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*Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA*

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The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Admit strangers.

### **Government Business**

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

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

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 2. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, that in accordance with Standing Order 65, the Public Accounts Committee shall comprise the following Members: the Member for Exploits, the Member for Mount Pearl North, the Member for the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis, the Member for Labrador West, the Member for Lake Melville and the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the Public Accounts Committee Members shall be the Member for Exploits, the Member for Mount Pearl North, the Member for Cape St. Francis, the Member for Labrador West, the Member for Lake Melville and the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's.

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.

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 12, second reading of An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act, Bill 82, and I further move that this bill be read a second time, seconded by the Member for Waterford Valley.

**SPEAKER:** It's been moved and seconded that Bill 82, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act." (Bill 82)

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you.

Good morning, Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this hon. House today to bring forward amendments to the *Labour Standards Act*. This act is designed to protect workers by requiring employers to establish conditions of employment that meet minimum legislated standards.

This government is committed to ensuring labour standards legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador balances the needs of both employers and employees. The act currently provides employees with seven days of unpaid sick leave per year, as well as several job protected leaves in the act such as parental leave, leave related to critical illness and pregnancy leave.

Speaker, the proposed amendments will introduce leave related to long-term illness, long-term injury and organ donation, which will provide job protected leave without pay for employees for up to 27 weeks. This extends to 104 weeks of employment for employees who were a victim of a crime.

Stakeholders such as the Cancer Society and Diabetes Canada have advocated for this change to ensure job security for sick and injured workers. The leave aligns with the federal employment insurance sickness benefit, which offers 26 weeks of benefits.

We have added one additional week, Speaker, for the waiting period.

The requirement for leave related to long-term illness, long-term injury and organ donation include that the employee has been continuously employed with the same employer for 30 days; extended medical care or recovery time is required and certified by a medical practitioner or a nurse practitioner; and proof that the employee was the victim of a crime that result in an injury or illness, if applicable.

Employees eligible for this leave will be entitled to up to 27 weeks in a 52-week period or up to 104 weeks in a 104-week period, if related to a criminal offence. Leave must be taken in periods of at least two weeks in duration.

Speaker, we also propose to amend the act to strengthen unpaid leave for reservists. The act currently has job protected leave for reservists in place; however, the Department of National Defence reserves employer support program has advocated for a harmonized national standard. To meet this request, we propose: reduce the minimum duration of civilian employment from six months to three, include military training as eligible for reservist's leave; limit leave to 24 months in 60 months with exception provided for national emergencies; reduce the notice of leave period from 60 days to 30 days; and extend the notice period a reservist or employer must provide if the return-to-work date is expected to change from two weeks to four.

Speaker, these proposed amendments to the *Labour Standards Act* ensure that employers who have to be off work for extended periods of time can do so without the added burden of worry related to job security.

I was thinking as I was driving in, the last thing somebody needs after getting, for example, a cancer diagnosis is to worry and they have to be off, if their job will be there

when they get back, on top of all the other stress.

Whether a worker needs unpaid time off to recover from an illness, injury or organ donation, or if they are preparing to serve their country, it is important that we recognize the need for job protection during that time.

I would ask, Speaker, that all Members of the House of Assembly endorse those amendments to the *Labour Standards Act*, which lays the foundation for enhanced job protection for employees while supporting business entities with better continuity planning.

I certainly look forward to the debate on the successful implementation of those important legislative standards.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

It's good this morning to get up here and talk about Bill 82, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act. It gives protection to employees, certainly for more job security, if they got the leave for illness or recuperating from injury. It provides some assurance, or it provides protection to the employees that need that.

There are supports for long-term injuries, especially for non-unionized employees. We all know that recuperating from injuries or illnesses can be a burden to families, especially that injured worker. It can be a burden to the employee who are trying to provide for their family and need some reassurance that they can continue to do what they've always done in those cases. So it's good that we can support those workers in those times of need and this bill

will certainly provide some of that assurance.

We'll support the bill, no doubt about that, but we'll certainly have some questions when it comes to the Committee stage. The overview is that this bill will amend the *Labour Standards Act* to enable non-unionized workers in the province to take unpaid long-term illness, long-term injury and organ donation leave. It also provides the ability for reserve members of the Canadian Armed Forces to take unpaid leave when it is necessary to prepare for deployment or in any national emergency risk without risk of losing their jobs.

This legislation is making sure that employees have jobs to return to, especially after long-term illness or injury, or organ donation. So it's nice to have the commitment there that they'll have a job to return to and they're provided protection while they're on leave protection.

The background for this was that these legislative changes follow public consultation. The Canadian Armed Forces were consulted as changes in the bill will allow part-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces to advance their military skills and careers with further protections, establishing and maintaining their civilian employment. Regarding long-term unpaid leave for illness, injury and organ donations, groups such as the Canadian Federation for Labour and Cancer Society will be consulted, so that was good in those terms.

So, in summary, the amendments within this legislation will seek to rectify the following: To provide non-unionized workers in the province to be able to avail of the right to unpaid long-term illness, injury or organ donation leave while protecting their job. This adds 104 weeks of unpaid leave available to those injured or ill as a result of a criminal act. It enables members of the primary reserve to avail of unpaid long-term leave associated with deployment training

or deployment. This is to align with other jurisdictions in Canada.

This bill will add to the reassurance to employees to have that type of protection. I'll just take my seat now and we'll wait for the Committee and we'll certainly have some questions in Committee stage.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

It's an honour to speak to this bill, and I need to compliment the department and the minister for bringing it in. I'm going to focus on just the one element of this Bill 82 today and that's relating to reservists and the accommodations, the changes, the enhancements that the minister indicated nationally that has been asked for as we try to harmonize how we support those who want to stand in harm's way and support us in their role as a reservist.

I'm also speaking today, and I guess it's my first opportunity to speak, as a parliamentary secretary of this new unit of government known as Veterans and Military Relations. I started that a few months ago. I must say, it's an incredibly busy place to be. There are all matters of expectation, needs, opportunities for lobbying and enhancement. I'm pleased to take it on. It's been very rewarding and here we are today, the day after a very dark day in the United States, but nevertheless we're making progress in terms of what this country can do and what role we can play in supporting our country.

I want to just mention for a second, because I look forward to over the next several weeks, months in this role in supporting military and veterans in terms of how we are approaching it, I think of it in terms of four

time frames. First of all, in aspect of just look at the lifecycle, if you like, of recruiting. Everything from cadets, how do we encourage people to consider enlisting as a regular force or as a reservist, Canadian Ranger and so on, the different roles and capacities. So that whole time frame, what can be done there to enhance the great shortfalls that we have in our country right now.

There is also the whole aspect of supporting those who are currently serving, again, in these different roles. Whether they be overseas, here in our country, in responding to natural disasters, it's all the wraparound services and so on. This is not to replace the obligations of the federal government, but to see what we can do as a provincial jurisdiction and as a secretariat in terms of supporting those efforts.

Our veterans – I'm wearing a poppy. I'm very proud to say that today all of my colleagues in this House, and as I look around society, we are all recognizing what our veterans have done before us, what they're doing now and the need to support them – a very important part.

Then, to wrap it up, a very important aspect, that I feel goes right back to the whole recruitment phase is how do we pay our respects to those who are no longer with us, that have served this place, this province, this Dominion and our country. Paying due homage and respect to them is upper most in our thoughts.

I need to mention, just briefly, but I feel that the emotions I shared with all of my colleagues in this House, on the 1st of July as we watched the repatriation of the Unknown soldier was truly a remarkable day. I was proud to be there with all of them. I could feel it across the entire province, as people still remark on the importance of doing that and establishing, recognizing our national War Memorial but also the repatriation of this Unknown Soldier who gave so much.

So you're going to hear me speaking, if you haven't already, about this four time frames. I'm pleased to say today that the minister has brought through several changes that are going to result in, I feel, a great enhancement in terms of supporting those who are already there, but I also feel it would be a great attraction. When folks see that they can – as a reservist, by the way, I'll go to that. A reservist is essentially a citizen of our country who combines the military career with a civilian career. So for those who would like to do both and willing to give up so much of their time, this will make it so much easier.

I must say when I took over the position and started sitting with staff and looking at briefing documents and so on, this particular element about enhancing opportunities for those who want to do both was right there under the spotlight. So I was really happy to see these changes.

Military reservists can respond to a war zone. This is not part-time, in terms of a hobby. This is a very serious dedication that our reservists in our province make. They actually can very much be in harm's way. Often in support capacities, but it also could be in other roles. It's very important that we think about that, whether it be patrols, guard duties and so on.

It's interesting as I think about these four – may I just use the term – buckets of energy or fronts of activity that we need to deploy in this new secretariat, I'm thinking about the fact that – and just looking at some of the senior officials in our country – they're talking about the current shortfall of some 16,500 personnel. The minister of National Defence, the hon. Minister Bill Blair, just recently identified that 16,500 shortfall. If you start thinking about the NORAD modernization plan, which we're going to speak to a little bit this afternoon, it also suggests that we need another 14,500 people involved in our forces. From a reservist perspective, we should be at 30,000. We are so far short of that now. So

there are huge demands and I see this as a great incentive.

Certainly, aligning the provisions to this act will relay to providing unpaid leave to members of the reserve force with other jurisdictions. It's interesting, you know, the lobby effort, the advocacy that we felt and the department responded to, with the minister, is to bring us in line with other provinces and territories across the country. I think we've all been provided with the jurisdictional scan and it's great to see that on every move, we have responded.

I look forward to just seeing how this rolls out. I'll look forward to speaking to people in my own district who are involved in it.

Again, it's providing harmonization, flexibility and certainty for those employers, also, who are wanting and willing to see their own staff avail of this very important additional activity.

With that, Speaker, I think I'll stop there, but I did want to make those important points on this aspect of the changes to the *Labour Standards Act* because it is most important for those who are serving for us.

Thank you very much.

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

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

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

I do want to start by saying there are some good changes here and we do appreciate, like the Member for lake Melville said, about adding that ability to harmonize what National Defence is looking for, for reservists. That is an excellent change.

Once again, I'll say there's stuff that we wanted to see and we hoped to see but it's not in here. I do want to touch on a point there. We do talk about precarious work, gig

economy. Those workers and protections are required for a lot of those that we wanted to see but we, unfortunately, don't see here. We want to make sure that people understand that there are changes that need to be made to the act on those things as well. Precarious work is a new and upcoming thing, you look at Uber, you look DoorDash, all those things, those workers do have some constraints and there are some changes there that needs to be there to protect them as well in that precarious work environment.

Another thing that we want to talk about is, obviously, extended unpaid leave, but you also have to look at the need for 10 paid sick leave days because we don't want people to be forced to go to work if they're sick to make up for their lost wages and making everyone else at work sick.

It's been known, especially if we just look at COVID, 10 paid sick days is a good start to keep people that cannot lose pay while they take time to recover from common illnesses and stuff that are spread around and making more people at work sick and then it's an endless cycle. We all know it. I look at it when my kid comes home, they picked up something at school; I'm out from work and taking sick days. But for most of us here, they can't miss a day of work. They're living paycheque to paycheque.

So that's something that we wanted to see is paid sick days in the *Labour Standards Act* to protect workers, but also give them the opportunity to get better, recover and go back to work, instead of forcing themselves to go to work while they're sick making everyone else at work sick. We're just creating a vicious cycle in the environment because people can't take time off right now. You know, people are living paycheque to paycheque, things like that, so that's something that we wanted to see when we're talking about amendments to sick leave and leave and all that.

This is something that we really wanted to see in here but we haven't seen. We want to reiterate to government that this is something that they really need to take serious time to consider, adding to the *Labour Standards Act* to give more protections for workers. This is a better thing to help workers recover but also to make sure that they still have a job to go to, but, at the end of the day, they also are not having to fall behind on bills and fall behind on other things while they're trying to make themselves better and trying to keep others from getting sick in the workplace. So these are things that we really wanted to see, things that we think should have been highly considered.

The other stuff in here, yes, these are nice changes. We appreciate the changes but there is more that can be done when it comes to the *Labour Standards Act* to protect workers and make work environments better for those who are sick, but we also want them to get better and to make sure that they are able to continue on and have a better quality of life for everybody. That's what we wanted to see here.

We go back also to minimum wage and that. I know it's not here but you have to look at that. Right now, the reason we're asking for paid sick days for people under the *Labour Standards Act* is because wages are not keeping up with inflation. People are living paycheque to paycheque, so even that all cumulates, it's all connected. We have to look at the minimum wage and a living wage. People are just not getting by.

So we appreciate the changes, they are a nice small start, but we also want to reiterate that there is other stuff that the *Labour Standards Act* amendments need to account for. One of the big ones, obviously, is we need to look at paid sick days in the *Labour Standards Act* to make a healthier environment for workers, to protect workers, but, also, we have to take into consideration the constraint that workers are under right

now in this province. One of them is, they are living paycheque to paycheque, they can't miss a single day of work so they're going to work sick and when they're going to work sick, it just makes a harder environment for everybody.

So we need to take this into serious consideration. It's just something that I wanted to mention while we talk about this other stuff with leave for organ donation, leave for reservists, unpaid leave for accidents and illness. That is great for (inaudible), but we have to take into consideration that there are people – actually most people right now – with minimum protections and they are going to work sick because they have no choice because they can't miss a single day of work.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Seeing no further speakers, if the hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour speaks now she will close the debate.

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

I want to thank my hon. colleagues in this House who spoke to the amendments we are proposing today to the *Labour Standards Act*. I want to thank the Member for Exploits. I want to thank him for his support. I'll just make a quick comment in a couple of things that the Member had said, just for clarity for the House, Speaker.

The changes do apply to both unionized and non-unionized. It's mostly, I guess I would say, non-unionized that will benefit, but the *Labour Standards Act* does set out the minimum standards for employment for all employees in the province, and collective agreements cannot contain less than minimum standards. The other comment I want to make is that the act does not apply – just for clarity in the House – to government employees.

I want to thank my colleague, the Member for Lake Melville, for his comments. He's doing a great job with the new responsibilities that have been added to him by the Premier around the whole veterans and reservists.

This close to Remembrance Day, I would be remiss myself if I did not mention that we think about the veterans, the families, we think about the impacts that have been passed down through generations with some of the trauma of those who served and certainly not lost on us is the debt of gratitude that we do owe in July. I hope to get an opportunity to speak more about it in the House, but in July, as part of the 75th anniversary, I did get to take 10 Indigenous students on the Trail of the Caribou and the only thing I'll share with the House today, in the interest of time, was a comment that a veteran made to me, standing near a stone of a young boy, 16 years old. I said: What keeps the fire in you of remembrance, you keep coming back? I think it was 19 times this elderly gentleman had been there. He said: We have 116,000 of our own men in foreign soil and if we don't pass this torch on to the younger generation, they will be forgotten and that will be a tragedy of epic proportion. I just felt moved in that moment to share that, Speaker.

I also want to thank my colleague, the Member for Labrador West, for his comments. He has made some great comments. I appreciate, any time that we bring in legislation in this House, that there will always be, I guess, an opportunity that we could have gone a little further. I want to say that when we look at labour legislation, lots of things – and I'm relatively new to the department, but I quickly picked up on and coming from a small business background myself, what I was raised in, is we the work that we do, we try and strike that balance between employers and employees.

This was something that folks had long lobbied for. We wanted people who were out on long-term illness, injury or organ

donation – organ donation, pardon me, is a voluntary program but still if somebody feels compelled they want to do that, we want them to be able to take the time to heal and recover and not have to worry about whether the job is there when they get back.

So I just wanted to touch on a couple of points. I thank my colleagues for participating in debate in second reading and I look forward to taking questions in Committee.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

The motion is that Bill 82 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.'

Motion carried.

**CLERK (Hawley George):** A bill, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act. (Bill 82)

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

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 82)

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

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

I move, seconded by the Member for St. John's West, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 82.

**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.'

Motion 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 are now considering Bill 82, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act." (Bill 82)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The hon. the Member for Exploits.

**P. FORSEY:** Yes, we do have a couple, Chair.

Who was consulted in this legislation?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

During the consultation – I don't have the actual list, but it was employers and stakeholders that had an interest in the *Labour Standards Act*. I did mention when I was speaking that folks like the Canada Cancer, Diabetes, Crohn's – even up to last week, and I only came into this department late July, I was still getting emails from those folks asking for those changes.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Did the Federation of Labour raise any concerns about the legislation or have any additional ask?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Certainly everybody that we consulted with, including the Federation of Labour, was largely supportive of this. Even as late as last night, that was one of the questions that I asked to my folks in the department who worked on this longer than me, that there were no concerns that were raised.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Have you consulted with the local business community, and do you have an assessment of how local businesses will be able to implement this?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Yes, everything we do, as I referenced earlier, is about striking a balance between employers and labours. We're, often, always concerned about the impact, in particular some of this stuff, with small- and medium-sized businesses.

What this does really today, Chair, is somebody who might have a long-term illness, a long-term injury, victim of a crime and then there's the reservist piece, may

need to be off work for an extended period of time and what we did was try and align those amendments with the national standards both on the reservist side and what the federal government is doing around the EI side with they give 27 weeks, we added one week, for the waiting period.

By enshrining some of this in the act, it actually provides for continuity for the employers. They're able to plan if somebody is not coming back, if they know a couple of weeks ahead, they won't be back on that date – they have to give a four-week notice to the employer. I had another train of thought that I'm missing but it might come back to me in a moment.

Thank you.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Given that people are now eligible for unpaid leave with protection of their job for the ones who are sick, but what about those who have to provide care for the family member. Has there been any consideration to include caretaker to be eligible for unpaid sick leave?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** That's an excellent question. Actually, there currently is, right now, leave related to critical illness. There were amendments made to the *Labour Standards Act*, I think it was in 2013, that is currently there right now to provide leave for caregivers of individuals with long-term illness or injury; it's in place.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Thank you.

Can you provide the definition of injury or illness?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I don't have that in front of me, but I will endeavor to get it.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Thank you.

