Community Centre and coach of the Holy Trinity High boys' hockey team.

In his maiden speech, on December 16, 2008, he proudly highlighted his four Herder championships with the Flatrock Flyers and acknowledged the deep influence of his predecessor, the late Jack Byrne, and his family. He expressed gratitude to his parents saying: My mom and dad are the ones who have had the most influence in my life. They raised their children to show compassion, respect for the less fortunate and the belief that community is family and families always take care of each other.

Kevin stepped away from politics in 2021 to spend more time with his family. When he announced his retirement here in the House on October 29, 2020, tributes poured in from all sides of the aisle, a testament to the respect and admiration he earned throughout his career. His final words in the House some days later were characteristically focused on others, as he paid tribute to a dear friend, Gord Dunphy, rather than himself.

Kevin's heartfelt compassion and encouragement are words we can all take to heart as we remember our dear friend. His kindness, encouragement and unwavering support meant the world to me, personally. So many others can say the same.

All of us, and Kevin's family in particular, have been going through a hard time since Kevin passed away on August 15, but those closest to him have been surrounded by many others, even strangers, who also thought the world of Kevin and have their own stories to share. That support has enabled everyone to keep their heads up and remember the true gentleman that

Kevin was and the remarkable example he set for all of us.

On behalf of our caucus, our Party, the wonderful people of Cape St. Francis and so many others near and far, I want to extend our deepest condolences to Kevin's wife, Denise; his son, David; his daughter, Nikki; their extended family and the countless others whose lives Kevin touched over the years as he worked to serve them to very best of his ability.

My fondest wish is that in generations to come, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will continue to have a House of Assembly filled with Members just like Kevin was, nothing could be better for our province than that.

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

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

**A. FUREY:** Madam Speaker, the late Mr. Parsons was truly an exemplary Newfoundlander and Labradorian. Like many, I attended his funeral back in August and the number of people there, many having to sit in an overflow area of the church, is a true testament to the man he was and how much he was loved by all.

Kevin was admired and respected by all who were fortunate enough to know him or work with him, including myself. As I said in the foyer, my first sitting, Kevin was across the aisle and welcomed me with the characteristic warm smile and even warmer handshake.

He loved Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly his hometown or Flatrock and the Flyers, and dedicated many years to serving the people of his community and his beloved province, including more than 12 years as MHA.

Kevin was a kind and compassionate leader and his thoughtful and collaborative approach was highly regarded by all.

Whether it was hockey, work, community or government, Kevin gave it his all. His contributions are truly countless and his accomplishments are plenty. Above all else, though, he loved his family. He was a son, a brother, a husband, father, grandfather, uncle and friend.

May all of those who have grieved his loss be comforted by the many happy memories and the pride of the legacy he leaves behind.

Our government will work with his family and his friends to create a true recognition of this special man's legacy so future generations can learn and remember the man, the legend, Mr. Kevin Parsons.

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

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

**J. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker.

"His life was gentle, and the elements so mix'd in him that Nature might stand up and say to all the world 'This was a man.'" This line from *Julius Caesar* equally applies to Mr. Kevin Parsons.

I came to know Kevin when I was first elected in 2019. I had the opportunity to attend a conference for parliamentarians in Niagara-on-the-Lake that summer. Now, I can't speak to him to the same degree that his colleagues in the Official Opposition, who knew him best, but I do know from my brief experience with him on that trip and here in the House, that he was a gentleman. Especially to a rather new and uninitiated elected official at the time.

He was down to earth, fair minded, lived for his family, led a life of service, had a great and gentle sense of humour and he enjoyed the simpler aspects of life, such as vegetable gardening, in which he took immense pride. It's about nurturing, about growing. He was easy to get a long with.

We sat close to each other here on this side and you had that sense of collegial spirit with him.

On behalf of myself and the caucus of the New Democratic Party of Newfoundland and Labrador, I extend deepest condolences to his family, to his friends and to the constituents of Cape St. Francis. I know his shoes will be hard to fill but if anything that I can aspire to is to be a representative like him in his gentle approach, in his great sense of advocacy for his district.

Thank you very much, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** We will now stand for a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence.)

**SPEAKER:** I ask everyone to be seated.

### Statements by Members

**SPEAKER:** Today we will hear statements by the hon. Members for the Districts of Waterford Valley, Baie Verte - Green Bay, Bonavista, Cape St. Francis, Conception Bay South and Humber - Gros Morne, with leave.

The hon. the Member for Waterford Valley.

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

**J. KORAB:** Thank you.

Oh, the curling puns.

Speaker, it is my pleasure to spend the first moments on my feet here at the House to recognize one of the district's, and province's, brightest stars, Liam Hickey.

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

**J. KORAB:** Liam is a three-time Paralympic competitor from 2016 to 2021 and competed in both the Summer and Winter Paralympics – a rare milestone for anybody.

Liam is a Paralympic medallist in both wheelchair basketball and Para ice hockey, choosing the latter as the sole path in 2018 where he took home a silver medal. Liam was a 2017 world champion and a world silver medallist in 2019 and 2021.

Liam was introduced to wheelchair basketball through the Easter Seals program and was their 2012 NL ambassador. Liam has played in several world championships, is a world champion and is currently a member and ice captain of Canada's Para ice hockey team and is working towards a 2026 Paralympic Games. He is also pursuing an education degree here at our very own Memorial University.

Liam represents the best of what our province has to offer in Para athleticism and demonstrates every day the success which can come from dedication and hard work. It's no surprise he received the Order of Newfoundland just last week.

Please join me, Speaker, in congratulating the continuing success of Mr. Liam Hickey.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

**L. PADDOCK:** Speaker, remembering Ernest Goudy.

As a veteran during Remembrance Week, I feel a great duty to highlight the heroic World War I story of Sergeant Ernest Goudy from Port Anson.

On October 9, 1917, at Broembek – citation: "For bravery in beating off a counterattack, and sticking to a post about thirty yards in front of our lines, until given orders to withdraw from his post. He was

the only man left from a whole Lewis gun team, but kept that gun in action, inflicting many casualties on the enemy." Awarded the military medal.

On November 20, 1917, at Cambrai – citation: "He displayed great courage and determination. When some of his team were knocked out he carried forward his gun and four carriers and single handed brought his gun into action under very heavy machine gun fire. His action in affording covering fire enabled the advance to continue." Awarded a second military medal.

His last living daughter, Joyce Bartlett, recently noted to me that on Remembrance Days her dad would sit in a rocking chair, listening to the radio and with tears in his eyes.

Let the name Sergeant Ernest Goudy forever reverberate in this House and across all Newfoundland and Labrador.

Lest we forget!

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

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

**C. PARDY:** Speaker, David Gill of Burgoyne's Cove joined the Canadian Forces Infantry in 1976 and, after basic training, spent four years with the 2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment.

During this time, he completed a United Nations peacekeeping tour of Cyprus from 1977 to '78 and was promoted to corporal in 1980. David was assigned to the 3rd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment in Germany and promoted to master corporal and completed a second peacekeeping tour of Cyprus in 1986. In 1987, David was promoted to sergeant when deployed to the Royal Canadian Regiment Battle School in Ontario.

After another tour with Canadian Forces Europe, he was posted to regular support staff at the 2nd Newfoundland Royal Newfoundland Regiment in 1990 as training sergeant for Bravo Company and promoted to warrant officer in 1992 and served as the company sergeant major until his retirement in 1996.

After regular service, David served 18 years as ranger instructor, chief instructor with the 5th Canadian Ranger patrol group. He was awarded three medals of distinction and has been a strong advocate for a licence plate to commemorate the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

I ask the Members of the 50th House of Assembly to join me in recognizing David Gill for his 38-plus years of service to our province and country.

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

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

**J. WALL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today to recognize and congratulate 13 outstanding athletes from my district who received the 2024 Premier's Athletic Awards for athletic excellence.

On October 30, several colleagues and I had the honour of attending this event where the following athletes were recognized for their particular sport Carly Norris: basketball; Nicholas Smith: baseball; Kyla Piercey, Mya Rogers and Rachel Dooley: gymnastics; Nicholas Codner: curling; Emily Reglar and Emma Pittman: karate; Lily Evans: skating; Ciara Molloy: soccer; Emma Driscoll: taekwondo; Austin Whelan: bicycle; and Lincoln Harris: triathlon.

These athletes were selected to receive this award based on their athletic accomplishments in the previous year. This is certainly a testament to their character

and dedication to training in their chosen sport. In addition to the athletes, I'd like to recognize the invaluable contributions from their family members. Without their support, I'm sure these awards would not have been possible.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues of this 50th General Assembly to join me in congratulating these accomplished young athletes on receiving these awards for athletic excellence and wish them every success in their chosen sport.

Thank you.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

On October 23, my colleagues, the MHA for Topsail - Paradise, the MHA for Harbour Main and I, attended the 13th Annual Bright Business Awards Ceremony in Conception Bay South.

The Town of Conception Bay South hosts this event annually during Small Business Week. It is a great opportunity for local entrepreneurs to network and showcase their achievements in our town. These businesses play a very important role in growing our economy and creating employment in our community.

The 2024 Bright Business Achievement Award winners are New Start-Up of the Year: Jennifer's Quilt Shop Inc.; Youth Entrepreneur of the Year: Kathryn Vinnicombe, 365 Wellness Inc.; Community Pride and Partnership: Shenanigans Bar & Grill; David Murphy Leadership Award: Lupin Planning Group Inc.; Established Business of the Year: Musically Inclined; Sustainable Business of the Year: Taylor's Fish, Fruit & Vegetable Market; Downtown CBS Member of the Year: Newlander Meat

Shop; Employee Excellence Award: Laura Hayes, Angel Paws.

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the award winners and nominees. A special thank you to the business community and sponsors for their support and contributions. Again, well deserved and I wish them continued success.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Does the Member for Humber - Gros Morne have leave?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Leave.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Humber - Gros Morne.

**A. FUREY:** Madam Speaker, today I rise to speak about the devastating fire which claimed the life of 77-year-old Eugene Spoon of Winfield, Kansas, and the loss of the Driftwood Inn in Deer Lake on October 19.

In the early hours of that day, members of the Deer Lake fire rescue, along with support from fire crews of Cormack, Reidville and Pasadena, responded swiftly to the emergency with selflessness and true dedication.

Their bravery and quick action were paramount in assisting staff and guests at the hotel, including student members of Leo Burke Academy volleyball teams.

Thank you to the first responders and those in the community and nearby communities who stepped up in big and small ways to help.

