



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FIFTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

---

Volume L

SECOND SESSION

Number 116

---

HANSARD

*Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA*

Thursday

May 15, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**SPEAKER (Bennett):** Order, please!

Admit visitors.

Before we begin this afternoon, in the public gallery, I'd like to welcome Mark Lane, Gerald Kirby, Ryan Kirby, Melissa Wells and Dr. Anthony Parrell. They're here this afternoon for a Member's statement.

Welcome.

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

**SPEAKER:** Before we get into Member's statements, as Speaker, I don't get the opportunity to do one, but I do want to recognize a very special lady in my district that I will be going back tomorrow to celebrate her birthday. Ms. Victoria Compton, that's living in the Lewisporte Health Centre, will be turning 108 years old tomorrow.

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

**SPEAKER:** I do believe that makes Ms. Compton, actually, the second oldest resident in Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Statements by Members

**SPEAKER:** Today, we'll hear statements by the hon. Members for the Districts of Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, Lake Melville, Labrador West and Harbour Main.

The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

**C. TIBBS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Rod Bennet, also known as Blackie Bennett, was born April 21, 1965, and has given a lifetime of service to his community. Today, he works with the Qalipu First Nation as Director of Operations.

Rod's involvement was wide and varied, joining the Army Cadet Movement in 1977, and went on to become a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in 1984. He played in the Grand Falls baseball league and served on their executive for 10 years. Prior to that, he served with the Grand Falls-Windsor fire department and served a term on council from 2017 to 2021.

His family became involved in fundraising initiatives with the Canadian Cancer Society after his wife was diagnosed with breast cancer. Rod Bennett fell sick in late January of this year and is now dealing with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. Fortunately, he has an army of supporters behind him as he has always been there for so many others.

During his cancer journey, he has been blessed with his first grandchild, Noah.

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

**C. TIBBS:** It's what fuels his fight, along with his wife, Hilda; his son, Jordan; and his daughter, Alison, which mean the world to him, as family are everything to him.

Please join me as we honour Blackie Bennet and wish him all the love and support he needs moving forward. We've got this, brother.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

Speaker, Lieutenant Colonel – padre – Thomas Nangle served as chaplain to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment during the First World War and, thereafter, represented the Dominion of Newfoundland on the Imperial War Graves Commission. He envisaged a series of monuments at important battle sites that we now know as

the Trail of the Caribou and developed our National War Memorial. His name and exploits are revered in our history.

Following the war, and for reasons not fully understood, Nangle moved far away and settled in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. He died in 1972.

My tribute today is to recognize Robert and Bev Forsey of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, who recently travelled to a remote region of Zimbabwe. After extensive detective work and assistance from local guides, the Forseys were able to locate Thomas Nangle's grave in the City of Kewkwe. They were able to remove the overgrown vegetation and restore the site, now better recorded for future reference. The local cemetery worker was happy that visitors had arrived to care for the grave, knowing an important person was buried there.

Speaker, I ask my colleagues to applaud the efforts of Robert and Bev Forsey to reconnect our province with one of our most famous sons.

Thank you.

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

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

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

Speaker, *Northern Outdoor Adventures* is a YouTube series that captures the rugged beauty and raw wilderness of Labrador.

Hosted by Jason Linstead, an experienced outdoorsman from Labrador West, the show offers a unique and close-up view of the natural wonders that define the remote region. Linstead's deep connection to the land shines through as he explores various outdoor activities including hunting, fishing, camping and survival skills. The series is not only a showcase of the diverse landscapes of Labrador, from dense forests

to expansive lakes and untamed rivers, but a tribute to the culture and traditions of the local communities.

Jason's practical approach to outdoor living is paired with his personal stories, giving viewers insight into the challenges and rewards of living in a remote and harsh environment. What sets *Northern Outdoor Adventures* apart is Jason's passion for promoting the natural world. The series often highlights hunting and fishing as well as wilderness exploration. Through his channel, Jason provides a genuine and inspiring glimpse into one of Canada's most untamed and scenic regions, Labrador West.

I ask all Members to join me in thanking Jason Linstead for promoting the outdoor wonders of Labrador West for all to see.

Thank you.

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

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

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

Vida Nova Recovery is a volunteer-led initiative founded by Mark Lane of Holyrood, in the District of Harbour Main, joined with his co-founders: wife, Rhonda Tulk-Lane, and Gerry and Ryan Kirby.

These community-minded individuals are in the process of developing a world-class, state of the art addiction treatment and recovery facility located off Salmonier Line, Holyrood. The inspiration for this initiative came as a result of the alarming rise in drug addiction in our province. This centre will be focused on compassionate, evidence-based care that will be tailored to individuals struggling with substance use disorders and addictions. Treatment, based on individual plans, will range in services from medically supervised detoxification to long-term

recovery and community integration. The centre will have 16 single-room treatment accommodations, in addition to 10 sober-living cottages.

Vida Nova means new life and it is a name quite fitting for this facility. Mark and the co-founders saw a desperate need for addiction treatment to help fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who struggle with addiction gain a new lease on life.

I ask all Members to join me in congratulating Mark Lane and his incredible team and wish them great success in bringing this project to fruition.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Statements by Ministers.

#### **Statements by Ministers**

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

**S. GAMBIN-WALSH:** Speaker, I rise to recognize one of the most significant moments in the province's history, the day women achieved the right to vote and hold public office, April 3, 1925.

We owe this triumph to the courageous women who stood firm in the face of opposition. Pioneers such as Armine Gosling, Fannie McNeil, Lady Jeannette Thorburn, Emma Peters, Myra Campbell and Agnes Ayre, who led the suffrage movement often facing resistance, ridicule and countless barriers. It is because of them that the voices of women are heard in our elections, in our Legislature and beyond, and their perspectives, our perspectives, are helping guide and shape our laws, policies and economic future.

The right to vote and hold public office is not just a privilege, it is a responsibility. It is a call to action. It is a reminder that democracy flourishes when all voices are included and when every individual has a seat at the table.

As we commemorate this year, I encourage each of you to participate in anniversary events that will be happening around the province and to also create your own initiatives to support women.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** I thank the minister for an advance copy of the statement.

Yes, today we commemorate April 3, 1925, as a significant milestone marking 100 years since women earned the right to hold office and vote. This anniversary serves as a reminder of the progress we've made, but it also highlights the pressing need for further action.

Women and gender-diverse individuals continue to face substantial obstacles, especially when it comes to achieving fair compensation and equal opportunities in the workplace. It is particularly troubling that the Office of Women and Gender Equality has delayed implementing critical regulations linked to pay equity legislation.

Advocates are still disappointed years later, expressing that the proposed measures lack the depth and effectiveness required to bring about meaningful change. We cannot settle for incomplete solutions. The urgency for action is paramount. Therefore, it is important for the minister to prioritize these critical issues and exhibit a true dedication to promoting gender equity.

Thank you.

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

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

**J. BROWN:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement.

As the father of two Indigenous women, I continue to remind them the importance that is the right to vote and the right to hold office, and them seeing me in this role every day is important as well for them. I encourage them and I encourage all women to seek public office, to express your right to vote but, also, to make sure that, as women and gender-diverse people, no matter your creed, your race or anything like that, your right to vote is your right to voice and it must not be exploited.

Today, this anniversary is very important for that and other things, and I also encourage the minister to, yes, make sure that we continue to advance women's causes to make sure more women sit in this Chamber and more women have rights and opportunities and the ability to do things comparative of all people in this province.

Thank you.

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

**SPEAKER:** Are there any further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

### Oral Questions

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

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

Speaker, "The system is broken:' NL Seniors' Advocate frustrated with the lack of action on long-term care homes."

In a report released this morning, the Seniors' Advocate wrote: "Significant problems in the long term care and personal care home systems were identified as a systemic issue by the OSA dating back to 2018." Yet, it has taken them until 2025 to complete the review.

I ask the Premier: Why did it take seven years to get this review done?

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

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

I want to thank the Seniors' Advocate for her incredible work, for advocating on behalf of seniors in this province. Of course, having been only in this role for less than a week, as I said, one of my priorities was to focus on what are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians priorities and one of those priorities is, of course, the well-being of seniors in this province, which is why we have a minister now dedicated to looking after seniors, looking at their priorities and what they are and that includes personal care homes and long-term care homes as well.

Of course, we have an at-home first policy. We respect our seniors in this province. We want them to age in place, at home, in their communities but, of course, if they need to move on to personal care homes and long-term care homes, the Continuum of Care Approach, which is what the Seniors' Advocate report is titled, is the right approach to take and I know the minister will focus on that as he does very important work going forward.

Thank you.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, I understand and appreciate the fact that the Premier is only in the job for a week or so, but the Premier was also the previous minister of Health and it shouldn't take the creation of a separate Minister of Seniors to take action on this serious issue that she has identified since 2018.

This review was initiated, wasn't started until 2023, so that's five years after the first thing. Then, it took until 2025 before it was made public. Five years before commissioning the review. What's even more shocking now is that the Seniors' Advocate has written in the three months following the release of the review, government has not released an implementation plan.

I ask the Premier: Why not and when will we see it?

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

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

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

Very important question that we want to identify the needs of seniors here in this province. As the Premier stated, we've made that a priority by implementing the Department of Seniors, but they will work very closely with the Department of Health and Community Services as we recognize the challenges that are present in our personal care homes, our long-term care homes and with our home support programs.

So the Members opposite might know that in 2019-2020, we did have something that was occupying our time, the pandemic, took priority at that point in time because the safety and well-being of seniors in the immediate time frame was what was on the

forefront but, since that, we've been able to manage that effectively and move into the process by which we'll now take the Seniors' Advocate's report and dive into it and see what we can do to move forward.

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

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, I heard lots of reasons, but I didn't hear when. I didn't hear any indication of when. Of course, today the Seniors' Advocate has given government another 11 recommendations. One of the recommendations is calling for a new continuum of care legislation to help seniors.

So I ask the Premier: Will you commit to keeping this House open and, next week, introduce the legislation that's recommended by the Seniors' Advocate?

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

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

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

I would like to inform the House that there is work under way on the development of continuing care legislation and draft operational standards for our personal care homes, as well as home support programs, long-term care programs. There is a lot of the service model and the delivery model that is wrapped up in different parts of the Department of Health and Community Services. Seniors are recipients of that care, as well as folks who are experiencing mental health issues and those with complex mental health and addictions needs.

So there are plans in place. There are already courses of action that we're able to

utilize to best provide these services for seniors until the legislation is prepared and ready for a public presentation.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** The only thing I can take from that, Speaker, is there is no commitment to bringing in this legislation in the current session while we're sitting here.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** The Seniors' Advocate has also recommended raising the Comfort Allowance to at least \$360 per month and indexing it to inflation so seniors can afford personal items, communication services and community involvement.

Will the Premier commit to following this advice?

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

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

A very important topic today. We all want to make sure our seniors are well regarded, respected and ensure they have a good opportunity as they move through life.

Speaker, we have indexed the Seniors' Benefit. This was something we put in this year's budget – very important. We have increased the Seniors' Benefit as well. Not only did we index the benefit, we indexed the threshold, which I know that the Members opposite certainly support even though they didn't support the budget.

I will say the issue of the Comfort Allowance – we haven't increased the Comfort Allowance in the last number of years, and we'll continue to review it as well as the threshold limits.

Thank you.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, I think for most of seniors that are out there in our province, they're not looking for things. They just simply want a yes or no.

We have a report here with 11 recommendations in it. We need a government that's prepared to stand up and say, yes, we will.

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** That's what we're asking.

The Seniors' Advocate recommended that rental rates for personal care homes and long-term care homes increase no more than once per year, be capped at the rate of inflation and require four months written notice.

How does the Premier respond to this recommendation?

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

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

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to what is certainly a pressure point for many seniors here in Newfoundland and Labrador. We recognize that and that's why we had the insight to put together an expert panel a while ago that was able to give advice to the department.

We do have an action plan to enact some of those measures that have been presented. That will be made public in very short order.

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

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

**T. WAKEHAM:** Speaker, I'm not sure why the Minister of Seniors doesn't want to talk about this issue. It's up to them, of course, who they get to stand up and speak to it. The Premier of the province is not willing to stand up and offer his opinion on whether or not he thinks these recommendations should be implemented.

Speaker, we value personal care homes. They provide significant care to our province's seniors and need to be supported in everything they do. Will you ensure that any changes you make that you'll work with the personal care homes to make sure they are able to provide the best care for our province's seniors?

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

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

**K. HOWELL:** Yes.

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

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

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

The Premier has been there a week and, if he's been in the House four days, he hasn't answered four questions the week. I think *Hansard* might show something. We'll live in hope.

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

**B. PETTEN:** We'll live in hope, Speaker.

Will government list compliance reports for homes publicly, just as restaurant reviews are currently posted?

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

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

As I said, there is significant work underway to build legislative measures by which we will be able to conduct business with our personal care homes as well as our long-term care homes and our home support programs. We're continuing work on that and as soon as it's ready for public presentation, it will be brought forward to this House.

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

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

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

I think, respectfully, for all personal care homes in the province that are providing the great service, the sooner they do that the better. I think it's only out of respect for those homes.

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, people died, were sexually assaulted or suffered negligence. Can the minister table the department's investigation into these serious events?

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

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

The Member opposite brings up what is obviously a very difficult issue for a lot of people here in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are some privacy and confidentiality measures that would have to be looked at and respected, so I'll have to take that question away and see what the art of the possible is.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** I guess the follow-up to that would be: Has there been an investigation completed?