The Canadian Armed Forces requires troops to complete several courses to be considered fully trained. Following such initial training through their many courses, one may avail to further their skills or education or advance their rank. Will all optional trainings be included in the skills training or just those required?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** In terms of your first question, I'll say to the Member of Exploits: Definition of long-term illness or injury. That will be determined by a medical practitioner.

So in terms of the reservist, that's one of the things that we're doing in this amendment, we're actually adding training. We're adding optional training. Up until now, a reservist, if they were called to go and serve their country, they obviously would be permitted that leave. But by adding in this amendment, if they decide that they want to do optional training, additional training, hone their skills, you know, we're living in a time of unrest and those people are very valuable and quite committed to their service, we want them to be able to do that and still have protection in knowing that they have a job to come back to.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Would a national emergency in context be defined as any form of domestic employment? For example, the forest fire in Central, the hurricane in Port aux Basques, if those people are deployed there, would they be compensated for that or only in times when emergencies are enacted federally?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I might have missed a little bit of that but I think the Member was asking who determines a national emergency? That would be the federal Government of Canada.

Was that your question?

**P. FORSEY:** Yes.

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

**P. FORSEY:** (Inaudible) clause 22 now, actually, here the bill changes timeline requirement required for an employee providing notice to the employer for military leave from the current 60 days to the 30-day notice.

Was the timeline changed to align itself with forthcoming additions for long-term leave?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I think on the reservist's side it was done to just allow that flexibility for the reservist, recognizing the important work that they do, recognizing that they could be called to serve their country, that they now only have to be working with an employer for three months, as opposed to the earlier six months.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Okay, thank you.

Increases to timeline that the employer must be notified by a primary reservist on unpaid leave, if there are changes in returning date. A two-week period is increasing to four weeks in such cases where the employee does not inform the employer within the prescribed timeline, the employer may defer their return-to-work date up to four weeks, which is up from two weeks.

Why is the timeline increased from two to four?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

To answer the Member's earlier question, basically, the dates that we work with, that we put in place, reservist's leave was amended to harmonize our piece of legislation with what other jurisdictions are doing across the country. When we do a jurisdictional scan, we see a number of provinces that have also already gone down this road: Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario.

The notice from two to four weeks is that if somebody is off, that's to provide a little bit of continuity to the employer as well. So if somebody is off and they're set to come back at a certain date and normally they would give two weeks, but if they know they're not coming back then, we're just requiring that they – sort of leaning to more supportive on the business side because I know you asked earlier about businesses. So thinking about their best interest as well, we just extended it from two to four. Again, looking at what other provinces and territories are doing.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Just a couple of more questions.

What led to the timeline of 27 weeks to be decided for those finding it necessary for unpaid, long-term leave?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

Again, that was just looking at what the federal government was doing and trying to align and harmonize our proposed

amendments. So EI sick benefits are 26 weeks, so we matched that and added one week for a waiting period week.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Why is it that victims of criminal actions may receive up to 104 weeks long term? How was the length of time decided upon this one?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** That's probably not an easy question to answer, but in terms of the 104 weeks, we looked at what some people who have already moved and are a little bit ahead of us in jurisdictions, what they have done. If you're a victim of a crime, you may have come out of that with physical injuries. There's no doubt about it, you're coming out of that with mental health injuries and there's a very holistic – you can be off on a long-term injury with maybe a broken leg or arm, but if you're off as a victim of a crime, there was a recognition that you may certainly need longer term off, I say that to the hon. Member, as you work through that whole process, often PTSD trauma and things like that.

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

**P. FORSEY:** Thank you.

The timeline one must consecutively be employed by an employer to avail of long-term leave is 30 days. What led for this amount of time to be decided upon?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

Again, that pretty much aligns with the 30-consecutive days, similar to other job-protected leaves under the act. It's in the act for 30 days because it's important that before an employee needs to go off for one

of the things that we're talking about in those amendments, that they be there long enough to have some history with the employer in that area.

**CHAIR:** Any further questions for the minister?

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

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

When opening up the act and consulting with the Federation of Labour, they had some additional asks when it came to protections for gig workers and also adding 10 paid sick-day leave. Was this under consideration by the department while drafting these amendments as well because these were all additional asks that were asked of the government at the time?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

What I'll say to my hon. colleague across the way is that re: paid sick leave, we continue to look at this issue and what other jurisdictions are doing. And then I always just revert to my early comments about trying to strike a balance between the needs of the employer and employees.

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

**J. BROWN:** Just an additional question. Under subsection (2), subsection (2) does not apply in cases where long-term injury was due to gross negligence on their part. How is that determined and what would you have to do to prove that in any jurisdiction or under any kind of court setting or anything like that for section 43.43(2)?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I don't have that right in front of me; I'll get that in a moment. Are you referring to how will it be determined? Because a medical practitioner would determine that.

I also want to say in response to your earlier question about considering the more paid sick leaves, those conversations are still continuing between folks in my department right now with labour groups and employers as we look at jurisdictions like BC and Canada and what they are doing. So those conversations are certainly happening in real time.

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

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, and I appreciate that comment.

I'll ask the minister to elaborate for victims of crime offences having time off for that. It is substantially more than people donating organs or facing long-term illness. I know that they're trying to find a balance and stuff there and working through the system, but long-term illnesses can be a significant amount of time. Why wasn't that consideration made more harmonized in that situation?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Again, those decisions, based on the consultations that we carried out with stakeholders, with labour groups and based on some of the things that we've heard around, I guess, the difference of victims of crime, I certainly appreciate the Member's comment that –

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Chair, I'm having a lot of difficulty hearing myself here.

**CHAIR:** So am I.

Order, please!

Can I have some co-operation, please? Let's focus on the debate.

Thank you.

**L. DEMPSTER:** It's really challenging when you're trying to hear the Members and answer their questions in this debate.

**CHAIR:** It is.

**L. DEMPSTER:** I appreciate that long-term illness and injury is not cut and dry either. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention mental illness, which we're seeing more in the workplace now than we ever have.

So I appreciate that can be a long time as well in terms of working back toward recovery, but again, much of this was based on feedback and will be determined going forward as to what category folks fit in by medical practitioners.

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

**P. LANE:** Thank you, Chair.

I'll be supporting the bill. Minister, the act is quite extensive. I'm only seeing a couple of changes here. I'm not saying they're not needed or that they're bad amendments, but there's only a couple of them there.

I'm just wondering, when you did this review, was it specifically someone coming to you to deal with these issues or was it supposed to have been a more fulsome review of the legislation itself, everything in the legislation?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

I appreciate the Member's question.

Those amendments were put in basically with a view of protecting workers who needed to be off sick. That was predominantly – so long-term illness, long-term injury, organ donation – giving someone who may, even though it's voluntary as I mentioned earlier, want to be an organ donor, ensuring that they had the time to sufficiently heal and recover before they went back to work. Having that in place for them. Then, of course, there is the reservist side, but again, consulted with stakeholders on both sides, looked across the country at what other jurisdictions were doing and looked to what the federal government is doing.

Also, a point that I wanted to mention to my colleague from Labrador West – and I had forgotten – was it's important that we note here for *Hansard* that anybody who feels an employer is not respecting the act and the changes that we are proposing, they still have that opportunity, obviously, to file a complaint with the *Labour Standards Act*. I want to mention that.

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

**P. LANE:** I thank the minister for that. I guess, you kind of answered it, I suppose. I'm just wondering, there are other issues that have been raised in this House of Assembly before that are not addressed here today. I know you can go back at any time and change legislation, but I would have thought that if you're doing a review and you're making changes of legislation, then you would look at perhaps other things.

A couple of things, one that came up – I know I've raised it here a few times in the past and I think it was the Loblaws strike that some of these issues kind of came to the forefront and we're talking about people working in the retail sector, grocery stores and places like that. One of those issues that I heard from workers about was the issue of split shifts and so on. This whole idea of an employee gets called in – for

example, you get called in in the morning to work three or four hours and then go home and come back tonight. So your morning is gone at work, your whole day is shot because you've got to go to work in the evening time, then you've got to work in the nighttime.

On top of that, you might work in the morning and you might be scheduled to work for, say, four hours, and two hours into the shift the employer says it's not very busy now; you go home out of it. But they don't get paid their four hours; they only get paid two hours. Come back tonight.

Now, they could come back tonight or work the next night, and maybe they're scheduled to work for four hours, and they've got child care and everything arranged based on that, and all of a sudden the boss looks out and says no, we're really busy; you can't go home. Now you've got to stay for an additional hour or two hours. To which they say: Well, what am I supposed to do with my child, child care or transportation? Well, that's your problem. We're busy. You've got to stay.

So these are the kind of ways that they believe – the people I've talked to, and I believe, I agree with them – that they're really being abused as far as I'm concerned. If you're going to be called in for shifts, the shift should be what the shifts are. If they send them home early, then you should have to pay them. If they're scheduled to come in for four hours, pay them for four hours. If you want them to go home after two hours, no problem, but you're paying them for four anyway. If someone's coming in for a shift, you can't force them to stay. But this is not what's happening. A lot of these retail outlets, they're coming and going and people are just not being treated fairly.

I'm just wondering is that something – I know it's not here in this amendment – that you are aware of? Is that something that is

at least being actively considered for future changes to the legislation?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

The situation that the Member would be describing would be related to the Collective Bargaining Act, I would say to the Member. In comment to are these things that we considered, I want to say to this hon. House, this is not a fulsome review. There was not a fulsome review done at this time. The amendments today are related to job protection. They're in response to what stakeholders were asking for.

I meant to say when I got up and did my opening comments in second reading, I wanted to acknowledge people like Andrea Seale from the Canadian Cancer Society, Maria Campbell from Diabetes Canada. Those are folks that really, really wanted to see this job protection, protecting sick employees.

I appreciate the Member's comments from Mount Pearl - Southlands, but not really relevant to the amendments here today, Chair, I would say.

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

**P. LANE:** Thank you, Minister, for that.

I would say that collective bargaining would come into play with unionized workforces, which some are, but there's also grocery chains and retail chains, big chains, that they're not unionized. So this actual act would apply to them.

I appreciate that's not specifically what we're dealing with today, but I wanted to take this opportunity to get it on the floor once again, because employees continue to be, I feel, abused by their employer in the way they're being treated with these split

shifts and come in and go home when I tell you and all this stuff. It's just not fair to them and to their families.

The other point, I just wanted to raise again for the record, is the issue of overtime, which is currently, I believe, time and a half the minimum wage. So if I have a job, I'm working, I get \$20 an hour; my employer only has to pay me, I think, \$22.50 for overtime which would be time and a half, if it's \$15, the minimum wage; whereas, arguably, if you're making \$20 an hour, overtime should be \$30 an hour. That's something else that I've had lots of employees reach out to me about that issue. Again, I'm just asking – I know it's not here – is that under consideration by the department?

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

Before I recognize the minister, I just want to make a comment on relevance, I'm allowing it because it's still within the context of the bill, but I take everybody's point that we're on specific parts of it.

The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Yes, in terms of the relevance side, yes, the Member did acknowledge it wasn't relevant.

What I want to say to the Member is that, if he has constituents that he represents that feel they're in an unfair working condition, by all means, encourage them to file a complaint with Labour Standards. They certainly have the option to do that.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**P. LANE:** I thank the minister for the response. That will conclude my questioning

on it. I just wanted to get it on the floor because it is an issue.

I would say, though, to the minister, in terms of Labour Standards, they can only enforce the act as it exists. So if the act says overtime is time and a half the minimum wage, then Labour Standards is going to say, if you got paid \$22.50 an hour, even though you make \$20 an hour, you're getting your time and a half the minimum wage. There's nothing we can do about it. So Labour Standards is not going to help that situation. The only way the situation gets fixed, if the will is there to fix it, would be to say if you're paid \$20 an hour, then if you're working overtime, you're going to be paid \$30 an hour. You're going to get time and a half your regular wage, not time and a half the minimum wage.

I just make that as a comment more than a question. I thank the minister for answering my questions and I, again, will support the bill.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Labour.

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

Just in response to the comment, I would just reiterate, striking the balance between employers and employees in terms of the act, we are continuing to review. Just in my short time in the department, in the first two or three weeks, you feel like you've met with every group relevant to your department, because everybody reaches out when a new minister comes into a department. So I've been sitting with folks from the Board of Trade, I've been sitting with folks from the Federation of Labour, many groups out in community and the groups are always opposing. The job, as the Minister Responsible for Labour and my folks, is always trying to strike that balance.

I want to thank everyone for their comments here and their questions on those proposed amendments.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

Any further speakers?

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 34 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 34 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 34 carried.

**CLERK:** Clause 35.

**CHAIR:** Clause 35.

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

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

Chair, I move the following amendment: That clause 35 of the bill be amended by adding immediately after the proposed 43.45(4) the following: 43.46(1) After 30 consecutive days of employment with an employer, an employee, for personal illness

or injury, is entitled, in each calendar year, to paid leave for up to 10 days;

(2) An employer must pay an employee who takes leave under subsection (1) an amount in money equal to at least the amount calculated by multiplying the period of the leave and the average day's pay, where the average day's pay is determined by the formula: amount paid/days worked where "amount paid" is the amount paid or payable to the employee for work that is done during and wages that are earned within the 30 calendar day period preceding the leave, including vacation pay that is paid or payable for any days of vacation taken within that period, less any amounts paid or payable for overtime; and "days worked" is the number of days the employee worked or earned wages within that 30 calendar day period.

This is seconded by the Member for St. John's Centre.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

We will recess to consider the proposed amendment.

Thank you.

### **Recess**

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

The Committee of the Whole have reviewed the proposed amendment and we find that it is beyond the scope of Bill 82. Therefore, it is not in order.

Shall clause 35 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Clause 35 is carried.

On motion, clause 35 carried.

**CLERK:** Clauses 36 to 41 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 36 to 41 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clauses 36 through 41 carried.

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

**CHAIR:** Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act. (Bill 82)

**CHAIR:** Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

The title has carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report Bill 82 carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

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

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

I know he likes that title.

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

It helps. Thank you.

I move the Committee rise and report Bill 82 passed without amendment. It is seconded by the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

**CHAIR:** It is moved that this Committee rise and report Bill 82.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

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

**SPEAKER (Gambin-Walsh):** The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

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

Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters referred to them and have directed me to report Bill 82 carried without amendment.

**SPEAKER:** The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to report Bill 82 passed without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

**J. HAGGIE:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

When shall the bill be read a third time?

**J. HAGGIE:** Tomorrow.

**SPEAKER:** Tomorrow.

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

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

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

I call from the Order Paper, Order 9, second reading of Bill 64, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics.

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

**J. HAGGIE:** I'm acting in all sorts of strange places today.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for Corner Brook, that Bill 64, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics, be read a second time.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that Bill 64 entitled, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, “An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics.” (Bill 64)

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

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

Speaker, I’m pleased to get up today to introduce Bill 64. It’s An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics. There has been a lot of work going on in the background and sometimes we don’t acknowledge the amount of work that we see going on behind the scenes. I’d like to give a shout-out to the Department of Health and Community Services, the Health Research Ethics Authority and the research community in general in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As the House is aware, the topic of health research which involves human participants is regulated by the *Health Research Ethics Authority Act*, which was proclaimed initially 13 years ago. That act established the Health Research Ethics Authority, whose mandate was to ensure that all health research involving human participants within the province is conducted in an ethical manner, and to enhance public awareness of the ethical dimension of health research involving human subjects.

That act requires that all health research involving human participants conducted in the province has to be reviewed and approved by the Health Research Ethics Board, or an approved research ethics body.

In 2019, Speaker, the authority commissioned an external review of the health research ethics process. The review made several recommendations to improve the Research Ethics Board, review timelines and processes, as well as to recommend improved resources, some changes to workload governance and accountability.

The authority’s board of directors then commissioned, on the basis of that, a legislative review of the act and, in 2019, the Department of Health and Community Services, in turn, commissioned a Working Group to assess the recommendations of the authority’s legislative review.

Upon review of the report, the Working Group then determined that more consultation with stakeholders was required. In February of 2023, those consultations were held. It included the Research Ethics Authority, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, Eastern Health, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and individual members actively involved in research in health in this province.

The result of that is this: Bill 64. It repeals and replaces the old *Health Research Ethics Authority Act* with a *Health Research Ethics Act* – slightly shorter title. The purpose of the bill, the need for it, is to update language in the act; it provides more flexibility for emerging research, including new methodologies and areas of studies; updates to the language in the act will reflect new drafting conventions – they’ve changed a lot in that last 13 years; it aligns the terminology in the act with a group called the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. It’s a long title, but basically this is a group of three national research bodies who have combined to produce guidelines for the ethical conduct of research involving humans and/or human biological materials in Canada. It is the gold standard and the foundation piece for health research and ethics in this country.

The act will also change reference from Health Research Ethics Board, simply to Research Ethics Board. This is a sensible thing because you can hear when I introduce the bill, there’s a lot of confusion about titles between the name and that of the Health Research Ethics Authority. This attempts to inject what clarity can be. There

was language in the current act which needed correcting in miscellaneous spots.

So starting at the top with governance, the board of directors will be changed. It adds two public representatives to the board of directors. It also clarifies that the chairperson of the Research Ethics Board is a non-voting director on the authority's board of directors.

The two additional public representatives have been added because the size currently of the authority's board is not sufficient to allow it to meet quorum and, therefore, render decisions as frequently as the community want. Additional representatives also give the opportunity for increasing diversity of individuals on the board so it is more representative of the citizens of this province than is currently perhaps the case.

The bill will also make changes to the authority's board of directors by providing that only the directors that are appointed to represent the public interest are subject to maximum appointment terms of three years. Although they will be eligible for a total period of no longer than nine – so they can be reappointed three times. This assists in longevity and continuity and, also, keeping the board of directors positions filled.