In the face of tragedy, it is important to support each other. The communities there certainly did that. The courage and compassion you showed highlights the

strength and resilience of the Town of Deer Lake and truly the spirit of Newfoundland and Labrador.

On behalf of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, I want to extend my deepest condolences to the family of Mr. Spoon. His daughter tells me her dad lived life to the absolute fullest.

Together, I ask that we honour his memory.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Statements by Ministers.

#### **Statements by Ministers**

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

**A. FUREY:** Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize eight outstanding and inspiring Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The Order of Newfoundland and Labrador is the highest honour of our beloved province. The Order recognizes individuals who have demonstrated excellence and achievement in any field of endeavour benefiting in an outstanding manner Newfoundland and Labrador and its residents.

The recipients this year are Bud Davidge, Clifford George, Liam Hickey, Saqamaw Mi'sel Joe, Andy Jones, Patrick O'Callaghan, Guy Poole and Dr. Andrea Rose.

Speaker, it was an honour and a privilege last week to take part in a celebration of the incredible contributions of these Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Mr. Jones was unfortunately not able to attend but will be invested into the Order next week when we are having a ceremony for him later.

Whether through their contribution in arts, culture and sport or volunteerism, education

and health care, these recipients, like those recognized before them, have made a positive and enduring impact on their communities and on the province.

Madam Speaker, I ask all Members to join me in acknowledging and celebrating our newest Order of Newfoundland and Labrador recipients for being exceptional ambassadors for the best place in the world, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Thank you, Speaker.

I would like to thank the Premier for a copy of his statement.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Official Opposition, I would like to offer our sincere congratulations to the most recent recipients of the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador. Being inducted into the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador is a prestigious accomplishment which recognizes an individual's unique and passionate dedication to our province.

This year, eight exemplary individuals were inducted. To Bud Davidge, Clifford George, Liam Hickey, Saqamaw Mi'sel Joe, Andy Jones, Patrick O'Callaghan, Guy Poole and Dr. Andrea Rose, I offer my appreciation for your inspiring contribution to our province.

You have elevated our arts and culture sector, put our province on the world stage in sport and have made a positive impact in health care and education.

Thank you.

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

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

**J. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker.

We thank the Premier for an advance copy of the statement and we also congratulate the eight very deserving people who received the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador.

However, we couldn't help but notice that, for a second year in a row, seven of the eight recipients this year were men. We, therefore, call on government to ensure that future cohorts of the Order are more reflective of all of our population in recognition of the unique contributions that women, gender-diverse individuals and racialized people make to our communities.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, after nine years of Liberal government, 175,000 people in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador are without a family physician.

I ask the Premier: Where is the human resource plan for health professionals that the Liberal government said they had and then didn't have?

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

**A. FUREY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the Member – and welcome back, everybody.

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

**A. FUREY:** As the Member opposite knows, the struggles with health care human resources are not unique to Newfoundland and Labrador. I am happy to say that we have the most robust incentive and recruitment package of any province across the country, Madam Speaker.

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

**A. FUREY:** As a result, Madam Speaker, we're starting to see actual, tangible results – 146 new doctors since April of last year.

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

**A. FUREY:** Eight hundred and fifty new nurses, new infrastructure. We are making progress, Madam Speaker, and it will all come together but it will take time.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, according to the president of the NLMA, the Liberal government has set up an unlevel playing field when it comes to physician recruitment, so that's not helping the situation at all.

After nine years of Liberal government, we are the second worst province in Canada in access to a primary health care provider. Those are not my numbers. Those are numbers from the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

So I would ask the Premier: Of the 23 Family Care Teams that you have announced, can you confirm that only six are fully staffed?

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

**A. FUREY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We're quite happy that we've introduced a new concept to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians called Family Care Teams.

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

**A. FUREY:** Brand new concept.

This came out of full consultation across the province through the Health Accord, Madam Speaker. As a result last year we started, I believe – I stand corrected – at only a few thousand people attached to Family Care teams. Well, I'm happy to report that today, just a few months, really, when you consider it, after we introduced a brand new concept, over 62,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are attached to Family Care Teams.

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

**A. FUREY:** We're increasing the human resources attached to them, Madam Speaker. Like in Grand Falls-Windsor, three new doctors attached to that Family Care Team just last week.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, tell that to the 175,000 people who do not have access to a family physician.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** It's great to talk about announcements but how many are actually working. How many of those teams are actually fully staffed, that's the question.

But I have another question today. After nine years of Liberal government, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are forced to pay for health care by going to a nurse practitioner.

I ask the Premier: Do you think it's acceptable for people to have to pay to see a nurse practitioner?

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

**A. FUREY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We're always looking for creative solutions that help unlock health care provision in people's communities, whether that's through virtual care or through changing scope of practice for different professionals. We will continue to look at all of those potential solutions, Madam Speaker.

The Member opposite, though, when he was in charge of a health care authority, we know what he would do. He would cut nurses. He would close clinics. We're gaining nurses and opening clinics, not cutting nurses and shutting clinics down.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador deserve better.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** We can do better, we must do better and those of us on this side will do better.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Those people are still paying to see a nurse practitioner. That's just not good enough.

So let's talk about those who are fortunate enough to be able to see a primary care provider. Let's look at the long wait times for MRIs and CTs. The NLMA president, again, said "the current wait time of two to three years for a routine MRI hurts patient care."

I ask the Premier: How many people are on the waiting list for an MRI today?

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

**A. FUREY:** Thank you, Speaker.

Just let me take an opportunity to address the preamble. Do you know what we need to be better than? We need to be better than Muskrat Falls. We need to be better than DarkNL. We need to be better than when he was in charge of a health authority, Madam Speaker. Cutting nurses and closing clinics, that's not what this government is interested in whatsoever. That's being better.

With respect to the specific question in diagnostic imaging, we know that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians need better access so that's why we are going from five to eight MRIs in this province. That will provide increased access so that patients can get the tests that they need, when they need it.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, after nine years of Liberal government, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador deserve better than that from the Premier of the province.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Let me again quote the NLMA president, who says: It's really not acceptable that we continue to normalize a crisis in the health care system. Again, not my words but the words of the NLMA president.

In August, over 7,000 people were on the waiting list for an MRI.

I ask the Premier: How many people are on the wait-list for a CT scan?

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

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Obviously, I haven't been Health Minister for very long, but when I took over this portfolio, I was so pleased to get all the details about all the work and how the Health Accord in Newfoundland and Labrador has already started to transform health care delivery in this province.

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

**J. HOGAN:** As the Premier said, we are expanding MRI from five machines to eight machines. We are running them longer; we are running them on weekends so people will be able to get MRIs quicker and that means that the wait times will decrease.

We have a number of patients now on Patient Connect. It's down to 50,000 and I anticipate in the next few weeks that will decrease as well. If you don't already have a family physician or aren't connected to a Family Care Team and you're on Patient Connect, you have access to Teladoc.

So when you add all that together, every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian has access to primary health care in this province.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, obviously the president of the NLMA obviously hasn't quoted the right numbers because I can tell you, there are 175,000 people, according to them, that don't have access to a primary care provider.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Again, we get no idea of how many people are actually on the wait-list. I didn't hear the answer to those questions. But if you can't get a scan, you can't get diagnosed, you can't get treated and you can't get better. That's what it comes down to.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** In the last few weeks, we've heard lots about poor planning; poor planning when it comes to building new infrastructure.

I ask the Premier: How do you build a new long-term care facility in Corner Brook and not have enough beds?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I've spoken to this. I spoke to the media about it and something doesn't seem to be registering is that the hospital in Corner Brook was built with the right number of acute care beds. There was a lot of planning that went into it and those beds are at the right number for that part of the province.

We do have an issue with ALC on that part of the province and we're working on it. But I would rather debate the issue about how we deliver that ALC issue in that part of the province – I've said how we're working on it – rather than make up facts and talk about things that aren't true and they're making up the debate to make it seem like something's true that isn't.

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

**J. HOGAN:** There are enough acute care beds on the western side of this province.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, I don't know if the minister heard the question, but I wasn't asking him about beds in acute care. I was asking him why the long-term care facility wasn't built with enough beds.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Prior to moving into the new facility, there used to be an ALC, alternate level of care unit, in the old Western Memorial Hospital. So where did that disappear? Where was the planning that was going to take care of that?

So my next question I ask the Premier: Why don't you use the old Western Memorial Hospital to accommodate these people?

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

**A. FUREY:** Thank you, Speaker.

I can tell the House, as I've said in public many times, we have made no definitive conclusions about what we're going to do with the old facility. We have been and shown to be creative in how we use facilities and we'll continue to be.

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

**A. FUREY:** It's important to us and it's important to those waiting for health care, not just those who are in an ALC bed, Madam Speaker, that we provide the right options for them so that the flow through the hospital, the flow through the system is best, for not just the patients but the providers, Madam Speaker.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, when we hear news that the Liberal government is now telling residents of the long-term care facility that at least 15 of them will have to go into double occupancy rooms, again, the

question becomes: How did we arrive at this? Why wasn't the planning done to make the long-term care facility big enough in Corner Brook.

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Between Western Memorial and the new long-term care facility, there are an additional 100 beds in Corner Brook right now for these issues.

To correct what the Member said, it's not that they will have to go in rooms of double occupancy, they will be given the option to be in a room with another person.

As we heard during COVID, if you're a senior, it can be a very lonely times and you may very well want someone in your room with you. You may very well want your husband or your wife or your partner. You may very well want your sister. You may very well want your friend. I think it is incumbent on us as a government to provide people options rather than dictate, you're going to go in that single room whether you like it or not.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Let me quote the former Seniors' Advocate: long-term care is going backwards and the province is doing seniors a disservice. "This is just wrong on so many levels." That's what I've heard.

Speaker, today we've heard media reports that 911 service was knocked out following an incident at the MCP building.

How many people called 911 looking for an ambulance during this outage and didn't get an answer?

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

**B. DAVIS:** Thank you, Speaker.

I'd like the hon. Member to know that there was no service knock out with respect to that. We had our alternate service measures put in place right away when that happened. It was put in place. They transitioned to the location that they had to transition to. At no point was anyone affected with respect to 911.

Thank you.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

After nine years of Liberal government, our province ranks eighth in the country in retention of young nurses.

How many nurses have quit in the last year, Minister?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As the Premier said, we now have an extra almost 850 nurses who have come to Newfoundland and Labrador in the last two years.

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

**J. HOGAN:** We have recruited externally, internationally, from India and Jamaica and other parts of the world. We have increased our seats here in Newfoundland and Labrador for homegrown nurses, for Bachelor of Science in Nursing, for nurse practitioners and for LPNs.