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

**K. HOWELL:** At this point, Speaker, I'd have to get back to the Member opposite with the answer to that question as I'm not aware of the investigations yet.

It might simply be that I haven't got to that part of the department yet, in three days, but I certainly will make every effort to get that information for the Member opposite.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** I would hope then, the former minister, maybe, the Premier or the Minister of Justice should know the answer to that question. I'll ask one of them.

Can you answer? Has the investigation been completed? You were there. One of you were there. Someone should be able to answer the question.

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

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

The issue of these cases, the comment I made at the time when I was in a different portfolio, was that there was no number that was acceptable except zero. What I also said was that protocols were followed, prompt responses and appropriate responses were done by each of the facilities involved and that, where appropriate, law enforcement was advised and notified.

What happens from a law enforcement perspective, I cannot comment on. Even as

Minister of Justice and Public Safety, that is a matter for law enforcement.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** The public and the families have a right to know, Speaker.

People died and the Auditor General called out the department's total lack of management and oversight. Minister, our caucus feels that this issue is very important. What steps is the minister going to take to provide accountability for what took place under her government's watch?

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

**K. HOWELL:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity to respond, again identifying that any of these incidents are too many.

One is too many in any occurrence of these events, so we are taking this measure very seriously. As I mentioned, it's a priority of this government now to deliver legislation that enacts standards for which our personal care homes, our long-term care homes and our home support programs will be held to. As soon as that is ready, we will present that publicly.

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

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

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

Speaker, during Estimates we learned that the department had failed to implement an Auditor General recommendation from 2016 to identify and monitor performance indicators related to children in care.

Speaker, after nine years, why does the Liberal government still not track the performance of the intervention and the In Care Program for children and youth?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Families and Affordability.

**J. KORAB:** Speaker, thank you for allowing me to rise here, and the hon. Member for the question.

The Department of Families and Affordability is committed to the safety and well-being of children and youth in care in Newfoundland and Labrador. There has been increased number of children and youth requiring a higher level of care and due to complexity of these needs, Speaker, children and youth in placement with service providers caring for these children are required to have a specialized education, training, experience and skills in order to meet the needs and care of children and youth to ensure their safety and well-being in our communities.

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

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

**C. PARDY:** The question was the comment on the early intervention of these children in care – early intervention – in order to curb the path of which many of these children embark upon.

Since 2017, the Liberal government have had to use the contingency fund five times to fund services for children in care, and each of those five years, no less than \$5-million contingency has been provided. Based on the Liberal's repeated under funding and how they ignored the recommendation of the Auditor General, I do worry that the children protection system has flaws.

So I ask the minister: What guarantees can he offer that every child in care is truly receiving the best care available?

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

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

Indeed, there have been challenges with funding for children in care because of those extreme costs for certain high and complex needs children. What we were finding is that there were more entering the system and that has been causing a tumult, I'll call it, in the budgeting process.

This is a concern to this government, to make sure that these children are well cared for and make sure they are given every opportunity, and that is why we've been completely funding them and, as the Member opposite said, sometimes from contingency if there wasn't enough budget.

So we're making sure that we have the available funds to ensure the best care possible, but we are monitoring the situation and working on the situation to ensure that these children in care are properly funded.

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

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

**C. PARDY:** The question, Speaker, was to ask how can we guarantee or be assured that they are receiving the best care possible in these homes. That was the question. I know I related to the contingency fund, but how can we be assured that they are receiving the best care possible?

On a related question, I have heard from foster families who feel they have been disrespected. One in particular in my district of which we've reached out on. They note a lack of support. Some have indicated that they are owed a significant amount of

money and one stated that the credit card was maxed out.

Is the minister concerned that, by not treating foster families with respect, families will no longer choose to foster?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Families and Affordability.

**J. KORAB:** Speaker, I thank the Member opposite for the question.

Here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we have approximately 545 foster families dedicated to helping youth and children with complex needs, providing safe and nurturing homes.

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

**J. KORAB:** Foster families, as the Member opposite can appreciate, I'm sure, they play a vital role in our youth in care. If there's anyone out there – I can't speak to the specific case, Speaker, as I haven't seen it. If that speaker would like to send it to me, I'll be happy to look at it personally. Send it to my department.

Thank you.

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

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** On Monday, Speaker, I asked for the creation of an advocate for persons with disabilities. Three times the minister said he was looking forward to getting up to speed on this.

Now that the minister has had a full week, I'll ask again: Yes or no, will the minister immediately create a disability advocate position?

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

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

I just want to do a bit of quick history on where we are today with regard to the creation of an advocate for disabilities in this province. I do believe the Member raised and I trust what she said is that it was in a mandate letter to, I believe, the Department of CSSD at one point over the last few years. Of course, subsequent to those mandate letters, there was a full review of all statutory offices in this province.

So it wouldn't have made any sense to create a new advocate if the reviewer then decided it wasn't appropriate or should have been done differently. Of course, the review has since been done and the person that did the review, Judge Fowler, recommended that we broaden one of the advocates, I believe, the Seniors' and include complex needs in that as well.

That was the recommendation. Of course, what I've heard through the disability community is that they don't feel that that's the right thing to do. I don't think we, as a government, should ever force something on the disability community that they don't want. So now it's time to continue to work with the disability community, have discussions with them about what the specific advocate would look like and I'm happy to do that with them.

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

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Speaker, for clarification purposes, there wasn't only one mandate letter. There were two mandate letters and, really, there has not been any movement or action. With respect to the review of the statutory offices of the House of Assembly, that was completed back in 2023, 21 months ago. So there was ample time for us to have an answer as to when the disability advocate will be implemented.

Speaker, in 2021, as I stated, the mandate letter directed the creation of an advocate

for person with disability. So this was clear. It was clear that they needed a new advocate for persons with disabilities and not to roll into the Seniors' Advocate.

So I really need to ask the minister responsible: When is the timeline? When will you be creating the disability advocate's position?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Families and Affordability.

**J. KORAB:** Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Member opposite and the passion here. It's a very important issue.

We acknowledge there's a significant number of people in this province, Speaker, that identify as having a disability. As the Premier just said, this is something that is under consideration for all of our advocate positions. Outside government, Speaker, as well as the call for a dedicated advocate, there are a number of organizations such as the network of disability organizations chaired by the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities. They play a key role in disability advocacy in this province.

In fact, Speaker, I have a meeting next week with the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities. I look forward to hearing from them personally on what they want and what we can do as a government to help them.

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

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** Speaker, the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador, they're actually at risk of shutting down due to a lack of reliable funding from this government.

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

**H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER:** And the minister previously said he's looking forward to speaking with stakeholders. Well, reach out to them.

Will the minister provide multi-year operational funds to community-based organizations including the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities of Newfoundland and Labrador?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Families and Affordability.

**J. KORAB:** Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the Member opposite.

The Department of Finance, under Minister Coady, is working with all departments to have grant funding for community organizations looked at for a new potential application process. For now, this will all be done under the budgetary process.

What I can say for groups like the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities is that the department does provide annual funding to them to support activities that undertakes their organizations.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

In Estimates, officials confirmed there are still no immediate plans to deal with landlords and tenants who break the rules despite legislation passed in 2018 allowing penalties.

How many more years is the minister going to wait before actually enforcing the law?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Government Modernization and Service Delivery.

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

I'm very pleased to talk about this. We have a very dedicated team at the residential tenancies office that help landlords and tenants with tricky situations every day. We created a new staff position dedicated for investigations and working with law enforcement. This is not a political decision that would be made in terms of where to lay the charges or anything, that would be the team working with experts and lawyers in the Department of Justice and Public Safety. That is ongoing, Speaker.

Thank you very much.

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

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Speaker, this has been ongoing since 2018. That's seven years.

The minister has overseen this file for the past six years and still nothing has been done. On January 12, she even admitted, "We do accept now that this has been a gap and we are going to be taking on that role."

I ask again: When?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Government Modernization and Service Delivery.

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

It is an extremely important issue. We created a new role for that exact purpose. Our residential tenancies team – we have a board that's quasi-judicial, so I do not direct their day-to-day activities. We have the new role working with the Department of Justice and Public Safety just like, for example, Occupational Health and Safety. There is no political involvement in where charges are laid.

Our quasi-judicial team, from the residential tenancies team, are working with the Department of Justice and Public Safety, and they will bring charges as they see fit to landlords or tenants.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Speaker, I thought my earpiece was gone, it's six years. I haven't heard an answer – six years.

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

**L. O'DRISCOLL:** Speaker, first it was a pilot project, then the excuse was staffing and now it's just inaction. Landlords and tenants continue to flaunt the rules with zero consequences.

After six years and delaying and dodging, when will the minister finally take action?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Government Modernization and Service Delivery.

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

It's the same answer as what I just described. I'm unhappy to say it numerous times. The residential tenancies team is a quasi-judicial area of government just like, for example, Occupational Health and Safety. The minister does not get involved in where charges are laid. How the investigations are undertaken, the public service experts in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador undertake that in consultation with the Department of Justice and Public Safety. We created a new role for that exact purpose, Speaker.

The Member is correct in what I said but we have actioned it. We have created a new role through the budgetary process and now

our team, the quasi-judicial team, are working with the Department of Justice and Public Safety. They will decide when and how to lay charges to landlords or tenants.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**L. PADDOCK:** Speaker, this is a repeat from past November, a question.

Last May, the Premier promised that the clinic in both La Scie and Triton would be open to provide primary medical care regionally to residents in those areas. When will that promise be honoured?

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

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

Yes, I'm certainly aware of the commitments that were made. We are working diligently to fill roles and positions that exist all across the province. We've been able to develop Family Care Teams, which have been an effective measure in rostering patients to primary care providers. We have close to 100,000 individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador who are now attached to a Family Care Team.

Anybody who is still in search of a family doctor or a primary care provider, we do recommend that they connect with Patient Connect so that we can get a better grasp of those individuals left in the province who still need a primary care provider. We are working on areas that have vacancies –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**K. HOWELL:** – and areas that need to be developed. We'll continue to work with the

Member opposite and through the NLHS to fill those roles.

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

The hon. the Member for Fogo Island - Cape Freels

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

Speaker, I've been contacted by the members of the Local Service District of Stoneville. The residents of this community are concerned about a recent increase in crime. The local RCMP cite a lack of staff resources.

I ask the minister: Will he help get more policing for the residents of Stoneville?

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

**J. HAGGIE:** Thank you very much for the question, Speaker.

I, prior to this sitting of the House, was at a recruitment fair at White Hills with the RCMP. I'm pleased to announce that they have, on average, a graduating class in Regina every week. We are expecting 10 new recruits from the RCMP.

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

**J. HAGGIE:** We have worked with both the RNC and the RCMP to increase the number of cadets and the number of recruits going through. I have met with both chiefs and will continue to do so to see what else they need.

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

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

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

Speaker, card-check certification allows workers to form a union without an

employer's interference and allows a smoother process. This province had card-check but it was removed by the former Conservative government, and the removal was supported by the Liberals in 2014.

I ask the new Minister of Labour: Will this government reintroduce card-check certification to make it easier for workers to unionize?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Rural Economic Development, and Labour.

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

It certainly is a privilege and honour to answer my first question as the new Minister of Rural Economic Development, Labour, and WorkplaceNL.

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

**P. PARSONS:** As we know and as the Member knows – I know he's well-versed on this topic and I appreciate his interest – this is certainly an issue that is very complex. We know that there are only two jurisdictions in Canada doing this: Quebec, of course, and BC.

As we know, when we introduce new legislation, it's something that has to be monitored, but I'm very proud of the amendments that have been made. With that said, we will continue to monitor this, but we do know it is very complex. It is very important that we balance the needs of employers, as well, of course, as labour.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

Speaker, all federal parties agreed with anti-scab legislation and when we ban scabs,

we protect workers charter right to strike, and that right is enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This legislation will protect workers and their jobs.

I ask the minister: Will she table anti-scab legislation and continue to work to make sure that the scales are truly balanced for workers?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Rural Economic Development, and Labour.

**P. PARSONS:** Thank you, Speaker, and again, I thank the hon. Member for the question.

Again I will repeat, we do know that the current anti-replacement worker legislation only exists in Quebec and BC; but since then, since 2022, we have made significant legislative amendments to the *Labour Standards Act*, which I'm very proud of, that workers can be proud of and labour in general here in our great province, such as to remove sick note requirements for employees requiring short-term illness leave and amended job protection leave related to long-term illness, long-term injury and organ donation.

So we are making good work, and we certainly will continue to monitor legislation to make sure that we are responsive and relevant.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

Also, she forgot off the list Manitoba has also introduced it, as well as I believe another province is in the process of doing it. So there are other provinces doing that.

Speaker, it's been 100 years since women in this province got the right to vote and hold office, yet we're still waiting on government to deliver the pay equity. Pay equity has stalled in this province because government didn't consult workers or women's groups.

So I ask the minister, now that she's in the Department of Labour: When will we see pay equity legislation fully implemented for true?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Rural Economic Development, and Labour.

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

Again, I was the minister that introduced, for the first time ever, the only government in our province to actually introduce –

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

**P. PARSONS:** – pay equity legislation. I know my colleague who's now in the role and we're already rolling up our sleeves to get work done.

But that said, a new update on the pay transparency, Speaker.