The bill also clarifies the responsibilities of the authority itself. They redefine the powers of the authority to better reflect its current role, which is to oversee an ethics review process and to also enhance researchers' awareness of ethical standards, rather than actual enforcement activity. It also establishes that the approved ethics research bodies must satisfy criteria established by the authority and still requires that the research ethics bodies it references be not-for-profit. It also clarifies that audits of the authority are to be performed by the Auditor General, in accordance with section 19 of the *Auditor General Act*, instead of annually by an auditor appointed by the authority itself.

The next layer of governance is that of the Research Ethics Board. That will be changed to require appointments to the REB to consider persons who represent gender diversity and, also, the appointment of a member who is knowledgeable in matters related to privacy. Those were areas of skills and views that were regarded as missing. It will then allow the Research Ethics Board members themselves to select a chairperson to represent them on the authority's board. This would be the non-voting director I've already mentioned. Currently, the authority actually appoints the chair of the Research Ethics Board. This was felt to better reflect current governance practices.

It will also allow the Research Ethics Board or an approved research ethics body to conduct summary reviews or accept ethical approval from not-for-profit boards or bodies in other jurisdictions, subject to criteria established by the authority. This means that the REB here does not have to redo work that's done by a legitimate, well-recognized ethics body in another jurisdiction. It simply has to satisfy themselves that that body is legitimate.

It requires Research Ethics Board also to appoint its committees in accordance with regulations and it also defines a category of minimal risk health research, which would be considered in the province without obtaining approval of the REB or a research ethics body in this province.

For this to apply, it would be minimal risk health research, but it has to be approved by somebody of standing somewhere in the country. So it would be a body prescribed in regulations or, alternatively, which satisfies our criteria which exists in, say, Alberta or Ontario.

Bill 64 will also clarify provisions in the act around processes. So it will clarify that the approval of the REB or another research body is required with regard to substantive changes in a research project but not

necessarily minor ones. It will also recognize that the principal investigator on a trial may not actually be the keeper of the records required for audits and monitoring, may not actually have access to them on the premises where they're stored. This has been an issue because of the way some trials are organized logistically.

They will also specify that the decisions of the authority are to be made on a majority vote and it will broaden the category of persons in the authority who are protected from liability by operating in good faith.

It will also provide that the authority shall refer completed applications to the REB in accordance with regulations and add new specific regulation-making authority, because the act at the moment is pretty broad and general authority really doesn't meet the current drafting standards.

It also specifies that failure to comply with the regulations or a determination or direction of the REB constitutes an offence under this act. It will specify that the authority can charge an application fee for an assessment, and it also removes the requirement for the authority to consult with a minister, Memorial and NLHS when appointing appeal panels. This is to speed the process up and make it more flexible.

It also removes the requirement for the minister to appoint an advisory committee, instead, making it an advisory committee optional on a decision of the authority.

It amends the reconsideration and appeals process. Again, in line with this tri-council policy statement I've referenced earlier on. Under the current act, applicants do have recourse to an appeal without having to go through the reconsideration process. The tri-council feels that that reconsideration is important as a step before going to an appeal.

In summary, Speaker, the bill modernizes the legislation to be more in line with current

practices and ensures that research ethics review practices in the province are in line with national guidelines. It will help facilitate research. It is what the bodies have been asking for and it will improve timelines considerably; a problem, certainly, that was an issue some six or eight years ago. It also ensures that research will happen in an ethical manner that protects the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

In today's health care context, improved research is crucial to generating opportunities for breakthroughs and, thus, improving health outcomes for our residents. With this bill, I think the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians can feel assured that this innovative province remains at the forefront of health research and so does this act.

So I would suggest that the Members of this House support this bill and I would be happy to listen to debate and look forward to Committee.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I'm not going to be near as long as the minister just was. I said to my colleagues, and as you know, I don't hold much back, but it's very dry legislation and I've got a feeling anyone that happens to be watching or listening to this does not have the faintest – it would take a lot of reading and research.

So the minister had a lot of sheets he read, and I do respect the good staff the Department of Health and Community Services that did a great job of writing it up. Anyway, I'll leave it there. I've got a lot shorter response to it. I will have questions in Committee and, yes, here we are.

Speaker, this bill will replace, as we said, *Health Research Ethics Authority Act* with the *Health Research Ethics Act* which makes sense as it is less wordy and easier to say.

The bill is replacement legislation to govern the health research in the province. With it, makes the following changes to the Health Research Ethics Authority: increasing number of directors – and we have questions in Committees around a lot of this stuff, of course – ensures that at least one member is knowledgeable in privacy; increase the independence of the Research Ethics Authority; clarifies responsibilities; reduces red tape, which is something that we're about, for health research where the proposed research has been approved in other provinces; and allows minimal risk health research to be conducted without specific approval.

We believe in health research, but there must be a balance between science and privacy. We must have regulatory framework that encourages research but also protects the individual. Proper health and research include ensuring participants have full and informed consent, including knowledge about their personal information will be used, possible negative consequences to the participants.

Proper health research also puts the proper framework for how information is shared and stored. This legislation is important because it outlines authority that governs health research. How the body is structured will have direct impact on what research can be carried out in the province.

As I said, we have questions for Committee. I'm not going to say any more than that because, if not, I'll go even dryer than what the minister just went. So I'll leave it at that and I'll wait for Committee to have some further debate.

Thank you very much.

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

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

For the most part, like I said, it is a lot of housekeeping in a lot of stuff there, but there is just one thing I want to mention here now and I'll have more questions in Committee about it.

It's just under the minimal risk health research, just under clause 11. It's more for Committee but I just wanted to bring it up that, some of the stuff going around the application process and how will that mesh in with other jurisdictions, the rationale behind clause 11 and how it is written and, you know, the authority with the minister and that.

So I do have some questions around that and I'll ask them in Committee, but I just wanted to give a heads up there now.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER:** Seeing no further Members, if the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs speaks now, he shall close debate.

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

I'm interested to hear what the questions are. Yes, it is dry, but this is a crucial piece of legislation. We listened to the research community and we have acted on their concerns.

For those of you who sat in the House in 2018 and 2017, this was a considerable topic of debate and exercised a lot of the Members opposite over Question Period about processes and these kind of things.

So it is a very focused piece of legislation, but it's entirely consistent with national standards. I would be happy to entertain questions from the Members opposite in the hope that we can all receive a consensus at

the end of this and move forward with the bill.

Thank you very much.

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

The motion is that Bill 64 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.'

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics. (Bill 64)

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

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 64)

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, I move that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 64, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics.

**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 are now considering Bill 64, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics.

A bill, "An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics." (Bill 64)

**CLERK:** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

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

Minister, who was consulted on these changes? I guess a double question: How do these changes compare with the governance of health research in other provinces?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Okay, the list: Memorial University; researches in the community, what were then the regional health authorities; NL Centre for Health Information, which are now all rolled into NLHS; we spoke to community representatives; Indigenous communities; government departments; OIPC; industry

rep; businesses. In addition to that, there were 15 interviews conducted with a total of 37 key stakeholders.

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

**CHAIR:** Order, please!

**J. HAGGIE:** Pretty wide consultation. We are leading the country. We are the only jurisdiction, and have been since 2011, that actually has health research ethics enshrined in statute. They all do it in policy but the basis is the same. It is the tri-council statement. The difference is we have ours in law and they have theirs in policy.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Minister, when it comes to that, are the directors for the Health Research Ethics Authority appointed through the public appointment process?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** One moment, I think these are level two so I think the short answer is yes. If that's any different, I'll let you know, but that's my understanding.

**B. PETTEN:** Okay.

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

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

There's an appointment made in consultation with the president of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. What if the president and minister do not agree on that person?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** That's a subject of a negotiation. Quite frankly, in the past, there

have not been an awful lot of people rushing to sit on this board.

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

**B. PETTEN:** I can see that, I guess, yeah.

Under clause 5, Chair, authorities, bylaws and responsibilities: Minister, can you give some examples of the types of bylaws the authority can enact?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Certainly, it's essentially to put in place processes and timelines. If the Member opposite remembers, in 2018, there was a legal action because the timelines were not met. So we've done two things: one is we've beefed up their resources, but the other thing is that the bylaws will specify timelines for an REB to return a decision and those kind of things. So that's process.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Thank you.

Under the ethics board composition, the Research Ethics Board must be not less than 10 members. How many will there be? Is that where you're going to seven?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Yes, I think I would like an odd number and, quite frankly, again, it is difficult to populate this board, which is why we have picked a number whereby some of them will be available for meetings more frequently than has been the case in the past.

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

**B. PETTEN:** So it will probably be a larger number, but just an odd number to make sure you've got quorum, correct?

The key skill sets of these members are outlined. Who determined these skill sets? How did they arrive at that?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** The authority to appoint the board will rest with the Health Research Ethics Authority.

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

**B. PETTEN:** And they'll determine the skill sets required?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** It could vary from one particular application to another. Projects differ in their scope: you may need a genomics expert for one; you may need an oncologist for another. So you need to have some choice.

**B. PETTEN:** Okay.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Under the approval for other research ethics bodies, can you give some examples, Minister, of other research bodies that meet this criteria?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Yes, essentially, the requirements would be that they are Canadian, that they are not-for-profit and they are affiliated with either an academic health sciences centre or a university. Trillium in Ontario have research ethics boards and most jurisdictions have at least

one set up at a provincial level. Some do them on a more localized level. I'm trying to remember what Alberta did but they keep changing so I'm not sure where they're up to at the moment.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Under clause 11, Minimal risk health research: Minister, can you give an example of the minimal risk health research project that was approved elsewhere and thus would not require approval here?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Municipal And Provincial Affairs.

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you.

Firstly, they would need to go through a checklist by the Research Ethics Board, but minimal risk, the one I would use is like the start of my Ph.D. which was a questionnaire. The harm piece is minimal by filling in a questionnaire; yet, that, because it's medical and it's health related, would require, by our legislation and still does at the moment, an ethics approval.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Interesting.

Clause 13, Monitoring research projects: How will participants of research be notified if any adverse effects are determined throughout the research process?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Municipal And Provincial Affairs.

**J. HAGGIE:** It's an iterative process. I mean, the researchers themselves, depending on the nature of the study, would actually have access to the data and, if not, then, particularly in drug trials where they are what's called blinded, so nobody knows who's getting what, the codes are broken at certain periods and so the researchers

themselves will become aware of it. The Research Ethics Board will have a monitoring role, as well, and that would be an iterative process that would be (inaudible) over the course, of say, a drug trial.

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

**B. PETTEN:** So to be clear, we would have regular correspondence with the participants. They would not be notified if anything were of concern.

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Municipal And Provincial Affairs.

**J. HAGGIE:** You're right. I mean, it depends, the exact nature of the discussion and the frequency would depend on the nature of the trial and the nature of the material being studied, but, yes, the short answer is that both parties would be in touch with each other.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Reimbursement of expenses, clause 26: Minister, can you outline how much the expenses cost and is there any estimate for reimbursement per member?

**CHAIR:** The hon. the Minister of Municipal And Provincial Affairs.

**J. HAGGIE:** That would be, I think, a bylaws decision for the authority. I will check and find out what the reimbursement would be for the authority board.

**CHAIR:** Any further questions?

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

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

Under clause 11, for the engage in minimal risk health research, will there be a definition in the regulation, or should there

be a definition in the legislation on what is minimal risk health research? Like you said in your time in health, a questionnaire was considered that. Is there a broader definition of that? Because where the minister could put in a regulation that could bypass some of the other application process, it could almost possibly create a bit of a loophole on getting through, like, consequentially?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Okay.

Under (j) in the definitions: "Minimal risk health research' means health research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research are no greater than those encountered by human participants involved in the health research in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the research." It's a long-winded way of saying it's a relative harms thing.

There would be an opportunity for the REB to say well this doesn't fit our definition of minimal risk health research. Again, the foundation for this is the tri-council piece as well. But that's the generally accepted definition used in policy across the country.

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

**J. BROWN:** Yes, and I understand that part. But I mean, like, a questionnaire is another thing, and we're just wondering because in the section, it almost creates a possible hole where you can go through the ethics body, but you can also have the minister prescribed in that, you know, a group or this project could kind of bypass it a little bit. We're wondering, just some reassurance that it is going to be pretty tight in the sense that people are protected, information is protected and that.

We just want to make sure because it kind of creates a little bit of a conundrum of

things that could possibly bypass the actual – under section 11(1)(a) and (b), some sort of organization would need to be prescribed it versus a normal application process to conduct such research.

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you.

The bottom line is the authority is the oversight of the board and the board is the oversight and determinant of what is inserted in this definition. A body prescribed by the regulations is one that fulfills the same criteria that we're using, which is Canadian, it's not-for-profit, and it uses the tri-council statement, TCPS 2, as its basis.

So some of these can be quite abstruse. But, I mean, for example, if you wanted to do a piece of research on, say, a skin tumour, for example, that skin tumour would be removed anyway and the risk of participating in the research – because what happened to it would happen in the lab, would be no different as to whether or not you were in the trial or not in the trial. The thing is because it uses human biological tissue, it has to get ethics approval, but it would be regarded as minimal risk under these definitions.

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

**J. BROWN:** Under that same clause, would the authority have the right to veto the minister's regulation regarding that particular clause if there's something there? Would they be able to say, what was prescribed in regulation is kind of not matching here? Would the authority be able to say no, that's a little bit too much?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** The minister and the board making regulations cannot make regulations

if this act is passed that is contrary to the intent of the act. I think that's called acting illegally or contrary to regulations and, as minister, I wouldn't want to find myself in that position.

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

**J. BROWN:** Just for clarification because the minister shall consult with the authority before making regulations referred to in the paragraph, because there's a way but there's also a way through on the other side with the regulations. So we're just making sure that there's no loophole there if a group or an organization or someone doing research can kind of work around that would be questionable and that's what we're just trying to make sure that the loophole actually isn't there.

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

**J. HAGGIE:** I mean this is a consultation. It's not a veto. It's a discussion. Whilst I understand your concerns, I think they are probably more theoretical than practical. As I say, the default is to look at the tri-council, TCPS 2 guidelines and, quite frankly, I don't envisage a scenario whereby they're offside with the board and/or the minister.

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

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

I have one question, Minister. It's clause 13(1): "The research ethics board or research ethics body that approved the health project, (a) shall monitor the research activities of persons engaged ...." Although (b) says "may conduct a review ...."

Yesterday we were in the House when the Member for Corner Brook brought forward his Bill 65, "may" and "shall" was certainly two different things. So why would "may"

and “shall” be used here rather not both having “shall”?

Under (b) you have record keeping, research methodology, conduct towards human participants, but it’s listed as “may.” Could you explain why, please?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you.

I think the standard is that shall monitor the research. If you create a requirement every time, regardless that you have to look at the record-keeping or conduct, the facts of the case are that might be onerous. But again, the review could look at other things.

The facts of the case are that each of those episodes there, record-keeping, research methodology and so on, they actually have to be stipulated in the research protocol to actually get it through in the first place. If the research strays offside with the protocol that they submitted with these criteria and was approved, then the board can pull it.

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

**J. WALL:** Thank you, Minister.

We all know the importance of good record-keeping. My thought initially went to it “shall” conduct a review, not “may.” That’s the point I’m trying to make with respect to what we have here. And, of course, going on with conduct towards human participants and research relating to health projects, I firmly believe that should be “shall.” But I look forward to your answer on that as well.

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

**J. HAGGIE:** The thing is they’ve got to monitor it, but if the research is going smoothly and they are conducting themselves appropriately towards human

participants, you wouldn’t necessarily need to review it. If the monitoring, which you shall do, produces a problem, (b) gives them the authority to decide to dig further.

**CHAIR:** Any 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 36 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 36 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 36 carried.

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

**CHAIR:** Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act Respecting Health Research Ethics. (Bill 64)

**CHAIR:** Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report Bill 64 carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

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

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

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

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 64 carried without amendment.

**CHAIR:** It is moved that this Committee do rise and report Bill 64 carried without amendment.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER (Gambin Walsh):** The hon. the Member for Lake Melville and Chair of Committee of the Whole.

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

The Committee of the Whole reports that they have directed to me to report to this House that Bill 64 has been carried without amendment.

Thank you.

**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 64 without amendment.

When shall the report be received? Now?

**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. the Deputy Government House Leader.

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you.

Speaker, I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that this House do now stand in recess.

**SPEAKER:** In accordance with paragraph 9(1)(b) of the *Standing Orders*, the House is in recess until 2 this afternoon.

### Recess

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

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

Admit strangers.

In the public gallery today, I would like to welcome public service employees and their Grade 9 children visiting us this afternoon as part of the national Take Our Kids to Work Day.

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

### Statements by Members

**SPEAKER:** Today, we will hear Members' statements from the hon. Members for the Districts of Humber - Bay of Islands, Labrador West, Lake Melville and Mount Pearl North.

The hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

**E. JOYCE:** Speaker,

Heroes should be recognized for their valour and unselfish acts to help others. It has been brought to my attention about a heroic act by Edward MacDonald of Frenchman's Cove in 1961, which has surfaced through an archival clip.

Three men and one boy were crossing from Woods Island to Benoit's Cove in a boat loaded with lumber and the boat became swamped. The young boy, Howard Hynes, was placed on the lumber while the three men, Albert Hynes, William Hickey and Stephen Hickey, were clinging to the sinking boat. Mr. MacDonald noticed this and sprang into action to save the three men and the young boy, which was not an easy

and safe task, taking people aboard an open dory sinking. He put his own life and safety at risk to save these four individuals.

Mr. McDonald rarely spoke about his heroism, but I want to ensure the family that his heroic deed is to be commended. The MacDonald family must be proud of their dad and we commend his bravery.

I ask all Members to join me in recognizing this act of bravery, and on behalf of the MacDonald family, your dad was a true hero.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

I rise today to acknowledge and thank those who helped the constituents of Labrador West in their time of need this past July. We are thankful to be back in our community and as we begin to reflect on that time, we have many people to thank.