We are doing all that work here and across the world to make sure we have the ability to bring nurses into the system and to grow them here ourselves. It is working because the number of nurses is increasing.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

As it has been said many times, recruitment starts with retention. In fact, Minister, one in two nurses leave the profession by age 35. That is a fact.

Will the minister now admit that these numbers confirm that the government's recruitment and retention strategy has been a total failure?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I said, I don't see it a failure when we have an additional 850 nurses.

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

**J. HOGAN:** As I said, we're not only recruiting internationally but at home, here, we've expanded the seats. I would like to report, of course, over 90 per cent of graduates from our nursing students –

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

**J. HOGAN:** Over 90 per cent have agreed to take positions here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

I mean, that's smoke and mirrors, Speaker. Those numbers, there are there are hundreds and hundreds of vacancies. It's a proven fact.

He went to a news conference a while ago and he left everyone in the room confused, except himself. Maybe he was confused because the numbers just don't add up. It makes sense to nobody. He can stand in this House in his place here, a new minister, and try to profess the same thing he professed in the media room. It makes no sense, Speaker, and the people are still confused by it.

Speaker, this government has continued to treat local nurses with disrespect while pouring out tens of millions of dollars to travel nurses. Maybe those are the numbers.

When is this government going to start treating nurses in the system now with respect?

**SPEAKER:** The Minister of Health and Community Services.

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm happy to report that since the high-water mark of agency nurses working here in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador of March 2024 – that was the high-water mark and it's been decreasing every day since then. Continuing to work on getting that number lower.

We work very closely with NLHS and, of course, they've delivered an RFP to make sure that agency nurses are being paid appropriately and reasonably to deliver those services in Newfoundland and Labrador. Which, I would note, that a lot of these nurses are scattered throughout, with a huge majority in Central Newfoundland.

It's very important to keep our health care system running. We need these nurses. They're important to the system. They need to be reasonably paid and we'll work to decrease our reliance on agency nurses as we go forward.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Member for Conception Bay South.

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Speaker.

If he needs the nurses so bad, give them permanent jobs. Show them the respect they deserve.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, I've heard from two students who recently graduated and could not get a permanent job in the province. They have now moved to Alberta. The government still refused to offer every nursing student a permanent job.

Speaker, why is the government still failing to offer nursing students a full-time permanent job?

**SPEAKER:** The Minister of Health and Community Services.

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I'll just repeat what I just said: Over 90 per cent of graduates from nursing schools in this province were offered positions and accepted them right here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, the Clarenville hospital no longer has internal medicine doctors. This means delays in getting patients the care that they need. If someone shows up to the ER with a

stroke, heart attack or serious infection, they won't be admitted, they'll be stabilized and sent to another hospital.

Can the minister outline why?

**SPEAKER:** The Minister of Health and Community Services.

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

NLHS became aware of this issue on Friday; they're currently working on it. They'll do everything they can to make sure that people are delivered that appropriate health care service in that part of the province, including, if necessary, possible locums to that area.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, the minister became aware of this issue in July through correspondence I sent to him. Speaker, we had four – three full-time and one locum – on a regular basis in Clarenville; as of today, we have none. Patient safety is at risk. We know the delay in treating these serious life-threatening conditions can worsen outcomes.

Will the minister admit that the residents of Clarenville and surrounding areas are being put at risk for internal medicine doctors because they get paid more to work in St. John's than they do in rural Newfoundland?

**SPEAKER:** The Minister of Health and Community Services.

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I said, NLHS is aware of this issue and they're working to make sure that appropriate services are delivered in that part of the province. This has nothing to do

with pegging one part of the province against another.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Can the minister confirm that they're paid more in St. John's than they are in rural Newfoundland?

**SPEAKER:** Question please.

**L. PARROTT:** Can the minister confirm that internal medicine specialists in St. John's are paid more than they are in rural Newfoundland?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, my understanding is they'd be paid the same but if there is a difference, I'll certainly get that information back to the House.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Did the minister receive correspondence from internal medicine specialists in rural Newfoundland?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I receive correspondence from people and doctors and nurses and massage therapists and physiotherapists and all kinds of medical practitioners, day in and day out. So if he wants to be more specific and certainly have a discussion about that, I'm happy to do so.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Did the minister receive correspondence from internal medicine specialists in rural Newfoundland, specifically Clarenville and Carbonear, from the MHA for Terra Nova in July, with subsequent conversations that happened after that, not only with me, but with the internal medicine doctors?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I can't recall the specifics of that correspondence but if it's there, I'm sure I can almost guarantee that we addressed it in terms of a reply to that, and I know that I spoke to the Member as well about the specific issue.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Speaker, this doesn't just affect Clarenville; it impacts the residents of the Bonavista Peninsula, Terra Nova and the Come By Chance area. If someone had a heart attack last week, they would have been treated in the Clarenville hospital. Now they'll be sent to St. John's.

Is the Liberal plan for rural communities to deliver a second-class health care system?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, when we look at health care in this province, we look at it

as a global approach. That's what Health Accord NL does.

As I said to many people since I became minister, I do look at that Health Accord NL all the time and see how that global approach is supposed to be dictated throughout the province, but I also say that health care solutions in this province are not only done globally, but community-by-community basis.

I know that I've spoken to Members a lot about how they may need a specific asset in that part of the province. It has nothing to do with if you're in rural Newfoundland or the urban part of the province. That health care approach doesn't change regardless of where you live.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

**L. PARROTT:** Thank you, Speaker.

I'll repeat it again: We have no internal medicine specialist supporting the Bonavista Peninsula, Clarenville, the Burin Peninsula as far as Carbonear – zero. We had four a couple of months ago. Family medicine doctors in Clarenville are nervous that they don't have on-the-ground support from specialists.

I ask the minister specifically: What does he think will happen if someone gets very sick, very fast?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Of course, we've implemented things to deal with this, such as virtual emergency rooms. We've addressed Teladoc, 811, all sorts of online and digital approaches to

medicine. Of course, we continue to work on getting boots on the ground, where necessary.

But, again, it does take time to deliver all these things, and things change. Sometimes doctors do move around, and we need to address that. Like I said, maybe the solution here is locums and we'll look at that with NLHS.

Thank you.

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Thank you, Speaker.

Why does this government continue to allow Northern Labrador patients to suffer through cancellations and delay in getting to and from their essential medical appointments and treatment – second-class health care.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Labrador Affairs.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the Member for the question.

Just this morning, I was in the Department of Health addressing a number of issues – got an open door, thankful to say, with all of my colleagues, to address some of the complex issues across Labrador. That was a question that I had asked because I heard the Member raising it in the media. Although I haven't had a call or anything to my office, specifically.

They're not aware of patients being bumped off flights. I mean, I'm happy to chat with the Member if she wants to give me, outside of this floor of the House, specific questions. If somebody has a confirmed reservation on a flight and they're being bumped off, I would be very happy to work with the Member to try and find a resolution to that issue.

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Speaker, it's very shocking that the Department of Health would say to the Minister of Labrador Affairs that they're not aware of patients being bumped off flights. What I mean is patients have appointments in Goose Bay and in St. John's and they can't get out to them because they're not on the flight. They are bumped off their medical transportation out to their appointments, and it's outrageous for the minister to be told that the Department of Health does not know about this.

Basically, Labrador-Grenfell Health has been told over and over. I call almost every week and speak to the people in Labrador-Grenfell Health about people not able to get on the flights. So, in actual fact, somebody is lying. Somebody is lying to the people of Northern Labrador. If they can't get out to their appointments –

**SPEAKER:** The hon. Member's time has expired.

The hon. the Minister of Labrador Affairs.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, as a fellow Labradorian, myself, I'm not going to play politics with the lives of people in Labrador.

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** I am not going to do that. I've been here serving the people of the province for a long time. Whether they're in Northern Labrador or whether they're here on the Avalon, I place a lot of value on ensuring that we get to the bottom of issues.

What I'm wondering, Speaker, is for clarity from the Member. One of the things that I was told this morning is when a patient is waiting to get out, the attending physicians determine who gets to go first or who gets to go second.

It is sort of a similar situation that we deal with in air ambulance. If there are several people who need to be moved around the province, as an elected official, I don't get to determine who moves first, but there is a group that meets every single morning and they determine the order.

So I don't know if that is what the Member is referring to, Speaker.

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

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

**L. EVANS:** Speaker, I sat here listening to the minister. I stood up to make sure I don't miss any time, because when chemo patients have pre-arranged chemo treatment that they have to get out, they have to actually fly out to have life-saving chemo appointments, people in Rigolet, people in Nain have contacted me directly, they can't get out to the chemo appointment. They are on social media trying to force the plane to take them.

So that's what I mean when patients are bumped off flights. They have pre-arranged chemo treatment and chemotherapy is about saving your life. I had relatives and friends and constituents die because of the failure to actually access –

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

The hon. the Minister of Labrador Affairs.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker.

As I said at the beginning in my opening, I'm quite happy to work with the Member if she got some serious issues like this that she is looking for help to resolve.

The House closed in May from the spring sitting and we're back now the fall, I haven't had one single phone call. I am happy to get

down – I am solution orientated – to help and find a resolution to what are some of these, sounding like, serious issues.

I did see, Speaker, in social media just the other day and I wondered, because there seems to be a lot of confusion around this whole issue, where an individual posted that they were bumped off the flight and when someone questioned her, she said: I was number one on the wait-list.

So I don't have full clarity myself and I'm happy to sit down with the Member for Torngat and try and support her to get to a better place with this issue.

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

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

**L. EVANS:** The truth is out there from actual patients, if she would mind to listen.

The latest reports show that air travel has increased 33 per cent out of Central Labrador and 47 per cent out of Lab West. Many Labradorians are forced to fly for medical appointments.

When will the Liberals finally cover 100 per cent travel for essential medical services?

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Labrador Affairs.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker.

I'm certainly aware that we've had our challenges around air access and I'm really pleased to see that I've been working on this for at least a year. I outlined a number of these that the Member might have seen.

In terms of the North Coast, Speaker, two things I will say, I don't know if she's referring to her constituency, many of which

have insured health benefits. The other thing –

**L. EVANS:** All of Labradorians.

**L. DEMPSTER:** All of Labradorians.

What I will say, Speaker, is that since the MTAP came under me in Budget '23, we added an additional \$1 million.

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** The next budget, we added an additional \$750,000.

Speaker, the Premier didn't put the program under me to administer. He put it under me to enhance it. We are continuing to review and we'll continue to enhance the program.

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

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

**J. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, in a recent interview the Premier stated his government made bold, courageous, transformational decisions and actions that will change Newfoundland and Labrador for the better.

