

Daily sitting 3

Wednesday, November 18, 2020  
*10 o'clock a.m.*

Prayers.

At the request of Hon. Mr. Savoie, it was agreed by unanimous consent to limit the number of Members seated on the Chamber floor to a maximum of 26, in order to allow for physical distancing, as follows: 14 Government Members; 9 Official Opposition Members; 2 Green Members; and 1 People's Alliance Member.

At the request of Hon. Mr. Savoie, it was agreed by unanimous consent to allow the 26 Members seated on the Chamber floor the option to speak from a seat other than their own.

At the request of Hon. Mr. Savoie, it was agreed by unanimous consent to allow the remaining 22 Members to be seated in the Chamber gallery in designated seats, in order to allow for physical distancing, where they can participate in debates using the microphones provided, participate in voice votes and recorded divisions, and avail themselves of all the rights and privileges afforded to Members of the Legislative Assembly, while also observing the rules of debate and decorum and the conventions of the House.

At the request of Hon. Mr. Savoie, it was agreed by unanimous consent to allow the use of electronic devices on the floor and in the gallery of the Chamber, as long as the devices are silent in nature and do not cause a disruption in the House or interfere with the decorum or conventions of the House.

With leave of the House, Hon. Mr. Savoie moved, seconded by the Honourable the Premier: (Motion 1)

THAT notwithstanding Standing Rule 30, statements of condolence and statements of congratulation shall form part of the ordinary daily routine of business in the House and shall be called by the Speaker following Introduction of Guests;

THAT statements of condolence shall take precedence over statements of congratulation and Members shall be recognized as follows: the Government first, followed by the Official Opposition and then other recognized parties in order of the size of their membership;

THAT this Special Order shall remain in effect during the remainder of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

And the question being put, it was resolved in the affirmative.

With leave of the House, Hon. Mr. Savoie moved, seconded by the Honourable the Premier: (Motion 2)

THAT the definition of “recognized party” in the Standing Rules be suspended for the duration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly to provide members of the Green and People’s Alliance caucuses with the same rights and privileges as other members of recognized parties in the House under subsections 28(10) and (11) of the *Legislative Assembly Act* and under Standing Rules 40 and 40.1, with respect to Statements by Ministers and Statements by Members.

And the question being put, it was resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. Speaker introduced the new pages for the session: Nora Ahmed, Cairo, Egypt; Kurvin Silvio, Grand Gaube, Mauritius; Anna Sirois, Edgecomb, Maine, United States; Emma Wagner, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia; Graci Young, Pictou, Nova Scotia.

The returning pages were: Sarah Albert, Edmundston; Head Page Andie Amaya, Calgary, Alberta; Khanh Do, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Curtis Kelly, Quispamsis.

It was agreed by unanimous consent to extend the time allotted for Statements by Members.

It was agreed by unanimous consent to extend the time allotted for Oral Questions by fifteen minutes.

Hon. Mr. Savoie rose on a point of order and submitted that Mr. Melanson used unparliamentary language when he used the term “secret agenda”. Mr. Speaker ruled the point not well taken.

At 12 p.m. the House recessed. At 1 p.m. the House resumed.

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:

By Hon. Mr. Crossman,  
Bill 2, *An Act to Amend the Climate Change Act*.

By Hon. Mr. Cardy,  
Bill 3, *An Act to Amend the Early Childhood Services Act*.

By Hon. Mr. Steeves,  
Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Assessment Act*.