Thank you to the essential workers, the volunteers who stayed behind to help the constituents of Labrador City and Wabush, the individuals providing health care, emergency services, provided essentials to the community of Wabush and looked after family pets.

Thank you to Churchill Falls, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and surrounding communities for opening up your communities and providing shelter to many constituents of Labrador City. We'll never forget the hospitality and the enormous help you gave to both Labrador City and Churchill Falls while they were evacuated from their communities.

Lastly, thank you to the first responders, the forest firefighters, for keeping our

community safe. The countless hours helping communities such as ours is remarkable. Thank you for your efforts.

I encourage all Members in this hon. House to join me in thanking everyone who helped Labrador West in its time of need during the forest fires in July.

Thank you.

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

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

**P. TRIMPER:** I have to add that we didn't coordinate this, but it's good to hear from the Member.

Speaker, today, I salute the people of Lake Melville and their response to several serious emergencies in 2024.

Individuals, organizations, businesses and communities in my district faced and overcame great adversity. With each event, Happy Valley-Goose Bay established its emergency operations centre to coordinate the many stakeholders and support those in harms way.

On the 19th of April, a fire on the north side of the town caused a local evacuation and closure of the airport that interrupted trans-Atlantic traffic. On the 19th of June, a forest fire near Churchill Falls caused the evacuation of everyone except essential personnel. On the 25th of June, the fire jumped the Churchill River, causing the complete evacuation of Churchill Falls. On the 12th of July, another forest fire near Labrador City forced the largest evacuation in the history of our province.

Most of the 7,000-plus residents went east, staying for several days in Churchill Falls, who were glad to reciprocate, or in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The YMCA, SPCA, churches, schools, 5 Wing and individual homes were ready to help. Host

communities swelled on each occasion to care for our Labrador neighbours. The many new friendships that have been forged are the true legacy of this challenging year.

Well done, Lake Melville.

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

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

**L. STOYLES:** Speaker, on Sunday, October 27, 2024, I had the pleasure of presenting 17, 75th anniversary medals to the people in my District of Mount Pearl North.

The people receiving these medals have contributed to the community in many different ways. Some have volunteered with different groups and organizations, while others have given time and their service, which has made a tremendous difference on our community while making our lives better.

I would like to acknowledge the following people: Bronda Aylward, Steve Best, Jim Bulger, Sarah and George Chafe, Tracey Dwyer, Peter and Patricia Furlong, Barbara Garland, Scott Hillyer, Sharon King, Gus Larkin, Gary Martin, Neil McLeod, Basil Meaney, Nancy Noseworthy, Patrick O'Keefe senior, Roger Learning and Rosalind Pratt.

Speaker, I ask all Members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating these individuals for their contribution to our community.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Statements by Ministers

### **Statements by Ministers**

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

**K. HOWELL:** Speaker, I rise in this hon. House to highlight the resources available and initiatives under way to commemorate Confederation 75 within the K-12 education system.

Our government has a cultural strategy for K-12 education in Newfoundland and Labrador titled Cultural Connections. This initiative aims to increase the presence of cultural content in the school curriculum and foster links between the arts and school communities. To enhance this strategy, and in support of Confederation 75, additional resources are available to educators through the K-12 professional learning platform.

Lessons are available in English and French and cover a range of topics and titles such as Canada A-to-Z, More Alike than Different, The Province in Confederation and Historical Exploration of Confederation.

Speaker, to complement the 75th anniversary of Confederation this House of Assembly is offering a professional development opportunity for educators on democracy, governance and citizenship.

Furthermore, in partnership with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation, Confederation 75 educational resource packages are being offered to schools and scholarships will be presented to 75 Grade 12 students in the province.

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

**K. HOWELL:** Speaker, all K-to-12 students will enhance their understanding of Newfoundland and Labrador's vibrant history and its path before, during and since Confederation. I encourage all K-to-12 educators to take advantage of these insightful resources and opportunities.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

**P. DINN:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member for a copy of her statement.

I do want to say that my colleagues on this side of the House certainly appreciate the significance of Confederation 75. However, we're shocked and appalled that this is the priority that's being announced today on the K-to-12 school system.

Daily, we hear complaints on violence and bullying in our schools, and there has not been a peep from the minister nor this Liberal government on this. In fact, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has called out the failure of this leadership in the Department of Education and actually called it – and I quote – non-existent.

Speaker, teachers, students, families and others are tired of empty promises, photo ops and studies without substantial improvement in the school system. We have had the Premier's task force, Child and Youth Advocate reports, PISA reports, the teacher allocation reports and now we wait for the Education Accord. How many more studies of problems facing our school system is this government going to wait for before they act?

Speaker, it is time for leadership, it's time for action and it's time for better.

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

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

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

Speaker, like Education Accord NL, this is yet another distraction from the real issues facing our school system. What is the use of pumping out curriculum resources and encouraging all teachers from K to-12 to

take advantage of them if government hasn't addressed teacher allocations, violence in the classroom, resourcing for EAL and student supports?

If the minister and this government wishes to truly commemorate Confederation 75 in a meaningful way, address those long-standing issues for both our students and our teachers. Do that.

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

**SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board and Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission.

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

I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Public Service Commission.

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

**S. COADY:** I'm pleased to recognize the significant contribution to the protection of merit in our province, through recruitment practices that are fair, equitable and transparent.

The Public Service Commission is responsible for many crucial programs and initiatives that help our government operate every day – from training and development to employee safety and wellness initiatives and hiring of staff for core government departments.

So far this year, more than 15,000 courses have been completed through our learning and development programs. Our ergonomics team has performed more than 150 ergonomic assessments, which contributes to the health and safety of our employees.

Today, the Public Service Commission has a head start on recruiting the next generation of public service employees. They've invited employees with children in Grade 9 to visit the House of Assembly as part of the national Take Our Kids to Work Day, and we welcome these employees and students here today.

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

**S. COADY:** Thank you to the Public Service Commission and its dedicated employees for their service to the province over the past 50 years. I'm proud to be part of their journey as they continue to build a strong and professional workforce, while supporting the well-being of every member of the public service.

Thank you.

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

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

**L. PADDOCK:** Speaker, I thank the minister for advance copy of her statement.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Official Opposition, I want to thank the hard-working and diligent public service workers who come to work each and every day in an effort to make our province a better place to live.

I thank the Public Service Commission for their administration of the merit-based principle and for promoting the public service as a respectable career. We must also remember the principle of impartiality for our public service.

Looking up, I also want to welcome the students who are visiting us.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** I hope that you find your experience enlightening and that you gain a

greater understanding of all the moving parts that keep our democracy running.

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

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

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

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

We also commend the work and devotion of our Public Service Commission; their work is critical. But if we're going to build a strong public service, we're going to have to do better with recruitment of more staff and keeping the ones that we have here.

That begins with reforms to the Job Evaluation System so workers feel like they're getting fair pay for the hard work they put in. This also means investments in our universities and colleges to make sure Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have every opportunity to get trained right here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

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

While the Premier was reannouncing a replacement for St. Clare's, the NLMA has confirmed the continued erosion of primary health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador saying, the crisis over access to

doctors in rural areas is – quote – getting even worse.

Speaker, why is health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador not a priority for this government?

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

**A. FUREY:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for the question.

Of course health care is important to every Newfoundlander and Labradorian, regardless of where they live.

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

**A. FUREY:** That's why we embarked with multiple stakeholders on a transformational document called the Health Accord, which will take time.

Of course, we all want this done immediately, but it is going to take several years to ensure and recreate a new system that meets the modern demands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians where they live, Madam Speaker. We have taken extraordinary steps to try to recruit and retain doctors in rural and remote areas in the province, including incentive bonuses of up to \$650,000. That's not the pay; that's an incentive to sign up to rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, the Health Accord is a good document. The problem is –

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

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**T. WAKEHAM:** The problem is the execution of the Health Accord.

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

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**T. WAKEHAM:** That's the problem. It's the execution of the accord.

So I ask the Premier –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The Member who is identified is the only Member who can speak.

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

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

So I ask the Premier: How does he respond to Dr. Major when says – quote – if they don't change the way things are, we will see a continued erosion where family physicians leave this province to go elsewhere to work?

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

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

Of course we work closely with the NLMA and we respect their opinion. In fact, they were a great source of input into the Health Accord and the evolution of different payment schemes to meet the demands of family doctors in a modern environment. They have multiple options in front of them now, all which they brought to us and all that we acted on for them.

We'll continue to make sure that there are options available to them, including being part of Family Care Teams, which was a new concept a few years ago. It's working in

the communities. We'll continue to grow on it. We'll continue to build them and we'll continue to execute.

We know what the Member opposite did when he was in a leadership role, a definitive leadership role: Instead of taking leadership, he decided to cut nurses and close clinics.

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

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

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**T. WAKEHAM:** Deflect, deflect, deflect.

The people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador deserve better than that and we will give them better than that.

To the Premier's comments about the doctors being involved, Dr. Major also said: The province imposed the collaborative care model on the province without consulting with health care providers. That's not what the Premier just said.

Speaker, Dr. Major confirmed that 30 per cent of residents do not have access to a family doctor. The NLMA have been waiting since 2018 for a human resource plan.

Why is the government part of the problem and not part of the solution?

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

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

If you go back to 2016 –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you.

If you go back to 2016, we were engaged with the NLMA about a patient medical home. This then changed into a primary care team and then became a collaborative care team. Nothing was imposed, Madam Speaker. Indeed, I have here, and happy to table it, a document from the NLMA website from the 8th of December, which is an affiliation agreement between the NLMA and NLHS and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to populate these teams with physicians.

We continue to work and our results, with the incentives, are bearing fruit. I'm happy to elaborate on that when the Member gets up again.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, Dr. Major also confirmed: Physicians feel threatened and intimidated to speak out for fear of losing their job and privileges.

Is that what health care has come to in Newfoundland and Labrador?

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

**A. FUREY:** Certainly, that's unacceptable if that's happening anywhere, that's not anything that I would endorse here or anybody in our government. If there are complaints, I suggest that those physicians bring them forward. We want to hear their voices. We want to make sure that we're enacting policies that work for them.

I can't comment on specifics. I'm not sure if the Member opposite has specifics, but I

can tell you that won't be stood for. People deserve to have their voices heard.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Here again, these are the words of the NLMA and the president of the NLMA.

Speaker, my office continues to hear the horror stories of residents trying to get access to ambulance services in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Specifically, we have been told that under the new system decisions are being made that are – quote – centrally controlled and micromanaged.

I'm aware of one senior who was discharged from a hospital at 8:30 a.m. but was not actually transported back to her nursing home until 10:30 p.m., some 14 hours later, despite that fact that the ambulance and the paramedics were parked outside the front door. This is how we have transformed ambulance services. These are routine transfers.

**SPEAKER:** Question, please.

**T. WAKEHAM:** They need to be dealt with at the local level.

I ask again: Why is this good enough?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

In line with the Health Accord, we are in the process of streamlining ambulance services. It is true, there is a central medical dispatch. This determines priorities for emergency calls and for elective transfers to home. There is a parallel system.

If the Member opposite has a particular example like that, as an MHA, he should bring that to me with an MCP number and consent and I will look into it. If he doesn't, he's not doing his job.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, if the system wasn't broken, I wouldn't have to worry about hearing these stories.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** I wouldn't have to bring them if the system was implemented properly.

Speaker, I'm also aware of ambulances being routinely diverted to the Northeast Avalon from outlying areas because of constant shortages and red alerts; however, this strips away coverage from rural areas, often for long periods of time.

Again I ask: Why are we deliberately jeopardizing health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador?

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

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

The Member opposite chooses to pick at one aspect of what he's called dynamic dispatching. When an ambulance is on the run, it doesn't sit in a depot, it's out there running, working. What happens is the nearest ambulance is called to a priority call, a 911 call and to backfill that, other ambulances move into cover.

It's a dynamic process. It requires adequate management. We have the technology. We have some very skilled staff at central medical dispatch and this can be coordinated in real time, courtesy of

technology we put in the ambulances about seven years ago.

Thank you.

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

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

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

Dynamic processes are not helping people in rural Newfoundland trying to access urgent medical care.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Another failure.

Speaker, our office has been contacted –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**B. PETTEN:** Our office has been contacted by a family of a cancer survivor with concerns over ambulance protocols for transport from their home in Whitbourne. Despite being told by her medical team to return to St. Clare's if she needed help, this lady was refused ambulance transport to St. John's.

Speaker, this family was told to return to St. John's in case of complications to access their specialist and cancer care team.

Why is government forcing this cancer patient to a facility that can't help her?

Minister, before you come back and tell me I'm not doing my job, this family asked me to bring this to the floor of the House of Assembly, so I am doing my job and we want an answer.

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

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

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

Well, the Member opposite should finish the job he started and give me the details.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** The architects of our health care crisis themselves, in the flesh here today. The architect –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

We can waste the time.

The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

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

I'll take no lectures from that side of the House today or any day for that matter.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, this woman needs to be assessed by her specialized cancer care team, but this heartless government's policy requires this woman to go to the nearest facility in Carbonear to be assessed, then proceed to St. John's, if required.

Why, Minister, why?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Madam Speaker, no politician, no administrator makes a decision as to priorities for ambulances. That is done on clinical criteria. If the cancer doctor in St. John's feels this woman needs an

ambulance to go from her home to see him or her, he can organize it. It's not a problem.

Again, if the Member opposite has specific instances, he should finish his job and bring them to me.

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

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

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

Speaker, this lady's specialized medical team was in St. John's. The only option she had was paramedics helped her husband load her into the car, their car, to make the drive to St. John's where she could be assessed by her cancer care team.

Speaker, why is government wasting time and resources, not to mention risking the woman's health, by diverting her to another facility for an assessment, then being transferred a second time where she needs to go?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** I can do little better than repeat my previous answer. If the physician wanted this lady to travel by ambulance and it was a priority, they can organize it. I would suggest again the Member opposite brings the details to us and we will examine them and see where the breakdown in communications was.

Thank you.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, if you truly cared about the people of this province, you'd have a system in place that would deal with that sort of thing.

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

**B. PETTEN:** There's no right answer to say you got to be transferred from Whitbourne to Carbonear when you're a sick person and your care team is in St. John's – there's an answer to that; she should've been transferred to St. John's. That's what the minister should be telling me now, it's not acceptable and he will direct them in the future that will not happen again. That's what the minister should be telling us.

Speaker, this family feels her life and health is being put in jeopardy by the bureaucratic policy that denies her quick access to her cancer care team that knows her medical history and treatment plan.

Again, why is this government putting policy and cost above patient care?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** I seem to be having difficulty getting through the concept that ambulances are based on clinical decisions, not political, not administrative. If there was a need for this lady in the view of the clinician, the clinician should have made that obvious and can organize an ambulance very easily. The clinic staff do this regularly, Madam Speaker. They used to do it in my clinic.

Again, there's obviously been a failure of communication. Delighted, and it's important that we look into it, but making hay on the floor of the House here by perseverating with the same questions is not actually helping.

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

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

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

Those words don't mean anything to most people out there that are listening. I'd say the family may be listening. But they know they're being disrespected by this minister and this government. That's what they're hearing and that's what we're hearing as well.

These people who called the medical dispatch and they looked for an ambulance to get to St. John's. They were told they could only go to Carbonear. That's the question that nobody wants to answer. I can give them all the details. He just heard this story and all he keeps coming back with is throwing shots at us. We're doing our job, Speaker.

Yesterday I raised the issue of a senior who was offloaded from an ambulance into a cold, hard waiting room chair because the ambulance was needed. Now today I have this example of a lady who had to find her own way to St. John's where she really needed an ambulance transport.

Will the Premier admit that these incidents are happening because they have failed to ensure we have good enough paramedics?

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

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

We do recognize there are challenges with offload delays, with getting patients into the emergency departments and we're working on those. We have an approach to manage that through NLHS and our new integrated ambulance service.

Once the patient gets into the emergency room, decisions about where those patients go and how they are managed are clinical. I don't make those decisions; a hospital administrator doesn't make those decisions. It is a triage nurse; it is an emergency room physician. Those are the people who make the decisions.

Again, if somebody feels that they have been treated inappropriately, there are mechanisms locally to raise that. If that doesn't work, the Member opposite, again, can supply me with details and we'll look into it.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

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

Speaker, following a violent shooting in CBS on October 20, the father of the victim was shocked to actually arrive to the scene ahead of the ambulance.

Can the minister confirm that the ambulance had to drive from Whitbourne?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Once again, Madam Speaker, to bring this to the floor of the House is an interesting way to start an investigation into what may or may not have happened. For all I know, the proximity of the ambulance may not have been an issue. But unless we have the details, I cannot look into it any further.

I will be able to tell him exactly where the nearest ambulance was at the time the call was received, provided that call was received by 911. It is only the integrated 911 system that provides you with those time stamps. The old mechanism does not.

I would use this opportunity to encourage anybody who needs emergency services, that's the one number you use: 911.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

**P. DINN:** That's an interesting response, given this was all over the news.

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

**P. DINN:** As a responsible minister, you would have done your job and reached out and dealt with this issue.

Speaker, while the father waited with his son, who had been shot in the back, the only ambulance available was dispatched from Whitbourne.

In an emergency, minutes matter, seconds matter. Speaker, this could have been a tragedy.

Why was there no ambulance available in the area?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Obviously, these are issues that require investigation.

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you.

It sounds like the outcome was fortunately not as bad as it could have been. Again, happy to look into the incident and the details. Obviously, without those, it is not possible for me to speculate – or inappropriate for me to do so – on the floor of the House.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

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

Speaker, this shooting happened just minutes outside of St. John's, yet the ambulance had come from Whitbourne. Earlier this year, the minister announced a new road ambulance system and I think the minister, in responding, touched on this already but I'll ask it.

Will the minister do his job and review this dynamic approach to responding to this incident?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

There is an ongoing and active review system of ambulance calls response times, and data is provided on a regular basis. As we strive to achieve, what we believe, are reasonable yardsticks, as there isn't a national one, we have adopted one of our own for response times. Certainly, that is part of our regular and ongoing activity.