His government evicted vulnerable people forced to live in tents from the grounds of the Colonial Building without any real alternatives for housing. His government also spent a significant amount of money on security personnel, the RNC and a drone this weekend to surveil 30 protesters gathered at the Colonial Building to call for an end to no-fault evictions.

I ask the Premier: Is this what he meant by courageous decisions and actions?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Housing, and Mental Health and Addictions.

**J. ABBOTT:** Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond and it's good to see you in the seat.

In terms of the housing and homelessness situation here in the province, and for those who are following what the government is doing through my portfolio and others, we are expanding the number of units right across the province. We are addressing the homelessness issue through our supportive housing, through Horizons at 106 on Airport Road, we've expanded and opened a new facility in Gander, we have invested in The Gathering Place and we will continue working with End Homelessness St. John's and other community agencies to address the housing needs of all that are here in the community.

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

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

**J. DINN:** I ask the Premier: Why does his government criminalize homelessness?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Housing, and Mental Health and Addictions.

**J. ABBOTT:** Speaker, I will certainly want him to expand on that concept and his definition because that is certainly not the case. We have, certainly through our community agencies, again, End Homelessness St. John's, through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, through Stella's Circle, through Choices for Youth, for The Gathering Place, for the Housing Hub in Central, for the Housing Hub in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and elsewhere, we are working through our community agencies, through our front-line staff, to make sure we can meet the needs of individuals wherever they are in the community.

We know that there's more work to be done, but as we set out in our plans, we are expanding housing units right across the

province and as time moves on, we will have fully addressed, I think, the housing challenge here in the province.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Housing continues to be a challenge in Labrador West, both communities struggle with the cost of development. Not a single, new private-market unit was constructed in the region this past construction season. We have a private market that is not a solution to the crisis.

With housing rental vacancy continuing at zero per cent, something must be done.

I ask the minister responsible: What is being offered to municipalities to help them with affordable development possibilities?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Housing, and Mental Health and Addictions.

**J. ABBOTT:** Again, Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond.

As the Member knows – and we've had different conversations over time and now that I am back in this portfolio those conversations continue – we're working and certainly in conversation with the mayor and council in Labrador City to talk about what are realistic options to make sure we can establish housing, particularly affordable housing, particularly for seniors, in the community. So those conversations continue.

My wish and my hope is that in short order, we will have a project in the ground, on the ground, above the ground, so that people can move in, in the next year or two.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Four NLHC units are being refurbished, that includes the two that were burned and are being replaced, and only two new units are being added in Labrador West. This is still not close to the 30 applicants awaiting housing. This compounded with a zero per cent vacancy rate in Labrador West is impacting residents.

I ask the minister: When will more units be added to the NLHC stock in Labrador West?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Housing, and Mental Health and Addictions.

**J. ABBOTT:** Again, Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond.

I thank the Member for acknowledging the work that is under way. We are adding units, we are refurbishing units and we continue to do that in terms of the units owned by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

One of the options we are considering, and in discussion with the mayor and others, is that, in fact, we, as a corporation, move forward in looking at an option where we would build some units for seniors. We are looking at some costing right now. I have been talking to the federal MP about shared costing with the federal government. We're looking with the town to see if they can make land and service land available. So we are on the road to finding the right project for Labrador West.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

### Tabling of Documents

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

**S. COADY:** Thank you, Speaker.

Pursuant to section 26(5)(a) of the *Financial Administration Act*, I am tabling five Orders-in-Council relating to funding pre-commitments for fiscal years '24-'25 to 2033-34.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Further tabling of documents?

Notices of Motion.

### Notices of Motion

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

**J. HAGGIE:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000 and City of St. John's Municipal Taxation Act, Bill 93.

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

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

**S. COADY:** Thank you, Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Administration Act No. 5, Bill 89.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and Labrador Affairs.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend The Labour Standards Act, Bill 82.

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

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

**S. COADY:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Repeal the Municipal Financing Corporation Act, Bill 88.

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

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

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

**SPEAKER:** No, the minister was standing.

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

**B. DAVIS:** Madam Speaker, thank you very much for the protection.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Family Relief Act, Bill 91.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

**E. LOVELESS:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act, 2008, Bill 92.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

**A. PARSONS:** I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Newfoundland and Labrador Act, Bill 90.

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

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 No. 2, Bill 83.

Madam Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Registered Nurses Act, 2008, Bill 84.

Madam Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Provincial Health Authority Act and Fatalities Investigations Act, Bill 85.

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, Bill 86.

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act Respecting Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses and Nurse Practitioners, Bill 87.

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

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I give notice that I will ask leave to move the following resolution:

Be it resolved by the House of Assembly as follows: WHEREAS section 85 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015, provides that the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner shall be filled by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on a resolution of the House of Assembly;

THEREFORE be it resolved that Kerry Hatfield be appointed as the Information and Privacy Commissioner effective November 25, 2024.

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

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

**P. TRIMPER:** Thank you, Speaker.

WHEREAS Newfoundland and Labrador has a rich military history, strategic location and capability; and

WHEREAS 5 Wing Goose Bay is strategically located and plays an important role in protecting North American air space; and

WHEREAS the federal government has identified 5 Wing Goose Bay as one of the four forward-operating locations in the North American Aerospace Defence Command, known as NORAD, modernization plan; and

WHEREAS having primary search and rescue, SAR, capabilities in Labrador is a key priority for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS 5 Wing Goose Bay continues to support NATO allies with specialized training;

THEREFORE the House of Assembly calls on the provincial government to urge the Government of Canada to advance these and other important roles that Newfoundland and Labrador fulfill with

respect to National Defence, NATO and NORAD.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Government House Leader.

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, I confirm that the resolution for which notice was given by the Member for Lake Melville is the PMR to be debated this Wednesday, November 6.

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

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

Petitions.

### Petitions

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

**J. DWYER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's nice to be back in the House of Assembly to represent the people of Placentia West - Bellevue with integrity and respect as I'll always bring to the table.

The background to this petition is as follows:

WHEREAS there are no current operations at the Bull Arm Fabrication Site; and

WHEREAS the site is a world-class facility with the potential to rejuvenate the local economy; and

WHEREAS residents of the area are troubled with the lack of local employment in today's economy; and

WHEREAS the operation of this facility would encourage employment for the area and create economic spinoffs for all our local businesses; and

WHEREAS the site is an asset of the province built to benefit the province and a long-term tenant for this site would attract gainful business opportunities; and

WHEREAS the continued idling of this site is not in the best interest of our province;

THEREFORE we, the residents of the area near the Bull Arm Fabrication Site, petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to expedite the process to get Bull Arm Fabrication Site back in operation. We request that the process include a vision for a long-term, viable plan that is beneficial to all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

FURTHERMORE, we request that the government place an emphasis on all supply, maintenance, fabrication and offshore workover for existing offshore platforms, as well as new construction of any future platforms, whether they be GBS or FPSO in nature.

The signatures on this petition today are actually from November 6 to November 7 of 2019. That's how long I've been presenting this on behalf of our people. We see the Bull Arm Fabrication Site as a gamechanger in the Isthmus area. Not only would it improve the economy in that area, it will also improve the economy of the districts adjacent and the whole province as a whole. Because we need to get our tradespeople back to work. We need to make sure that we are walking and chewing bubble gum the same time. When we're trying to introduce new industries, we cannot forget about the industries that are actually helping us get to new industries.

I ask the minister if he could give us an update on the Bull Arm Fabrication Site.

Thank you, Speaker.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

**A. PARSONS:** Thank you, and I appreciate the petition from the Member opposite.

It's one that he has presented for some time and appreciate – we've discussed it in this House. We've discussed it outside the House. We've discussed it basically out on site. In fact, I think, we had a discussion in June on this.

The long and short is that we actually agree with what the Member is saying. This is an economic asset that belongs to the people of the province as well as the province and we do want to maximize the opportunity that is there.

That's why the province put out an RFP in December of 2023 to see what that interest actually would be. Now, I will be the first to admit that that process has taken longer than anyone expected. There are significant reasons behind that, some on government, some –

**E. JOYCE:** (Inaudible.)

**A. PARSONS:** I say to the Member for Bay of Islands, you'll get your chance yet.

Some of the reasons have been proponent-driven. Some have been within government. The reality is there's a lot of work to this and there's been a lot of back and forth between interested proponents. I say that in plural, for obvious reasons. Right now there are times, in fact, that there's been financial analysis done within government, but there's extra information and financial analysis required from the proponents that we have to go back to the proponents and get that. That's why it's taking so long.

Right now I'm anticipating, hopefully, that all the due diligence, hopefully, would be done some time in 2024. At that point, we can then make a decision, hopefully going

forward, on what does the future hold for Bull Arm.

The big thing we've discussed a million times, though, is that it's an asset that belongs to government. As much as we want to see it maximized, we do not want to dispose of it for less than it is worth. Again, that's what we're trying to make sure of here.

Nobody wants to see this asset be derelict; nobody wants to see it not be evaluated. What we want to see, though, is as much going on there as possible. On that note, I think the Member and I agree, and, in fact, I think most of the Members agree.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Member for Bonavista.

**C. PARDY:** Speaker, in the spring of 2022, the lab services at Bonavista hospital were quietly downgraded, despite research indicating that for 70 to 80 per cent of all medical diagnoses, laboratory work is required. A significant portion of the diagnostic lab samples now have to be sent to G. B. Cross Memorial in Clarenville, some 1½ hours away, to be assessed and reported back upon.

We, the undersigned, feel that this quietly conducted downgrade negatively affects the recruitment of physicians and health care professionals to the Bonavista Peninsula, the quality of care of residents of the peninsula and adds more cost for taxpayers.

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to return the lab services at Bonavista hospital to the level that optimally services the residents of the area and enhances the recruitment of health care professionals.

The minister, in his Question Period, discussed a global approach. I hope the global approach doesn't require those seeking health care to have to travel more in the District of Bonavista. I'm sure the viewers are looking at that and wondering whether that's the case.

Anybody walks in the Bonavista hospital, research states that 70 to 80 per cent of them are going to need a lab result in order to be properly diagnosed. What they've got to do now, if they're from Sweet Bay, Charleston, if they're from Old Bonaventure, New Bonaventure, they quite possibly got to return the next day or the day after to get the result and the necessary prescription in order to seek and achieve wellness.

It is quite conceivable that the government is losing money on a change that they made very quietly and secretively. Nobody knew until months after, the public – some didn't even know until a year after – that government downgraded the lab services. Imagine, fooling with the health care on the Bonavista Peninsula and nobody knew. Now, where is the transparency in that?