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- By Hon. Ms. M. Wilson,  
Bill 5, *An Act to Amend the Assessment Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. Flemming, Q.C.,  
Bill 6, *Family Law Act*.  
Bill 7, *An Act Respecting the Family Law Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. Savoie,  
Bill 8, *An Act to Amend the Executive Council Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. Flemming, Q.C.,  
Bill 9, *Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Reporting Act*.  
Bill 10, *An Act to Amend the Coroners Act*.  
Bill 11, *An Act to Amend the Queen's Counsel and Precedence Act*.  
Bill 12, *Construction Remedies Act*.  
Bill 13, *An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicle Act*.  
Bill 14, *An Act Respecting the Enduring Powers of Attorney Act  
and the Wills Act*.  
Bill 15, *An Act to Amend the Notaries Public Act*.
- By Mr. K. Chiasson,  
Bill 16, *An Act to Amend the Elections Act*.
- By Mr. D'Amours,  
Bill 17, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco and Electronic Cigarette  
Sales Act*.

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Ms. Harris gave Notice of Motion 3 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Arseneault:

WHEREAS the chiefs of the Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq First Nations have written to the Premier asking for an inquiry into systemic racism in New Brunswick criminal justice and policing;

WHEREAS the information and recommendations from an inquiry should provide valuable insight into what measures can be adopted to best address the serious issue of racism in our criminal justice and policing systems;

WHEREAS the Premier of Nova Scotia has recently apologized for systemic racism in that province's justice system, that province has introduced significant reforms, and it has committed to additional reforms;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to appoint a commission of inquiry into systemic racism in New Brunswick criminal justice and policing under section 2 of the *Inquires Act*;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to appoint Indigenous commissioners and use the terms of reference developed by Indigenous leaders in the constitution of this inquiry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to implement all of the recommendations of this inquiry.

Ms. Thériault gave Notice of Motion 4 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Guitard:

WHEREAS Clinic 554 provides invaluable health services to a large patient group, including services for marginalized patients with addictions, LGBTQ2SI+ patients, patients with HIV, and persons with mental health needs, as well as abortion services;

WHEREAS the province of New Brunswick has an obligation to provide sufficient access to the services provided by Clinic 554, including reproductive health services such as abortion;

WHEREAS access to abortion services that are currently only provided through public hospitals in Moncton and Bathurst is insufficient to meet existing demand;

WHEREAS insufficient access to abortion services represents a danger to the health and safety of those requiring them;

WHEREAS patients who require access to abortion should not have to pay out of pocket when they are legally entitled to have any associated costs covered through our Medicare;

WHEREAS the Horizon Health Network passed a motion from its board indicating that Horizon's board will "advocate to the government of New Brunswick for payment to physicians to provide abortion services in a quality and safe environment outside of hospitals";

WHEREAS the federal government has indicated that refusal to fund abortion services provided by Clinic 554 is a violation of the *Canada Health Act*;

WHEREAS the Higgs government has refused to fund the services provided by Clinic 554;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the province to fund the services provided by Clinic 554;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the provincial government to repeal paragraph (a.1) of Schedule 2 of regulation 84-20 of the *Medical Services Payment Act* that prevents the payment of abortions outside of a hospital setting.

Ms. Thériault gave Notice of Motion 5 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. D'Amours:

WHEREAS the various communities that make up New Brunswick are committed to the preservation and development of their respective cultural identities;

WHEREAS countries are becoming more and more economically integrated and it is all the more important that cultural communities be able to preserve their identity and a strong sense of belonging;

WHEREAS entrepreneurs in the book chain such as bookstores and publishers in New Brunswick play a fundamental role in the development of the book industry and literacy in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS the Canadian Free Trade Agreement adopted in 2017 includes Article 809, which constitutes a cultural exception that allows for the adoption and maintenance of programs and policies favouring the distribution and development of artistic expression or content;

WHEREAS all international trade agreements signed by Canada provide exceptions for cultural industries;

WHEREAS entrepreneurs in the book chain are suffering the financial consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and no additional assistance is currently provided to them by the provincial government;

WHEREAS stakeholders in the cultural industry have been calling for the implementation of a book purchasing policy since the adoption of the New Brunswick Book Policy in 2009;

WHEREAS a book purchasing policy would make it possible to consolidate the local book chain and foster the development of reading of works produced in New Brunswick;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to develop and implement a book purchasing policy requiring institutional purchasers, including government departments and agencies, school districts, schools and agencies under their jurisdiction, and public libraries, to acquire books from New Brunswick independent bookstores and publishing houses.