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

**P. PARSONS:** My gosh, they're so excited in here today. It's like the last day of school, Speaker, they can't contain themselves. They're very excited about the legislation as well, as we know.

But as we know, we are drafting the framework currently for pay transparency regulations –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**P. PARSONS:** – that will serve as the basis for the detailed discussions with those targeted employers.

So that work is ongoing. That work has now moved to the Department of Labour, of course. Staff are already hard working, they're already working on this, Speaker, and I look forward to bringing the best legislation of course for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, including women and gender-diverse.

Thank you.

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

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

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

Workers' health and safety must be top priority for governments. The establishment of an occupational health and safety clinic would help both employees and employers support healthy and safe workplaces and allow early intervention for occupational diseases.

So I ask the Minister of Labour: Will she establish a dedicated occupational health and safety clinic?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Rural Economic Development, and Labour.

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

I'm glad to see the Member for the Third Party is really putting me through the gears here today in our session.

I'm proud to say that, to date, 44 of the 48 recommendations have been completed and there are four ongoing, one led by WorkplaceNL and three led by the provincial government. I have a list that I can certainly table.

Again, we're committed to making the best legislation, working with everyone involved, all of our stakeholders, and I look forward to getting down doing that work. I also welcome the Member to certainly come over

any time and we can have a sit down in a meeting to talk about the best practices.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** Quick question, no preamble, please.

**J. BROWN:** Speaker, transparency and accountable are what workers deserve.

I ask the minister: Will she publish all workplace health and safety inspections on the government website?

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Rural Economic Development, and Labour.

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

As we know, our government is all about transparency. I'm very proud of the practices of our budget which we passed last night. Like I said, we're committed to making the best legislation, not just in this department, this wonderful department, this new department with a focus on rural economic development, Speaker, but across government.

So that said, we're always committed to bringing the best legislation forward and the information –

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

**P. PARSONS:** My gosh, Speaker, they're so excited I can barely hear myself speak.

Speaker, thank you.

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

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

### Tabling of Documents

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Pursuant to paragraph 21(f) and section 51 of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, I am pleased to table the House of Assembly Management Commission's Annual Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024.

This report includes a summary of the work of the Commission for the period of April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Are there any further tabling of documents?

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

### Petitions

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

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Roads in our province are in various states of disrepair. Many rural communities are concerned that the deplorable road conditions will keep visitors and family away from celebrations that they will be presenting this summer. We are inviting the world to come to our province this summer and many rural roads are unfit to travel and many vehicles are damaged by huge potholes, unrepaired washouts and uneven shoulders. This is a real deterrent for tourists and family members from out of province who wish to join in our celebrations.

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: To urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to have a plan that is created for the provincial roads program and addresses the needs of the many repairs that are needed on our rural roads.

I presented this before, and the reason why I'm presenting it today is because the people that signed on this petition are from Chance Cove. My hat's off to the new council in Chance Cove. Their council became dissolved and now they're starting to find out a few things that they weren't aware of, but they feel that they've been left behind for far too long. Chance Cove is a bypass, and if anybody knows about my district, we call it the Doe Hills. There's always fog there. It's where Trinity Bay meets Placentia Bay. If it's clear there on a day, you better get ready for fog everywhere else.

So the thing is that there has been many accidents. It's really bad in the winter with drifting and stuff like that. What happens if there's an accident in the Doe Hills? You have to reroute traffic through the old Cabot Highway, which starts in Chance Cove, but the path from the highway to even the branch is horrible. It's no better than a cow path. There's collapsed culverts, it's just unbelievable and we have one of the most prized destinations of a trail in Chance Cove, the Chance Cove trail. We've put in money to the trail and all that kind of stuff, but guess what? The trail is better to walk on and go over now than the roads in the community.

It's just unbelievable that we have painted lines going right through potholes – not even a bag of fillcrete or anything like that in it, just painting over potholes. It's just unbelievable. I've done everything I can in working with the community but it just seems to get ignored. I think it's because of the depots that close down the summer. I've been telling the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure this now

for years. I would really like them to sit down and listen to my priorities because I understand that I drive these roads, but I'm there on behalf of the people and they need to be listened to once and for all.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

Speaker, these are the reasons for this petition:

Nursing students completing a Bachelor of Science in nursing at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador undertake no less than 1,600 unpaid clinical placements. The rising cost of tuition at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador has placed additional financial burden on students, forcing many to seek outside employment to cover university fees, living expenses and support. Inadequate funding for preceptorship and independent placements fail to recognize the significant time and effort invested by nursing students during these critical expenses. Nursing students engaged in clinical placement and full-time studies find it challenging to maintain part-time employment, thus impeding their ability to cover their educational and living expenses.

Therefore, we petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide nursing students with a fair compensation for clinical placements that exceed 48 hours per semester, reflecting the time and effort they dedicate to their clinical work. This compensation could lead and align with compensation provided for a living minimum wage. Remove the fees associated with clinical placements for local and international students to alleviate the financial strain faced by students and

ensure equitable treatment compared to students in other programs.

Speaker, you know, we're trying to recruit people. We're trying to get people into the health care system. We're trying to encourage people to go into the sciences, especially the medical sciences, breaking down barriers for students and those that want to take on such a – you know, I could never imagine myself going into nursing but people who actually want to go in there, we should be making sure that there's a clear pathway for them and make sure that they don't find themselves in any burden.

I can only imagine signing up for nursing and the amount of work and the amount of study and the amount of everything like that. If we break down barriers for people, get them into the education system and make sure they get to do their placements. I think it's fair. I did a work term in the trades. My work term was paid; I went and spent three weeks on a job site and they paid me. I always thought, or I expected, if I did a work placement and that, I thought everyone got paid. You're doing work for some organization or something; you're making value, you're going to get paid for it.

We find out that nursing students going to these clinical placements don't get paid and actually, apparently, they pay to go to these things. This is why I think this is a good opportunity for government to have a look, treat nurses fairly and maybe this is an enticement in saying: I went and did my placement. I got paid for it. It was great. If you build the trust between government and the health authority and the student themselves, you're probably going to recruit more people this way.

So I just want to put this petition out there on behalf of nursing students of this province and make sure this is an opportunity that, maybe, we can help better the recruitment process and treat nurses fairly right from the get-go.

Thank you.

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

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

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

I have presented this petition a number of times. The background to this petition is as follows:

WHEREAS there are many hopeful mothers and couples in this province dealing with infertility issues and require medical assistance to conceive; and

WHEREAS the costs associated with out-of-province fertility treatments, specifically in vitro fertilization, is extremely cost prohibitive; and

WHEREAS there are doctors in this province trained in in vitro fertilization and have the desire to set up an in vitro fertilization clinic in the province; and

WHEREAS the province is dealing with an aging population and serious population growth challenges.

THEREFORE, we petition the House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to establish a fertility clinic within the province providing full fertility services, including IVF, to hopeful mothers and families and, in the interim, provide financial assistance to assist out-of-province fertility treatment and services.

I can speak from experience of having three beautiful daughters and anyone in this House who has brought a child into this world are really blessed – really blessed – to be able to do that. As we know, there are many that are unable to do that and those that require medical assistance to do so.

Back in 2016, this Liberal government, in their AGM, had a resolution to provide fertility services here. Four or five years ago, they ran their election campaign on providing fertility services here. They've come in with some assistance but, as we know, not nearly enough.

We deal with demographic issues, population decline and here is a real answer to that: to build a family in this province and to stay in this province. I can't imagine young mothers and young couples who, five years ago, took government on their word that there would be a clinic here, and they're still waiting. We all know the years to conceive are numbered, and some of these families are now five years more behind.

I know it's been kicked down the road again, so 2026 is the promise of that. I do urge this government to look at this and come in with full fertility services sooner rather than later.

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

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

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Long Run Road is the main access road from the Goulds to Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove. This piece of infrastructure is in need of major repairs. This road is in a deplorable condition and is relied on by both residents and visitors on a daily basis. Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove is a well-known tourist attraction in the area.

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to complete the necessary repairs to the Long Run Road in Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove to enhance and improve the flow of traffic to and from to allow safer travel on this important roadway.

Speaker, I've certainly done this petition many times. It's a very important stretch of road down in Petty Harbour. I was only down there last week; when you drive down, at least three or four times you haul across the road to go over on the left side to go around some of the holes that are there. From Crocker's Bridge right down to Chafe's Landing or in that area, there is two kilometres of road and it's in dire need of repairs.

I know that in the Roads Plan that came out that Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove is on the list. I'm not sure what they're doing down there, so I'll hopefully find out. We did request from the department what they're doing, but hopefully the department sees on getting it done or getting that piece of stretch done.

The tourism that's in the area itself – and I got some places listed: Chafe's Landing, Tinkers Ice Cream Shop, Petty Harbour Mini Aquarium, the East Coast Trail is down there, Fishing for Success, North Atlantic Ziplines and the fishery is down there. Anybody who wants to come down there, they can go down and look at crab fishermen coming in, unloading. In the summertime, when the cod fishing is on the go.

Anyone that goes in or flies into St. John's, they certainly want to see rural Newfoundland. They have a rental car, that would be the first place they head. If they're staying here for a while, yes, they might say there are more tourists that go to Bonavista and Twillingate and other areas across the Island, but I guarantee you, there are as many people who pass through Petty Harbour as any place on this Island. That is a guarantee.

This summer, we have the Summer Games coming up; hopefully, this paving, if it's going to be done, is going to be done by the time the Summer Games start. I know they have infrastructure they have to do, but with tourists coming in here and the amount of

people that are coming, if they're in St. John's doing these activities and they get an afternoon off, I guarantee you they're going to be heading to Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove to get a picture of rural Newfoundland and what it looks like. I can guarantee you they will go down there. It's a beautiful spot.

When you go down there in the summer, it's even hard to find a parking spot. That's how busy it is down there, people walking around the community. There's a boardwalk down there. It's just incredible how many people are down there.

So hopefully the minister is listening and he will be able to get these two kilometres of road paved before the Summer Games come here. There'll be an influx of tourism in the province this summer for sure, besides Summer Games, and hopefully he will be able to get down and get this roadwork done.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** The hon. the birthday girl – I mean, the Member for Torngat Mountains.

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

**SPEAKER:** Happy Birthday!

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

Obviously, I haven't got my birthday wish yet.

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

**L. EVANS:** We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador who urge our leaders to ensure that fair electricity rates be provided to residents in Northern Labrador communities.

Electricity rates charged to Northern Labrador residents are cost prohibitive to

adequately heating their homes. The first 1,000 kilowatt hours, residents are charged the same rate as neighbouring residents in Lake Melville region, however above this ceiling, Torngat Mountains residents are charged 21.3 cents per kilowatt hour.

Speaker, that's the highest in the province. This is the highest rate in the entire province, preventing residents from being about to afford to heat their homes with electric heat.

Low-income families and households that don't have the manpower or the means to haul wood are the greatest impacted. Poorly heated houses often results in damage creating expensive repairs from frozen pipelines, moisture damage and mould. Poorly heated houses also create social and mental health issues that can be long lasting. We strongly believe that changes to the electricity rates should be made for Northern Labrador residents of Torngat Mountains.

Speaker, I talk a lot about manpower to haul wood, and the reason why I do that is because we actually met with Jennifer Williams and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, the Crown corporation. They failed to address the needs to transition off of diesel generating stations. We on the North Coast are penalized, and she told me that. The Member for Lab West was there, the Member for Lake Melville was there. She said the high rate, which we are at 21.3 cents a kilowatt hour now, is to discourage residents from using electric heat.

Now, what about seniors? Are they required to go off and haul wood? They can't afford the really expensive stove oil, furnace oil to heat their houses, so they're being discriminated against. Women – are you saying that all women and also men – there's a lot of men out there that don't have the ability to go off with a chainsaw and cut down wood, chop it up and bring it into their house. They have bad knees, bad backs, elderly people. So seniors, people with

disadvantages, you know, physically who can't do it. Speaker, in my district, people are suffering so this really needs to be addressed.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**SPEAKER:** Orders of the Day.

**Orders of the Day**

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

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

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 3.

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Speaker, the motion reads:

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Assembly as follows:

WHEREAS section 7 of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* provides that, upon nomination by the House of Assembly, the Clerk of the House of Assembly shall be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council by Commission under the Great Seal;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Kim Hawley George, KC be nominated for immediate appointment as Clerk of the House of Assembly.

Speaker, that is seconded by the Premier.

I'd like to say a few words about Ms. Hawley George. Perhaps, Speaker, I do believe I'm the longest-serving Member in the Legislature on House Management, been there from back in my presiding officer days, and so I have a lot of direct familiarity, myself, with Ms. Hawley George. It's a very,

very important role, Speaker, and when we move through the consultation process, and we go through a recruitment initiative, and we look for suitable candidates of who would fill the position of Clerk of the House of Assembly.

Speaker, I'm sure many people here in this House would be familiar that the Newfoundland and Labrador Assembly operates under a highly prescriptive administrative and accountability framework, and that's all laid out in the HOAIA Act, which most of us, as MHAs, would have some level of familiarity with. So the regime is unique. Our regime is unique in the Canadian context.

Speaker, the Clerk must maintain and enhance trust and confidence in the Legislature through faithful stewardship of public funds under this very robust framework that I referenced. The Clerk also provides expert procedural and administrative analysis and advice, often under tight timelines, on unique and complex matters, many of which we have dealt with here over the last three or four years. The Clerk works with the Speaker, other presiding Officers, House Leaders, Members of the Management Commission and all Members of the House of Assembly. This advice that the Clerk in the position would give may have significant impact on the effectiveness and constitutional validity of the proceedings of the Legislature.

