

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

The House met at 10 a.m.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Pursuant to order and on motion, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider bills entitled:

“An Act to Amend the Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2005” (Bill 26); and

“An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, 2012” (Bill 27).

The Speaker left the Chair.

The Deputy Chair of Committees (P. Trimper) took the Chair of Committee of the Whole.

During the debate, the Member for Topsail Paradise (P. Dinn) moved amendments to clauses 6, 8, 10, and 13 of Bill 26.

The Chair recessed the proceedings to consider the amendments.

The Chair reconvened the committee and ruled the amendments in order.

Debate commenced and concluded on the amendments.

The Chair put the question and declared the amendments carried.

Debate resumed and concluded on Bill 26 as amended.

On motion, the Committee rose.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The Chair (P. Trimper) reported the Committee of the Whole had considered the matters to them referred and had directed them to report the Committee had recommended:

With amendment, a bill entitled “An Act to Amend the Licensed Practical Nurses Act, 2005” (Bill 26); and

Without amendment, a bill entitled “An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, 2012” (Bill 27).

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The Speaker put the question and it was ordered the report be received and adopted.

Pursuant to order and on motion, the amendments to Bill 26 were read the first and second time.

On motion, it was ordered that Bill 26 and Bill 27 be read the third time on tomorrow.

Pursuant to order and on motion, the following bill was read the third time and passed:

A bill, “An Act Respecting the Office of the Auditor General and the Auditing of the Public Accounts of the Province” (Bill 36).

Pursuant to order and on motion, debate commenced and concluded on second reading of a bill entitled “An Act to Amend the Corporations Act” (Bill 24).

Pursuant to order and on motion, a bill entitled “An Act to Amend the Corporations Act” (Bill 24) was read the second time and, on motion, it was ordered that Bill 24 be referred to a Committee of the Whole now.

Pursuant to order and on motion, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider a bill entitled “An Act to Amend the Corporations Act” (Bill 24).

The Speaker left the Chair.

The Deputy Speaker (B. Warr) took the Chair of Committee of the Whole.

On motion, the Committee rose.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The Chair (B. Warr) reported the Committee of the Whole had considered the matters to them referred and had directed them to report the Committee had recommended, without amendment, a bill entitled:

“An Act to Amend the Corporations Act” (Bill 24).

The Speaker put the question and it was ordered the report be received and adopted.

On motion, it was ordered that Bill 24 be read the third time on tomorrow.

On motion, the House recessed at 12:01 p.m.

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The Speaker resumed the Chair at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Members' Statements

The following Members provided statements:

The Member for Exploits (P. Forsey) recognizing the volunteer efforts of the BGC in Norris Arm.

The Member for Cape St. Francis (J. Wall) recognizing Rose Nichols of Pouch Cove for her efforts in knitting hats for newborns at the Janeway.

The Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay (B. Warr) recognizing Logan Colbourne of Coffee Cove, goaltender with the provincial AAA hockey team.

The Member for Placentia West - Bellevue (J. Dwyer) recognizing the "Ride for Andrew Smith" which was held on September 18 in Arnold's Cove.

The Member for Torngat Mountains (L. Evans) recognizing Toby Obed for his advocacy work on Indigenous issues.

The Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave (P. Parsons), with leave, recognizing 7-year old Olivia Parsons of Shearstown as she battles Leukemia.

Ministerial Statements

The following Ministers provided statements:

The Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation (S. Crocker) highlighting the 70th anniversary of the Arts and Letters Awards Program.

The Members for Bonavista (C. Pardy) and Labrador West (J. Brown) responded to the statement.

The Minister of Education (T. Osborne) recognizing recipients of the inaugural Premier's Award for Teaching Innovation and the Minister of Education's Award for Compassion in Teaching.

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The Member for Conception Bay South (B. Petten) and the Leader of the Third Party (J. Dinn) responded to the statement.

Oral Questions

The House proceeded to Oral Questions.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees

There were no reports by Standing or Select Committees presented.