When the new ambulance provider is up and running fully, that data, particularly with our computerized system, will be a lot easier to access and we will be able to provide more real-time reports, but that activity happens at the moment.

Thank you.

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

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

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

**L. PADDOCK:** Speaker, let's go a little further across the province this time.

In May, during the Baie Verte - Green Bay by-election, a commitment was made to restore health clinic services in the fishing communities of Triton and La Scie.

When will these clinics be open?

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

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

Those were certainly commitments that were made; they will be commitments that were honoured. They were commitments that were made by the former minister of Health, who happens to be in the gallery today. He's milking his return for all its worth.

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

**A. FUREY:** But certainly we'll continue to work with those communities to ensure those services are delivered in a timely fashion.

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

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

**L. PADDOCK:** Speaker, these communities are still waiting and it has been six months.

Will the Premier admit that he was just playing politics during the by-election?

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

**A. FUREY:** Playing politics? Speaker, imagine politics in an election; that's a strange concept.

What I will say is that we committed to the people of La Scie and to the people of that peninsula that we will reinstate the clinics that were there, the former minister did. We're committed to doing it. As I understand it, one of the physicians there already started to provide increasing coverage to La Scie in particular. We'll continue to make sure that we're recruiting to fill those positions long term.

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

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

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

Promises made during election, I guess, they didn't win it, so we're not going to see it, that's the way that's going to happen.

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** That's how election promises work.

Speaker, I have a simple question for the Minister of Service NL.

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** How many elevators in this province have an expired inspection certificate?

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

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

I do have to ask him – I missed the first four or five words of his question – can I ask for him to repeat the question, please.

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

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

How many elevators in this province have an expired inspection certificate?

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

**E. LOVELESS:** Well, the one that I was on today is not expired because I was using it, but in all seriousness, I do not have that number, but I certainly will get that information for the Member and report back to this House.

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

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

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

The one that he was on today is not inspected, by the way, if he's wondering.

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** As a result of shocking access to information requests, we have learned there are 500 elevator inspections that have not been completed in the Department of Service NL.

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Speaker, thousands of residents use these elevators every day when they go to work, school and shopping.

Why is your government not doing their job?

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

**E. LOVELESS:** Again, Madam Speaker, anything that deals with the safety of the public is very concerning and that's certainly an operational piece of my department. I will take back what he's given to me here today, I will have a conversation around that and I will definitely report back to the Member.

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

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

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

Memorial University graduates are our doctors, our teachers, our nurses and our future; yet, this government has repeatedly withheld funding to this valuable resource.

I ask the Premier: Will he restore funding to Memorial University so that it can begin to address the \$481-million deficit in deferred maintenance created by this government's cuts?

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

**K. HOWELL:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to respond and to recognize the importance that Memorial University plays here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We know that it is a very valued institution and we continue to support it. However, we do have certain expectations that the university upholds on their end and we work with them on a continuous basis to make sure that they are doing the best that they can with the public funds that they are entrusted with.

We have given them significant investment. Even as recent as last budget, we had an investment in infrastructure services where we gave funding to provide relief for some of the campus renewal fees.

So we have continued to invest in the students by putting that money back in their pockets. We'll continue to work with Memorial University to ensure that they are providing the best services for students here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

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

**J. DINN:** Speaker, university students and faculty have said that class sizes are increasing, course offerings are reduced, there are no EAL supports at all, that there's discussion about eliminating exam booklets

and requiring students to bring their own paper for exams.

I ask the Premier: Does he think this is appropriate?

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

**K. HOWELL:** Thank you, Speaker.

As I said in my first answer, we continue to invest in Memorial University. The operating grant that the government provides is \$298 million and, with that, the onus is on the university to be responsible for that money that we give them.

On a monthly basis I meet with the president of Memorial University and have those conversations as well as the chair of the Board of Regents. We continue to work with them to make sure that they are investing the money that we give them for the best interest of Newfoundland and Labrador students.

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

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

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

Speaker, the NLMA says that according to a recent Narrative poll, 30 per cent of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are still without a family doctor. Folks who are sick are showing up at emergency rooms, adding to the wait times because they don't have primary care, especially those in rural areas in Labrador.

I ask the Premier: What is the long-term plan to address wait times and staffing in rural areas in Labrador who are having extremely long wait times for primary care?

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

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

Rural primary care has always been a challenge, and recruitment and retention have been issues and we've been very focused on that. We have, as the Premier mentioned, \$650,000 for a rural family doctor to set up practice or to take over an old one. In actual fact, that is not wages, salaries or fees, that is incentive. We have Connect NL, and in the last year, 62,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have been connected. Our recruitment of doctors: 43 new physicians in this province since April of this year.

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

**J. HAGGIE:** One hundred and three in the last calendar year. These are the most generous in Canada and they're working.

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

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

**E. JOYCE:** Speaker, health care is a very serious issue in the Corner Brook-Bay of Islands area, especially in the emergency department. Lack of family doctors, seniors can't afford to pay the fees for the nurse practitioners visit is causing a backlog in the emergency department. It is a crisis. An 87-year-old lady spent 27 hours in the emergency room. People bringing their own blankets to sleep on the floors.

I ask the Premier: What is your government doing to help alleviate this crisis, which is getting worse in the Corner Brook area?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Whilst the NLMA focused on primary care physicians, our focus has also been on primary care in general. We do have a

variety of options for people to seek primary care virtually, or in the comforts of their own home. So there's 811, there is Teladoc and then there are virtual consultations.

Certainly, the challenge in the emergency departments is simply one of throughput most of the time, because we have a significant number of alternate level of care patients who require accommodation. We have, as a government, over the last little while put in over 300 long-term care beds across this province, outside of St. John's, and we'll continue to look at that. The Member raises an important point, but we're working on it.

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

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

**E. JOYCE:** I'll say to the government: No 87-year-old person wants to spend 27 hours in the emergency, I can tell you that.

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

**E. JOYCE:** When you call 811, 95 per cent tell you to go to emergency. So it causes the backlog.

A family doctor just left her practice, and I quote what she said to her patients: The competing recruitment incentives offered by provincial government for new family physicians to work in NL service facilities in our regions have made it impossible to recruit physicians to work in private community family care clinics like ours. My workload is unsustainable.

That is from a family doctor who just left in Corner Brook. One left in Deer Lake, too, for the same reasons and the Premier is well aware of that person.

**SPEAKER:** Question please.

**E. JOYCE:** People are suffering. Seniors don't go to the emergency room due to long waits and would rather suffer at home.

**SPEAKER:** Question please.

**E. JOYCE:** These seniors deserve better. Citizens deserve better. What is in place is not working. What concrete –?

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

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

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

I think, to answer the question in 45 seconds is hard, because there's so much to talk about. We have worked hard to allow people to age in their own homes. We have provided options for primary care that are non-traditional and really came out of COVID and are working very well.

In terms of there are issues that the Member referenced with primary care physicians, this agreement here, inked with the NLMA, is a way for people in solo practices to avail of the services of a Family Care Team and to become affiliated. So they're no longer on their own, they're no longer isolated, they're no longer unsupported. I would encourage any family physician in a rural practice to look at that; it matters.

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

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

Present Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

### **Tabling of Documents**

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

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

I have three documents to table.

First, in accordance with section 6 of the *Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008*, I hereby table the 2023 annual activity report of the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Board of Newfoundland and Labrador.

In accordance with section 10 of the –

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

**E. LOVELESS:** Can't hear myself speak.

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**E. LOVELESS:** That's right, calm them down over there.

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**E. LOVELESS:** In accordance with section 10 of the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act, 2008*, I hereby table the 2023 annual report of the Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thirdly, Speaker, in accordance with section 9 of the *Chartered Professional Accountants and Public Accountants Act*, I hereby table the 2023-24 annual report of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

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

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

Referencing a document that I referred to during Question Period, this is entitled *Family Care Team: Affiliating with Family Care Teams NL*. It bears the logo of the

Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. It's a publicly available document on their website, dated December 8, 2023.

It's the first one I could find. I believe there's at least a subsequent iteration of this and there are multiple other documents to show consultation on primary care teams with the NLMA going back to 2016.

**SPEAKER:** Any additional documents to be tabled?

Notices of Motion.

### Notices of Motion

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

**B. DAVIS:** Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow introduce a bill entitled, An Act Respecting the Management of Law Enforcement Articles, Uniforms, Vehicle Markings and Vehicle Equipment, Bill 94.

**SPEAKER:** Further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

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

**C. PARDY:** Thank you, Speaker.

We are the only province in Canada that has limitations on catch and timelines to catch northern cod. The recreational cod fishery has a daily limit and firm dates when the food fishery can occur, regardless of weather and sea conditions.

In addition to safety, if residents of the province were permitted to catch their food quota without these restrictions, it makes for

a safer, less costly and results in reduced carbon emissions due to fewer trips being required.

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to lobby the federal government to explore more accommodating regulations that will allow residents of our province to catch their food in a safer, less expensive and more carbon-friendly manner.

Many residents in my district like to be able to go out and catch their food for the winter, but not to be prescribed so rigidly by the federal government. One thing that would come to mind is that the federal government may be concerned that there may be people that don't follow the rules and the regulations in doing so. But if we make regulations based on a few that may not follow the rules or may go over board with the consumption or the catch, then we're off track.

The Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture yesterday mentioned 90 enforcement officers. So that ought not to be a factor with 90 trained professional enforcement officers that can keep an eye on it. And keep in mind, we still have the ability to put stipulations in that will allow the people in my district to go out and catch their fish without having to do it over a splattering of the 10 weeks and at a time in the fall of the year in Bonavista Bay and Trinity Bay when the codfish are better, they can't get out on that week.

My colleague from Ferryland was saying, in that 10 days, there were two of those days where somebody could get out, if they weren't working and they were available. So we do have an issue with that. When Keith Elliott goes out in Bonavista, Keith Elliott is going to go out and catch enough for his family over the winter. Mr. and Mrs. Humby in Morley's Siding will only go out and catch what they need in their food fishery. Instead

of 10 trips, it could be two trips and they're finished with their food for the winter.

So I would ask for consideration of this and maybe the minister can talk to his federal cousins. Let's see if we can get a change in that and let us restore the traditional right of Newfoundlanders to go out and catch their fish when it's safe to do so.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture.

**G. BYRNE:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the hon. Member for presenting this petition.

I take no issue with the prayer and the premise behind the petition whatsoever. I will take an opportunity to address certain issues that were raised by the hon. Member in the presentation that he gave to us. One, in terms of the enforcement officers, I think that all would reflect and appreciate that of the 90-plus resource enforcement officers that we have in this province, they're primarily engaged in wildlife activities, Crown lands activities, other activities.

I will note, however, that we are actually engaged in activities related to the federal jurisdiction, and that comes for inland fisheries. We would probably be fairly stretched thin and it may have an impact on our ability to enforce inland fisheries, albeit a federal jurisdiction. We would probably be in a situation where we would impact our ability to enforce big game regulations and requirements.

One of the things that I have always advocated is that, just as the province, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are required to pay the federal government for RCMP contract policing and if we do not pay, they will leave. We provide the federal government with resources with personnel

to police inland fisheries, which is a federal jurisdiction –

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The minister's time is up.

**G. BYRNE:** – but the federal government refuses to pay the provincial government for that activity. I'd like the hon. Member to support me in that cause.

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

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

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The reasons for this petition are as follows:

WHEREAS individual residents and municipal leaders have spoken to the deplorable road conditions in the District of Harbour Main; and

WHEREAS the district is made up of many smaller communities and towns like Holyrood, Upper Gullies, Seal Cove, Cupids, Colliers, North River and Makinsons who have roads in desperate need of repair and paving, specifically Route 60 and 70; and

WHEREAS these roads see high volume traffic flows every day and drivers can expect potholes, severe rutting, limited shoulders and many washed out areas along the way;

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 immediately take the necessary steps to repair and repave these important roadways to ensure the safety of the driving public who use them on a regular basis.

Speaker, I'm specifically talking today about Route 60 from Holyrood out to Seal Cove and Upper Gullies. This roadway is desperately in need of pavement. There are deplorable conditions that the users of the road have to endure.

Speaker, I've been addressing this in this hon. House since my election in 2019: 14 road petitions, four different Ministers of Transportation and infrastructure. The last two ministers in 2021 and 2023 came out to see first-hand the condition of the roads that the people have to travel on with respect to Route 60.

I've been receiving numerous, overwhelming calls, almost weekly, emails that indicate the constituents have such anger now and frustration because they believe that the government is not listening to them. They are concerned and they are upset about the fact that nothing is being done with this road. Year after year, minister after minister; yet, it's falling on deaf ears.

Now we know that there has been investment. There's been millions of dollars invested over the years. We know just last year the multi-year roads program there was \$225 million invested; yet, no help for the people of Harbour Main, specifically Route 60.

Please, we're asking you to listen; I invite the new minister to come out and witness how bad this is.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Rural Economic Development, and Transportation and Infrastructure.

**F. HUTTON:** Madam Speaker, I thank the Member opposite for the petition. I'd like to also thank for her acknowledging the extensive work that this provincial government has embarked on.

Last year, in March of 2023, we announced a \$1.4-billion roads strategy for the next five years, that is to allow the contractors and others to know that we are committed to doing that much work.

I know I don't need to remind the Member opposite that we have a very large province and there are a lot of communities that have similar wants and needs. The district that she represents in particular had about \$5 million worth of work committed to the district last year. Did it address every road in her district? No, it did not, but I am happy to come at some point during maybe this sitting of the House to meet with you and with all Members to discuss what needs to be done.

There's a priority basis that we look at when we're making a decision on what roads are going to be done. It has to do with the volume of traffic, which, of course, I know, as well, Route 60 is a busy road. It has to do with speeds that are there and a priority basis from each representative from the districts who come to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and ask for specific work that can be done.

**E. JOYCE:** District of Bay of Islands.

**F. HUTTON:** I'm happy to go there as well and have a look.

What we will do is, I will commit to looking at this with the Member opposite. I know that she has been in communication with our office and I'm happy to do that.

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

### Orders of the Day

### Private Members' Day

**SPEAKER:** It being Wednesday, I now call on the Member for Lake Melville to introduce the resolution standing in his name.

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

It's a great honour to bring this PMR forward today. So I'd like to move the following, seconded by the Member for Waterford Valley:

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 airspace; 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 – 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 BE IT RESOLVED that 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.

I look forward to the debate this afternoon. It's an interesting honour to be here. First of all, the history of 5 Wing Goose Bay goes back to the Second World War and it has fulfilled an amazingly strategic role in the commitment, the economic activity, so much about the history of this province and it's contribution, again, to NATO and NORAD has been extensive.

I found myself attracted to the location in 1987. I came to this fine province to work on a NATO base proposal in Goose Bay. It was a three-month offer and I'm still there kicking around. It's been so much a part of life.

In 2003 to 2006, I chaired what is known as the Goose Bay Citizens Coalition, again, working to find a political solution, at the time, for what needs to happen at that location, which is so strategic. I'm very pleased to say that the political lobbying in terms of finding a role for the Wing is no longer required.

What this PMR is about today is expediting the commitments that have been there. If we've been paying attention, Anita Anand, the previous Defence minister back in 2022, made quite the announcement. As part of her \$38.6-billion NORAD Modernization Plan, she identified four, what are known as, Forward Operating Locations: Inuvik, Iqaluit, Yellowknife and Goose Bay.

So these four, running across the top of Canada's North, will be there in support of the two main locations where we will be deploying our F-35 Raptor at Cold Lake, Alberta, and at Bagotville, Quebec.

I've been explaining to people that Goose Bay's role into the future is going to be one of a very sophisticated garage. As the F-35s and other kinds of surveillance, detection and response in protecting our North, Goose Bay is going to fulfill a very, very important role.

I don't believe I'm being overdramatic by saying that I feel that what happened last night and the results that were revealed this morning, I feel that we have taken a massive step back in the stability of this world. When I think that just to the North – our own northern border – is a country where I spent 14 years of life working, incredibly disappointed and frustrated with, but I feel it's all the more incumbent on all of

us to realize what's happening right here in our backyard, but also the role we can play.

I won't dwell on it too much, other than to say I want to reach out today and speak to some of my Ukrainian friends that are home in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and across the province, because we will continue to be there with you despite whatever promises the president-elect might have made. We will be there to support you.

As I said, the Forward Operating Location, it's one of four, and I find myself in this interesting role. I need to thank the Premier for, first of all, his lobbying over the last couple of years, that he has assumed that role regarding the base, which I call home and within my district, in terms of getting on with so many of these opportunities that are existing there for us. But also in appointing – and as I spoke this morning – and creating this new secretariate responsible for Veterans and Military Relations.

So just a few days ago, this PMR came out of a letter that I sent to the current minister of National Defence, Minister Bill Blair, outlining essentially the same elements that are in the PMR, that is to advance these commitments around the NORAD modernization program. What they're saying essentially is that there is going to be a definition phase that will start in 2027. Well, they've already started work. It's a lot of research, just a lot of, sort of, behind the scenes types of investigations; inventory of what equipment they have now; what equipment they need to invest in; how that's all going to work. It's everything from power sources to other kinds of logistics, infrastructure and so on that will be required.

They're hoping – at least the schedule says – their initial operating capability will be in 2034. I get it; it's going to take a while to get some of these things in action, but I would like to see an acceleration of this timeline. Then, finally, they expect to be in full operational capability by 2039.

As I spoke this morning and I'll reiterate this right now, I feel that the world is at a point where we can't kick this ball down the road. While we certainly appreciate the identification and the huge multi-billion-dollar investment that will happen in Labrador and at Goose Bay. It is all the more important that we really get on with it now, so I would like to underline that.

I look to my colleagues here, the Minister of Labrador Affairs and my neighbour and I look to my other neighbours here from across Labrador, we have been calling for the last several years to have Goose Bay designated as a primary search and rescue base location. We do not have that right now.