So before I say a couple of words about Ms. Hawley George who is coming into this position, she's been in the position in an acting role, now moving in permanent, I just want to lay some framework as to the responsibility –

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

**SPEAKER:** Order, please!

It's getting hard to hear the Member speak.

**L. DEMPSTER:** – that the Clerk would have.

Speaker, Ms. Hawley George, KC, was appointed Acting Clerk of the House of Assembly effective September 1, 2023, in accordance with subsection 7(3) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*. Prior to her most recent appointment as Acting Clerk, Ms. Hawley George served as Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel for the House of Assembly since 2017 and concurrently serving as Acting Clerk Assistant from 2020-2023.

Prior to joining the Legislature, she served as Chief Legislative Counsel and assistant deputy minister for Legislative Counsel and Legal Services in the Department of Justice and Public Safety. Ms. Hawley George's nearly 30-year career has been in public service to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Ms. Hawley George has the knowledge, experience, commitment and qualifications to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of Clerk on a permanent basis. I believe when this came before the House Management, which is made up of Members of all parties in this province, there was certainly a unanimous decision that Ms. Hawley George was indeed suited and was qualified.

So I want to wish her well as she moves into this position on a permanent basis. I can tell you, from my experience and we may hear from other Members in this House today, she makes herself available to provide support wherever she can, whenever she can. I think we're very fortunate to have someone of her calibre to take on that position.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**B. PETTEN:** Speaker, it's a pleasure, as well, to stand in my place and I know following the Government House Leader and to speak about Ms. Hawley George, we too are at the benefit of a lot of her – I guess, it is questionable if she calls it wisdom when she got to listen to us, especially when she has to listen to me when I get passionate about an issue, as you can attest to.

But to her credit, she's always there, she's always available, a phone call away or her door is always open. We don't always agree, but I always leave her office knowing that I was listened to, my viewpoints were respected and the answers I got, I felt comfortable with. People have asked, actually, are you sure? I said, even this past week, yes, I am confident, I'm sure I got the right advice, and you can't say that every time you leave a room in this business, as we all know.

All my dealings with her have been nothing short of first class. The advice we've always got has never, ever been wrong. I mean, most of her counsel, I call it, even in our day-to-day running of the House, it's always been very good. It's very unbiased. It's what you expect from a Clerk, and I know all of caucus appreciate what she does for the House.

I am a Member of the Management Commission for a lot of years, as the Government House Leader is as well, and I do recall when she come before us to be appointed, in the Management Commission, there was no question. I think there was one comment by my colleague from Bonavista actually. I can't remember his words, but it was very kind words at the time and we all concurred it was an easy appointment at the time, and she continues on to do great work.

I think it's overdue that this appointment be completed by this resolution of this House. I think it probably could have been done before now, but I'm glad it's getting done. We do support this resolution and we do wish Ms. Kim Hawley George all the best.

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

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

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

I won't take up too much of the House's time for this, but I do want to say our interactions with Ms. Hawley George, from my first time in this House in 2019 to now, between all the different roles that she filled, have been excellent. The advice has always been there. Her door was always open.

She's a fantastic individual to work with and the most I can say is we respect the resolution, we support the resolution, and we're glad that Ms. Hawley George will be now our permanent Clerk in the House now after this motion.

Thank you so much, Speaker.

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

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

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

I just want to take a minute, too, to just congratulate Ms. Hawley George on this appointment today. I thank the Members opposite; the same things they're saying today they said at Management Commission when I was Government House Leader about how she's definitely the right person for this position. She sits right in the middle of us shouting back and forth. I'm sure it's a difficult job at times but one that I know she very much enjoys doing.

I want to thank her personally for when I was Government House Leader for texting her and calling her and meeting with her with all my crazy what-if scenarios, what if this, what if this. She always had answers and she was very patient with listening to what I had to ask.

I want to thank her specifically for the work that she did on the Churchill Falls House of Assembly debate. We all know that was a very tailored and specific and precedent-setting debate which will now be available to use in future sittings of this House of Assembly. She worked very closely with us and with the Opposition on setting that up and setting the rules up and getting through the House that week. That was a very historical day and she was a part of that historical day, so I want to thank her for that and thank her for her work and look forward to working with her in the future.

Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

**P. LANE:** Mr. Speaker, I honestly don't want to rain on any parade here because I want to say, first of all, that I have nothing but the utmost respect for Ms. Hawley George as well. I've had lots of dealings with her in this House of Assembly when she was the Law Clerk, when she was the Clerk, as others have said. I've consulted her a number of times, whether it be about putting in an amendment or a petition or other issues with Government Member Services and so on.

She has been absolutely fantastic. She's been nothing but accommodating to me, personally. I think she's very, very qualified. I recognize her qualifications. I recognize her experience. I'm sure she's the best person for the job. Not disputing it. I am not disputing any of those things and I'm glad

she's getting the job. I would support her 100 per cent.

I'm just going to raise this matter just for the perspective of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* that we're supposed to follow in this House of Assembly. There's a question – it's only a question, looking for some confirmation only. I refer to section 7(1) of the HOAAIAA act – House officers. Section 7(1) says: Upon nomination by the House of Assembly, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, which is the Cabinet, shall, by Commission under the Great Seal, appoint the following officers and then it lists the Clerk of the House of Assembly, the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, the Sergeant-at-Arms and so on, what's in this motion.

I don't have a problem with any of that at all. Here's the part that I'm just asking the question about. Section 7(2) about the appointment of a House officer, it says the following: Before a nomination is made under subsection (1) – which is the appointment of the person – the Speaker shall – not the Speaker may - consult with the Commission – I assume that being the House of Assembly Management Commission, which apparently was done – the Clerk of the Executive Council and the chairperson of the Public Service Commission to determine an appropriate process for recruitment of suitable candidates – with an "s" – for appointment.

That's what it says here. I'm not making this up. I didn't make these rules. This is legislation that governs this House of Assembly. Obviously, the Management Commission were consulted if they agree with it, not a problem. I'm asking the question: Was the Clerk of the Executive Council and was the chair of the Public Service Commission consulted about a process and are they satisfied with that process?

If the answer is, yes, we consulted with all of these people, and they all agreed to it – the Public Service Commission chair said, yes, not a problem, you can just appoint the person, I'm glad we're doing and I support it 100 per cent, but this is what's written in the act.

That is my concern. If we want to vote for Ms. Hawley George anyway and disregard that, I guess that's up to the House of Assembly, but I'm just putting it here on the record that's what's in the act. I just have to ask that question, are we indeed following the act?

With that said, if it's the House will that we vote for Ms. Hawley George, I'm happy for her. As I said, she's a fantastic person, very approachable, very qualified. I'm sure she's the best person for the job. I wish her well, no issue whatsoever. It has nothing to do with it. I am just asking for clarification as to whether the act has been followed in this particular case.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**S. REID:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's great to have an opportunity to speak on this motion before the House today. I'm not in any position to answer the questions that the Member opposite asked, but I'm assuming that the proper process has been followed and everything is fine.

I just want to talk to the character and my experiences with Ms. Hawley George and why I think she is suitable for this position. I got to know her as a Member of this House, but I worked closely with her while I was Speaker for a number of years. We worked together in terms of her advising me on issues related to the House, and she's eminently qualified for this position and has the work experience to do this position properly.

She was Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel for the House of Assembly from 2017 until she was appointed as Acting Clerk in September 2023, and she has 30 years of experience in the public service. She's someone who sort of worked her way up through the system, gaining knowledge and experience as she's gone along.

When I think about my time as Speaker and working with her and other people, we faced some difficult circumstances, and I guess the most notable was COVID. The fact that this House was able to continue to operate through a pandemic was amazing. Other places, other jurisdictions were calling us to ask us, how did we do that? How were we able to keep our Legislature open? We were able to change things, and we changed the whole format of the seating here in this House. We allowed for Committee meetings to take place virtually, which is commonplace now, but wasn't, sort of, acceptable practice before COVID.

So I think that type of experience in unusual, difficult circumstances indicates how lucky we are to have the people that we have here, like Ms. Hawley George, to come forward and to serve in these positions and to help us in our operations of this House. She has the education, work experience to continue in this job she's already in as an acting capacity.

The other thing that I note that I recognized as I worked with her as Speaker when she was the Law Clerk, was that she had a sense of fairness and being fair and understanding the principles of our parliamentary process. From her legal background she understood the law, but she also understood the parliamentary procedures and the parliamentary process that's so important to our democracy and the voices of the people being represented here in this House.

I just want to note those things. I believe she's an eminently qualified person to fill

this position and I encourage all Members to support her appointment in this House.

Thank you very much, Speaker.

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

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

I'm going to stand again and reiterate what my colleague from Mount Pearl - Southlands said. This has nothing to do with the person. Anybody who dealt with Kim Hawley George knows she does it on a professional basis, does it on a timely basis and she is very helpful. We all recognize that and I know two people now have read out her credentials, which cannot be questioned. There is absolutely no doubt about that.

I just want to give a little background. Back in 2007 after a scandal in the House of Assembly, Justice Green came in and he was asked to come in to do a review of the House of Assembly. This is where the HOAIA Act came in. I was interviewed actually by Justice Green then on what should be put into this act and what should be done and how it should be done. I was actually interviewed for it.

I've just got to say there's no one in this House been through this House of Assembly, *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* than me. No one has seen how the act wasn't followed more than me. You even apologized yourself to me once, Mr. Speaker, when we were all out. You even apologize that the act wasn't followed at the time and apologized for what you voted on. You even told me that yourself.

**SPEAKER:** No, I did not.

**E. JOYCE:** I thank you for that apology, by the way and others, too. There's more than one here that did, trust me, but that's fine.

The issue I have is that we have an act. We're Members of this Legislature and we produce acts to follow and we give acts for the people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to follow. I'm asking a very serious question here and I'll ask this to the Management Commission too because if they agree with this process, I have a problem. I really do have a problem.

Under the act, as the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands said, and I'll just read it again, subsection (1) which was read into this here – subsection 7(2) is where I have an issue. Before a nomination is made under subsection (1), the Speaker shall consult with the Commission, Clerk of the Executive Council and the chair of the Public Service Commission to determine an appropriate process of recruitment. My question is, what process was put in place for recruitment? Was it a sole process?

This is nothing about Ms. Kim Hawley George; this is about what we set up. The people of this province expect us to follow the law. This is the law of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, so what was the process and what was the recruitment?

If the Management Commission agreed just appoint them, they should agree to a process, not just appoint. That shouldn't have been done. Give us the minutes where the Management Commission, the Clerk of the Executive Council and the Public Service Commission agreed with the process. Table those documents, if there is any. Table the minutes for the Management Commission. Table the minutes where they agreed to a process, because if we don't agree to a process – and this is just my opinion. I've been through this act before and there's a lot of times that act wasn't followed, and you know it, Mr. Speaker, because you apologized to me. Thanks for that. But when you get in the Chair, it's different, isn't it?

I got to say, I've been through it and the act wasn't followed. So we have another

situation again that I feel, personally, that it wasn't followed. I'd be neglect of my duty if I didn't bring up and inform the people of Newfoundland and Labrador what I think. Because, if we had a process, there would have been a nomination for people.

No doubt it in my mind Kim Hawley George would have got the job. There was probably no one going to apply for the job except Kim Hawley George. I have, probably, no doubt about that, but until we put that out and follow the process – and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, as Chair of the Management Commission, what was the process? What process was put out by the Management Commission?

The Government House Leader: What is the process? Was there a process put out?

**P. LANE:** The Speaker has to do it.

**E. JOYCE:** Pardon me?

**P. LANE:** The Speaker has to do it according to the act.

**E. JOYCE:** According to the act, the Speaker got to do it.

You got to coordinate it. What process was done?

So here we are, we went through this whole scandal back in the early 2000s. Justice Green set up the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, here the House of Assembly agreed to this act and here we are now wondering, did you follow the process? Was the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* being followed?

That's a question I've got to ask. It's a serious question, because I can tell you, and I look at people across the hall, when I was involved with this here, they took it and threw it out through the window. Everybody agreed to it – everybody agreed to it; not everybody. Andrew Parsons never, sorry,

and Brian Warr never but everybody else agreed to it. They all agreed to it, and even the Minister of Finance, after a meeting with the Management Commission, informed me, well, that's not what someone said that morning. Then, later: I can't recall, because the process wasn't followed and she knows the process wasn't followed.

Here we are again, in my opinion – unless there's documentation tabled to show the process and what process it was and if there was for a job competition put out. I'd like to see it. Show me the job competition that was put out so other people can apply. I don't think anybody would have. I don't think anybody has credentials that would win the competition anyway from Kim Hawley George. This is nothing to do with the person; this is the process.

So if the House of Assembly is not following the act and not following the law that we voted on, how do we expect citizens of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to say that we are privileged? We are privileged, how? Let someone stand up and tell me how an individual who's told that there's a process for the House of Assembly, we don't need to follow it because we can stand in this House, we could do what we like. It's fundamentally wrong.

