

Wednesday, May 12th, 2010

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

The Member for The Straits – White Bay North (Mr. Dean) made a Statement to recognize Mr. Ephriam Simms of St. Anthony who has received the Governor General's Commendation.

The Member for Grand Falls – Windsor – Green Bay South (Mr. Hunter) made a Statement to congratulate Barbara Fifield for her dedication to Haiti orphanage relief efforts.

The Member for Kilbride (Mr. Dinn) made a Statement to recognize the accomplishments of Keith Power, originally from Goulds.

The Member for St. John's West (Ms. Osborne) made a Statement to pay tribute to the late Philomena Rogers.

The Honourable the Minister of Health & Community Services (Mr. Kennedy) made a Statement to acknowledge National Nursing Week 2010.

The Honourable the Minister of Tourism, Culture & Recreation (Mr. French) made a Statement about the economic impact of the JUNO Awards held in St. John's in April.

The Member for Ferryland (Mr. Hutchings) tabled the Report of the Social Services Committee.

The Member for Port de Grave (Mr. Butler) presented a Petition calling on the House of Assembly to have compassion on the citizens of the Province and allow them to build cabins on Kruger lands.

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

“WHEREAS drilling and production in our offshore areas brings not only economic benefits, but real risks of environmental disaster, as we have seen with the Louisiana oil catastrophe, which will have impacts for decades to come;

AND WHEREAS the offshore oil industry polices itself through the CNLOPB and there are concerns on their lack of transparency in addressing oil spills, as well as resources available to address a major emergency event;

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AND WHEREAS there is no comprehensive safety regime or work plans for oil spills, no independent monitors on rigs and oil extraction is exempt from the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, the *Fisheries Act* and the *Canada Shipping Act*;

AND WHEREAS Chevron is currently drilling in deep waters without immediate backup plans and oil analysts say it could take up to 3-4 months for back-up rigs to become operational;

AND WHEREAS the Grand Banks represents one of the richest fishing banks and fragile ecosystems in the world and thousands of Newfoundlanders could be gravely impacted should a major oil spill occur;

AND WHEREAS British Columbia and the Pacific States have a combined oil spill task force in place with annual work plans – notwithstanding a moratorium of offshore drilling on the west coast;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly encourages the Provincial Government to immediately put into place a Task Force to examine the current environmental and safety procedures, policies and processes; make recommendations for “best practices and technology” changes; review the industry on an annual basis; review protocols for potential oil spills in Placentia Bay; produce an Annual Work Plan to enhance oil spill preparedness and response capabilities throughout all drilling areas and oil transport routes near Newfoundland and Labrador to avoid and/or mitigate the effects of a possible oil spill that could devastate the waters off our coast for decades to come.”

During the debate on the Resolution the Member for Virginia Waters (Ms. Dunderdale) moved, seconded by the Member for Trinity – Bay de Verde (Ms. Johnson), the following amendment to the Resolution:

“That the Resolution be amended by deleting all recital clauses and the resolution clause and substituting the following:

“**WHEREAS** the Provincial Government has called for an independent review of oil spill preparedness and response capabilities in light of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico;

AND WHEREAS the offshore oil industry is regulated by the Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) and there is a public interest in knowing whether the regulatory regime and oil spill response capacity is adequate or in need of improvement;

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AND WHEREAS Chevron is currently drilling in deep waters;

AND WHEREAS the Grand Banks represents one of the richest fishing banks and fragile ecosystems in the world and many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians could be gravely impacted should a major oil spill occur;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly supports the Provincial Government's decision to put in place an independent review to examine the current oil spill prevention and response procedures, policies and processes; make recommendations for "best practices and technology" changes; review protocols for potential oil spills in Placentia Bay; and make recommendations to enhance oil spill preparedness and response capabilities throughout all drilling areas and oil transport routes near Newfoundland and Labrador to avoid and/or mitigate the effects of a possible oil spill off our coast."

The Speaker suspended the proceedings at 3:29 o'clock in the afternoon to permit the Opposition to review the amendment.

The Speaker resumed the Chair at 3:41 o'clock in the afternoon and heard the submission of the Opposition.

Debate continued on the Resolution.

The Speaker suspended the proceedings at 3:48 o'clock in the afternoon to consider the amendment.

The Speaker resumed the Chair at 3:57 o'clock in the afternoon and ruled the amendment in order.

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

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

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, May 13th at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon.

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On motion the House then adjourned accordingly.

William MacKenzie,
Clerk of the House of Assembly.