The material has to be transported via taxi, courier in a controlled temperature setting. If it goes beyond a certain temperature, then even the specimen may be jeopardized. Will we know when the result is given back to the patient? No.

So I would say let's return the lab services in the District of Bonavista. Let's do what's right. Let's implement the quality of care which we always hear being professed in the House of Assembly and let's do it in 2024.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Member for Ferryland.

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Thank you, Speaker.

The background for this petition is as follows:

Route 10 is on the Southern Avalon and forms a large section of the Irish Loop. This is a significant piece of infrastructure and is the main highway along the Irish Loop. This highway plays a major role in residential and commercial growth of our region.

Therefore, we petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that immediate brush cutting is required on Route 10 of the Southern Shore Highway, as large sections of brush along this highway is a significant safety hazard for the high volume of travelling motorists who travel this highway daily. This work is essential for prevention of moose-vehicle accidents and safety along Route 10.

Speaker, I've done this petition many times and, certainly, drive the district many times as well. I speak to the department on many occasions and they've been doing some brush cutting, some ditching, and doing a great job for what they've done, but they only got so much equipment. They don't have equipment to do their brush cutting.

I certainly spoke to the minister now, the previous minister as well, and we do have some brush cutting coming up. But there's more than this section of brush that needs to be cut. All these rural areas – this should have been done a long time ago. You should give the equipment to these departments so they can do the job safely for the people of the district and every district.

Right now, I go up to La Manche, that's 10 kilometres to go to Brigus. It should be done. It should be done in certain sections of Cape Broyle and they're responsible within the community of Cape Broyle. Going from Cape Broyle to Calvert is another section that needs to be done. Going from Ferryland to Aquaforte is another section

needs to be done. Going from Aquaforte to Fermeuse is another section needs to be done, and going from Fermeuse to Renewes.

You don't need it when you get up further on the barrens; there's nothing there, but we do need it in these areas. It's not needed on every kilometre of road. They just need to have the equipment to be able to do the job properly and provide safety for the people of the district, not only mine – every district. This has been neglected over the years, whether it be this government for the last nine years. But we have to give these departments the proper equipment to do the proper job so its safe for our residents to travel these roads.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Exploits.

**P. FORSEY:** Thank you, Speaker.

Residents of the Exploits District have great concern from the result of the 24-hour emergency service cut to the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Care Centre in Botwood. All residents feel that the 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. service does not adequately and efficiently address the emergency requirements of this district affecting both patients and residents to receive adequate care when needed.

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to restore the 24-hour emergency service at the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Care Centre immediately.

Speaker, I brought this petition forward many a time. In 2016, the Liberal government – purely a decision by the Liberal government – cut the 24-hour emergency service at the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Care Centre.

Ever since then, I've got concerns from residents, especially on the lower end of the districts, having to drive long distances now after 8 p.m. to receive emergency services that are well needed, should be provided, yet they can't get it at the health care centre in Botwood. They have to drive all the way to the Central Newfoundland Regional Health Centre in Grand Falls-Windsor, which is already overloaded from outlying areas that are always diverted to Grand Falls-Windsor and is always exploding in regard to patients at the emergency units.

As promised in the 2019 election by the Liberal government, and as promised again in 2021, to restore the 24-hour emergency service in Botwood and help streamline the health care service in Central Newfoundland, I wonder if the new minister now will restore the 24-hour emergency service at the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Care Centre and hold up to the commitments of this Liberal government.

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

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

**E. JOYCE:** Thank you, Speaker.

The background of this petition is as follows:

The Department of Education promotes inclusive education as a cornerstone of educational policy in Newfoundland and Labrador promising to accommodate all students equitably. However, many schools are not able to meet these commitments effectively, leaving students who need support without access. The lack of resources often results in a situation whereby students are either unable to attend school due to lack of safety or students attend school but are not supported to learn.

Despite the government's obligation to provide an inclusive education, reports from educators, parents and advocacy groups

reveal persistent gaps in resources and educational supports. Many students are continuing to face significant barriers in accessing equitable education.

Therefore, we petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to:

- (i) determine – with the input of families – and hire the necessary human resources for students with exceptionalities prior to the end of the academic year – i.e. June 1;
- (ii) develop a consistent communication plan – daily and weekly – that is upheld between schools and families to ensure the process towards goals outlined in Individualized Education Plans are being monitored and adjusted, as needed;
- (iii) take sole responsibility for providing inclusive education to all students throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, regardless of Indigenous status or federal government approvals under Jordan's Principle;
- (iv) providing a safe space for educational staff to encourage – without fear of reprimand – to acknowledge gaps in service delivery, and communicate this with families and appropriate staff in order to develop a constructive solution;
- (v) implement annual policy review to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion education and make necessary adjustments based on feedback and outcomes from educators and families;
- (vi) establish post-secondary options for students with exceptionalities who will not meet the criteria of post-secondary schools.

This issue has been brought to the forefront this September, and I know the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands has heard it a lot

also, especially out in Western Newfoundland with the Jordan's Principle.

The acting minister, the minister of municipal affairs and environment, was out in Corner Brook and he met with parents. I want to put him on the record what he told those parents: that education is a provincial responsibility. There is confusion there that it is the feds that should have the Jordan's Principle.

Education is a provincial responsibility he told that family. So when the government wants to stand up and start fighting with the federal minister, Gudie Hutchings, and they want to say: No, it's them, not us. There were children soiled in their clothes for up to three hours, sitting in the classroom because the federal government said: No, no, it's the province; we haven't got a Jordan's Principle in place.

For God's sake, don't let this happen again. There are kids who couldn't even go to school. They walked in on September 4, their principal turned them around and said: No, go home, we don't have a student assistant for you. This is what this petition is about, the children with exceptionalities. Don't let this happen again, government.

Who cares whose fault it is? Fix it, go get the money later, but don't let this happen again. Please, on behalf of the students, on behalf of the parents, this is what this petition is about. I urge the government, on behalf of all the families, to make sure that this doesn't happen again. Sit down, work with the families, work with the schools and listen to the parents.

**SPEAKER:** The Member's time has expired.

**E. JOYCE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, the reason for this petition: Air travel within the province is especially costly; the number of routes and scheduling of flights on them are inadequate; the cost of air travel hits Labradorians particularly hard as they have to travel to St. John's or elsewhere within the province for work, health care or education; and poor air connectivity harms economic growth and development in Labrador.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to form a committee to address intra-provincial travel and improve flight prices, frequency and accessibility.

Thank you, Speaker.

I bring today over 3,844 signatures from people all across Labrador who agree with this. We don't access air travel like many others across this country. In Labrador, we're more like the Territories, Northern Quebec, things like that, where air travel is more for health care, for education, for work, personal matters. We're not using it as frequently for vacations or the like; most of it is required because we have no other choice.

There is no tertiary care unit in Labrador so for a large number of specialty appointments, we have to get on a plane and we have to fly to St. John's. If we have anything with sports or anything like that, they have to get on a plane and go to the Island. We do not have all the services that are required in just Labrador, we have to come to the Island. It gets expensive, and as reports and stuff have shown in the last little while, the costs have ballooned: 33 per cent around there in Central Newfoundland and almost 50 per cent in Western Labrador.

The costs have been rising and that's why we would ask the government, and we urge the government, to form a committee, work

on this and try to come up with a plan to address this. We know a lot of this rests with the federal government. We understand that the majority of the issues and stuff that we're facing with the costs and stuff are federal government issues.

One example is the Wabush Airport, a federally government owned, operated and maintained facility. They're the ones who control landing fees. They're the ones who control how that's all charged back to the airlines. They're the ones at the helm on that one, but we also need this province to help us with this issue. So we need the province to come in and actually help, go to the federal government and get them to start addressing this thing.

With the rest of intra-provincial travel, there are all kinds of other things that need to be worked out as well, but when it comes to the costing, with the flights and everything like that, we need the province on board and we need all Members of Labrador on board, all Members from rural Newfoundland and Labrador. We need everyone on board to help go to the federal government and get them to start changing the rules and actually get them to play their part as well.

A lot of these issues do lie with the federal government but we need help from the provincial government to force the hand of that. It's getting out of hand – it is out of hand. It wasn't even that long ago when I was living in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, I could easily travel back and forth between Lab City and Wabush for \$250. Good luck doing that now. I'm going to say it wasn't that long ago for me, but it's gotten to the point where it's just unreasonable. It's unfair.

It's actually hurting communities, it's hurting people and people trying to do stuff, especially health care. When it comes to people travelling for health care, it's the biggest one hit right now.

I think that we, as a province, can work together on this, but we have to force the hand of the federal government. That's why we're asking, and the people of Labrador are asking, for a committee to actually work on this for a solution that will benefit over a long period of time, not just a small patch. We want a solution that is long lasting and can address this issue, because we just can't do it anymore.

**SPEAKER:** The Member's time has expired.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Minister of Labrador Affairs.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, I want to thank the Member for his petition on behalf of the people that he represents. It is a very real issue; it is causing real hardship. It's an issue that I've been really seized with myself.

Starting with last September, I took the opportunity to sit down with the new CEO of Goose Bay Airport Corporation to say this is a challenge, it's a growing challenge. The airport went out and hired a consultant and they did a lot of work. Basically, the results of what the consultant came back with confirmed what we were thinking across the country: airfare had risen by 9.3 per cent. But in places like Goose Bay, it increased 33 per cent and in places like the Member represents, it went up 47 per cent.

I recently presented before the Competition Bureau in Ottawa, a whole panel. We put a lot of work into that. I have written the federal minister of Transport requesting a meeting and bringing this matter to his attention. I've had the federal minister of Labour, MacKinnon, in my department and I've raised it with him. What MacKinnon actually said to me is that the federal government is doing a piece of work now, looking at rural routes in northern areas

across the country because a number of different areas are struggling.

But the Member is absolutely right, I'll reference his airport in particular, the people that he represents in Wabush, it's run by Transport Canada. A landing fee in Goose Bay is \$8.77. A landing fee in Wabush, which is run by the federal government, is over \$700 a landing. So you know that it's trickling in to the cost of a ticket. It's very cost prohibitive.

Unless you're travelling right now on insured health care services or you're travelling for MTAP, where some of your cost is offset, it's causing a real, real hardship to the people of Labrador. I'm really happy to work with the Member – there's strength in numbers – and see if we can keep the federal feet to the fire on this one.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**P. LANE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Department of Education provides inclusive education as a cornerstone of educational policy in Newfoundland and Labrador, promising to accommodate all students equitably. However, many schools aren't able to meet these commitments effectively, leaving students who need support without access.