Ms. Thériault gave Notice of Motion 6 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Gauvin:

WHEREAS the direct contribution of cultural industries to New Brunswick's GDP was \$550,379,000 in 2017;

WHEREAS the number of jobs related to culture in New Brunswick was 7,750 in 2017;

WHEREAS the typical artist had a median income of \$24,200 in 2016, an amount that is 38% less than the median income of the New Brunswick labour force, which is \$38,800;

WHEREAS there is no legislation on the status of the professional artist in New Brunswick and no body to assess and define the legal status of artists, resulting in a lack of recognition of status and the existence of glaring socio-economic inequalities for those in the profession;

WHEREAS most artists do not have access to employment insurance, health insurance, measures covering business risks and fluctuating income, workplace safety insurance or retirement on comparable terms as other professionals;

WHEREAS current programs covering benefits, employment insurance and pension plans are employee-based and do not take into account the realities of the artistic profession such as invisible work, which includes research and creation;

WHEREAS improving the socio-economic conditions of artists requires a link between the governments of New Brunswick and Canada, particularly with respect to: social benefits such as the pension plan; tax measures that take into account annual fluctuations in income, such as income averaging, exemptions on royalties and creation grants; measures related to remuneration and underemployment, such as a guaranteed annual income or employment insurance better adapted to self-employed workers and taking into account invisible work and the periodicity of earnings; measures providing for sick, parental or compassionate leave;

WHEREAS the Premier's Task Force on the Status of the Artist was established in July 2014 and is expected to report shortly;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to commit to the adoption of a Status of the Artist Act that is not merely declaratory but that contains concrete measures to substantially improve the socio-economic status of professional artists;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to establish, following the tabling of the report of the Premier's Task Force on the Status of the Artist, a Standing Committee on the Status of the Artist under the Office of the Premier to be responsible for the implementation of all of the report's recommendations, including those calling for a link between the provincial and federal governments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to put in place, following the tabling of the report of the Premier's Task Force on the Status of the Artist, a timeline for the implementation of the recommended government measures to cover all of the economic and social risks associated with the artistic profession, including those that call for a link between the provincial and federal governments.

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Mr. McKee gave Notice of Motion 7 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Landry:

WHEREAS the Mental Health Court offers an alternative for offenders with mental health issues;

WHEREAS this program is widely praised by mental health advocates for its focus on community treatment as opposed to incarceration or other penalties;

WHEREAS the Mental Health Court program was developed based on best practices in other jurisdictions and informed by research;

WHEREAS the Gallant Government reinstated the Mental Health Court through the Provincial Court system in Saint John with plans to expand Mental Health Court services throughout the province;

WHEREAS there is a need to expand the Mental Health Court program to other regions of the province so that more offenders with mental health issues can avail themselves of this invaluable service for addressing their mental health needs;



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WHEREAS other provinces including our neighbouring province of Nova Scotia have recognized the benefits of having a Mental Health Court and have made a commitment to expanding availability;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to expand the Mental Health Court program throughout the province and announce a specific time frame for doing so.

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Mr. Gauvin gave Notice of Motion 8 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Thériault:

WHEREAS there is an alarming lack of affordable housing in many areas of the province and the situation is getting worse;

WHEREAS increased demand for rental units has resulted in significant increases to monthly rents for many people who cannot afford it;

WHEREAS there is insufficient subsidized housing to meet the demand;

WHEREAS chronic homelessness is a serious social problem that must be addressed;

WHEREAS, in 2018, the previous Liberal government signed a 10-year \$300-million cost-shared agreement with the federal government to tackle the issue of affordable housing;

WHEREAS this agreement provided for a pathway to protect, renew, and expand social and community housing;

WHEREAS municipalities like the City of Moncton have indicated that they are prepared to partner with the community and the province to make significant investments in social housing and support community housing initiatives like the Rising Tide project;

WHEREAS there have been two years of inaction by the Higgs government in addressing this serious issue that is a threat to the safety and security of many New Brunswickers who desperately need affordable housing;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government of New Brunswick to provide its share of the funding under the federal-provincial housing agreement and make affordable housing a priority;



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government of New Brunswick to partner with municipalities and community housing organizations to provide funding support for community housing initiatives.