When I look to the enormous coastline, and so many of my colleagues, we all have some aspect of coastline that we need to be considered about, we all know the importance of the fishery, we know the importance of the offshore and we also know the importance of fast response, of capable response.

Right now, at 5 Wing Goose Bay, is 444 squadron. It's headed up by a very capable good friend of mine Major Erin Pratt. They have Griffon helicopters that they use, but, unfortunately, they are often not tasked with a civilian response. If there's an emergency, that's determined out of Joint Task Force Atlantic out of Halifax, who may deploy aircraft from my colleague's location in Gander, the Cormorant, or perhaps other airplanes from Greenwood, Nova Scotia. You can imagine the time now that we're taking as we respond to this.

I ask for these assets and this designation to primary search and rescue because right now, at a secondary level, it's everything from when parts might arrive, through to their state of readiness, through to the capacity that we need. Yes, as a provincial government and as four MHAs and everyone else who's concerned about the safety of everybody working on the coast of

Labrador, we need that response. But I also would argue that national defence, given this new role as a Forward Operating Location and the integral aspects that we will serve with our NATO allies and the role of NORAD and so on, they need that primary designation.

I'm kind of sharing with you some of the arguments because I've asked Minister Blair for an opportunity to sit and discuss this with him.

The third element of the letter that I sent, and I alluded to it in this PMR, has been – as many of you know and that's what brought me to this fine province back in 1987 – the low-level flight training that goes on. NATO allies from Germany, Britain, Netherlands, France, some other countries, Italy, were active there for many decades. It was a tremendous role for us to play with the open spaces. I worked on the environmental aspects of that, ensuring that the program that was in place at the time was run as state-of-the-art in terms of environmental monitoring, environmental effects monitoring and it made sure that everything was very sustainable.

There's a lot of desire to bring this type of activity back. The Germany Air Force has certainly made it very clear that they're interested in doing that. We will look for the right opportunity and ensure that everyone is comfortable with decision.

There's also other very strategic training that goes on, and I'm not sure of the current status today, but I can tell you, when I often speak with the wing commander or others in charge at 5 Wing, there could be a special forces team up to 100, maybe several hundred, folks from Germany, from Britain that are conducting a special forces training at a particular facility we have located southwest of Goose Bay. These are just some of the important roles that we play.

I think it's all the more important that this House understand how important Goose

Bay is, the role we can play with NATO and NORAD and, really, its significant role and posture we have on the world stage.

I look forward to the debate and closing it up in a couple of hours.

Thank you.

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

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

It's always an honour to speak to a PMR or any other resolution in the House. I thank the Member for bringing it forward. It's a good PMR.

The one thing I would say is that I find it interesting that this is the PMR that's chosen this week, specifically for Goose Bay, when Goose Bay is up there suffering through high crime rates, serious issues with drugs and other things that are being overlooked by government. I think that if you were to talk to the residents of Goose Bay, the situation that's happening up there right now is far more important than search and rescue and the base.

Now, while the base is the great economic driver and I would love to see it come back, I will tell you, I grew up in Labrador, I know low-level flying very well, I did Arctic worker training in Goose Bay as a soldier and I had the pleasure of working with search and rescue for nine years.

When we talk about search and rescue capabilities in the province and we think about being located in Gander, historically 103 Search and Rescue in Gander does between 85 and 100 missions a year. About 50 per cent of them are south of Gander and about 50 per cent are north. Right now, geographically, it's positioned in the right time.

They've generally got three assets, sometimes four, and a couple of years ago

the government went out and they bought the US presidential helicopter which is the same variant. It's a Cormorant helicopter CH-149 without a tailgate. So, ideally, that would be modified and utilized in the situation like this.

Right now for northern response, Trenton is the main place that does it. CFB Gander does a lot. We do Northern Iqaluit, Inuvik, different places. The Burton Winters tragedy and certainly a couple of fishing tragedies that happened over the years shone a really bright light on what's happening, not just in Goose Bay, but on the Coast of Labrador, in general.

So there is a requirement for SAR. Unfortunately, as the Member indicated when we talk about the Griffon helicopter and 444 and their capabilities, they only have VFR, visual flight rules. They can only go in the daytime. Anyone who spent any time in Labrador knows that's not very good in the winter. It really handcuffs their ability to perform. The Cormorant has IFR and the ability to carry out the searches as indicated.

It's interesting that the military chose to use the word "FOB," forward operating base, for Goose Bay. I would, if I was the Member, be pushing for something a little greater than that.

As we know, right now, when a ship leaves Halifax, FOB becomes St. John's. In the process of St. John's becoming the forward operating base for the naval vessels that leave Halifax, they built a new headquarters for HMCS Cabot and we can't use it. It's pretty sad what's happening over there. Anyone who's been down around there, they understand that the dock down there is condemned and if a vessel leaves Halifax and comes into St. John's, they can't even berth where they were supposed to berth. So I would hope that in lieu of rushing this, we do it right. Doing it right means that the runway is in the right shape for fighter jets to come from all over the world like they used

to, that everyone is in agreement with it and that Goose Bay thrives because of this, because it should. It once did and it should again. There's zero question about that.

This PMR is important, there's no question, to the people of Goose Bay and the surrounding area. But at the end of the day it really, really, really needs to be done right. As the Member indicated, JRCC looks after all deployments. When we talk about SAR capabilities – and what Canadian military SAR is, their mandate is specifically Maritime, and anything they do outside of Maritime is really done as a favour.

I'll also indicate to the Member that I talked to the Members from the Liberal Party who were involved in lobbying the federal government, specifically, the MHA for – I always make sure I get this right – Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair. I indicated to her that I had a particular expertise and I would love to be a part of any lobbying that was happening, and it wasn't welcomed. It didn't happen. I didn't have an opportunity to do that.

What I would say is while you're lobbying to make these things happen, you need to understand you should be lobbying for an expansion in service. An expansion in service would include a mandate that puts SAR outside of just Maritime relief because there is no SAR capability in the interior of Labrador. As we expand resources and get into situations where we have people driving across the province that have no ability to communicate or do things, one of the vastest, most untouched regions in North America, we don't have SAR capability up there.

While 103 gets deployed sometimes into these areas to look, generally, as a rule, that's not who does it. It ends up being ground search and rescue, a bunch of volunteers or CASARA, Canadian Air Search and Rescue, again, a lot of volunteers.

The other thing I would say is that Goose Bay, given the situation they have, when we talk about search and rescue, we should be looking for top cover. So right now they have no fixed wing posted there. Yellowknife has a fleet of fixed wing who can do top cover for the Cormorant helicopters that fly out of Comox.

So it's a big picture and the big picture really needs to be looked at. And when you're talking about one of the harshest environments in North America – we all watch TV and movies and when we talk about search and rescue, you think about Alaska and what goes on up there. Well, Labrador is no different. It's the roughest, toughest place in the world. So we need to make sure we've got the right equipment and the right people to do it.

When you talk about the individuals who perform this, search and rescue, I would say that the Canadian SAR Techs are beyond any other fighting force or rescue force in the world.

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

**L. PARROTT:** They are the top that the world has. They have won competitions all over the world time and time again and they show exactly what they can do. They put their life in peril every time there's a call.

The whole idea of Goose Bay bringing forces from all over the world back, I think, is essential. I think that Goose Bay should be the gateway to the North. We all know that there's going to be lots of different things happening in the North over the next four or five years and further into the future. Certainly, with the unrest around the world, with Russia invading Ukraine – and I'm not going to get into the political side of things, but we see what's happening on the world stage politically – I believe Newfoundland and Labrador are well positioned to not only take advantage of the North, but to be a part of the defence of our northern regions and the people who occupy them.

Currently, what we do is we utilize the Rangers. Hats off to the Rangers, but the Rangers are northern response and coastal response. Again, they're reservists but they don't have the assets or the capability to do what is needed to be done if things go bad, I guess is the best way to put that.

When we talk about exploiting the plan for NORAD – I'm not sure the state of any of the infrastructure in Goose Bay right now, because a lot of it has been left untouched for quite some time. The fire of the tower up there, I believe it was the old tower that burnt, but from an air traffic control standpoint there's a whole lot of different things that need to happen.

If it's going to be just a forward operating base, I think that we need to be lobbying to make sure that there are full-time regular force men and women from the Canadian military that are working there, primary technicians, health care people. At one time, there was a base hospital; there were a lot of things up there that could help support all of this. Sadly, over time, it's gone away and it's a civilian contractor that runs all of that.

The other thing I would caution is if you look at any of the four bases right now for primary SAR response, Trenton, Comox, Greenwood or Gander, they're all – all; every single technician that works there – civilians and it's a civilian contract, IMP Aerospace out of Nova Scotia. We need to make sure that we can get people in Goose Bay that can look after all of these resources. Because, right now, the Canadian military doesn't have technicians that are trained that can work on the CH-149. It's something that we need to consider as a part of it.

I would be lobbying, if I were the Member, to have fixed wing up there on a full-time basis. Some of that should be not just in Bagotville; I believe that we should have fighter jets in Goose Bay on a regular basis, on a full-time basis. If we talk about from a

deployment standpoint, it's the most northern and it's the most easterly point in Canada right now that has the capabilities for those things to happen.

While it doesn't take these new fighter jets very long to get where they're going, I would argue that once they're positioned in Goose Bay, it puts Goose Bay in a position to thrive. It helps us with all the things we need to help, certainly, in the community. All you got to do is watch the news that the community up there now is in peril. I think that a larger military presence would only bring in more RCMP, more supports and more things that could help the community survive and move forward, but that's not just the answer.

So I'm more than willing to sit down with the Member at any time and discuss search and rescue capabilities for the province or set him up with the right people to have those conversations. I have no doubt that the wing commander for 444 has those connections and knows exactly what he's talking about at the same time.

The reality of things are, if we push this along too fast and we don't have the equipment that needs to be there, then we're going to fail before we even start. We need to understand what the primary role is for search and rescue and get that changed if Goose Bay is going to be a place where we're operating these helicopters from.

That's all I have to say, and I thank you for your time.

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

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

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

I'm happy to stand for a few moments today and support the PMR that was brought in by my colleague, the Member for Lake Melville.

It's a very, very important PMR, not just that I could say that as an individual from Labrador, but no matter where you are in the province. We've got a gym there in Goose Bay with 5 Wing and they've been there a long time and doing important work. But as was already referenced here in the House today, it's the unrest that's happening around the world that really drives home the importance of the protection that we need here at home and what we can offer to other areas.

As I sat here, I had kind of forgotten there is so much that we do from week to week to week. So much travel and things and one week slips into another and things leave your mind, but as I was listening to my colleague from Lake Melville, I went back to two or three weeks ago when I was in Reykjavik up in Iceland.

I was there doing a number of things. I was meeting with the Energy Ministry in my portfolio as the Minister of Environment, but in addition to that, the Arctic Circle Assembly was happening there. It's about 2,400 people, 70 nationalities; a very, very important conference bringing together people from all across the North, people from Nunavut, which our province have signed an MOU with in February of '23.

We've been doing some great work with Premier Akeeagok and his deputy and our Premier and myself, recognizing that across the North we have a small population, we have large land mass, challenging places to govern, challenging places to provide basic services, challenging place to provide adequate search and rescue supports; but what I wasn't prepared for at that conference, the little bit I did get to take in between some of my meetings, was the focus on NATO and NATO security.

One of the sessions that I participated in was the chair of the NATO committee, Rob Bauer, I think is how you pronounce his name. I'll tell you, he captivated 2,400 people and you could hear a pin drop. He

did not mince his words when he talked about, as the chair of the military committee, the shift that they have seen in their world in terms of preparing in the last four years. He said that sometimes you turn on the news and people who don't understand will talk about an investment into our military almost like they're talking about charity. He said: Make no mistake about it, an investment into the military is an investment into our own security.

There was a lot of talk about Trans-Atlantic security. Russia was mentioned here today, the Northwest Passage. I said to some of my officials as we were coming back, cheesy as it's going to sound, I kind of grew up in a world where we often spoke with pride of the True North strong and free. That was in my mind a lot as I was there and participating in some of those meetings, because all eyes are on the North right now. My colleague, from Lake Melville, would certainly know this as well as I do.

I think the message coming out of those meetings was, how do we protect our air and waterways? We have certainly to be vigilant in those changing times. The other thing that was an interesting topic again – my colleague who's a scientist would be very familiar – there was a lot of focus on climate change and how that is rapidly reshaping our world and we need to be ready to respond to that. In the North, they are warming up four times faster than anywhere else. Folks are going to be looking for new shipping routes, et cetera.

NATO was very firm in saying we are here; we always uphold and protect. I think he used a figure of the population; it's just escaping my mind right now. Also it was interesting how they talked about the wars of the past and we're coming up on Remembrance Day and a somber time of year when we remember our veterans. I was thinking about the comments that he had made about the wars of the past were mud and blood. But the new wars will be fought differently.

Everybody gets pretty nervous when you talk about nuclear, and NATO is a nuclear alliance. He shared how they believe that it's a war that should never be fought and can never be won. I thought that was powerful. I actually made that note in my phone and I just found it a few minutes ago as I was getting ready to say a few words. He certainly let us know that the audience there today, that was from across 70 different nationalities, that NATO have certainly moved to collective defence mode again.

I'm looking at the time; ten minutes goes fast when you're up. So the PMR that my colleague from Lake Melville brought in today, he has outlined a number of things about 5 Wing Goose Bay being strategically placed and the important role that they play in protecting North American air space. We know that the federal government have identified 5 Wing Goose Bay as one of the four forwarding operation locations.

So THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED is that this House of Assembly call 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.

In my last couple of minutes, Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't talk about search and rescue. We have had some real terrible, devastating tragedies. I'm saying a terrible tragedy – a tragedy is a tragedy but sometimes if someone have really lived their years, as my grandfather would say, it doesn't seem as bad with time as young lives cut down.

When the *Island Lady* went down off Battle Harbour coming in, last day, two young men that had had a vey successful fishing season and just put off some of their load in Battle Harbour because they knew their nets would be full and did some TikTok videos and things like that, it was a good

day and went missing and there was no supports anywhere in Labrador to come in a very fast response way.

While the *Island Lady*, that day when she went down in September of '22, we had the Burton Winters Inquiry happening in Makkovik and, in real time, I was getting my updates. So it was an awful lot going on. What it did for us was it lit a fire again that we need to put pressure on the federal government to step up with their search and rescue support.

So that is why there's been a tremendous effort to have 5 Wing Goose Bay elevated to a primary search and rescue site. There has been an inordinate amount of energy that we have put into meeting with the federal government. I won't have time to go down through all of the dates, other than to say there was a delegation of us that travelled, in particular, in February of 2023 and there was quite a delegation of us that met with a number of federal ministers, including Minister Bill Blair at the time, and it was to push for those search and rescue supports for Labrador.

A part of our delegation was Jeanette Russell and Dwight Russell – one of the two boys on the boat, it was their only son, and there is nothing that drives an individual to make a difference than someone who has their own life story. She has channelled, really, from that time to this, a lot of her pain into trying to make a difference. She gave a very compelling presentation. She certainly had her homework done on what the benefits would be of enhancing the designation of 5 Wing to a primary search and rescue.

If you look at the map of Newfoundland and Labrador, you will see all those fast rescue stations, red dots around the Island portion of the province and you won't see one in Labrador. It really, really is unacceptable. So that's a fight that we have continued to have with Labrador.

When you think about our vast coastline, when you think about our main industry is certainly the fishery, we have some wins: a mandatory emergency position indicating radio beacons. EPIRBs, I think we call them, are now placed on vessels. I know that our shrimp company who is an incredible company in Labrador, but they operate six processing facilities, inshore, offshore boats, factory freezers. They actually supplied all their boats with those beacons.

I just want to say – I see my time is gone – I thank the Member for bringing in this PMR. I think it is very timely with the unrest around the world. With what we have there in Goose Bay, we just need to continue to enhance that and we need to build in search and rescue supports because, at the end of the day, we will save lives by doing it.

Thank you for the opportunity.

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

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

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

I have a long family connection to Happy Valley-Goose Bay. I lived in Happy Valley-Goose Bay for a couple of years. I met my wife in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. My wife has family there. I have family there. Goose Bay has a very special place in my heart and I visit it regularly.

Actually, I had the opportunity to go to Goose Bay again with the All-Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions and got to show two Members from the Progressive Conservative caucus around who have never been to Goose Bay before. The first thing we saw was the building getting tore down on the base. It was the very first thing off the place they saw.

It's really hard to go back to Goose Bay and see, every time I go there, less facilities,

stuff being torn down. It's heartbreaking because when I lived in Goose Bay in the early 2000s, there was still stuff on the go. I think some of the Germans were still around then.

Over the last couple of decades, it's hard to see that and then, at the same time, you hear the federal government going on and on about Arctic sovereignty, which is an important thing, but they're not doing anything, I think, in Labrador productive about it when we have 5 Wing Goose Bay. We have the asset; it's there. It's ready to go, for the most part, and I have no problem supporting the PMR – not a problem with it.

I understand the importance of our Arctic sovereignty. Our NORAD commitments, our NATO commitments and these things are very important. Goose Bay is absolutely perfectly placed to continue its role. There's a reason it was put there during World War II, and that reason continues to be the right reason and that is because it's in the North Atlantic protecting the Arctic but also protecting the North Atlantic.

So I support the Member's motion. Anything that happens there is also good for my district as well because we are all in this together as Labradorians.

I want to go back to 2017. He was an MP at the time, but he was the former leader of NDP here at the time, who stated: The base is one of the most significant bases in the world during World War II. Beyond that, it still has an important role in its current mission now in respect to NORAD, which requires the base to be kept up.

That was in the House of Commons. So it is a very important thing, but it has to be kept up. I think, unfortunately, the federal government has not committed to the upkeep that was necessary. I don't think that they've been keeping it up to a standard that it should have been kept up to. I support the motion that we pressure the

federal government to keep those commitments.