The lack of resources often results in a situation whereby students are either unable to attend school due to lack of safety, or students attend school but are not supported to learn and thrive.

Despite the provincial government's obligation to provide an inclusive education, reports from educators, parents and

advocacy groups reveal persistent gaps in resources and educational supports. Many students are continuing to face significant barriers in accessing equitable educational opportunities, such as insufficient support staff, inadequate classroom accommodations and lack of transparency and communication between school and home.

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to:

(i) determine – with input from families – and hire the necessary human resources for students with exceptionalities prior to the end of the academic year – i.e. June 1;

(ii) develop a consistent communication plan – daily and weekly – that is upheld between schools and families to ensure that progress towards goals outlined in Individualized Education Plans are being monitored and adjusted, as needed;

(iii) take sole responsibility for providing an inclusive education to all students throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, regardless of Indigenous status or federal government approvals under the Jordan's Principle;

(iv) provide a safe space where educational staff are encouraged – without fear of reprimand – to acknowledge gaps in service delivery, and communicate with these families and appropriate staff in order to develop a constructive solution;

(v) implement an annual policy review to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion education and make necessary adjustments based on feedback and outcomes from educators and families;

(vi) establish post-secondary options for students with exceptionalities who will not meet the criteria of post-secondary schools.

Madam Speaker, I guess to pick up on what my colleague from Humber - Bay of Islands has already spoken to – and he's certainly hearing from families out on the West Coast and families that were affected by this Jordan's Principle. Jordan's Principle and that whole issue with the federal government is not something that would be impacting parents and students that I'm hearing from in my district and I'm sure throughout the Northeast Avalon because I hear from families from, not just my district, but all over the St. John's metro area, for sure. This is a provincial problem. It's not a West Coast problem.

One would think, after the case with Carter Churchill that had happened and the human rights complaint and so on, and what that family had to go through, you would think that that would have been enough to solve the issues that we're having when it comes to having appropriate staffing, student assistants and so on. I'm actually shocked that after all they went through and after that case, that we continue to hear from families, not just of deaf children, but students with all different types of exceptionalities that are not getting support that they require.

I hear from teachers. I hear from student assistants. I hear from families where this is happening on a daily basis in the classroom. The supports are not there. The resources are not there. We need to do better. This is calling upon certainly the House of Assembly, to encourage our government to make strides, to make it better for students with exceptionalities in our province. They deserve an education just like everybody else.

Thank you.

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

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 1, Address in Reply.

**J. MCKENNA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**SPEAKER:** Would the Member like the podium?

**J. MCKENNA:** No, I don't.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Fogo Island - Cape Freels.

**J. MCKENNA:** (Inaudible) to the fall session of the House of Assembly, I just want to give an overview of my being born and raised on Fogo Island. I still have my home there, but I will go back to the roots of my father's day. He was also born in the same community. He lost his mom at the age of 12. He had to get out and help out to raise the family. He worked at a very young age.

He had an aunt who lived in Bishop's Falls who had a taxi stand. When he turned 17, he went in and drove a taxi for his aunt. It was then he signed up for the services for World War II.

He had not much contact while over in England, Scotland, wherever he was posted. Back in them days, of course, there was no iPhones, no Facebook. You're lucky to hold on to your own face in them days, but he did make contact with a couple of his sisters through pen and paper, but he was 6½ years before he got back to his hometown.

He, in turn, met my mom, from the same community, and they started a family there. In that community at that time, there was no business of any sort. You couldn't go and buy a loaf of bread or a pound of butter or anything like that. Absolutely no service whatsoever. So he started up a general business.

Of course, I was born into that business, as well as other siblings. There was three of us boys and seven girls in that family. As I got older, I got to go to work in the business. I saw a great opportunity there. My father grew that business to supply everything in that community. Everything that you could possibly mention from dry goods to medicines to building materials, oil and gas for the fishermen and everything like that.

He, in turn, on the end of his investments, brought in a diesel generator and we actually sold hydro to the community. The houses got wired and with that, of course, came other additive to the business such as appliances, refrigerators, televisions, so it just escalated from there. There was plenty of opportunities for myself to work in the business, which I did.

I then met my loving wife from the Town of Fogo. She came to work in the business with us as well. It was then I settled down. I lived in Fogo for three years first when we got married. I still worked with my dad. We moved back to my community, bought a mobile home and we raised a family of six daughters – six girls. They did quite well.

Out of six daughters, three of them became engineers and worked in the oil industry. Actually, I still have one who lives in Texas with two girls of her own. My oldest daughter became a nurse and have a degree in nursing. My second oldest is the one who is living in Texas right now. The third oldest went and done business and worked with Revenue Canada for a number of years. She decided after so many years to be a stay-at-home mom and they're raising, right now, four daughters. Our fifth oldest, God bless her, we always refer to her as an angel in heaven, Candace, was born in 1989 with a disability. She had to be taken from Gander hospital by air ambulance and the Janeway team and she was placed in the insistence of care of the Janeway for 3½ years before we got her home.

That took a big toll on the family. I, at that time, was working with my dad and then suddenly my dad became ill and passed away at the age of 63. Of course, my mom owned the business and everything after dad passed, so I ran it for my mom for about five or six years, then she decided to sell me the family business. I worked in that for a number of years with other members of the family, then I decided that I wanted to move on and do something different myself as well.

I took on some new ventures. I went into a distributorship with Brookfield Ice Cream Limited of Grand Falls, Central Newfoundland. I worked with them for 13 years with my own transport truck and then I got into other various things like pulling freight for the various wholesale firms and one thing or another.

Then I had another venture that I wanted to do and that was open up a business in what we called the central part of Fogo Island, actually the crossroads to all the communities on Fogo Island, which has nine communities. I opened up a Chester Fried Super Stop, it was called. I sold Chester Fried chicken. I had a Greco express franchise. We ended up into like a full-fledge family restaurant. It became fairly, fairly busy, especially with the family and the size and what we had to take on when Candace came home.

My wife was still running the business in Island Harbour so we decided to sell that business to another member of my family, which we did, so she came down to the restaurant business and worked with me. In that business, we not only had a restaurant and a franchise, we also had a hair shop there. We also had a tanning salon there.

I then invested into an Airbnb on the same site and in 2002 I invested into a pub. The pub was known as Kenna's Pub. All that is still operational today.

With the burdens that we had and the burnout that we had, when our youngest daughter, Chawna, who is a chemical engineer, went to university, we decided that we would give ourselves a break, sell out and do something different. So we sold out in 2010 and we took a year out, you know, give my head a shake to see what I really wanted to do.

I then got involved with the oil industry. I paid for all the courses on my own. I went on the oil rigs. I had a couple of stints on the *Henry Goodrich* and the *Glomar*. At that time, things were slow, I couldn't get on full time so I decided I'm going to go west. So I went out to Fort Mac, I went to work on the Syncrude site for just about four years. I moved back in 2015 because the oil industry prices were going down and things weren't the same out there. A lot of our overtime was gone and paid holidays were nipped and things like that so I decided to pack it in and come home.

Then I said: I can't stop here; I don't want to retire. I felt I had lots of energy, so I went and done my MED. I wasn't sure where I was going to with that, but I knew I was going on the water somewhere. I ended up getting hired with Coast Guard. I was with Coast Guard for four years until I retired in 2020.

That's my background when it comes to business. I took a few years, like I say, after I retired just to relax and one thing and another and then, of course, I got pulled into the politics. I got elected last year in a by-election. I must say, I'm really enjoying it. I must say I do. I took that on because I saw lots of things that needed to be done in the District of Fogo Island - Cape Freels.

I have to go back to my families, immediate and otherwise, and thank them for the support that they gave me, the support that my campaign manager gave me and other people that supported me, all the constituents of Fogo Island - Cape Freels.

But when you speak about Fogo Island, we'll have to tie in Change Islands as well because both have similar industry: harvesters and fish plant. I don't know if a lot of people realize but the economy of Fogo Island is fairly strong, and I mean strong. This year, through fishery and tourism, we will be putting in over \$100 million to the economy of this province.

Then when you cross the pond, I should say, over to this side, the Cape Freels side, the same thing over there. There are two or three large fish plants there. A lot of people depend on the fishery. There are a lot of harvesters there. They have aquaculture there. They have manufacturing there. Again, they're putting in over hundreds of millions to the economy from Fogo Island - Cape Freels.

In summing up, after I got into the campaigning and then when I got into the door knocking, since I got into some of the homes and seen what needs are there, I do have a lot of concerns and I think I want to see improvements in that district, moreover with seniors. I went into houses where seniors pretty well cried to me that they are being forced out of their homes, because they're not getting enough hours for home care. They don't want to go into a seniors' home; they want to stay in their own home, and they want to die with dignity.

I think that's the thing that we have to make better. I'm going to try, for the people of Fogo Island - Cape Freels, my constituents, to represent them and advocate on their behalf.

Summing up now, I just found out that I did have a connection to that part of the district. My great-grandfather lived in Cat Harbour, which is now known as Lumsden. He was the first start of the McKenna family. He moved to Island Harbour in the late 1800s and from there on, here I am.

Thank you very much.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

**L. PADDOCK:** Madam Speaker, as I rise this afternoon in the people's House, I do so in a humbled manner, given that the residents of Baie Verte - Green Bay have entrusted me with their voice.

The by-election was an important medium for our democracy. Many of you here in the House today visited the district and, hopefully, gained a better understanding of rural Newfoundland, especially for a district where the distance from St. John's necessitates that government be better brought to the people.

During the by-election, notable commitments were promised to our district, and those now need to be fully honoured. Given the amount of GDP generated in the district for our province – an amount that, I will add, should notably increase over the next few years – then any provincial support provided will be multiplied back to our province.

I would like to thank former MHA Brian Warr for his service to the District of Baie Verte - Green Bay.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** To wish him well in his future endeavours and, like other rural MHAs, for his support to the district, given the unforgiving travel demands.

Baie Verte - Green Bay now consists of 39 communities, a mix of towns and Local Service Districts with one interconnected thread: the community-mindedness of its residents. Like their forefathers and mothers, these residents are focused on bettering their communities, expanding economic opportunities, looking out for each other and, as such, they deserve equitable government allocations.

Madam Speaker, from this House of Assembly, we must remember that it is through vigorous government debate and answering questions that we can set the conditions to improve the lives of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. That is exactly what we must do, because too many of the residents in my district are now struggling. We have a duty to them and to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to be fair and equitable, to expedite opportunities and to be relentless in seeking better.

