

Daily sitting 34

Thursday, February 8, 2018

10 o'clock a.m.

Prayers.

Following Members' Statements, Hon. Mr. Doucet rose on a point of order and submitted that Ms. Wilson used unparliamentary language when she referred to certain Members as "arrogant, insulting and insensitive". Mr. Speaker ruled the point well taken and requested that the Member withdraw her statement, which she did.

Mr. Fairgrieve, Member for Carleton, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the Legislature to improve the condition of route 560 between Centreville and Woodstock. (Petition 13)

Mr. Coon, Member for Fredericton South, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the government to contribute to national land conservation targets by setting goals and creating an action plan. (Petition 14)

It was agreed by unanimous consent to vary the rotation of Opposition Members' Business.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Doucet, seconded by the Honourable the Premier:

RESOLVED, that when the Assembly adjourns on Friday, February 9, 2018, it stand adjourned until Tuesday, March 13, 2018.

Hon. Mr. Doucet, Government House Leader, announced that it was the intention of government that the House take into consideration Motion 32; following which the House would resume the adjourned debate on the Budget; following which Opposition Members' Business would be considered.

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 32, Mr. Roussel moved, seconded by Mr. Guitard:

WHEREAS seasonal industries play a vital role in New Brunswick in order to maintain a stable and sustainable economy;

WHEREAS many families and individuals are dependent on seasonal work as their main source of income;

WHEREAS the unemployment rate in a region is used to determine the number of hours required to qualify for Employment Insurance along with the program's benefit period;

WHEREAS the Employment Insurance program is administered by the federal government;

WHEREAS positive economic growth in New Brunswick that may be concentrated in specific areas of a region may skew the unemployment rate formula for the whole region, especially in regions with rural populations where there may be more reliance on seasonal work;

WHEREAS the unemployment rate calculated for a particular region does not take into account a large number of seasonal workers that may be employed in that region, a large number of seasonal workers will exhaust their Employment Insurance benefits several weeks prior to returning to their seasonal jobs;

WHEREAS this artificial gap or “black hole” is unfair to seasonal workers who will not be able to gain enough hours to qualify for Employment Insurance benefits;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick urge the federal government to make changes to the qualifying provisions of the Employment Insurance program to address the plight of seasonal workers.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And after some time, due to the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bernard LeBlanc, the Deputy Speaker, took the chair as Acting Speaker.

And after some further time, Ms. Dubé, seconded by Mr. MacDonald, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 32 be amended as follows:

By adding after the seventh whereas clause:

WHEREAS the Gallant government has been incapable of creating employment in the rural areas of northern New Brunswick and youth unemployment in the region remains highest in Canada most months;

WHEREAS Serge Cormier, the federal Liberal Member of Parliament for Acadie-Bathurst reported to the media on January 25, 2018, that an aide program from the federal Liberals is going to be announced soon;

Mr. Deputy Speaker put the question on the proposed amendment and a debate ensued.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put, the amendment was defeated.

And the question being put, Motion 32 was resolved in the affirmative.

At 12 o'clock p.m., Mr. Deputy Speaker left the chair to resume again at 1 o'clock p.m.

1 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker resumed the chair.

The Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned debate on the motion (Motion 28),

That this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, having been read,

The debate was resumed.

And after some time, Ms. LeBlanc took the chair.

And the debate continuing, after some time it was on motion of Hon. Mr. Doucet, on behalf of the Honourable the Premier, adjourned over.

Debate resumed on Motion 21, moved by Mr. Jeff Carr, on behalf of Mr. MacDonald, seconded by Ms. Shephard, as follows:

WHEREAS the Local Service Districts of Douglas and Estey's Bridge have been struggling with the development and proposed development of rock quarries within their respective areas;

WHEREAS the development of gravel pits and quarries has been a long-standing issue of contention with residents within all municipalities of New Brunswick, including cities;

WHEREAS the issues of quarry proximity to residential areas and the current excavation protocols for the quarry planning approval are deemed insufficient by many communities in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS many regional service commissions, at present, do not have the regulations to evaluate gravel pits and rock quarries differently in terms of impact and optimal distance from residential areas, given the site-specific characteristics of proposed resource extraction sizes;

WHEREAS the environmental footprints of a gravel pit and rock quarry differ greatly, given that gravel pits require only mechanical intervention for extraction of resources and quarries require the use of both machinery and blasting;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT this Assembly urge the Department of Environment and Local Government to revisit its regulations and legislation pertaining to rock quarries with the intent to recognize the different environmental footprint that exists between gravel pit and rock quarry developments, and develop an assessment tool that better addresses the various factors that are impacted, namely: waterways, run-off, noise, air quality, sight distance from provincial roads, and continued quality-of-life for existing area residents;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this Assembly urge the government to review its allowable quarry proximity to existing residential area regulation with the intent of increasing the catchment area with which the Department of Environment and Local Government, regional service commissions and quarry developers are required to consult and that the minimum proximity to quarry regulation and/or legislation has its minimum distances expanded.

Madam Deputy Speaker interrupted proceedings and requested that Mr. Fitch withdraw the phrase “misleading the House”, which he did.

And after some time, Mr. Speaker resumed the chair.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put, Motion 21 was resolved in the negative on the following recorded division:

YEAS - 17

Mr. MacDonald
Ms. Dubé
Mr. Holder
Mr. Fairgrieve
Mr. Fitch
Mr. Urquhart

Mr. Coon
Mr. Savoie
Mr. Jeff Carr
Mr. Flemming
Mr. Northrup
Mr. Crossman

Mr. Steeves
Ms. Wilson
Mr. Wetmore
Mr. Stewart
Mr. Keirstead

NAYS - 23

Hon. Mr. Fraser	Hon. Ms. Harris	Mr. Bernard LeBlanc
Hon. Mr. Doucet	Hon. Ms. Landry	Mr. Roussel
Hon. Ms. Rogers	Hon. Mr. Kenny	Mr. Guitard
Hon. Mr. Horsman	Hon. Mr. Ames	Mr. Boudreau
Hon. Mr. Melanson	Hon. Mr. Harvey	Mr. Albert
Hon. Mr. Landry	Hon. Mr. LePage	Mr. Bertrand LeBlanc
Hon. Mr. Bourque	Ms. LeBlanc	Mr. Doherty
Hon. Mr. Rousselle	Mr. Chiasson	

The Order being read for second reading of Bill 28, *Green Energy Security Act*, a debate arose thereon.

And after some time, Mr. Bernard LeBlanc resumed the chair.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put that Bill 28 be now read a second time, it was resolved in the negative.

The Order being read for second reading of Bill 40, *An Act to Amend the Education Act*, a debate arose thereon.

And after some time, Mr. Speaker resumed the chair.

And after some further time, Mr. Speaker interrupted proceedings and announced that the hour of daily adjournment had arrived.

And then, 6.10 p.m., the House adjourned.