Arctic sovereignty is an important thing. As the Minister of Environment mentioned, climate change is happening, more ships are passing through the Northwest Passage. We are the gateway to the Northwest Passage. If you want to get through the Davis Strait, you have to go by Labrador. If you have to go by Labrador, you have to go by 5 Wing Goose Bay.

So for security of our own Arctic waters, that base is perfectly positioned to be the gateway, obviously, to the Northwest Passage. We should be there, and we should have the right amount of funding for that.

Another thing, the Member mentioned too about low-level flying. I know that's a subject for Labrador and it has two sides to it, but it was a very interesting time with Indigenous groups and that. I understand that there is talk of our NATO friends resuming that type of training. It's important but we also have to make sure that all partners in Labrador are on board, everyone is playing their part and make sure that there is informed consent amongst Indigenous groups.

I know she is now our Governor General, but Mary Simon when she was with ITK, I know, talked about when they were putting forward operating stations in the High Arctic about informed consent and talking about we have to work together with Indigenous groups and partners to make sure that we're doing it in a way that everyone is informed and consenting

We also want to make sure with anything like low-level flying, that there is informed consent and we're working in partnership with our fellow Labradorians and our Indigenous groups to make sure that we can fill these NATO commitments and continue to make sure that we are at the top and then make sure that 5 Wing is where it

needs to be. But all and all, through this whole PMR, it's good; it's a good thing. We need to be pressuring the federal government for this. We need to do that, but we also have to make sure that it benefits us as well.

So we go to search and rescue, and the Minister of Labrador Affairs mentioned about search and rescue and the Member for Terra Nova also mentioned about search and rescue, that is another key thing that we are lacking in Labrador, but we have the asset there, we have 5 Wing Goose Bay there. It's just the right amount of investment and to make sure that we do it in a right way that we can actually benefit from that and also, National Defence and the federal government can benefit from having that asset. So I support the call for having the base upgraded to have these SAR Tech capabilities.

We had many tragedies. Like I said, I was involved with Cain's Quest during the same time that the Burton Winters things happened. It was just after all that happened, the race went off and I remember all that tragedy happening and talking to all the individuals who came down and raced. Actually, that year the entire Cain's Quest was dedicated to the memory of Burton Winters. I remember talking to many people who came down from Natuashish and Hopedale and everything like that, the teams that raced there were talking about everything that went on there. It was absolutely a tragedy for Labrador as a whole.

The *Island Lady*, a complete tragedy for all of Labradorians. Many people from those communities live in Labrador West and they are all family. It was absolutely devastating to hear that news in Labrador West as well.

So we want to make sure we pressure the federal government to do that right thing, to make sure that SAR Tech is a part of it, make sure that we are meeting our NATO commitments, our NORAD commitments.

You know, NORAD is not just Happy Valley-Goose Bay, you look at Cartwright, White Hills, Saglek, those places are all connected to the rest of Labrador, but it also connects back to Goose Bay. Goose Bay is in Happy Valley, down in the bay, but the presence of Goose Bay is the entirety of Labrador. It has assets. It's dotted all throughout the land to do different things.

I know we used to have over in Emeril, just before Lab City, there was the remnants of – I don't know if it's doline or pine tree line but it's still there, you can see the old bunker and everything is still there in Lab West. You go up to Schefferville, there's still the bunker and everything up there from the doline. Bits and pieces of Goose Bay's long history and service to NORAD is dotted all across the land in Labrador.

To this day, we all know the importance of our Arctic sovereignty, our commitments to safety and security in this country, but at the same time, we don't want to see this asset underutilized. We want to make sure it's there, but also at the same time, we want to get our benefit out of it, too, to make sure that we have security when it comes to search and rescue. We want to make sure we have security when it comes to protecting the Northwest Passage, our Arctic sovereignty. We have the capability and, I think, absolutely this House of Assembly should, as it says, call upon the federal government to make sure that this is done right. I agree with this, but I just have a thing to add, to make sure that our Indigenous partners are involved and make sure that we are going to get the benefit from it as well.

It's a long important history and I'm 110 per cent in support of making sure that Happy Valley - Goose Bay, 5 Wing is, like the Member for Terra Nova said, more than just as forward operating base, it's a key part of Arctic sovereignty and also a key part of our search and rescue program for Labradorians.

Thank you.

**SPEAKER (Trimper):** Thank you.

I now call on the Member for Corner Brook.

**G. BYRNE:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

It's very important to talk about this to confirm and reaffirm our House's commitment, not only to the people of Happy Valley - Goose Bay who provide the house for 5 Wing Goose Bay, but also to the people of 5 Wing Goose Bay itself, who are incredible, amazing professionals.

I will never ever be able to understand or fathom what kind of approach to life, just the daredevilry of being able to jump out of an aircraft into the North Atlantic as required, as a call of duty. I say that with just understanding that I would never ever be able to contemplate it, but there are people who do it and they do it because it's their duty to do it. They do it because they trained to do it. They do it because it's their responsibility to be there when required. If we do not understand and respect that kind of commitment to service, then we'll never really understand service. That is one of the reasons why we have to be absolutely confirmed and reaffirmed to support them because they support us.

I'm going to start with the segue here which is that before we begin to talk about search and rescue, we need to talk a little bit about – a lot about – pro-action to prevent the necessity of search and rescue. We need to talk about vessel safety. We need to talk about fishing vessel safety rules. We need to talk about amendments and corrections to fishing vessel safety design and requirements. Transport Canada, the rules that are imposed upon the fishing sector, our inshore fishery in particular, are not safe.

Fishermen have been saying for decades that modifications need to be done to the rules so that they can properly modify their

vessels, so that they can be safe in high seas. This is an expectation that I think is reasonable and that Transport Canada is not abiding by. There has to be advancement on this, but at the end of the day, even the safest vessel, even the most secure environment, mitigated-risk environment that could possibly be imagined, things still go afoul.

There is always going to be a necessity for personnel to be on deck and on duty to respond to search and rescue requirements. That's where 5 Wing Goose Bay is part of the sharp end of the spear of yesterday, of today and, definitely, tomorrow. As activity increases in Canada's North, where is the node, where is the hub for activity to monitor and to be present and to be readily available and accessible for the Northwest Atlantic? It is Goose Bay, 5 Wing Goose Bay.

This is a responsibility that the federal government has to maintain, the health and security of Canadians, but also to respond on international events, as well. This is why having a full complement, not a substation, not a downgraded station, not anything else other than a full complement of services would be sensible and required because it's the only one for a very, very, very, very far distance.

Greenwood, of course, offers complementary services in some respects, but having that access, having that service in Canada's North simply makes sense. The platform for which that should occur, it makes perfect sense to any reasonable person that it is Goose Bay. Able to be resupplied, restocked on a moment's notice, but at the same time extending far into the North and having a presence there of rapid response.

With that said, I am very much assured that this private Member's resolution will indeed meet the full satisfaction of all Members of the House. I'm also very much assured that our voice needs to carry even further

beyond this House to make sure that the federal government and federal decision-makers within the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces understand very, very well that is an asset to which they need to invest in.

This is the sharp end of the spear on search and rescue. But, to use another expression, this is where the puck is going. As Canada makes greater efforts in our Arctic sovereignty and Arctic exploration, Arctic activity, we need to have good physical, political and strategic presence.

We also know that other nation states will want to occupy that same space. So as part of our national foreign policy, it just simply makes sense to have ongoing presence in that particular field, and Goose Bay is the natural, natural location for it.

In terms of the assets themselves, in terms of the assets that are deployed there, I will say and say that they're equipped well, but they should be equipped better. What I do not have any hesitation in saying is that they are equipped with the best character, the best skills. What 5 Wing Goose Bay has are the best people imaginable.

Again, I cannot think of any profession, any vocation, any job where you would be expected that in the darkest of night, in the highest of seas, in the worst of weather, to actually exit an aircraft to take a plunge in the North Atlantic to come to the aid of a vessel in peril and the souls that are on board.

If we do not understand the gravity of that situation and support it, then we do not understand service. If we do not recognize that service is offered out of a sense of duty, a sense of professionalism, then we do not understand duty or professionalism. If we do not understand that we are the ones who are the beneficiaries of that heroism, then we do not know what a hero is.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, this resolution is timely. It allows a platform to convey a message to the rest of the country, to our international partners and international players that are engaged in greater Arctic activities. But, most important, that this House is sending a message that we do celebrate, appreciate and understand the greatness that is here in our province and the people behind 5 Wing Goose Bay are very much the front face of that greatness.

With that said, a long-term political commitment, a long-term financial commitment, a long-term strategic commitment, a long-term commitment is the answer for 5 Wing Goose Bay.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** Thank you.

I next recognize the hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

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

Speaker, with regard to your PMR and I guess to give some amplifying context that I believe is very relevant to this PMR – first of all, with regard to SAR, SAR is not just an airborne asset medium. We have SAR, of course, across ground and across the Maritime side. The Member for L'Anse au Clair –

**L. DEMPSTER:** Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair.

**L. PADDOCK:** Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair, thank you. She noted time and distance in the interior of Labrador. That's where we endear if you don't have cover for aircraft to get out, you're going to rely heavily on GSAR – Ground Search and Rescue. We have the assets there with the 5th Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, RCMP assets, et cetera. Then, on the Maritime side, we would have vessels: the Coast Guard,

Royal Canadian Navy and then a mix of fishing vessels, et cetera.

SAR is a combined stakeholder activity. It's not just one entity; it must be done in coordination. To coordinate, one of the biggest things that you need with SAR is communication capability. That is there, I think, between the air and the sea with regard to Link 14, the transfer of data. It is a challenge going from here to land. That's where we see a lot of SAR issues occurring when people get lost. A case in point, Burton Winters.

Just to collate some of the issues that were raised with regard to what is happening in the Eastern Arctic, so the northeastern waters up off Labrador, as the Member for Labrador West pointed out, we have cruise ships. We have an expanding interest in tourism for the Northwest Passage, and that's going to continue to grow. We have an expansion in fishery. Some people say that the biomass for the fishery is moving to the northeast. So we should continue to see increased demand on the fishery, as well.

We're seeing Baffinland, now, offloading in Harbour Grace. We're seeing an expansion in mining in Nunavut with Baffinland, and that's happening both on the land and then they're shipping out, with their vessels coming in and then going down the sea routes.

As was highlighted by several here, it is the security. It is the security because we share a border, Canada, with Russia. Russia, now, is really an antagonist for NATO, as a whole. It's not just NATO because Canada is a member of the Arctic Council and the rest of the members of the Arctic Council have an interest in that. So that's where I would encourage engagement with member states from the Arctic Council. Some of them even have council offices here in St. Johns, like Iceland.

As well, we have the Inuit Circumpolar Council. I believe what is happening in

Labrador, what is happening across an expansion of activity in the North, they've shown great interest from SAR and what is happening with SmartICE. I think they could be an ally as well, engaging the federal government with regard to an expansion in Goose Bay because it would be a great interest for their community.

Now, it has been highlighted in the PMR and by several others here that Goose Bay is a strategic location - undeniable. I think what we have somewhat fragmented is how strategic that location is. It was highlighted by the Member for Terra Nova with regards to the forward operating bases, and that's been done simply for logistics, that is an air bridge into the North.

The Labrador Chamber of Commerce, and it was further highlighted by the Member for Labrador West, it is a gateway to the North. Goose Bay, being Canada's eastern gateway to the North, not just for here, but for Maritimes assets as well.

Now, I was at a conference three years ago where Halifax was dubbing themselves as the gateway to the North. We have to stand up for what is ours, Newfoundland and Labrador, because there is significant opportunity happening in Northern Canada in Arctic affairs that we need to capitalize upon, which is why it was very unfortunate when the government across the way closed the Arctic opportunities office.

Now, for SAR, as has been highlighted here, there's been a lot of study, there's been a lot of review, both in a Canadian and international context with regards to the quickest means and where you base your assets. One of those studies that I would encourage you to look at was done by Dalhousie University for a risk management course. They plotted every incident, not just a call where assets went out, but every incident that was identified. So a call into the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre was plotted on a map going back 30 years. That is very useful, because that gives you an

indication of where you potentially base some of your search and rescue assets. That, coupled with where things are going from future development, then needs to be taken into context.

My final point comes back to what the Member for Corner Brook highlighted, and that is awareness. I think we also need to get in all of our schools and we need greater awareness training with regard to search and rescue and with regard to water-borne safety.

I, myself, didn't learn to swim until I went to military college so that has to be done across both the Island and Labrador so that we mitigate a situation before it could even occur. Being on a SAR, as a former military officer, is challenging because you don't know what you're going to be exposed to. You're focused on one thing and that is saving a life.

So any assets that we can further bring to the table for this province, I believe, is a good thing. But like I said, I believe the surrounding context with all this needs to be taken into factor as well.

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

**SPEAKER:** I next call on the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

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

Let me be very clear for my colleague from Baie Verte - Green Bay – welcome to the House of Assembly – I can't agree with you more that the only gateway Halifax and Nova Scotia has is the gateway to this province, which happens to be the gateway to the North. That's the gateway they have, so we'll be fighting hard with them.

We always have to fight, at our federal and territorial minister meetings, we always fight with other jurisdictions to make sure they understand what role we can play in sovereignty of the northern part of the

country and the northern part of North America. It's an important piece that they need to understand.

I get the opportunity, based on the opportunity from my department, to stand up and chat a little bit about some of the things that we would do in our department, but, more importantly, what advantages would come from having the federal government make those investments in 5 Wing Goose Bay, which is really, really important from a strategic standpoint.

Speaker, 5 Wing Goose Bay has been in operation since 1941; with respect to during the summer months and overall strategic locations, they have been highlighted many times by speakers today.

I'll get to some things; I hope I'm not going to repeat other speakers here because I think we're all in alignment that we need to be lobbying the federal government for those additional resources that they have to spend anyway. They have to spend them anyway; they should be spent in this province.

Speaker, 5 Wing Goose Bay is a vibrant base. I've been there as recently as last weekend. It's beautiful. It has a lot of opportunity for space for the Canadian Armed Forces, in particular, but many, many other countries and other armed forces that are part of our alliances. Those are important things that we need to focus on.

There are many people here in this House that are way more experienced than I am about the impacts that would come. We have a couple of veterans that spoke to this today. We have two individuals that live in close proximity to that base and have seen the heyday of the base at its best. We have other people that are going to speak about why it's so important for all of us in this province to have that advantage of having that investment in a part of our province, that being Goose Bay.

There are other bases across this province that we can lobby hard for, as well, but this one is strategically located and meets all of the criteria of what's happening with respect to our northern part of our country and northern part of the global community.

In my previous position as minister of Environment and Climate Change, there have been lots of changes that are happening up North. There's lots of opening up of land that people can now transverse areas that they could not transverse easily before.

We need to ensure that the sovereignty of our North is protected. I can't think of a better location; one of the four that has been highlighted by the federal government is Goose Bay and Happy Valley - Goose Bay and 5 Wing Goose Bay, in particular. The people up there are understanding of what happens with respect to a base. They're understanding of the significant amount of infrastructure that can be built in that area and they're very welcoming people. I think that's an important role that we can all understand that they can play.

We've highlighted some conversations about ground search and rescue, which we have a vital role in, as well, as a province, albeit the federal government putting extra resources is always welcome. We look for that. Ground search and rescue in Newfoundland and Labrador plays a significant role in public safety. We all know that. Regardless of the conditions, these volunteers step up when there's an emergency and people need to be assisted.

In February of 2023, the Department of Justice and Public Safety, along with a delegation from Labrador, met with federal Minister Blair to discuss search and rescue concerns and recommendations for Labrador. At that time, we pushed to enhance the designation for 5 Wing Goose Bay as a primary search and rescue centre; the Canadian Coast Guard Inshore Rescue Boat Service station located in coastal

Labrador; rescue crafts strategically located along Labrador's coast; mandatory emergency positioning; a position indicating radio beacons for all vessels; and further consideration for innovative solutions to search and rescue prevention and response.

The Labrador stakeholders and Indigenous organizations also expressed gaps in the reliable land and marine communication systems and support first responders and the public. Discussions regarding search and rescue continues with the intention to form a joint committee, meeting to determine roles and responsibilities, gaps in search and rescue resources and areas to strengthen and optimize supports.

We look forward for the work of the committee in advancing SAR efforts in Labrador and across our province, because when one area of our province benefits, all areas of our province benefit. It is not unlike what we hear everyone say: a rising tide lifts all boats. We want every part of our province to be successful. That's challenging, albeit, we have questions every day from Members opposite us that share a passion for this province as well, that want to see their areas benefit. No one on this side of the House wants nothing more than for every area in this province to benefit. Anything we can do that would help Happy Valley or Gander or help any other organization or any other municipality in our province, we're going to try to do that.

So what we've done, we've committed to search and rescue improvements and have already made investments to enhance ground search and rescue, stemming from the province's inquiry into Ground Search and Rescue for Lost and Missing Persons that was held in 2021. So we've made some investments. Over the past three fiscal years, the province has invested \$3.5 million in NL Search and Rescue Association to increase capacity and sustainability towards its critical work.

We understand how important it is. We're going to continue to try to make investments where they make sense and when we have the resources, we're going to do it and the inclusion of five additional teams in Labrador.

Search and rescue across this country is shared between provincial, territorial and federal levels. We all know that. We all understand that's challenging, but that's also the benefit that can possibly happen here as well. There are areas that we can work together on and we need to be all, in this House of Assembly, pushing the federal government, because they represent all of our people in this province as well, to push them to do more in our province on every aspect, not just 5 Wing Goose Bay, every aspect of our province we should be pushing for more from the federal government.

I look forward to those conversations, we've had many of them, and I look forward to our colleagues on the other side of the House pushing as well.

The Canadian Armed Forces is primarily mandated for aviation-related search and rescue, while the Canadian Coast Guard is responsible for search and rescue operations at sea. I think the hon. Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay mentioned that earlier in his conversation.