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Ms. Landry gave Notice of Motion 9 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Legacy:

WHEREAS, as a result of the Climate Change Fund, the province is receiving significant tax revenues of over \$128 million for the 2020-21 fiscal year, which includes \$83 million going into general revenues;

WHEREAS, unlike the federal government, the province of New Brunswick has decided not to rebate the monies received through the federal carbon pricing plan to consumers;

WHEREAS, although certain tax revenues are being used to offset increases in excise taxes on gasoline and natural gas, there are additional tax revenues that could be used for funding climate change measures such as energy efficiency initiatives;

WHEREAS energy efficiency programs help businesses and consumers reduce energy consumption costs, support local business suppliers, and create jobs;

WHEREAS energy efficiency programs contribute to fighting the impacts of climate change:

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to direct that all additional carbon pricing revenues beyond those used to offset fuel prices be used to create a comprehensive energy efficiency and retrofit program for businesses and residential property owners and any excess be directed to other climate change initiatives.

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Mr. LePage gave Notice of Motion 10 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. McKee:

WHEREAS we are fortunate that many New Brunswick businesses are able to stay open despite the COVID-19 pandemic, many of which are seeing their revenues reduced significantly and are struggling to survive;

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WHEREAS the Government of New Brunswick has provided very little support for businesses, compared to other provinces;

WHEREAS generous business support programs provided by the federal government such as the wage subsidy program have helped many businesses survive that might otherwise have had to close or downsize significantly;

WHEREAS many New Brunswick businesses are worried about how they will survive when the federal subsidies are no longer available;

WHEREAS, unlike the federal business support programs and those of other provinces, the meagre business support programs provided by the Government of New Brunswick are non-forgivable loans that merely add to the debt of a business and put it at further risk;

WHEREAS the Government of New Brunswick has not even provided financial support to help businesses pay for the cost of personal protective equipment for their employees or to offset the costs they have incurred to modify their business premises to accommodate health and safety requirements imposed under the Emergency Order;

WHEREAS small and medium-sized businesses and the jobs they provide are crucial to our economy and are deserving of needed support;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislature urge the Government of New Brunswick to bring forward a more comprehensive program of financial support to help New Brunswick businesses survive the pandemic.

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Mr. LePage gave Notice of Motion 11 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Mallet:

WHEREAS there are many areas within New Brunswick that do not have adequate access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS access to high-speed Internet is crucial for many businesses and the lack of high-speed Internet creates an economic disadvantage for them in communities where it is not available;

WHEREAS access to high-speed Internet is also vital for individuals and communities;

WHEREAS the previous Liberal government invested \$10 million in high-speed Internet and was committed to ensuring all areas of the province would have access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS, as a result of COVID-19, many students in our regular school program have had to access learning programs remotely, and there is a risk that, in the event of a further outbreak requiring the closure of schools, they and probably more students may have to do so again;

WHEREAS parents of students living in areas without access to high-speed Internet have expressed concern about the educational disadvantage faced by their children;

WHEREAS many post-secondary institutions have moved to an online platform to deliver their education and training programs and postsecondary students require access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS many New Brunswickers are now asked to work from home and thus need access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS many health services, including doctors' visits, are increasingly being delivered virtually as a result of the health and safety restrictions associated with the pandemic;

WHEREAS individuals, businesses, and communities in mostly rural areas of the province deserve access to high-speed Internet;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to make access to high-speed Internet for all areas of the province a top priority;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to invest in the necessary infrastructure to ensure access to high-speed Internet.