Now, Speaker, I'm assuming there's no process because I never seen any. We asked for it. We asked for the job competition and what was put out? No answers – there were no answers. I spoke to a member of the Management Commission and they can't even remember agreeing that this first be done. They can't even remember. I'm not saying they might have not been there, they might have missed the meeting, but where are the minutes to you, Mr. Speaker, setting out the process? It comes back to you. It comes back to you and that's the way it is. It comes back to you, Mr. Speaker: Before a nomination is made, the Speaker shall consult.

So can you give us your consultations that you had with the Management Commission meeting, with the Clerk of the Executive Council and the Chair of the Public Service Commission, who is the same person now by the way. If this person was consulted on this, this same person, we should see the documentation of the former Clerk of the Executive Council, and now the Chair of the Public Service Commission. We should have her comments here today if she made any comments. I don't even know if she was consulted. I don't know; because, usually when there's a job competition, it's put out in the public and people have a chance to apply. Then, you do the interviews if necessary.

That's the process but, right now, we're voting on something here that we are going against what we voted for in the House of Assembly – we voted for – and I fundamentally feel that we're doing a disservice to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador by bringing in an act in this House of Assembly and saying, because we're in Legislature and we're the elected members, we can change it just like that. What if someone gets a speeding ticket tomorrow? Can they say, well, I don't agree with that. What if someone goes out tomorrow and shoots a moose illegally? Can we say we agree with that now? They can't do it.

I'll take this and I'll close on this: The situation that I found myself in, I always said that you should follow the act. The act was never followed. It was never followed and a lot of people jumped on board because, politically, it was the right thing to do. It felt like the right thing to do. Now, for God's sake, when I get in the elevator, they walk out because they can't even look me in the face. That's alright though, I understand that. I understand that with the false allegations and the changes and all that, but we're in another situation now and we, I feel, are doing the same thing.

I'll say it again and I don't care who hears it, we should follow the act. The Management Commission should – should – sit down with you and release all the documentation, if there's any. If there's not, that's all we could do but you, Mr. Speaker, are the person who has to verify the process. It is incumbent upon you, under the act, before the nomination made under subsection (1), the Speaker....

So it's you, Mr. Speaker, who has to do the consultation and it's you who should table the documents. If there's none, there's none, but at least stand up and say we have no documentation. I spoke to this lady on the phone, the Clerk of the Executive Council, who is Chair of the Public Service Commission now. We spoke privately and we all agreed to it, but you, Mr. Speaker, this is your responsibility. You are the person in this House of Assembly that has to follow this act. You have to follow this act. It's incumbent; you swore the oath to follow this act.

So you should supply the House of Assembly with the information of what consultations, what was done and what process was followed. If you don't do that, or you could say you did whatever you had to do, that's up to you, but in my opinion, I feel confident that we are not following the act. Justice Green went through it, if the Speaker of this House of Assembly is not following the – I'm not saying you're not; I shouldn't say that. I feel confident that if you have that information, it should be tabled before we make this decision that we agree to something in this House of Assembly that we don't have the information for.

I cannot personally say that I support the process of this appointment. It is an appointment. It is not a process of – Mr. Speaker, I'll read to you the exact words: the appropriate process for recruitment. You, as the person responsible under this act, should give us an outline of the recruitment that you did: did you send it out across Canada? Did you send it across

Newfoundland? Did you send it out just in this immediate House of Assembly to the people? It is incumbent on you to give us the process. So I'm asking you, and I know you can't answer questions, but I think you, before we make a decision in here, table the process you must follow – you must follow.

I'm sorry to be harping on you, Mr. Speaker, but that's the way the act says – that there is how the act is read. You know and I know in my situation the act wasn't followed. You know it. Thanks for the apology for nothing then. There were four or five people present when you did it, by the way, just to let you know.

I'll say again, if you don't table this process, I feel we're doing a disservice to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador because if the House of Assembly doesn't follow the law, why should people in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador? I look forward that we can take a break here and you table the process that followed of the discussions that you had and how you sent it out for other people to get the opportunity. If there was none sent out publicly for people to have the opportunity, this is not turned around here and saying we're just going to follow the recruitment process. We didn't; this is a complete appointment and it's wrong, fundamentally and basically it's wrong.

I look forward to you, Mr. Speaker, taking leave and tabling the documents so we can vote on this in a proper manner. If everybody was consulted and everybody agreed, show us what process you followed so that we can have a vote because if not, this is just absolutely wrong.

Thank you.

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

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

It is, indeed, an honour to speak on this motion in support of a most incredible, capable – I can think of many adjectives, and I've heard several here in this room today, and I'm very happy to see that support. I just want to take my time. I want to walk us all through a bit of logic here.

First of all, I found myself elected after a career in the private sector in 2015, spent the next three years in Cabinet and it was an amazing whirlwind. Then, one day, I got a call about an opportunity to sit in your chair. I said: Wow, what do I know about overseeing a Legislature and so on?

Walking into the precinct and learning to work with, at the time, people like Elizabeth Murphy, Sandra Barnes, other folk here at this Table now, listening to former Speakers, it is such a fascinating world. It really gets to the heart and soul of the democracy that we so value.

Our Westminster system is founded on so much principle, integrity and precedent. By the way, not just in this province, but throughout the Commonwealth. You know, I think I've mentioned this in a previous speech, maybe a couple of years ago, but one of my first really interesting observations of somebody like Elizabeth Murphy – and if you walk down this corridor, down here, you'll see her picture going back decades. The logic and experience that that woman had, that brought to this Legislature was amazing.

I can remember there are often these interesting situations that come. You see us adjourn for deliberation. What goes on in that room, the Speaker's office, is quite fascinating. There's intel, not just from the people around the Table but Elizabeth would often say, I need to reach out to London. She'd put that accent on and she'd contact our counterparts in London just to make sure that the decision we're making, the precedent on which we are following is consistent across the Commonwealth.

As you know, Speaker and Speaker that succeeded me, Speaker 44, 45 – I was 43 – we've had the amazing opportunity to learn from so many nations affiliated with this Westminster system. It is based on integrity, precedent, sharing of knowledge, experience and ideas.

I just wanted to put that out there because it's been a great honour. As I know, this is going to be one of the last times I get to speak on my feet, I just want to say I've been blessed to have had that opportunity. I think I've sat in just about every chair in this room, but the one I've treasured most has certainly been sitting in the one you're in now.

Since 2017, I started working with Kim Hawley George. She came in as Law Clerk and her impressive capabilities were, as they say, impressive. Her knowledge of the system, her willingness to learn from the best of the game and, frankly, Sandra Barnes, who so many of us a lot of our political career has been with that woman, who is now retired, but we can all look back on the wisdom, that balance.

Sandra has a great line and one that I think about a lot. She said: We have to learn as a presiding Officer and the team around us to treat each one of these MHAs the same. You got to love them all the same, she would say, and that was such a basic fundamental principle to her. I have to say that she drove that into my head and, despite the fact that at this time I'm sitting on the government side, when I sit in that Chair, you have to focus on that.

What I've seen from Kim Hawley George is not only her ability to serve as the Clerk of this Legislature in a very professional and accountable way but also in this balanced way. Things get heated in the Chair; they get heated on the floor. We all get heated.

I can tell you, one thing I've always appreciated from Kim Hawley George – and I want to give a compliment to the

Opposition House Leader for his opening remarks, because he likes to challenge, no question, but to hear him speak to this matter, I think underlines how we all feel about what this Acting Clerk has been doing for all of us. She listens, she provides rationale, explanation, critique and we do learn and, as he said, very wisely, we come out of it wiser; we've learned something from her. I want to put that on the floor.

My colleague across the way is pointing out some issues around the process, so I just want to put a little clarification on the floor. As we know, this House of Assembly, with the will of the House, we can do what we want to do. As the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands raised the matter first of all, he was drawing on the text out of HOAIAA, the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*.

I'm just going to read a little bit of text for background for us. Section 7(2) requires that the nomination for Clerk is made under section 7(1): the Speaker shall consult with the commission, the Clerk of the Executive Council and the chairperson of the Public Service. The Commission is to determine an appropriate process for recruitment of suitable candidates for appointment.

In this situation, you, Sir, the Speaker, facilitated a consultation process as prescribed by section 7(2) in April of 2024, including with the House of Assembly Management Commission. Further to that consultation, you, the Speaker, advised the Commission in writing of your decision to nominate Ms. Hawley George for permanent appointment. Section 28 of HOAIAA further highlights the requirement that the Clerk possess a particular and unique skill set which would limit the pool of suitable candidates for this position.

I think we've all agreed, those who've spoke in support of going forward, that, with her combined experience in her previous parliamentary and administrative roles in both the Legislature and Executive

Branches of government, it is evident that Ms. Hawley George has the knowledge, experience, commitment and qualifications to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of Clerk of the House of Assembly on a permanent basis.

I'd next like to, just for my colleague's benefit, read your own words, Sir, from the letter that you wrote on April 17, 2024, and this is just the relevant text.

You state: In making my decision, I have carefully reflected on the mandate of the Clerk as chief administration officer and chief parliamentary advisor as prescribed by statute, as well as the distinct accountability framework of the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly, including the House of Assembly Service. Section 28 of the HOAIAA highlights the requirement that a Clerk possesses a particular and unique skill set which would limit the pool of suitable candidates for this position.

In summing up, those who've spoken in favour of this, we're speaking from experience. We sit here in these sessions, and as we had this week, long hours and so on, tough situations have emerged. Where we've had disagreement, we've been able to seek her advice, seek her counsel. We know who – this is like a job interview and we've had that luxury of that time to see what's been going on.

One thing that I've learned in my 10 years in this political adventure, when I encounter opposition to something I pay more attention to why there's opposition, not so much to what is the opposition. If you really move the words to the side, you have to ask yourself: Why is this an issue? Why is this coming up? I would challenge anyone who's feeling opposed to this, based on what I've just said, what others have said in support of this.

Are you really paying attention to your own experience working with this Acting Clerk or do you have another axe to grind? I would

challenge those who were thinking about delays or voting against this. Ask yourself is this the right decision? I would say yes, it is. I would like to say that, in my own words, I find Ms. Hawley George of the highest of integrity. No one, certainly, is above her critical approach to her role; including ourselves. Myself – perhaps yourself, Speaker – we’ve also had our corrections from Ms. Hawley George.

To be able to do that on a day-after-day basis is something we should be really thankful for and that, as we try and we work very diligently – we all take an oath here – to maintain the true integrity of this institution, the House of Assembly, we need to be truly thankful that we have somebody like Kim Hawley George serving in this role. I would see her name going forward in the same annals of history as Elizabeth Murphy and Sandra Barnes.

Thank you very much.

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

**SPEAKER:** Seeing no other speakers, all those in favour of the motion, ‘aye.’

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Nay.

**SPEAKER:** Motion carried.

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

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

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

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 1.

Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of Ways and Means to consider

a resolution relating to the raising of loans by the province and related bill, Bill 110.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that I do now leave the Chair for the House to resolve into a Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means.

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!

I’d also like to welcome the permanent Clerk of this House of Assembly.

We are now debating the related resolution and Bill 110.

### Resolution

*“Be it resolved by the House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows:*

*“That it is expedient to bring in a measure to authorize the raising from time to time by way of loan on the credit of the province a sum of money not exceeding \$4,100,000,000.”*

**CHAIR:** Shall the resolution carry?

The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

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

It's an honour to rise in this House again to represent the people of St. John's West and to bring forward another piece of *Budget 2025*.

*Budget 2025* has identified a borrowing requirement of \$4.1 billion for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026. Today, we are introducing the *Loan Act, 2025*. Under the authority of the *Loan Act, 2025*, and section 38 of the *Financial Administration Act*, we will raise by way of loans not exceeding the amount of \$4.1 billion. The *Loan Act, 2025* will continue in force and in effect until the \$4.1 billion limit is reached or is replaced by a subsequent Loan Act.

The *Financial Administration Act* authorizes new borrowings for the purpose of redeeming or retiring debt, making sinking fund contributions or for retiring unfunded pension liabilities. The *Loan Act, 2025* is required to provide specific long-term borrowing authority to meet the 2025-2026 budgetary requirements. Of the \$4.1 billion in borrowing for 2025-26, approximately \$1.8 billion is for debt maturities that are coming due in '25-'26 and in the first quarter of the '26-'27 fiscal year.

That's important to note, Chair. That it is for some maturities coming forward in the first quarter of 2026-2027. The reason I raise that is because, of course, we need the liquidity. We are pre-borrowing for debt maturities coming due in the first quarter of the subsequent fiscal year '26-'27 to ensure the province maintains sufficient liquidity while the budget for next year is being debated before the Legislature.

It is important to note that we are requiring all new debt issued to have an associated sinking fund attached. So the province is planning for the eventual retirement of its debt when it comes due rather than continually refinancing. It is part of the strategic plan we have for financial improvement, and I'll give more details in a moment. For example, any long-term debt

issued by the province will be fully funded upon maturity.

The remaining \$1.8 million in borrowing is required to fund infrastructure expenditures for roads, health care and capital assets. These are investments, Chair – I say these are investments. I think anybody would call them investments, as they ensure that we have the proper infrastructure in this province. It also makes payments on promissory notes for the province's pension plans, and we have talked significantly in Estimates in this House about those pension plans.

I've talked about the debt maturities, I've talked about the infrastructure and I'll also note it includes \$300 million in borrowing for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. As the people of the House of Assembly recognize, we do the borrowing for NL Hydro, and that is included in this promissory note. We also have included the sinking fund contributions as well as the contingency requirements that we have in place for the tariffs.