I don't have a lot of time left, Mr. Speaker, but I am very supportive of what we're trying to accomplish here in this private Member's resolution here today. I'm happy that my colleagues on both sides of the House are very supportive of this. I thank the hon. Mr. Speaker for bringing this forward today.

We look forward to hopefully getting a very positive response out of our federal government, with all of us pulling the oar. Myself and the Minister of Housing share Quidi Vidi Lake and I'd like nothing more than all of us in this House of Assembly

pulling on the same oar as we're trying to accomplish the same thing.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Thank you.

I now call on the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

**C. TIBBS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and again, I would like to thank you as well for bringing this PMR forward.

We all know how fortunate the rest of Canada is to have Labrador. We know about its distinct location. We know what comes out of Labrador, of course, and once again, how fortunate Canada is to have a place like Labrador.

We talked about our rich military history and, of course, we do have a very rich military history. It's showing here today. I'm only too proud to have doubled up on our veterans in this caucus, especially this close to Remembrance Day, with the addition of the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

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

**C. TIBBS:** I would hope that, in the future, government sees the assets that we do have here across the floor, sort of thing, and pick their brains, get some information here because, obviously, these two gentlemen have a lot to offer when it comes to information.

The fact of the matter is we do need a national defence strategy moving forward, just like every other country does. I wish we didn't need it. I'm sure everybody wishes we didn't need it as well, but the fact of the matter is that we do need it.

I've spent some time in Goose Bay as well and I've also spent some time in Cold Lake, which we alluded to earlier. They still do

some low-level flying up there as well, so I've seen it first-hand what they do up there and I also seen the collaboration that they do have amongst different countries.

I did some drilling up there a few years ago on the base itself. Of course, you needed some great security passes to get through, but I've seen the collaboration up there of our NATO allies and what we have up there and it's fantastic to see. It's needed. I am happy to be part of NATO and also I'm happy to have those other countries with us as we all look forward to the same goal of the safer Great White North, and we're very happy to see all hands on deck for that as well.

I don't have the experience, of course, of the two veterans in my caucus, but I do have experience in emergency services and working in very harsh conditions and I've seen first-hand what can happen. We're very lucky to have the search and rescue units that we do have throughout this province. I know the Exploits Search and Rescue, Buchans search and rescue and all over the province, we are very lucky to have men and women who are willing to jump out of bed at any time just as a volunteer firefighter or firefighter, in general, to get out and search for somebody and hopefully bring them home safely.

The more resources we have in this province when it comes to search and rescue, of course, anybody would be on board with that right here. Being on the East Coast of Canada, in Canada's North Atlantic, we know what kind of harsh environments that bring. We want to make sure that those resources are there and the federal government does step up and add whatever resources needed to this country and Newfoundland and Labrador. We want to make sure that they are right here.

We talked about the gateway to the North; it is, in fact, Labrador and so it should be. All those resources that come there, we are

very grateful to have, and that's exactly where they should be. This is a great PMR.

Just for fishing alone – and the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair talked about the fishing vessel that went down two years ago. It's the same story; we've had these disasters in the past. We all know how efficient time is for a search and rescue to come. We want to make sure, once again, that the resources are there in a timely manner to get out off those fishing vessels. Absolutely minutes at that point can make the difference between life and death. I did the BST course right here just off the coast of St. John's. By God, when you take a dip in that water, you're going to feel it and you're not going to last very long.

We also seen many tragedies as well when it comes to our offshore oil and gas. The Ocean Ranger, for instance, was one of our most terrible disasters in Newfoundland and Labrador's history. The Cougar flight that went down numerous years ago – some young men and women on that thing as well. Again, we've seen these tragedies in the past throughout our beautiful province. We should take every step that we can take to ensure that these disasters, when they do happen, we do have the resources there that can go out in a timely manner to ensure that we save as many people as we can.

We know how beneficial our fishing is to the province. We know how beneficial our oil and gas is to the province and the country as well, as well as the fishing. So, absolutely, we want to ensure that our coastlines are taken care of. We will stand behind this PMR if that, in fact, gives us one portion of what this PMR is going to entail, which is our search and rescue.

Everybody in Newfoundland and Labrador knows, especially in Labrador, the interior and how harsh it can be, and not just in the winter. We could have four seasons in one day, as they say. We've heard that in the past as well, but when it comes to our interior here, whether it be snowmobiling or

people working or just ATVs or anything recreational like that, we welcome people to enjoy our vast land – and some of it still has not been touched by man itself. It's an absolutely beautiful place. We want to ensure that those resources, those men and women and all the equipment that we can have is in place to ensure that if anybody does get lost, if anybody does get injured, we have, at the ready, many resources to get out and tackle any terrible tragedies and bring any man or woman home, whether they're visiting here or they're living here. We want to ensure that those resources are in place to do that and whatever we can do we're going to make sure that we do it.

Again, the interior of Newfoundland and Labrador, it can be a vast, vast wasteland, especially we know now with cell service – and for some reason it seems to be getting even worse. I don't know how this is happening, but it is actually getting worse across Newfoundland and I'm sure Labrador as well. Cell service is not a reliable source if anybody's going to call out.

So anybody who's watching today, there are many things that you can do to train if you're going to go outside into the vast wasteland, once again, of Newfoundland and Labrador. One of those, of course, is take that training and letting you know what you need to do. I'm not an expert on it by no means, but I know the training is out there and you can see what you have to do.

Somebody alluded to it earlier, as well, the cruise ship industries and the recreational fisheries. We have so much happening off our coastline and we want to protect our coastline because we're very proud of it. We want to ensure that future generations can feel comfortable with what they need to do, whether it be the inshore fishery or offshore fishery or cruise ships or recreational. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians or anybody who comes here should feel safe in doing so and knowing that if a tragedy happens, there will be people at the ready

to ensure that they will get the services that they need that will bring them home safely.

When it comes to search and rescue, as well, I've had a little bit of experience with it in the past. One thing that I will say is, an all-hands-on-deck approach is definitely needed at times like that, whether it be any three levels of government, absolutely, we need everybody there sort of thing. It's not just the municipal government that can have search and rescue go out of their own town, the province needs to step up and ensure that those resources are there as well.

Now, we can see that the federal government can do something great here and follow the Member's PMR. You know, 2034 seems like a long time away and I like the thoughts of bringing that down a little bit further and taking that into account for the future as well.

I'll just finish off with a little story. The first time I ever went to Goose Bay, we were diverted because of weather and we stopped there. There were a few guys from Hibernia on the plane with me. They just came up from Louisiana. They were technicians and they were on their way to St. John's and we got diverted. I remember we were going to spend a couple of hours there and they asked us if we can deboard, can get a coffee, get a sandwich maybe, while we're waiting. We had to walk across the runway there and into the terminal. I remember coming to the door and one of the guys had, like, a sweater on and I said you might want a jacket. He said: Oh, is it that cold? When he got to the door, he stepped out and he stepped back in. He said: There's no way I'm going out there right now. I said: I don't blame you.

So we do, we have a unique position on the world map, but it can benefit us. It can benefit the world and we can be those champions. I believe that this PMR will definitely be a step in the right direction. So I thank the Member for bringing it forward and I will be supporting it.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER (Gambin-Walsh):** The hon. the Minister of Housing, and Mental Health and Addictions.

**J. ABBOTT:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion and debate here this afternoon on our colleague's private Member's resolution.

The tact I want to take on this very briefly, Speaker, is reflecting on last night's presidential election in the United States. So we now know who the president of the US will be. We know the geopolitical situation in the world is going to change overnight. The calculations that are being played out in Washington, in NATO headquarters, in Moscow, in Beijing and elsewhere in the world, are actually now alive and in real time. So where do we as a country, and then obviously as a province, stand within that?

We've been called upon as a country to increase our spending on defence. We've known that for quite a number of years. We've been asked, we've more or less signed on to increase our spending on national defence to 2 per cent of GDP. We're currently at 1.34 per cent. So we have to get to 2 per cent by 2032. You can only assume and you can only expect that the president-elect of the United States, in his first call with our prime minister, is going to say: Where are you? Where's the money, show me the money, put the money on defence. We're not going to be able to shirk that.

As a country, yes, we have a lot of priorities and we have other priorities. In my case, I would like to see more money on housing. I would like to see more money on mental health and addictions, nationally, and, obviously, transferred to the province to spend on our priorities. But I'm also realistic to know that if we do not meet our

international obligations, we're going to be in deep trouble with our partnerships around the world.

So when you look at the PMR in terms of what we can do here in this province and what the federal government can do to assist us in contributing to the world and the world's need for better defence, defence in the context of if we are stronger, our enemies, whoever they may be, will think twice. We know Russian submarines are going up and down our coast and they're not here for tourism. So why are they here? Because they're going to challenge our defences. What are they doing in the Arctic? They're going to challenge our defences, as are other countries.

We have to build our defences, if for no other reason than for ourselves, but also to contribute to NATO and NORAD.

Speaker, it was in that context I looked at the PMR and we really do need to put all our effort on the federal government, current and future, to live up to their obligations internationally and that we, in turn, can and should benefit from those by investments in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in terms of 5 Wing Goose Bay, in terms of Gander, in terms of St. John's and elsewhere to build up our resources and build up our assets.

It also includes in making sure that our military, both present and past, are supported appropriately and financially with housing, with medical benefits and with appropriate pay. That is something, again, the federal government needs to stand up to.

As we know, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians represent a very large proportion of our military forces both at the navy and ground forces. We need to make sure that if we are sending our sons and daughters into the military, that they, too, are going to be supported by the federal government.

So this is no time, I think, to sit on one's hands. We've had, as of last night, whenever the president-elect got up to say I am now president, then Ottawa needs to change its tactics and its approach to our neighbour to the south.

I think the next days and weeks are going to be very important, how our federal government responds. But I think here, with a unanimous resolution to Ottawa, would suggest that we are all on side of getting Ottawa on side and making sure we get the investments we need. A lot of colleagues have spoken on the search and rescue component, and that's obviously a very immediate need for us and it's something that can and should be invested in overnight. We shouldn't be playing games with that aspect of our defence budget.

Speaker, I just wanted to speak on that component of this resolution and I want to congratulate our colleague for bringing this forward.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

I must say thank you to all of my colleagues, amazing diversity of comments, ideas, suggestions. But one common denominator was the passion for the province and the role we can play on this world stage. I've got to say, well done to all of you.

I'd like to just talk a little bit about the comments of each. First of all, I've got to thank the Member for Terra Nova for his comments and for his service.

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

**P. TRIMPER:** I think we sometimes throw that out there, but I've got to say, I mean it, and I know everybody in this House means it. So I thank you for that, Sir.

I do want to challenge you, though, on your comment. You went off-script and you talked about crime prevention in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Yes, it's a challenge. But I'll refer you to the announcement that the Minister of Justice and Public Safety made just a couple of hours ago.

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

**P. TRIMPER:** A \$20-million investment, how he's turned the police transformation working team around and deployed them into Goose Bay. We know it's a priority, we're responding and we're going to get to it. I look forward to seeing this all roll out. So I wanted to throw that back at you.

I also wanted to correct you just on the designation. It's a forward operating location, and if you go online and look at the modernization plan – you've got to go scrolling around to find it; there's a lot of information – it's not just a remote location. It has to have all the capability and capacity that Bagotville is going to have. Because when those submarines come off our shore, we still have Tupolev bombers, other aircraft from Russia that are testing our defences, when they show up in Goose Bay, they need to be surrounded by the same kind of technology and infrastructure that they'll enjoy at Bagotville or at Cold Lake. So all really good.

The point about the SAR Tech is absolutely right on. The Canadian Rangers, thank you very much and the importance of the technical capability, couldn't agree more. I've got to give people like Greg Wheeler back home and some of his team, who I know are working really hard on starting to prepare us for this rollout and what's coming – it's a huge, massive investment. I don't have the exact dollars. I hope to have a team from Ottawa come down. I was in

Ottawa in June, I think, it was and met with senior DND officials about the rollout. It is substantial. We need to hear this and be prepared.

My colleague from Cartwright- L'Anse au Clair, I was with her a little while ago when we said farewell to an esteemed colleague and I am going to mention his name here. He's the long-time comms director for Labrador Affairs, Allan Bock. We had a nice send-off for Allan – one of the best in the business. But I was struck, I must say to my colleague, about you and Michelle Watkins and others who spoke about that very moving, powerful speech by the chair of the NATO committee and what they're doing now. We've got an ocean between us, but we need to remember Russia is just to the north. But our colleagues in the Baltics and the western part of Europe, they are seriously engaged in thinking a whole new way.

To my colleague from Labrador West and the decline of the wing, I did want to add to him that yes – and I think we do have it arrested. I was told the other day by the wing commander that Goose Bay now is handling something like 30,000 aircraft movements a year. During COVID, just to let you know, that all foreign military aircraft coming into North American airspace came through Goose Bay. It was a busy, busy base.

I also needed to give a shout-out to the parliamentary secretary for the minister of National Defence and that's Yvonne Jones, the MP for Labrador. Not a political statement, other than to say that lady works extremely hard. She's in a very strategic position for us. She's a long-time friend and I'm glad she's there and she's so important right now for our postering and what we need to do and go forward.

To my colleague from Corner Brook, his passion and admiration for everybody who has to jump out of helicopter into a frozen ocean, absolutely right on, spot on. The

Arctic sovereignty piece and the caliber of those who are there, I have to say I've come to know a lot of the folks in the 444 squadron in Goose Bay, tremendous individuals. They are fit and they are dedicated. They face a lot of challenging situations, civilian and military, and hats off to them.

To my colleague from Baie Verte - Green Bay, Sir, I want to take a second to say thank you for your service.

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

**P. TRIMPER:** It was an honour just to spend some time with him in Türkiye just recently. We got to know each other right there. I very much appreciated it and, Sir, I will be looking up your offer and that of your colleague from Terra Nova, we'll sit down and have a chat in the coming time to talk about what's going on in my new secretariat. I look forward to that. Thank you.

You did mention about the Arctic Council and it's such a tragedy. I've had a lot of interaction with that council over my last 20 or 30 years myself. Russia missing at that table now is substantial. Just last week, the Labrador campus of Memorial University hosted the University of the Arctic Board. Everybody was there, every circumpolar nation, except Russia. It is a glaring error – not an error but it's a glaring absence. We need to take this strong stand but may we all live long enough to see us return to the time when we can all collaborate around the North. I just can only hope.

My colleague from Justice and Public Safety spoke about the important role of all of our bases. To my colleague from Gander, here in St. John's, the reservists across our province, the Canadian Rangers, there are so many aspects and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians continue to step up. As I spoke this morning, there is a tremendous deficit of regular and reservists and I look

forward to seeing what I can do to help this province address and do what we can.

The Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, the rich military history that he spoke of, I thank him very much for that, and the resources. The Cougar 91 response in tragedy, I can remember that day vividly and it's just a prime example of whether this emergency be military or civilian, we need to be able to get those people as quickly as possible and we need to think about this massive geography that we call Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Minister of Mental Health and Addictions – excellent point, Sir, and I thank you very much for highlighting again our role on this international stage. We think of ourselves sometimes as a subnational within this Confederation that is Canada, but I can tell you we punch well above our weight. I'm very proud of it and we need to do think about the world stage and I was thinking about some of these issues just last night. Yes, it's a new reality. We have somewhat unchecked power that we're going to need to look at how we interact, and diplomatic efforts and stepping up is going to be very much a part of our challenge.

I want to just wrap up with a couple of thoughts. This is the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force, and to my colleague from Gander, we can feel and know and see the celebrations and I just want to give a tip of the hat to them. I have just a little story about them. Several years ago I was in Malta, and in Valletta, up on the top, there is a monument to all of the flyers that participated in the defence of that island nation in the Mediterranean. You go around and you see Australia, New Zealand, Canada and so on, and you go around and then it says Newfoundland. It's amazing. We were everywhere. It's that spirit and that rich history that we're drawing on.

I need to also mention Jeanette Russell, my colleague from Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair, I mentioned her. I've come to know her. She lost her son in this terrible fishing tragedy just a couple of years ago. One of the most powerful people to have around your table when you're in front of a defence minister or a federal minister. Jeannette, thank you so much for your advocacy. We're still going and I thank you very much for the boost.

I need to acknowledge a very good friend of mine, Lieutenant Colonel Aleem Sajan. He's the wing commander in Goose Bay; a tremendous individual. He's focused on his role, not just in defence, but how he fits into Labrador. I can tell you that reconciliation and bringing truth to what we need to do to address so many issues of the past, Aleem, I have to thank you very much for your leadership on that.

Finally, I want to thank Lieutenant Colonel Guy Parisien and his team. What I want to say is that I thank you, Sir, because a couple of years ago, he and his team identified my wife to serve as the honorary colonel for 5 Wing Goose Bay.

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

**P. TRIMPER:** Cancer cut her short in terms of her opportunity to do that, but I can tell you, she was so excited. Myself and other political colleagues around me, we said: Why didn't we think of it? We didn't and in some ways, it's – anyway, I just want to say, I thank you, Guy. I thank you and so many others. I thank so many who saw the passion that my wife had for that base.

I dedicate this PMR to her and I thank all of you for your support.

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

**SPEAKER:** 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.

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** We often spoke of Caroline, who was the most effective person that you could ever, ever find in the most unassuming way. She just knew what needed to be done. She did an incredible job in her community, whether it was coordinating the transportation logistics of the games; whether it was her commitment to 5 Wing all over; or to the Christmas tree, which it's soon coming that time of year at the hospital, but an incredible, incredible human who made the rest of us really want to up our game, I can tell you that. That's how she lived her life.

Thanks to my colleagues for that standing ovation for her and that beautiful wrap-up to my colleague for Lake Melville.

That said, Speaker, I would now move, seconded by the Deputy Premier, that this House do now adjourn.

**SPEAKER:** The motion is 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:** All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

**SPEAKER:** It being Wednesday, in accordance with Standing Order 9(3), the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 in the afternoon.