

Wednesday, December 2nd, 2009

The House met at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon pursuant to adjournment.

The Member for Port de Grave (Mr. Butler) made a Statement to congratulate Mr. Bill Ralph on receiving the National Harbour Authority Achievement Award and a Prix d'Excellence Award.

The Member for Bellevue (Mr. Peach) made a Statement to congratulate Dr. Paul Bonisteel on being selected Physician of the Year for Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Loder) made a Statement to congratulate Mrs. Emily Park of Cox's Cove on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

The Member for Ferryland (Mr. Hutchings) made a Statement to congratulate the class of 2009 of St. Kevin High School, Goulds.

The Honourable the Minister of Tourism, Culture & Recreation (Mr. French) made a Statement to congratulate all those involved in the recent Olympic Torch Relay events in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Honourable the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (Ms. Pottle) made a Statement to inform the House about a Youth Justice Camp in Hopedale.

The Member for The Straits – White Bay North (Mr. Dean) presented a Petition from certain residents of the Province calling on the House of Assembly to urge Government to initiate a study to evaluate methods of reducing the incidence of moose-vehicle collisions in the Province and to accept and implement the conclusions which arise from their study.

Pursuant to notice and on motion debate commenced on the following Resolution standing in the name of the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair (Ms. Jones):

“WHEREAS it is estimated that there are over 120,000 moose living in Newfoundland and Labrador;

AND WHEREAS more than 700 moose-vehicle collisions occur in our Province each year;

AND WHEREAS moose-vehicle collisions result in human fatalities and a higher prevalence of head, neck and brain injuries than other motor-vehicle accidents;

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AND WHEREAS the cost estimates to the provincial health care system for just initial emergency care due to moose vehicle accidents is averaged at over \$600,000 a year, and cost estimates for vehicle damage is over \$1 million annually;

AND WHEREAS other provinces with lower moose populations have taken significant action to reduce moose-vehicle collisions;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has not conducted a recent study or review of new technologies and mitigative options such as fencing, lighting systems, increased brush cutting and increased hunting quotas that could potentially lower the number of moose-vehicle accidents;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly call upon Government to initiate a comprehensive study to evaluate what technologies, mitigation techniques and investments can be undertaken to reduce moose-vehicle collisions in Newfoundland and Labrador;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this review include a detailed analysis of other jurisdictions and evaluate options such as fencing, lighting systems, brush cutting and increased hunting quotas;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House of Assembly call upon Government to accept and implement the conclusions or recommendations of this review”.

During the debate on the Resolution the Honourable the Minister of Environment & Conservation (Ms. Johnson) moved the following amendment to the Resolution:

“That Recitals 2-6 be struck out and the following substituted:

‘WHEREAS it is estimated that there are over 120,000 moose living in Newfoundland;

AND WHEREAS there are hundreds of moose-vehicle collisions in our province each year, with the annual numbers currently ranging from about 450 to as high as 900 in 1989 to 1991;

AND WHEREAS tragically, many people lose their lives in moose-vehicle collisions, and many others suffer injuries, including serious neck, head, brain and other injuries; and such injuries mean emergency care, hospitalization, time off work, loss of income or life-changing disabilities;

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AND WHEREAS it is difficult to place a monetary value on the costs of moose-vehicle collisions, but it has been estimated that the cost of vehicle damages alone exceeds \$1 million annually;

AND WHEREAS many jurisdictions, including Newfoundland and Labrador, have investigated and implemented various measures to prevent collisions between motor-vehicles and wildlife;

AND WHEREAS it is important for the government to understand the factors associated with moose-vehicle collisions and to continue to evaluate and, where prudent and feasible, apply various technologies and other measures, such as fencing, lighting systems, increased brush cutting and increased hunting quotas that could potentially lower the number of moose-vehicle collisions.'

And that the main resolution clauses be struck out and the following substituted:

“BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly call upon the government to build upon its work to date by analyzing in detail, on an ongoing basis, the factors associated with moose-vehicle collisions in Newfoundland and Labrador;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House of Assembly call upon the government to complement this analysis with a detailed evaluation of the various technologies and other measures, such as fencing, lighting systems, increased brush cutting and increased hunting quotas, that may have been tested in other jurisdictions, and the prudence and feasibility of applying such measures in Newfoundland and Labrador;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House of Assembly call upon government to report its findings to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and to ensure that these findings inform the government's decision-making.”

The Speaker suspended the proceedings at 3:27 o'clock in the afternoon to consider the amendment.

The Speaker resumed the Chair at 3:40 o'clock in the afternoon and ruled the amendment in order.

Debate continued on the amendment to the Resolution and on the Resolution itself.

The Speaker put the question on the amendment and declared the amendment carried.

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The Speaker put the question on the Resolution as amended and declared the Resolution as amended carried.

It was moved and seconded that when the House rose it would adjourn until tomorrow, Thursday, December 3rd at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon.

On motion the House then adjourned accordingly.

William MacKenzie,
Clerk of the House of Assembly.