In standing here today, I would like to note that I am the descendant of the first permanent settlers into our district. My grandparents, grandchildren themselves of those first settlers, were focused on community, while they toiled hard in our fishery. They lived their lives emboldened by the Latin above your Chair: Seek ye first the Kingdom of God. Both of my grandfathers played key roles in developing churches through both labour and fellowship.

Grandfather Paddock was also a skilled schooner builder and a well-known fishing captain who took crews north in the summers. Unfortunately, the merchant trucking system in use at that time did not allow him to experience free enterprise. My grandparents and my parents were green before it was even fashionable, as they live by the motto: reduce, reuse and recycle. Yes, even fish guts and animal bones were trenched to make the soil nutrient rich, especially with nitrogen.

They were skilled in living healthy from the natural land, growing vegetables, raising animals and catching a range of fish products. Catching caplin or bringing kelp to fertilize the gardens as a teenager also instilled in me a desire for work and a reminder to be self-reliant. My Paddock grandparents had four sons deployed during World War II, including my own father, Lloyd, who was in the Merchant Marine. That commitment and sacrifice had a notable impact on my grandfather's fishing

crew. Madam Speaker, at times, service for the greater good is indeed needed.

Growing up in Robert's Arm, I was blessed to have my value system influenced by family, church and school. My mom, Edith, instilled in her eight children the importance of sharing, community service and doing what one can to help others. Teachers instilled discipline and a passion for learning. My siblings and cousins have also had a profound impact on me with their trade skills, with their service to others and with their unwavering helping mindset.

After graduating from Dorset Collegiate, I was merit selected for military college, le Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. The first year was trying, due to never having seen calculus, but I was determined not to be outworked and in graduating 4½ years later, I finished near the top of the top third of the graduates.

Madam Speaker, I was honoured to serve this country. I had a satisfying and accomplished career; one, where I was awarded three commendations for my logistics and financial leadership efforts. However, my mother kept me grounded as she reminded me as a young naval officer: Don't get too big for your britches. Meaning it is not about you, but those that you lead.

While serving, I also completed accounting and logistics designation and was selected for the Command and Staff College, a master's level program. In my last post as director of finance of all military operations, I was focused on delivering timely, transparent and fully accounted reports to support a range of kinetic and humanitarian operations. I also place great importance on using rigorous costing methodologies for initiating new military missions and for encumbering public funds.

In returning to our province, I first led an industry association as its executive director and, subsequently, I joined Virtual Marine in a sales role. This private sector

engagement provided me with unique insights into small business activities across our province. Small businesses are the anchors of our provincial economy and we must, collectively, here in this House, find the ways and the means to reduce the regulatory burden on them, especially taxation.

Madam Speaker, two weeks ago we celebrated Small Business Week in Newfoundland and Labrador and with it, I had the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the percolating small business activity across Baie Verte - Green Bay, namely across fishing, forestry, mining, agricultural and tourism.

Fishing, a renewable resource, has been the foundation of our district for the past two centuries and each fish harvester is a small business. Significant opportunity remains for our fishery and aquaculture activities and there is a need to re-establish some TAC, like mackerel, and to ensure that the inshore fishery remains the primary beneficiaries for Northern cod TAC increase. Moreover, some adjacent processing capacity needs to be re-established, especially on the Baie Verte Peninsula.

Forestry, another renewable resource, has been conducted in our district for the past 150 years. At first, the focus was schooner building, which later turned to pulpwood exports. Today, the forest harvesting in both Green Bay and on the Baie Verte Peninsula supports a range of wood operations, including the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Mill and local sawmills. Additional wood allocation to local sawmills is now needed, as it is a means to mitigate our housing crisis.

Madam Speaker, agricultural activities are also expanding across our district from root vegetable gardening to hydroponics for lettuce to raising cattle. There is a desire to produce more locally as was done by our forefathers and mothers. However, the road

block to expansion with several farming operations rests with Crown lands. We must do better.

Madam Speaker, 155 years ago our district was the initial catalyst for mining in Newfoundland and Labrador. Since then from Betts Cove, Tilt Cove, Little Bay to Pilley's Island, Baie Verte and Ming's Bight our district continues to be a focal point for mining. That legacy is now being further discovered through the efforts of FireFly and Maritime Resources with other company names about to emerge.

We are on the cusp of another mining boom. This provincial mining opportunity now requires timely infrastructure and work support for our communities in order to fully leverage that mining opportunity.

On the tourism front, scenic Green Bay and the historic Baie Verte Peninsula offers significant untapped tourism potential. With hiking trails in most communities like the one retracing the Beothuk history on Long Island to the Rattling Brook Falls to those hugging our rugged coastlines, our area is an outdoor paradise. There are also boat tours, whale pavilions and museums like the Dorset Soapstone Quarry in Fleur de Lys.

By also adding in the historic French Shore, Le Petit Nord, with its French ovens, it becomes abundantly clear that history, geography and a sense of place intertwine (inaudible) over a salt breeze. However, road safety issues are impacting our tourism potential. Case in point, we must ensure that both residents and tourists can at least see the road signs.

Madam Speaker, as I continue to travel my district, three issues are highlighted on a daily basis: health care, cost of living and road safety. My solemn pledge to every resident of Baie Verte - Green Bay, our businesses and our municipal leaders is that your priorities will be my lead mark and better is now needed for our collective future.

In arriving to this day, I would like to firstly thank the voters of Baie Verte - Green Bay for placing their overwhelming trust in me. Regardless of how a person voted, you will have my support. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to the Baie Verte - Green Bay PC Association and especially my campaign team as your untiring efforts were the fuel in my personal tank.

Madam Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and thank the timely support of the House of Assembly staff in my transition and that of my CA, Margo Burton. Their impartial efforts and dedication to service is indeed noteworthy and it reflects a great credit on our public service here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

To close, Madam Speaker, I would like to highlight that it was instilled in me as a young naval officer bridge watchkeeping on one of our Canadian warships that one should never pass a fault as the consequences of inaction could be severe.

On that note, I look forward to working with all MHAs to help navigate our province towards a better tomorrow.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Waterford Valley.

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

**J. KORAB:** Thank you, Speaker.

Esteemed colleagues and people of Newfoundland and Labrador, today I stand before you filled with gratitude, responsibility and optimism. It is an incredible honour to address this House as a Member of the House of Assembly for the first time.

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

**J. KORAB:** The second time if you count the Member's statement.

I'm originally from Harbour Grace, in Minister Parsons's district. It doesn't mean we're related. We are, but growing up in rural Newfoundland, it gave me a bit of a unique perspective, now living in St. John's. I grew up around the fishery. My uncle, grandfather and my mother's husband worked in the fishery. I worked a summer fishing capelin as a 15-year-old, offloading crab boats, shrimp boats and my mother was the port authority before she passed away, in Harbour Grace. So I feel I have a connection there.

I moved to St. John's in '99 for education. I worked in the IT, originally, and when I worked at Xwave across there, we actually had a tape library here in this building. So 25 years ago, I technically did work here – much lower but worked here.

Something that you might not know about me, I curled a little bit. The curling gave me that sports background, and the travel, I think, gave me a good perspective as well. I've transferred that over to my business and family life, so I've learned a lot from there.

Speaker, the list of people who have helped me is really long and I'll spare you – it will take longer than 30 minutes. My clock didn't reset by the way. I haven't been speaking for 12 minutes already.

**SPEAKER:** It goes down.

**J. KORAB:** Okay, good.

Someone said I had 30 minutes. Do I have 30 minutes or 20 minutes?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Twenty.

**J. KORAB:** I only got 20 minutes? It won't be that long.

I want to thank everyone that helped me, especially my wife, who's here and my two daughters.

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

**J. KORAB:** Our anniversary fell during the election so I'm still making that up. My CA, Jonathan, we started right around the same time, fairly new. It's his birthday today.

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

**J. KORAB:** Happy birthday to Jonathan.

The people of Waterford Valley have put their trust in me, and this is something that will be in the back of my mind every time I take this seat here in this Legislature. I want to thank the previous Member, Tom Osborne, for his 28 years of service. Everyone here would know Tom.

I worked with Tom a lot over my seven years as a Ward 3 councillor, as we overlap. So I had many conversations with Tom over the years. I recognize I do have big shoes to fill. That was made abundantly clear every third or fourth door I knocked on during the campaign.

In all seriousness, I do know it's big shoes to fill. I'll approach this constituency the same way I did my seven years on city council: I'll be accessible, I'll be responsive and I'll always be an advocate for the residents of this district.

As I look around this Chamber, I see not only colleagues but representatives with diverse voices and vibrant communities across our beautiful province. So let's remember while we may have differing opinions, we share a common goal: to improve the lives of the people we serve. It's essential that we work collaboratively, respect each other's perspectives and find common ground. The challenges we face are not unique to these individuals, but we need a collaborative commitment to progress.

I believe we're at a pivotal moment in this province's history. Like many, I recognize we have challenges, economic uncertainty, the need for sustainable development and preservation of our rich culture and history, but I also see incredible potential. Together we can harness the resilience and innovation of our people to build a bright future for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

I stand here today committed to serving my constituents with integrity, transparency and compassion. My priorities will always be the voices that elected me: the hard-working families; the longshore men, many of whom are from Shea Heights; the young people dreaming of opportunity; and the elders who have paved the way for us. I pledge to listen, advocate and ensure their needs are at the forefront of every decision I make here in this House.

Waterford Valley District holds multiple attractions and commercial industries and services, not only and including the crown jewel, in my opinion, is Bowring Park. The park was established in 1914. It holds 200 acres of beautiful zones, sports fields, conservatory and, of course, everyone's favourite, the duck pond. Bowring park has a monument of the caribou. I had the previous pleasure of sitting on the Bowring Park Foundation before.

Our district also has the Railway Coastal Museum – we all know our rich history in the railway – on Water Street and adjacent to one of the busiest commercial zones, which includes the dockyards and Campbell's Ships Supplies, which was established in 1877.

Across from the dockyards, you have Fort Amherst and the Fort Amherst Harbour Authority. This is a legendary location, and a good chunk of our thriving fishing industry comes out of there. A lot of people don't realize that, but it does. This includes a small boat basin, which has about 150 vessels using the port throughout the year

to launch and offload their quotas. I'm sure that's no surprise to the former Fisheries minister here.

The north side of Fort Amherst is home to a lot of commercial traffic coming in and out. In the warmer months, you can certainly see the cruise ships coming in and out. We have our Coast Guard search and rescue facility, as well as a few small businesses, most recently would be the Punchbowl. Obviously, we have the most easterly point in North America in Cape Spear in the district, which we are very proud of.