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Mr. LePage gave Notice of Motion 12 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson:

WHEREAS, as a result of the pandemic, there have been significant job losses including layoffs at WestJet, Mount Allison University, Air Canada, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation, and Caribou Mine;

WHEREAS many small businesses all over the province have also suffered as a result of the pandemic which caused reduced business revenues;

WHEREAS other provinces are announcing programs to spur economic recovery with strategic infrastructure investments;

WHEREAS the Higgs government has made very few infrastructure investments under the Canada-New Brunswick Infrastructure Agreement signed by the previous Liberal government;

WHEREAS, unlike other premiers, Premier Higgs has indicated that he is not interested in the new federal-provincial infrastructure program that provides an even more generous cost-sharing structure for provinces;

WHEREAS there are many worthwhile and beneficial infrastructure projects that would create jobs and spur economic growth at a time when we should be focused on economic recovery;

WHEREAS there are many critical municipal infrastructure needs that could be addressed through the proposed federal-provincial infrastructure program;

WHEREAS, not only will strategic infrastructure investments create jobs and spur economic growth, these investments will help address serious issues like the challenge of climate change, and avoid future costs;

WHEREAS, if New Brunswick does not make strategic infrastructure investments, economists predict that economic recovery will be slow and other provinces will recover at a much faster rate;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government of New Brunswick to recognize the importance of economic recovery and take advantage of the federal-provincial infrastructure program by making strategic infrastructure investments throughout the province a top priority.

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Mr. Bourque gave Notice of Motion 13 that on Thursday, November 26, 2020, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. LePage:

WHEREAS the pandemic has created considerable challenges for the daycare sector;

WHEREAS, as a result of the pandemic, licenced daycares must implement health and safety measures that add additional expenses, including extra staffing;

WHEREAS, as a result of this additional cost burden, many daycare operators are struggling to keep their businesses open;

WHEREAS having access to daycare services is critical for many parents, including health care workers;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick government has not stepped up to assist licenced daycares;

WHEREAS, without additional support, there is a risk that many licenced daycares may have to close;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to put a support program in place to support licenced daycares which includes financial support to New Brunswick daycare operators.

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With leave of the House, Hon. Mr. Savoie moved, seconded by Hon. Ms. Shephard: (Motion 14)

THAT notwithstanding Standing Rule 29(1), the time for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sitting of the Assembly on Fridays shall be as follows:

Friday 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.

THAT this Special Order shall remain in effect during the remainder of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

And the question being put, it was resolved in the affirmative.

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Hon. Mr. Savoie gave notice that on Friday, November 20, 2020, Bills 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 would be called for second reading.

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And then, 2.07 p.m., the House adjourned.

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The following documents, having been deposited with the Clerk of the House, were deemed laid upon the table of the House pursuant to Standing Rule 39:

**Annual Reports**

2019-2020 Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission	October 16, 2020
2017-2018 Premier's Council on Disabilities	October 19, 2020
2018-2019 Premier's Council on Disabilities	October 19, 2020
Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick, Volume I, Performance Audit, 2020	October 20, 2020
2019-2020 New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission	October 28, 2020
2019-2020 New Brunswick Community College	October 29, 2020
2019-2020 Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick	October 29, 2020
2019-2020 Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation	October 29, 2020
2017 Office of the Chief Coroner	November 5, 2020
2019-2020 New Brunswick Research and Productivity Council	November 6, 2020
2019-2020 Service New Brunswick	November 10, 2020
2019-2020 New Brunswick Liquor Corporation	November 10, 2020
2019-2020 Cannabis NB	November 10, 2020
Report on Performance 2019-2020, Auditor General of New Brunswick	November 10, 2020
Legislative Activities 2019	November 13, 2020

**Other**

Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2020, Volume 1, Consolidated Financial Statements	October 14, 2020
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