

Daily sitting 19

Thursday, March 28, 2019

1 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

Mr. Landry, Member for Bathurst East-Nepisiguit-Saint-Isidore, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the Legislature to resolve the labour dispute between the Council of Nursing Home Unions and the Association of Nursing Homes by sending their agents to binding arbitration. (Petition 5)

Ms. Mitton, Member for Memramcook-Tantramar, laid upon the table of the House a petition in opposition to a quarry being created on PID 70075304. (Petition 6)

Ms. Landry gave Notice of Motion 43 that on Thursday, April 4, 2019, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Thériault:

WHEREAS the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure has a policy whereby roads in many rural areas are not plowed between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.;

WHEREAS during or immediately following winter storms, this creates a difficulty for workers who work for companies that may operate in 24-hour operations and may need to be travelling;

WHEREAS the inability to move goods and employees from one location to another can have a significant negative economic impact and leave rural areas at an economic disadvantage;

WHEREAS this policy may also give rise to concerns of public safety as it may result in impeding transportation by emergency vehicles, first responders, police and the public dealing with situations of emergency in rural areas;

WHEREAS climate change has given rise to concerns that weather patterns may become more unpredictable and winter storms more frequent and severe;

WHEREAS the government will soon be negotiating collective agreements with CUPE related to plowing and winter maintenance schedules;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to revisit the policy of taking plows off the roads between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Mr. Arseneault gave Notice of Motion 44 that on Thursday, April 4, 2019, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. LePage:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation since November 9, 2018, including correspondence, however recorded, stored or archived, by electronic means or otherwise, between the Department of Health, the Premier's Office, the Executive Council Office, the Ombudsman and any other government departments with respect to the Restigouche Hospital Center and the Youth Center of excellence mental health facility.

Ms. Mitton gave Notice of Motion 45 that on Thursday, April 4, 2019, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Coon:

WHEREAS our planet is on the precipice of an unprecedented crisis due to human-caused climate change;

WHEREAS according to a recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, if global emissions of carbon dioxide are not reduced by at least 45 per cent by 2030, reaching net zero by 2050, the climate catastrophe in which we now find ourselves will have passed the point of no-return;

WHEREAS hundreds of New Brunswick youth walked out of school on Friday, March 15, 2019, to take part in a Global Day of Action against climate change;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge government to modify school curricula to include education on climate science and climate change that reflects the reality of the situation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge government to cease its resistance of carbon-pricing programs.

Mr. Austin gave Notice of Motion 46 that on Thursday, April 4, 2019, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. DeSaulniers:

WHEREAS New Brunswick is struggling to find enough paramedics to meet the need for these medical professionals;

WHEREAS paramedics should be part of a union that better reflects the profession;

WHEREAS paramedics voted 98 percent in favour of changing their classification from non-medical to patient-care providers like other health-care professionals in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS changing the paramedics' classification will make higher pay rates possible therefore attracting more people to the profession;

WHEREAS paramedics should be paid more for the vital role they play within the provincial health-care system;

WHEREAS reclassification is a necessary and reasonable change to increase morale among New Brunswick paramedics and would provide them the opportunity to bargain within a unit which better reflects their role in service delivery;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to reclassify the bargaining unit of New Brunswick paramedics from non-medical to patient-care providers.

Mr. Savoie, Government House Leader, announced that following third reading, it was the intention of government that the House resume the adjourned debate on the Budget; following which Opposition Members' Business would be considered.

The following Bills were read a third time:

Bill 11, *An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Pricing Act.*

Bill 12, *An Act Respecting the Surcharge Payable under the Victims Services Act.*

Ordered that the said Bills do pass.

The Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned debate on the motion (Motion 23),

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

The debate was resumed.

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

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 31, Mr. Lowe moved, seconded by Mr. McKee:

WHEREAS heavy industry benefits from a number of tax exemptions in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS public institutions such as hospitals have much higher assessments than many significant industrial properties;

WHEREAS the City of Saint John commissioned reports entitled “Municipal Property Tax Issues in The City of Saint John” and “City of Saint John Fair Taxation Report” that raise concerns with these exemptions;

WHEREAS Bill 10 was introduced in the fourth session of the 58th Legislature and Bill 9 in the current session of the 59th Legislature to address these issues;

BE IT RESOLVED that this House direct the Standing Committee on Law Amendments to undertake a study, including hearing from experts and stakeholders, and report back to the House with recommendations on whether to reduce or eliminate any property assessment or property taxation exemptions or benefits that apply to heavy industry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House direct the Standing Committee on Law Amendments to report back to the House with its recommendations within 120 calendar days of the adoption of this motion;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee may, during a period when the Legislative Assembly is adjourned or prorogued, release a report by depositing a copy with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and, upon the resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present the report to the Legislative Assembly.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And after some time, Mr. Savoie, seconded by Hon. Mr. Carr, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 31 be amended:

By deleting the first and second whereas clauses and substituting the following:

“WHEREAS the New Brunswick property tax system has not been reviewed comprehensively in more than a decade;

WHEREAS inequities seem to exist in the current property taxation and assessment system;”

In the third whereas clause by deleting “these exemptions” and substituting “the property tax system”;

In the fourth whereas clause by adding “some of” before “these issues”;

By deleting the first resolution clause and substituting the following:

“BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to undertake a comprehensive property taxation and assessment review, working with the local governance sector, to modernize and improve the current property tax system.”

By deleting the second and third resolution clauses.

Mr. Arsenault rose on a point of order and questioned whether the motion was amendable, and, if so, submitted the amendment was not in order.

At 3 p.m. the House recessed. At 3.07 p.m. the House resumed.

Mr. Speaker ruled that the motion was amendable, and the amendment in question was in order as it was not foreign to the original motion, it simply proposed an alternative question for the consideration of the House.

Mr. 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.

Mr. Speaker put the question on Motion 31 and it was resolved in the affirmative.

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 36, Mr. Landry moved, seconded by Mr. Lowe:

WHEREAS the provincial government has stopped negotiating with CUPE on behalf of nursing home workers;

WHEREAS nursing home workers provide invaluable service in providing care for some of our most vulnerable citizens;

WHEREAS nursing home workers deserve fair wages, and to have issues of recruitment and retention and staffing addressed;

WHEREAS the Liberal Opposition publicly announced that it was in support of binding arbitration as a means of resolving the labour dispute;

WHEREAS the Green Party and the People's Alliance subsequently announced their support as well for binding arbitration;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House urge the government to work with the New Brunswick Association of Nursing Homes and provide the Association the assurances necessary for them to agree to enter into binding arbitration to resolve this dispute and enter into a collective agreement.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And after some time, Mr. C. Chiasson, the Deputy Speaker, took the chair as Acting Speaker.

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

And after some time, Mr. Arseneau, seconded by Mr. Coon, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 36 be amended:

By adding following the resolution clause:

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to fully fund any collective agreement resulting from the binding arbitration process.”

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

At 4.16 p.m. the House recessed. At 4.28 p.m. the House resumed.

And after some time, Mr. Austin, seconded by Ms. Conroy, moved a sub-amendment:

SUB-AMENDMENT

That the amendment to Motion 36 be amended:

By adding after “binding arbitration process” the following: “under the terms and conditions acceptable to all negotiating parties and the Province”.

At 4.48 p.m. the House recessed. At 5.01 p.m. the House resumed.

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

At 5.44 p.m. the House recessed. At 5.51 p.m. the House resumed.

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

And then, 6 o'clock p.m., the House adjourned.