Our places of worship are dedicated to parishioners and also successful multi-use structures, such as servicing daycares, which my daughter went to, on Craigmiller Avenue for three years, teaching facilities and, most recently, Elections NL use one of the churches as a place for folks to safely cast their vote in the last by-election for my district.

There are many other commercial activities happening in the district, including great locations for filming in the television and film industry, diverse food offerings and we host the largest high school in the province. We have some of the largest farms in beautiful Kilbride. Shopping, supporting local foods, a lot of starts right here in Waterford Valley.

One of the things I'm excited about is in 2025 we have the Canada Games that's coming to St. John's and surrounding areas.

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

**J. KORAB:** So in less than a year, this multi-sporting event will bring an exciting energy to not just the city, not just the Northeast Avalon, but the entire province. It's going to inspire young athletes and communities to pursue their dreams and aim for greatness.

I've never played in the Canada Games. There was this other event I played in that was multi-sport, but I did attend two Canada

Games in the Maritimes a number of years back and I got to see first-hand the impact it had on the residents, the athletes and as well the community. You've only got to look down the hill here in 1977 to see the impact that the 1977 Canada Games had with the building of the Aquarena.

In my opinion, one of the biggest things and legacy that will come out of this Canada Games is the Canada Games turf, track and Centre of Excellence that's being built on Memorial University campus.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude, once again, for this opportunity and thank the residents that voted me in. As the Member opposite said, if you didn't vote for me or you did vote for me, I'm still your Member, my phone is always on – usually on.

I'm eager to work along side all of you as we tackle the issues for the communities. Together, let's build a province that reflects the best of who we are. A province where everyone can thrive.

Speaker, thank you. Thank you, everybody. Let's work together.

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

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, second reading of Bill 80, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005." (Bill 80)

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I wish to notify the House that there was a small error in the title of Bill 80 during first reading, whereby the word “services” was inadvertently included. So I would like to note that the title on the bill have been corrected on both the Order Paper and Progress of Bills and now reads, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, when I called second reading, I apologize, it is seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**SPEAKER:** Okay.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am pleased today to speak to Bill 80, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005. Madam Speaker, as this House is aware, the *Fair Registration Practices Act* received Royal Assent on November 9, 2022.

This act provides that prescribed regulatory bodies shall have a process for the internal review of a registration decision within the time prescribed in the regulations after written reasons for the registration decision are provided to the applicant.

Currently under the Medical Act and the Psychologists Act, a person who is affected by a registration decision may, within the 30 days, after receiving notice of the decision, appeal to the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Once the *Fair Registration Practices Act* came into force, the 30-day time period to appeal a registration decision under the Medical Act and Psychologists Act could expire before an internal review of the registration decision is completed.

Madam Speaker, these amendments would mandate an internal review process

consistent with the requirements of the *Fair Registration Practices Act*. The amendments resolve any conflict between timelines by ensuring that the time period to start an appeal at court does not begin until after the individual has received notice of an internal appeal decision. This would avoid individuals having to incur expenses and time to preserve an appeal when they may ultimately be satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal.

It also avoids individuals inadvertently failing to file an appeal because they did not realize the time to do so expired while they were waiting the internal review. With these changes, individuals would not be able to appeal registration decisions until an internal appeal is completed. Similar language and processes currently exist in other health profession statutes.

Madam Speaker, this bill will also provide for additional amendments to the acts to allow the council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board to appoint persons or committees to hear internal appeals of registration decisions in their place. It will make minor language changes as required, such as the incorporation of gender-neutral language.

With respect specifically to the Psychologists Act, the bill also clarifies that it is the registrar who makes the initial registration decision. This ensures operational clarity on the role of the registrar. The bill ensures that the Medical Act and the Psychologists Act will function properly with the *Fair Registration Practices Act*.

These amendments will favour fair, transparent and timely practices during the administrative steps taken by a regulatory body to process an application for registration. Fair, transparent and timely registration is an essential component of this government's work to increase the

number of registered health professionals in our province, while continuing to maintain the self-regulation of these professions in the name of public interest.

I am pleased that this bill is here and I am happy to support it. I look forward to comments from other Members.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I won't have a lot of dialogue on this one, I think it's pretty straightforward. I believe from the get-go it's regulatory changes that everyone supports. It's only making it better for appeal processes.

It's making amendments to the Medical Act and the Psychologists Act as related to licencing and registration appeals and decisions, as the minister has just stated. The *Medical Act, 2011* and *Psychologists Act, 2005* currently limits appeals regarding licence and registration decisions to the respective regulatory councils. The bill will aim to broaden our appeal rights and allow affected individuals to escalate appeals to the Supreme Court – that's the main change.

Additionally, it intends to provide councils the authority to delegate appeal hearings to committees or appointed persons, addressing administrative load and enhancing procedural efficiency. A move towards gender-neutral language is also proposed to ensure inclusivity in the legislative language.

Key amendments in the bill provide provisions for individuals to appeal to the Supreme Court if dissatisfied with decisions from either the College of Physicians and Surgeons or the Newfoundland and

Labrador Psychology Board. This change empowers practitioners by offering recourse beyond the regulatory bodies, potentially increasing public trust in the professional oversight. The delegation ability granted by the council is designed to expedite appeal processes by reducing the bottleneck of direct council involvement. Other changes are made to incorporate gender-neutral language.

The amendments to the *Medical Act, 2011* and *Psychologists Act, 2005* represent a progressive step towards a more accessible and inclusive regulatory framework. By providing additional appeal options and incorporating gender-neutral language, this bill modernizes administrative protocols while upholding fairness in professional licensure oversight.

We'll have a few questions in Committee, but that's basically all we have to say. We do support this legislation. It's a step forward in helping people with the appeal process and gives them another avenue. We'll have some more questions during Committee.

Thank you very much.

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

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, Speaker.

It's nice to see some of the changes here, but the big change obviously here is the ability for internal appeals and the setting up of a committee for an individual to appeal inside there, but also to take it to the Supreme Court at that point; and updating gender-neutral language.

It's pretty straightforward in that and we'll just have some questions in Committee.

Thank you so much.

**SPEAKER:** If the hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services speaks now he will close debate.

The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Member for Gander said everyone's out of practice, but he really meant I was out of practice and wasn't paying attention. I was directly talking to the Member for CBS, when I'm supposed to stand up and thank him for his comments on this act, and I thank the Member for Lab West as well.

I look forward to questions in Committee.

**SPEAKER:** The Deputy Government House Leader.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker.

I move that Bill 80 be now read a second time.

**SPEAKER:** Is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that Bill 80 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.

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

Carried.

**CLERK (Hawley George):** A bill, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005, Bill 80.

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

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 80)

**SPEAKER:** The Deputy Government House Leader.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Madam Speaker, I move that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 80.

**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 the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**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 (Trimper):** Order, please!

We're now considering Bill 80, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologists Act, 2005." (Bill 80)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, under clause 3 with the council delegation of authority, how will these people be appointed?

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

**J. HOGAN:** I'm just looking to read clause 3, just give me a moment.

Sorry, can you just clarify? Was it under the Medical Act or the Psychologists Act?

**B. PETTEN:** The Medical Act.

**J. HOGAN:** Okay.

So there are no limitations on who can be appointed. It will be appointed by the council.

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

**B. PETTEN:** So will they be remunerated?

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

**J. HOGAN:** No, my understanding is they will not be remunerated, but I will make sure I get that before we close Committee here today, to correct that if it's wrong.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Minister, who did you consult with for this legislation?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Consultations would have been done, obviously, with the boards and the NLMA as well.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Were the results of those discussions positive? Any concerns?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Thank you very much.

Yeah, it was positive. There's a bit of a hole in the legislation, obviously, that we needed to fill, so there weren't any concerns about adding this extra appeal provision within it.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Minister, was there a jurisdictional scan of other provinces completed for this legislation?

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

**J. HOGAN:** That's pretty standard for when we do – well, I'm not going to say any legislation, because it might not be relevant, but most legislation we look at what other jurisdictions are doing.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Always important to ask, though.

How many appeals have these bodies routinely heard in the past? What are the number of appeals that they normally historically received?

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

**J. HOGAN:** I don't have that number for the Member, but we can certainly get that for him.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Does the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board have the capacity to handle these appeals?

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

**J. HOGAN:** Yes, that would have been part of the consultation process. They never raised that as an issue.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Minister, are you concerned about any undo legal costs being incurred if a person is successful?

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

**J. HOGAN:** This is part of a process. They get an additional appeal provision now. It clarified that there is an additional appeal provision. Certainly, when they file their applications, I'm going to assume most of the time they don't use legal counsel and if they're still dealing within the registrar, it would be a less legally intrusive process for that provision. Of course, if they decide to go to the Supreme Court, I would also advise someone to get a lawyer to do that. But people can do that on their own, if it affects them individually, but we are not changing the appeal provisions at court. It existed before and it still exists now.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Does this legislation include any disciplinary matters?

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

**J. HOGAN:** This legislation is not about disciplinary matters – these amendment, I should say, not necessarily the legislation.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, Chair.

Just one question on this. When this was set out there now, it was left pretty broad in the sense of an individual or a committee, and the makeup of it is really left to the committee for these changes for the appeals thing.

Is there a reason why it was left so broad and the makeup of these committees was put into this, or is there a possibility of it being put into the regulations, just the broadness of these individuals? There was no real reason why the makeup was not legislated of a particular makeup, each group can kind of do their own thing. Was there a reason why it was left like that?

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

**J. HOGAN:** The council is defined in the act under section 9 and that would be very specific about who can be on the council and then, obviously, when they decide to delegate the decision, I think is what you're talking about, to either a different council or an individual. I think it just allows flexibility to do that.

**CHAIR:** No further questions?

Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

The motion is carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** Clauses 2 through 27, inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 27 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

Clauses 2 through 27 are carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 27 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:** Against?

The enacting clause is carried.

Thank you to the Member for Gander.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Amend the Medical Act, 2011 and the Psychologist Act, 2005.

**CHAIR:** Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

The title is carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report the bill carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

The bill is carried without amendment.

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

**CHAIR:** The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 80 carried without amendment.

**CHAIR:** It is moved that the Committee rise and report Bill 80 carried without amendment.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

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

**SPEAKER (Gambin-Walsh):** Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville and Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

**J. HOGAN:** Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that Bill 80 has been carried without amendment.

**SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to report Bill 80 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**L. DEMPSTER:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the bill be read a third time?

**L. DEMPSTER:** Tomorrow.

**SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Speaker.

I move that this House do now adjourn; seconded by the Member for Gander.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**SPEAKER:** This House stands adjourned until 1:30 in the afternoon on Tuesday.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 1:30 p.m.