Tabling of Documents

There were no documents tabled.

Notices of Motion

The Government House Leader (S. Crocker) gave notice they would on tomorrow move the following motion:

THAT, in accordance with Standing Order 8(8), notwithstanding the Parliamentary Calendar issued by the Clerk for 2022 or any Standing Order to the contrary, the parliamentary calendar for the Spring 2022 sitting of this House shall be modified as follows:

THAT this House will meet in accordance with the daily schedule prescribed in the Standing Orders, as follows:

- From March 15, 2022 to March 17, 2022, inclusive;
- From April 4, 2022 to April 14, 2022 inclusive;
- From May 2, 2022 to May 19 inclusive; and
- From May 30, 2022 to June 2, 2022 inclusive;

AND THAT the week of May 23, 2022 shall be a constituency week.

Pursuant to Standing Order 11(1), the Government House Leader (S. Crocker) gave notice they would on tomorrow move the House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 4.

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Answers to Questions for Which Notice Has Been Given

There were no answers to questions for which notice had been given.

Petitions

The following Members presented petitions:

The Member for Labrador West (J. Brown) regarding a climate emergency declaration.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change (B. Davis) replied to the petition.

The Member for Ferryland (L. O'Driscoll) regarding the lack of nurse practitioner services at the Shamrock Medical Clinic in Ferryland.

The Member for Lake Melville (P. Trimper) regarding a climate emergency declaration.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change (B. Davis) replied to the petition.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTION

Pursuant to notice and on motion, debate commenced on the resolution standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party (J. Dinn):

WHEREAS the 2016 Census showed that St. John's has the highest level of income inequality in all of Atlantic Canada, with the top one percent taking home nine times more than the bottom 30%, and seven times more than the bottom 50%;

AND WHEREAS Canadians from all parties and all walks of life, including CEOs, Senators, doctors, community support workers, and economists, are now championing some form of basic income program;

AND WHEREAS federal Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland has called for a new New Deal in light of the vast transformations occurring in our economy due to automation and information technology, which see the bulk of the productivity gains going to the wealthiest while real wages stagnate and an insufficient number of jobs are created to replace those lost to automation;

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AND WHEREAS former Governor of the Bank of Canada Mark Carney echoed Minister Freeland's comments in 2018, explaining how technology has decimated the share of income going to workers, increased poverty, and underemployment, with the effect of hollowing out the middle class and replacing their work with more lower-skilled jobs and the vast majority of productivity gains going to the wealthiest as a result;

AND WHEREAS the federal government is already pioneering in the provision of income support to those who most need it through the Canada Emergency Response Benefit;

AND WHEREAS evidence from the Alaska Permanent Fund found that when low- and middle-income families receive extra money every year, they bought more education, clothing, recreation, and electronic purchases for their children, while giving more money to the high-income families did not result in increased investment in their children;

AND WHEREAS the current income support system amounts to a poverty trap and still leaves many to fall through the cracks;

AND WHEREAS Canadian data from basic income pilot projects has shown that such programs increase public health, foster improvements in nutrition, improve mental health and well-being, lower the immense public costs associated with poverty, encourage entrepreneurship, and allow people to pursue education and training;

AND WHEREAS the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has calculated that poverty costs this province a total of \$959 million dollars, in preventable health problems, crime, lost productivity, foregone public revenue, and intergenerational costs;

AND WHEREAS a poll conducted by The Gandalf Group on behalf of The Maple Leaf Centre For Action On Food Security (June 28-30, 2021) indicated that significant support exists among Atlantic Canadians and among all demographics for a basic minimum income floor that would provide a safety net for all Canadians.

AND WHEREAS a 2017 study by the Roosevelt Institute showed that even a \$1,000 payment to all adults once a year would expand the American economy by 12.56% over the baseline after eight years and permanently raise the level of national economic output;

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AND WHEREAS this House voted last year to set up a committee to study a pilot project on basic income and create a timeline for its implementation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House consider truly ending poverty in this province by establishing an all-party Select Committee on Basic Income, with a mandate to review and make recommendations on: eligibility and minimum income amounts, interaction with existing income supports, additional poverty reduction initiatives, cost-benefit analysis, potential models for such a program, and a timeline for implementation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House ensure this Select Committee has the resources it needs to conduct its work;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Select committee engage Federal Members of Parliament from Newfoundland and Labrador to participate.