Allow me to take a few moments, if I may, because I do have time, to review ways in which we are improving the financial health in the province. Chair, I've spoken about this many, many times in the House of Assembly. I think it's important that we continue to ensure the financial health of this province, and we have a strategic plan for doing so. When I started in this role, I can tell you, it was one of the things that I made sure of that we had in place and had in place for the bond-rating agencies.

I think, Chair, we've moved significantly through some of those, making sure that strategic plan is being enacted. I think it's one of the reasons why the bond-rating agencies have ensured that we have been upgraded because we have made some good strides.

So if I go back four, five years ago when I took over this role, I can remember hearing the Finance minister at the time, it was in

July and they were doing a financial update, and I think that they were going to be somewhere in the vicinity of \$2 billion in deficit. Now, that ended up to be about \$1.5 billion, but still a substantive number. We've been able to bring down that deficit. We're working toward getting to a balanced budget.

Now, Chair, we've been very, very close – as has been often said in this House of Assembly, budgets are about decisions – and we could've made the decision that we would be a balanced budget this year. However, we needed to make more investments in health care, in education, in economic diversification and development.

But I will say that \$372 million estimated for '25-'26 is about 3 per cent of revenue. Now, I would prefer if it was at 2 per cent of revenue, only because I think at 2 per cent of revenue, you're basically in that balanced ranged. But I will note other jurisdictions. For example, Quebec this year is at 6 per cent of revenues. Nova Scotia is at 5 per cent of revenues in their deficit.

So we have been bringing down our deficit and we are on a path, and I think that that's where we need to be on a path towards balanced budgets. I know the Members opposite were not supportive of balanced budget legislation but allow me to say that we don't want to continue to borrow for our day-to-day operations. We want to get to a place where we are balanced in that approach. Borrowing for investments is a different scenario.

This year, we're also contributing \$1.8 million to the Newfoundland and Labrador Future Fund, bringing those total contributions – this is all part of our strategic plan – to \$467 million.

Now, Chair, allow me to say again why I feel very strongly about a Future Fund. It's a sovereign wealth fund for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Too bad when we first introduced oil revenues to the

coffers of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, it's unfortunate that they didn't start a sovereign wealth fund.

So the idea here of a sovereign wealth fund is to take a portion of non-renewable revenues – it's laid out in the act. Depends on if we have more monies, we put more aside. If we don't, we put less aside. There is a formula for it. But it takes a percentage of non-renewable revenues from oil and gas and from mining and puts it aside.

Chair, allow me to tell you that we will have, by this budget, \$467 million. That's a lot of money. I know some people opposite will say it's not enough money, but it is a lot of money that we have put aside. By the end of the fiscal forecast that's going to be \$1.3 billion. Should we make an agreement on the Churchill Falls we could continue to grow that Future Fund and sovereign wealth fund, and I strongly feel we should.

Now, I heard somebody say today, oh, we should take some of the money in the Future Fund and do more tourism or do something else with the money. That is why in the legislation we were very specific to say for 10 years of the inception of the Future Fund, it can only be paid down on debt. That is fiscal discipline, Chair. It is so required to have fiscal discipline.

I'm going to say we have earned, on the Future Fund, \$28 million already. So the difference in spread, because we are borrowing money – and I hear the Members opposite, we shouldn't be borrowing for it. But remember that we are taking the top line of revenues and putting it aside, but we are borrowing in this province, so I understand that. We are borrowing but we are earning a spread between what we can borrow and what we earn on that money, so I wanted to take a moment, as we're talking about loans.

We also have done things under responsible debt management and we've done them here in the House. We've

changed some of the ways we maximize performance of the sinking fund that came through the House of Assembly. I talked about the Future Fund. We're diversifying our investment base. Members opposite will remember that we now have investors from Europe and let me tell you that they have been good investors. We have actually lowered our cost of borrowing because we have those investors.

In the last year, in '24-'25, we've placed our first transactions in the European capital market. We hope to do more. We've strengthened our liquidity so that cash reserves are available to meet obligations. One of the things, when I spoke to bond-rating agencies of how we can improve our position, they talked about liquidity and we are improving liquidity.

So, Chair, I think I kind of explained the \$4.1 billion and what it is necessary for. A substantive amount of that \$1.8 billion is for debt maturities. We are borrowing for infrastructure. I think all of us in this House of Assembly, I've heard everyone talk about how important infrastructure investments are. We know about our obligations under the promissory notes that were made to ensure a positive pension plan for this province. I think it's reasonable that we are borrowing \$4.1 billion.

I will say that we have moved through and I do want to talk about the Memorandum of Understanding of Quebec to terminate and replace the 1969 Upper Churchill contract. I think that does mean, and I talk a lot about this when I talk to investors about the opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador, growth in our economy, diversification in our economy, the opportunities in energy, oil and gas. I talk substantively now about gas, which I think is a new, interesting opportunity in the LNG. I know the Member for Terra Nova will be very supportive of the development of that.

I talk about hydroelectricity. I talk about hydrogen. I talk about mining. I talk about

technology and I can tell you that we are well positioned in this province for continued growth in our economy. That will help paydown debt as we move forward, including the opportunities in Churchill Falls.

So with that, this Loan bill will enable us to maintain our liquidity. It will maintain our liquidity as well as invest in the province's development through its infrastructure projects. I look to the House to support us in moving forward with this Loan Act, and to support us as we approach investors; because remember, investors are listening to the House of Assembly. I've just made a case across the country of going to visit some investors in Toronto and in Winnipeg. They are very supportive of the Newfoundland economy. We've been able to raise money on the markets relatively quickly and with relative, robust investment.

I will say to the people in this House of Assembly, with that and with what we have been able to achieve in our economic growth, I think we are very well positioned. I ask this House to support us this year in the \$4.1 billion.

Thank you.

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

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Minister.

I now call on the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

**L. PADDOCK:** Chair, it's always a pleasure to be able to get up and speak and represent, not just my District of Baie Verte - Green Bay and the residents there, but all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as the Finance critic.

Let me start first, we're looking at \$4.1 billion. That's, as the Minister of Finance indicated, liquidity for the province. If that was a business, then you'd be looking at it as your working capital fund. At a micro level, for all residents of Newfoundland and

Labrador, that is about, really, what they have in either their chequing or savings account. I want to touch on that for a moment because, before any resident would make any effort to get a loan from the bank, they would plan. They would plan.

You're going to hear me continuously use that word over the next few minutes. They would plan with regard to how they could reduce costs within their family unit, how they could grow revenue within their family unit and, if need be, they would be very aggressive in doing it if they were faced with a financial challenge.

Now, this \$4.1 billion is significant and I will go back first, and I highlighted it last night, to reiterate what the Auditor General highlighted with regard to the track we are on, the unsustainable track that we are on with regards to borrowing. She highlighted last night with regard to last fiscal year, '24-'25, the province would be borrowing \$2.8 billion for a net debt of \$18 billion. We are spending, she noted, beyond our means and she highlighted – this is her words, not mine – that the province needs to plan to become less exposed to the increased cost of borrowing.

So I'd like to now talk about some of the line items in that \$4.18 billion loan and, in particular, the last three line items. First is the \$300 million to fund the promissory notes for teachers and the public service plan. I've highlighted this before, most of the public service plans are, essentially, fully funded or close to it with one glaring exception. One glaring exception and that is the Uniformed Services Pension Plan. That is only 25 per cent funded.

Again I remind government, not just of their duty and obligation, but of their moral obligation to ensure that those that were on the front line for this province are looked after.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** The nearly 1,000 pensioners on that pension fund deserve it just as much as every other public service pensioner in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The other one that I want to talk about is the \$200 million for contingency. I raised it again last night that there are really no details on how that \$200 million is going to be spent. The government on the other side, you know, keeps harping: We're transparent, we're transparent. All we're asking, really, is a plan. They keep saying that it's for tariffs. I highlighted a number of cases yesterday where tariffs and the potential to help companies in Newfoundland that are tariff-impacted could be supported.

Let me refresh government Members on the definition of transparency. Transparency: Making information about government activities, decisions and spending available to the public. So, again, I ask for some type of template, overarching plan for that funding of \$200 million for the contingency fund.

Now, we have currently, a projected, but understated, deficit of \$372 million. I'll explain that understated, in a sense, as I go along. I want to make two comments on that. The first is with regard to the former premier. He said, budgeting – and this is paraphrasing his words – we do it because we've got to. There was nothing aggressive in this budget, meaning there's no aggressive action plan to deal with what has to be addressed for the province for this fiscal year. It is muddling through.

If we were being aggressive, if the province was being aggressive – I shouldn't say we because here on this side of the House we definitely would be – then there are options in front of us to be more aggressive on cost avoidance and revenue acceleration. As I highlighted yesterday, to the Minister of Fisheries, there's an opportunity right in front of us to reduce a lot of that deficit by getting a mackerel fishery in place.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** The fish harvesters across the northeast coast of this province don't have to go out and buy mackerel seines, they already have them. They just need the capacity to go. In fact, the mackerel is there. The US is catching their share. If you go to Sobeys you will see mackerel in the fridges. That is gobsmacking, absolutely gobsmacking, to see mackerel being brought in to this province when our own fish harvesters can't catch it.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** I'd now like to talk about numbers because numbers matter.

The projected understated deficit is \$372 million from Estimates, but that is now notably over \$392 million based on what the Premier has agreed to – this shingles vaccine and a reduction of the carbon tax – both of which we agreed to, but it's important that we keep account of where the numbers are because this is the people's money, these are taxpayer-funded operations. So let me say then, we're borrowing \$400 million for the projected understated deficit, so we're now very close to that threshold of \$400 million.

One of the key items of concern with where we are is the treatment of the tobacco settlement funding. In the Estimates there was a total of \$520 in revenue, the full amount that would be received over 30 years, and \$125 million related to the legal fees over the same period of time for a total net for this year of \$395 million.

I asked the minister in the House yesterday what is the status of that, and she indicated it has not been finalized. We are counting our chickens before they're being hatched – unbelievable. Then, we asked for details, how much are we actually going to receive in cash from that settlement this year, and no answer. The maximum that we would receive in the settlement for this year – at

max. – would be 40 per cent – 40 per cent of \$395 million. If you then add the balance of that other 60 per cent of what's left over to be received over 30 years for that tobacco settlement according to GAAP, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, that should be brought and booked over each of those 30 years.

That's the way it should be done. If we add what would be coming over those 30 years, that's 60 per cent; regardless, at a minimum our current deficit is \$629 million. Numbers: That is a real number, that is an accurate number and that is a number based on the way accounting should be done, not this creative accounting that we're currently seeing in front of us.

Since I have a few more minutes, I will come back to transparency. I've been in here now less than a year and I've been continually frustrated, similar to my colleague from Torngat Mountains, with the mismanagement of the public purse. Now, I haven't been here as long as the MHA for –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Humber - Bay of Islands; he's here a lifetime.

**L. PADDOCK:** No, no – Mount Pearl - Southlands, or others.

The MHA for Mount Pearl - Southlands gave a very detailed list that covered, just really, the last three to four years of government mismanagement. That included items like the travel nurses; the Comfort Inn contract for \$31 million, when we could have bought the hotel for \$3 million; the land deals at Kenmount Terrace and Snow's Lane, where miraculously you get an assessment that shows up after the government is questioned; how is that being open and transparent to the taxpayers of this province?

Then my colleagues from Central Newfoundland, colleagues from Exploits and also from Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, noted about the Premier's office in

Grand Falls-Windsor. That office, again as I highlighted with regard to the definition of transparency, we have no information. Nobody in Central Newfoundland has any information on what its role is and what it's supposed to be doing. Again, that is a clear abuse of the taxpayer dollar. We gave the government an opportunity yesterday to really cancel that office and do the right thing and reinvest the money in the Lionel Kelland Hospice.

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

**L. PADDOCK:** Budgeting is about choices. Budgeting is about an opportunity cost and where you could have spent it otherwise. We see with this government that they are continuing to look after too many Liberal friends and colleagues.

So for \$4.1 billion, as the Auditor General highlighted last year, we are spending beyond our means. We are lacking a plan to take concrete action now to address what is needed in this province. We are lacking a plan for both cost containment and revenue acceleration.

We, collectively in the province, have to change. We have to set the course for a better future, and there's going to be an opportunity for you within the province to make that choice very soon.

Thank you so much.

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

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

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

Allow me a couple of moments to correct some of the record. The Generally Accepted Accounting Principles are used for private businesses; we use Public Sector

Accounting Standards— just for clarity, certainty, so there's no confusion.

The Member opposite talked about the Uniformed Services Pension Plan; allow me to say that we are already consulting with unions to improve that plan. It does affect approximately 1,000 people who are pensioners under the Uniformed Services Pension Plan and we are working hard. There will be further movement on this as we progress. We have done some incredible work, outstanding work, on improving the pension plans of others and we will do equally good work on the Uniformed Services Pension Plan.

On the \$200-million contingency, I would say at this point we have not seen or it has not been indicated there is much pressure from the tariff situation. What we don't want to do is trip into doing something when there is no major impact.

I know the Members of this House of Assembly recognize that we don't want to use that money without having to use that money. So we have an ongoing discussion with community leaders, with unions, with business community to see, to hear, to listen, to understand the impacts and as we listen and understand the impacts, should there be impacts, then we'll determine how or if we need to spend that \$200-million contingency.

Again, I know Members opposite would not want us to spend that money if we do not need to, Chair. I know that. Then they'd accuse me it's an election year. So I don't want to do that.