During the debate, the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills (G. Byrne) moved an amendment.

The Speaker recessed the proceedings to consider the amendment.

The Speaker resumed the Chair and ruled the amendment in order.

Debate resumed on the amendment and the resolution itself.

During the debate, the Member for Labrador West (J. Brown) moved a sub-amendment.

The Speaker recessed the proceedings to consider the sub-amendment.

The Speaker resumed the Chair and ruled the sub-amendment in order.

Debate resumed and concluded on the sub-amendment, amendment and the resolution itself.

The Speaker put the question and declared the sub-amendment defeated.

The Speaker put the question and declared the amendment carried.

The resolution then read:

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WHEREAS the 2016 census showed that St. John's has the highest level of income inequality in all of Atlantic Canada, with the top 1 per cent taking home nine times more than the bottom 30 per cent and seven times more than the bottom 50 per cent; and

WHEREAS Canadians from all parties and all walks of life, including CEOs, Senators, doctors, community support workers and economists are now championing some form of basic income program; and

WHEREAS federal Finance Minister, Chrystia Freeland, has called for a new deal in light of the vast transformations occurring in our economy due to automation and information technology which see the bulk of the productivity gains going to the wealthiest, while real wages stagnate and an insufficient number of jobs are created to replace those lost to automation; and

WHEREAS former governor of the Bank of Canada, Mark Carney, echoed Minister Freeland's comments in 2018, explaining how technology has decimated the share of income going to workers, increased poverty and underemployment, with the effect of hollowing out the middle class and replacing the work with more lower skilled jobs, and the vast majority of productivity gains going to the wealthiest as a result; and

WHEREAS the federal government is already pioneering in the provision of income support to those who need it through the Canada Emergency Response Benefit; and

WHEREAS evidence from the Alaska Permanent Fund found that when low- and middle-income families received extra money every year they bought more education, clothing, recreation and electronic purchases for their children, while giving more money to the high-income families did not result in increased investment in their children; and

WHEREAS the current income support system amounts to a poverty trap and still leaves many to fall through the cracks; and

WHEREAS Canadian data from basic income pilot projects has shown that such programs increase public health, foster improvements in nutrition, improve mental health and well-being, lower the immense public costs associated with poverty, encourage entrepreneurship and allow people to pursue education and training; and

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WHEREAS the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has calculated that poverty costs this province a total of \$959 million in preventable health problems, crime, lost productivity, foregone public revenue and intergenerational costs; and

WHEREAS a poll conducted by The Gandalf Group on behalf of the Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security (June 28-30, 2021) indicated that significant support exists among Atlantic Canadians and among all demographics for a basic minimum income that would provide a safety net for all Canadians; and

WHEREAS a 2017 study by the Roosevelt Institute showed that even a \$1,000 payment to all adults once a year would expand the American economy by 12.56 per cent over the baseline after eight years and permanently raise the level of national economic output; and

WHEREAS this House voted last year to set up a Committee to study a pilot project on basic income and create a timeline for its implementation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House consider truly ending poverty in this province by urging the government to establish an all-party Committee on basic income, with a mandate to review and make recommendations on: eligibility and minimum income amounts, interaction with existing income supports, additional poverty reduction initiatives, cost-benefit analysis, potential models for such a program and a timeline for implementation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House urge the government to ensure that the Committee has the resources it needs to conduct its work and engage Federal Members of Parliament from Newfoundland and Labrador to participate.

The Speaker put the question and declared the resolution as amended carried.

Pursuant to Standing Order 9(3), the Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow, Thursday, November 4 at 1:30 p.m.

Sandra Barnes,
Clerk of the House of Assembly.