Allow me to also say that –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** It is an election year.

**S. COADY:** It is an election year, then you would accuse me of spending it unwisely.

Allow me to also ensure that the House understands that the tobacco settlement

has no bearing on this year's loan program – no bearing. The timing of the cash payments for the settlement is different than the accrual of the revenue. We can agree to disagree.

I have some very good, incredible public servants who advise, lawyers who advise on these matters and I can say that the advice – so we can agree to disagree, to be honest with you, on the accounting treatment and the trigger for recognition. The trigger for recognition for us was when the payment terms were being finalized, legal advises that will happen within a very short period of time.

We also know that on March 9, the courts ruled. We also know that the courts require a plan. So I would say to the Members opposite, we felt – and I mean it sincerely – that from an accounting treatment we had to assume that. So I will say that again.

On the cost avoidance, I heard the mackerel fishery. Look, I have great faith in the new Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture. She will do her utmost to work very closely with the new Newfoundland and Labrador federal minister of Fisheries. We have to continue to grow our fisheries. I spent over a decade, well over a decade, 15 years in the fishery. I know the value of the fishery and the opportunities in this fishery.

So we do want to continue to grow those opportunities, but I would say to the Member opposite, we also want to ensure that we grow other aspects of our economy. That's why this budget actually does put money in for oil, put money in for gas, put money in to ensure a technology sector, put money in for the tourism sector. Those are part of growing a bigger opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador and that will provide us with even more monies, especially if we continue with the diversity within the province of Newfoundland that I spoke of earlier.

I do wish to say to the Member opposite, I wish that he hadn't used the term "creative accounting". That does not supply our investment community or the banks or the bond rating agencies or, quite frankly, anyone in this province well. I would say to the Member opposite we can agree to disagree on the accounting treatment but, please, be respectful of the fact that we have professional accountants advising us, and that we will do our utmost to ensure that we meet all revenue requirements of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I do an estimate process to ensure that we fully disclose what our Estimates are. It was fully disclosed, right from day one what our Estimates are and I can say I have an estimate for corporate income tax, for example. Am I guaranteed that I'm going to receive the corporate income tax? I don't know what will happen with tariffs but this is my estimate for corporate income tax. So I will say to this House, that I stand by the numbers we have presented to the House of Assembly. There may be changes. If there are changes, we will do our utmost to absorb those changes as they come through this year, but they will have a full disclosure in the fall, as per normal, as to any changes that may occur.

Chair, I think I've gone through everything. I agree with the Member on one thing: We do have to ensure that we are focused on a balanced budget. He said that we are spending beyond our means; that is the challenge that we are faced in this province. We have to grow our revenues because it is an expensive province to run. It's very geographically dispersed, we have an aging population, we want to grow our economy, all those things.

So I do implore this House to continue to focus on making sure that we are as balanced as we possibly can be in this province. I, indeed, have already said my views on this and I implore the House as well that we continue to focus on a strategic plan which I've outlined, which we have

implemented to ensure that we have fiscal responsibility, that we really do focus on effective debt management and that we really do focus on ensuring that we are always constantly fiscally prudent in this province.

Having said that, I'll take my seat and listen for other questions.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Minister.

I now call the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

**P. LANE:** Thank you, Chair, and I'm glad to have the opportunity to speak once again.

Mr. Chair, I just want to say and I want to go to this \$500 million or \$392 million, whatever it is, tobacco money minus the lawyers' fees – \$390 million or whatever the case might be. Unlike my colleague from Baie Verte - Green Bay, I'm not an accountant; I don't have an accounting background. I have done some accounting courses and so on. I have a basic understanding of how things work and how budgets work through my experience here and in the municipal world and even in the business world prior to that.

I'm not questioning, and I understand the minister in response talks about GAAP applies to private industry and there's a different set of rules that apply in the public sector. She did say the name, the acronym, I forget what it was. It doesn't really matter, but it's a different set of accounting rules. I accept that, but there are a couple of concerns I still have.

The first concern is, and this is what really kind of rubbed me the wrong way – I have to be honest, there was some good stuff in the budget and I was open minded, originally, about voting for the budget. I voted for last year's budget and the budget before, so it's not a case of I'm a person

over here who's just going to vote against all the budgets simply because I'm on this side of the House. I've supported the government on lots of stuff, actually. I probably would here, but the part I have to be honest that really rubbed me the wrong way was around the transparency of it.

Now, I understand the minister could say that if you comb through the budget document the money is there, but it certainly wasn't in a proactive way. I felt on budget day, in the budget documentation or in the Budget Speech, whatever, it certainly wasn't put out there that, hey, the reason why we're only going to have a shortfall of – and I'm saying only a shortfall; \$372 million is still a significant shortfall – \$372 million, so everybody knows, is that we're going to book \$390 million under these standards, that may be allowed maybe by the rules, fine, but that's the reason. If we never had this one-time money, this found money or whatever you want to call it, if that didn't happen, here, this would be our real, fiscal circumstance.

Then, of course, if you go into the Budget Speech, it talks about – and I'll just very quickly read here: "Balanced budgets are projected for each year in our multi-year forecast starting in 2026-27." So starting for next year's budget, you're projecting multi-year balanced budgets. Then my question becomes, if we're already stating, in a very overt way here, that this year we're going to have a deficit of \$372 million and the only reason why that's not actually \$762 million is because of this \$390 million that we're going to claim this year, how are we going to balance the books in the next three years?

That means next year and the year after that and the year after that, we're going to have to come up with an additional \$700 million in order to balance next year's budget. We'd either have to come up with an additional \$700 million or we would have to cut the budget by \$700 million or a combination thereof, but \$700 million is a

huge amount of money to be able to make the statement that we're on track for multi-year balanced budgets after this year.

That's where technically you may be correct in terms of the accounting principles that you're using and the projections. I'm not doubting the experts. I'm not an expert. I'm not doubting what they're telling you. I'm not doubting the fact that maybe you can claim it that way. Albeit we're not even getting the \$390 million. We're going to book \$390 million but the reality of it is we're only really going to get 40 per cent of that and then 30 years to get the rest, so that in –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Maybe.

**P. LANE:** Maybe. That's true.

So even all that is very suspect, I will say, but even with that being said the way it is and the way it's stated, to me, it just came across as we are – it's not that we're not telling the truth, but we're leaving out relevant facts. We're omitting salient facts that that ought to have been disclosed. I think that's the issue my colleague has as well. That's certainly the issue that I have. So then it comes across as being disingenuous, misleading, that type of thing. That's the impression that one could get from that.

Not saying that was intentional. I'm not accusing anybody or anything but that is the way that it can certainly be interpreted, particularly in an election year. I think that's the big problem.

Now, the other thing, of course, talking about the actual loan itself, we're going to borrow \$4.1 billion and according to the briefing that I participated in, \$1.8 billion of that is for just renewing existing debt. So it's not really new debt. It's just like probably borrowing money at a better rate to replace money we we're already borrowing, that type of thing.

But \$2.3 billion of that is new money for capital. So if you take that \$2.3 billion and then you add to it the \$372 million, that's \$2.672 billion. Then, of course, it could get higher if we were to use the contingency, and I'm glad to hear the minister say that that contingency is going to be used very, very sparingly. I will do my best to hold her to that, and I'm sure I don't need to but I would because I agree.

I can remember when I was in municipal governments years ago and there'd be different projects we wanted to undertake with the city and so on. I hated it, every time someone would say, well, how much are we going to have to budget for this particular project, this facility or community centre, whatever? The first thing they say, well, we've got to throw in a 20 per cent contingency.

I can remember myself and one of my former colleagues would cringe whenever we would hear that contingency because the minute that we agreed on a contingency, you could rest assured that every cent of that contingency would be spent. That was code for we want to spend extra money and you're going to approve it. We hated that word "contingency." We were more around no, no let's stay within the budget that's set. Never mind contingencies, 20 per cent because you fellows will find a way to add extra things and everything else to spend the money.

So I'm glad that's not the intent of this minister to do that and I would, certainly, support that but, as I said, if you take the \$2.3 billion in new debt, add the \$372 million, then of course, the dollar is higher than projected, oil is lower than projected – right now, it could change, but right now it's not good. It's actually going to have a negative effect.

I mean, we're bordering pretty close to \$3 billion. The bottom line is that's like another \$3 billion on top of an existing net debt that's already 17 or 16 –

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Eighteen.

**P. LANE:** Eighteen is it? Already \$18 billion. Now we're into \$21 billion net debt. And that's not the actual debt, that's the net debt. The actual debt is probably north of \$30 billion, I suppose, when you throw in all the unfunded liabilities, pensions and all that kind of stuff.

Again, as we continue to borrow money year over year over year, this has got to be top of mind. You can't go on forever. And I know every year we talk about it and we have these same speeches and so on, and then we do it again, do it again, and I understand there's a lot of pressure. A lot of people want things. There's a lot of people need things, but somewhere along the way, this has always got to be top of mind for whoever is in government to realize that tremendous burden, that rock around our neck, that debt.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you to the Member.

I now call on the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**S. COADY:** Thank you.

Just to respond to some of your questions. One is on disclosure. So you don't normally see in the Budget Speech – it's already a long speech, almost an hour – a call out of all the different types of revenue, but I hear you on maybe we need to do a better job of calling out different types of revenue and different types of risk in that revenue.

We estimate personal income tax. We estimate corporate income tax, for example, and there may be some volatility in that. If you remember, if you go back a couple of years ago, we actually had volatility to our favour. You remember, we had a big windfall because we got more corporate income tax than we had expected; you'll recall that. But I hear you on maybe if

there's an extraneous issue, we should do it. So I hear you. Thank you for that.

I will say that it was disclosed in the technical briefings on budget day. We did talk about it, what, a month ago in Estimates here. So we have spoken about it, but I hear you on maybe in a Budget Speech if you have extraneous revenue or anything volatile.

The second was the forecast, and I would like to offer my colleague or any colleague, we could do a briefing on the forecast and what it comprised of and why it looks the way it does. I'll offer that to you. If you wanted, just send me a text and I'd be happy to set something up.

The third is on the addition to net debt, and I just want to correct a couple of numbers. We're actually spending \$1 billion in infrastructure. It's still a lot of money but I would argue that infrastructure is an investment. So the change in net debt is the deficit itself plus the infrastructure. That's what's comprised in our net debt. So I just wanted to assure you, but if at any time you'd like a briefing on any aspect, I'm happy to do so.

I will say again, the opportunity in Newfoundland and Labrador – well, I spoke to the business community recently and they said, what makes you excited about Newfoundland and Labrador and what makes you concerned about Newfoundland and Labrador? I said: For the first time in my extensive, long career in business and now in politics, Newfoundland and Labrador is really in the midst of a renaissance of growth and opportunity that I don't think we've seen.

We certainly haven't seen it in the 35 years that I've been in business and, remember, I was chair of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, president of the Board of Trade. Like, I've been through a lot of iterations around our economy. It is one of the best times. I do have – and I'm being sincere and

honest – great hope that we will get to address our deficit and our debt because of that growth. That’s why I support making those investments in the budget that we have made in the economic growth, that we’ve made in education, because I think all of us agree that education is critical to the future of this province, and in health care.

Look, we’ve set on a path of improving our health care, and I think that we’ll be the envy of the country as we move forward and implement more of the Health Accord. It will help sustain our health care funding versus growing our health care funding, because I think everyone is finding incredible cost burdens of health care really putting pressure on our budgets.

So I hope I’ve answered your questions and thank you always as well, to the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands, for always being supportive of ensuring that we are fiscally responsible. I really appreciate that.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

I now call on the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

**L. PADDOCK:** Chair, I just want to come back to some of the rebuttal and, I guess, give a further rebuttal to that.

First of all, with the tariffs, maybe they’re not getting any uptake there because, as I said earlier, with regard to transparency, there’s been no direction from government to the industry associations on how that can be used. We’ve had lobster harvesters and shrimp harvesters that have been impacted by tariffs. Again, like I said, let’s be transparent with the allocation, the planned use of that tariff and that \$200 million contingency.

It was highlighted with regard to spending beyond the means. Again I come back, these were not my words. These were the

words of the Auditor General in her last report. She emphasized the need for a plan from government to tackle the growing, concerning fiscal situation.

On the issue of GAAP, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, I worked in a controllership role at a federal level. Now, there might be some nuance difference at a provincial level but, at that federal level, we ensured public sector accounting was also aligned with GAAP, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

On that, I’d like to highlight what was indicated from a CBC article on the 13th of May. It was titled “How big bucks from big tobacco prevented N.L.’s deficit from doubling.” Let me read a couple of excerpts: At this point, Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province that has decided to apply all of the tobacco settlement funding, more than half a billion dollars, and that has experts raising eyebrows – has experts raising eyebrows.

It goes on to say: Given that the transaction for Newfoundland and Labrador is exactly the same transaction for the other provinces, they don’t know why there would be a different recognition criteria and practices than other provinces are using.

We are the only province that has stepped off and booked the entire amount of \$520 million. That was highlighted by the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy. They go on to say this whole transaction, to them, is a bit puzzling. To me, it is a bit puzzling. Again I ask, and I reiterate, we have to be clear, upfront and transparent and, yes, Minister, you’re right to reassure investors and bond agencies. When we see the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy questioning some of our transactions, then I believe it’s time that we are open and transparent with the entire province.

This comes back, really, to the budget and that decision and to you making that singular choice. Similar to what Mulroney

said to Turner: You had the choice; and you still have the choice. You still have the choice to adjust this now.

With a couple of minutes left, I guess I'll just reiterate what my colleague from Mount Pearl - Southlands highlighted with regard to where we are with the 15 per cent of the budget that's tied to oil revenue. As we know, if the price of Brent drops, and right now, a month and a half into the year, we're tracking \$10 lower than projected, and if the price of the exchange rate on the Canadian dollar increases, it's a further negativity for what we are getting in oil revenue.

We are in an unfortunate situation, 12.5 per cent through the year, a month and half in, where we have two significant negativities facing us down with regard to oil revenue – that is the price of Brent and the forecast changes that are being made on it, and the exchange rate on the Canadian dollar – by my calculations, and your department can look at that, we are already \$35 million-plus below forecast this far into the year. This is significant, and it's significant that we need to keep our stick on the ice in managing the budget from here on out.

So I'll leave it there for now, but my big concern in all of this, as I reiterated this afternoon and all week, is about being open and transparent with all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Thank you.

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

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**S. COADY:** Thank you very much, just a few quick comments.

I understand that the fishing industry is doing quite robustly this year. In fact, I think some record high prices for a number of our

fishers. We meet on a regular basis as part of the tariffs with the industry, including FFAW, so if there's anything that they feel they need assistance with, I know – I know – the president will bring it to our attention and, especially, to the attention of the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture.

I will say, with regard to the oil, that is always something I monitor. I probably don't sleep as well as I do because it is a volatile industry. I mean, if you go back to April 1, it was \$74 a barrel. Now, I think, it's \$64 a barrel. It ebbs and it flows and it's always a concern, but we monitor it regularly and make adjustments regularly to what we can possibly do. We use 11 different independent forecasters to give us a price that's locked in in budget, but all throughout the year we know it is volatile. We will make adjustments, as we do, and, hopefully, we'll see it rise again and we'll be able to absorb those indices.

I will say as well, look, the accounting standards, it reflects some personal interpretation. We have some very senior, very good, very learned, very intelligent public sector accounting experts that have undertaken this review based on the best information that they have, and they – we – I have made some decisions around that. I can say that, obviously, the Auditor General will review that in Public Accounts but, again, it is as we normally do in our systems.

We'll continue to monitor on our oil forecast. We will continue to monitor on tariffs. When we talk about a plan, we have a very robust, strategic plan for financial improvement. It is bearing fruit for us. We have a plan for growth of our economy, that is bearing fruit for us.

I think Newfoundland and Labrador will have a stronger future and, as I always say, we want to be stronger, smarter, self-sufficient and sustainable. That's my

mantra, and I believe we're making good progress towards it.

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

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

Back to the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

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

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill, because it is a money bill and it affects everybody in the province and some of the things that I've heard I guess, in the last few comments and stuff, it's all about choices. I think that, on behalf of the people of Placentia West - Bellevue, some of the choices that are being made are not necessarily, I guess, fiscally responsible.

A couple of the things that I think that we need to wrap our head around, really, I listened to budget debate earlier this week and we were talking about Wi-Fi and cell service. We talked about bringing servers online and getting the right implements in place, and I agree with that, for the simple fact that we had the biggest cyber security breach in the history of Canada. If we don't secure our servers then, obviously, we're going to be still vulnerable. I agree that is something that should be a priority.

With that being said, at what point are we going to catch up to the rest of the world and have Wi-Fi and cell service that's available to everybody? Fire and emergency services could utilize it in a lot of dead areas in my district. There's business and industry, people want to be able to come and talk back to their head offices instead of having to go to an area that might have cell service or Wi-Fi connection.

These are things that, like I said, are all about choices but, at some point in time, we have to catch up with the times of what everybody else has, I guess, in the urban area. It's not about the speed of the people

that already have it when there are people out there that don't have any.

Then we talk about giving virtual care. This is what's kind of bothering our seniors and persons with disabilities and stuff is that if we don't have a primary care physician and we have to do virtual care, then this is a choice that needs to be made on behalf of over 60 per cent of our population. They could really utilize it. When we look at attracting people to our shores, as the Member for Ferryland has always said, everybody has a cellphone in their pocket nowadays, but what good is it if you can't use it.

Why should the companies be collecting that stipend if they are not providing an opportunity for you to use your phone at all times? Because a lot of times, that phone is in your pocket for that emergency reason. If you get lost or you get in a car accident or anything, but if you're in a car accident and you're not able to utilize your phone to call for help, then that really compromises your safety of getting the ability to be looked after. So for the vein alone, we should have Wi-Fi and cell service throughout the province.

I'd like to know what the cost is. Maybe it's something that we turn around and we do what New Zealand done about their prescription program. We bring in companies and we let them know that you'll have exclusivity for our whole province as long as these are what the rates are and they're going to be controlled. You won't have any competition, so you won't have to advertise it to anybody. All you have to do is be present and have the right infrastructure in order to provide the service to the people. I think that's a no-brainer. I had a buddy that went over to Denmark and got a card to have Wi-Fi while he's out at sea. He's got more megabytes than I do per month and it cost him 10 bucks. Like, it just makes no sense.

We talk about our Future Fund, and I understand where the minister is coming from. She explains it well, kind of thing; but at the end of the day, we also need a present fund because there are things that are causing gaps that when we make these choices, they're not necessarily to the benefit of the people that really need them. They're not no small part of our population. With the Public Sector Accounting, you know, I'd like to know where we can allocate then to help people today.

Like the people in Labrador, there's an awful lot of revenue that comes out of Labrador for non-renewable resources. What percentage is being held back so that they can have medical travel and travel out of Labrador to get the services that they need? Plus they need Wi-Fi, plus they need power, plus the mines need power and water. These are the things that I'm saying when we make choices, let's make them for the best interest of the whole province and get things done.

One thing that I've been adamant about, I guess, is this disability advocate. I really, honestly, after six years of advocating, I really cannot believe that that's not in place yet. That's a choice that this government has made for about 30 per cent of the people in the province. I am a parent of a child with a disability so I can see it from two angles but, I will tell you right now, if we think that we're doing the right thing by leaving behind and not representing and supporting 30 per cent of our population, then I think the kitchen is too full.

We have an opportunity to do the right thing and I implore this government, when you're making your choices and it comes to budgeting and it comes to allocations, please do it from the lens of what's best for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. We will get back to our budget. We will get back to paying off our budget as long as we put our people back to work and we invest in an industry like oil and gas that has been neglected for the last 10 years because of a

green economy. It's not a light switch; it's a transition.

We have an opportunity here to be world leaders with the products that we have off our shores, and we get the opportunity to do it with our people that leave our shores and go everywhere else in the world and are the foremost experts in the world in oil and gas. Let's get back to the table making sure we're making choices that are in the best interest of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Chair.

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

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

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

I really appreciate the impassioned plea on some additional spending. Allow me just to say that, in this budget, there is \$16.5 million in broadband. I completely support the Member opposite in that we need to ensure connectivity throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. There is no doubt, and that's why this budget does contain \$16.5 million there. I would say we need the help of the federal government. We have a large geographic area and we must have connectivity throughout it. So I'm on your side.

Notwithstanding the request for a disabilities advocate that I think is well in the hands of the department and the needs for same, I will point out just for those that are listening, \$400 a month, starting in July, per month for persons with disabilities. I think that should be recognized and that's contained within this budget.

I will say that we're putting aside – I can't remember the exact number – somewhere in the \$140 million for the Future Fund, but

we're spending \$11 billion. I would say that we are making big efforts on making sure that we support the people today and presently. I know all of us care deeply about that. We care deeply about that, but I don't think the impact of the Future Fund will have a big effect on today's spending. I know it's a lot of money but it is ensuring that we have a better future.

I understand the pent up needs, desires and requirements, I have it from my team too. There are a lot of things we need to invest in in this province. We're doing our best to get there.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

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

We go through the budget. We go through Loan Act. We go through all that and we see where the money's going, where the money's coming from and things like that, but one thing that, I don't know if it's a gripe or a perceived problem, I get from my community, from Labrador, is that we provide all this revenue to the province, we provide resources and these resources damage our land. It actually takes from our land. We see the massive amount of mining that goes on in Labrador West. We see the damming of our rivers. We see those kinds of things and we give up a chunk of our land, our home, our community and we hope that we get something in return.

These assets are value added. They're sent out of the province or down a transmission line and the thing that we always see is, well, we give up all this and what do we get in return? Especially in Labrador West where there was never a benefits agreement. There was never any of that stuff done in the 1950s. I think, technically, IOC took control of the land in 1933 so it predates Confederation.

So this is the thing that a lot of our communities stated and it's been kicked around for a very long time, but it's something that has to be asked in this House: Why is not 1 per cent or 2 per cent of the royalty or anything that goes out of this province put aside to make sure that we build back in Labrador, to make sure that we don't have any infrastructure deficits, make sure that the infrastructure is in the communities?

It's more present today when we see a lack of housing, a lack of health care or a lack of these things that we're seeing in our communities. We've never seen anything put to one side to make sure a place like Labrador, where it is underserved and it's remote, yes, and it has unique challenges and stuff because we look at the geographical differences between there and there. We know we're only – what – 30,000 people spread over twice the size of the land mass that the Island is, but we do also expect something in return to make sure that we have sustainable communities and to make sure that we have the services and everything that is provided.

This is why a lot of my community comes to me and goes: Jordan, why doesn't just one per cent or two per cent or three per cent of the royalty that is sent out, that it's not made sure that it's withheld or earmarked to say, well, make sure that these roads are repaired or this infrastructure is built or make sure that we have everything that we need to make sure that we can continue to make that royalty for the province, to make sure that we have these resources that are available and to make sure that we actually get back something in return.

This is something that we're talking about loans and borrowing money and everything like that, but we do make money. We do have a very significant resource-based economy that does significantly – without the debt. If we didn't have the debt and you compared what we'd make in royalty and everything like that, we do make a

significant amount of money in this province but we want to make sure that it is going to where it needs to go.

The people of Labrador keep saying we have all these mining opportunities, we have all these hydroelectric opportunities, we have this, but nothing is retained back for us. We're kind of feeling a bit left out. We're feeling kind of like we're watching it all go out this way but we don't see it coming back the other way.

If there's anything that I could stand here and say and advocate to, while in this debate, the Minister of Finance is: Why aren't we seeing the investment that we made? The investment we made is we lost a chunk of our land. We dammed our rivers. We put big holes in the ground. We sent out our natural resources to foreign lands, but we've never seen anything that really came back to us,

It was really more prevalent now today than ever before; especially with the fact that we're seeing a housing crisis, we're seeing a crisis with mental health and addictions, we're seeing a crisis in health care in our communities and we want to make sure that maybe given the amount of resource that comes out, we're looking for that return investment. Especially when I look my community of Labrador West where we're really deadlocked when it comes to housing and health care and child care and all these needs right now.

We want to make sure that we're going to get that return on investment for the amount that we send out of province, the amount of money that these companies make and how much money that the province gets in revenue from royalties. I just want to put that out there to the minister. That this is something that, really, we're seeing blatantly now that – we want a return on our investment is the best way to put it.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

Any further speakers to this resolution?

Shall the resolution carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, resolution carried.

A bill, "An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province." (Bill 110)

**CLERK (Hawley George):** Clause 1.

**CHAIR:** Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

**CLERK:** Clauses 2 through 6 inclusive.

**CHAIR:** Shall clauses 2 through 6 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 6 carried.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province. (Bill 110)

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report Bill 110 carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

Carried.

Motion, the Committee report having passed the resolution and bill consequent thereto, carried.

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

**L. DEMPSTER:** Thank you, Chair. I move that the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 110.

**CHAIR:** The motion is that the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 110.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Against?

Carried.

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

**SPEAKER (Bennett):** Order, please!

The hon. the Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

**P. TRIMPER:** Speaker, the Committee of Ways and Means have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that they have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

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

When shall the report be received?

Now?

**L. DEMPSTER:** Now.

**SPEAKER:** Now.

On motion, report received and adopted.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the resolution be now read a first time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** *"Be it resolved by the House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows:*

*"That it is expedient to bring in a measure to authorize the raising from time to time by way of loan on the credit of the province a sum of money not exceeding \$4,100,000,000."*

On motion, resolution read a first time.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that the resolution be now read a second time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** *"Be it resolved by the House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows:*

*"That it is expedient to bring in a measure to authorize the raising from time to time by way of loan on the credit of the province a sum of money not exceeding \$4,100,000,000."*

On motion, resolution read a second time.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province, Bill 110, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

**SPEAKER:** It is moved and seconded that the hon. Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce the bill entitled, An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province, Bill 110, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board to introduce a bill, "An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province," carried. (Bill 55)

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province. (Bill 110)

On motion, Bill 110 read a first time.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 110 be now read a second time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province. (Bill 110)

On motion, Bill 110 read a second time.

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

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

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, that Bill 110 be now read a third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

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

Motion carried.

**CLERK:** A bill, An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province. (Bill 110)

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

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Authorize the Raising of Money by Way of Loan by the Province," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 110)

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

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

As we move into a long weekend, I want to wish all my colleagues here in the Legislature safe travels. Whether you're flying or driving, get back to your families safe and have a great long weekend.

With that, I will move, seconded by the Premier, that this House do now adjourn.

**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.'

Motion carried.

This House do stand adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

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