

Daily Sitting 2

Thursday, November 24, 2011

*1 o'clock p.m.*

Prayers.

Mr. Boudreau offered condolences to the family of the late Mr. Azor LeBlanc, former Liberal MLA for Shediac (1974-1991).

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Mr. Speaker, the Honorable Dale Graham, introduced the new pages for the Session: Serena Smith, Kingston, Nova Scotia; Karen Cook, Fredericton; Randy Kaye, Colpitts Settlement; Kyle Davenport, Perth-Andover.

The returning pages are: Alicia DelFrate, Fredericton; Conrad Fox, Fredericton; Ryan O'Donnell, Boiestown; Brigid Wheaton, Central Blissville; Karina Kierstead, Quispansis; Andrew MacDougall, Burton.

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Mr. Fraser, Member for Miramichi-Bay du Vin, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging that acute care beds at the Miramichi Regional Hospital remain as such, and that the hospital maintain its level 3 trauma designation. (Petition 1)

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Mr. Bertrand LeBlanc, Member for Rogersville-Kouchibouguac, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging that acute care beds at the Miramichi Regional Hospital remain as such, and that the hospital maintain its level 3 trauma designation. (Petition 2)

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Mr. Fraser, Member for Miramichi-Bay du Vin, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the Minister of Public Safety to provide an independent, far-reaching and transparent judicial public inquiry into the murder of Paul "Poncho" Henderson and the actions of all law enforcement personnel involved in the initial investigation of his death. (Petition 3)

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Mr. Bertrand LeBlanc, Member for Rogersville-Kouchibouguac, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging that the entire shale fracturing process, including present exploration for natural gas, be halted immediately. (Petition 4)

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Mr. Fraser, Member for Miramichi-Bay du Vin, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the government to implement a food solidarity program of \$50 per month for all households on social

assistance and to raise the basic social assistance rates to match the average of those in place in Atlantic Canada. (Petition 5)

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Mr. Albert, Member for Caraquet, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the government to implement a food solidarity program of \$50 per month for all households on social assistance and to raise the basic social assistance rates to match the average of those in place in Atlantic Canada. (Petition 6)

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Mr. Melanson, Member for Dieppe Centre-Lewisville, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the government to implement a food solidarity program of \$50 per month for all households on social assistance and to raise the basic social assistance rates to match the average of those in place in Atlantic Canada. (Petition 7)

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Hon. Mr. Leonard laid upon the table of the House a document entitled *The New Brunswick Energy Blueprint, New Brunswick, Department of Energy, October 2011*.

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It was agreed by unanimous consent to permit Hon. Mr. Leonard to make a lengthy Minister's Statement.

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

Following Oral Questions, Mr. Fraser rose on a point of order and submitted that the Premier had used unparliamentary language. The Premier withdrew the words in question.

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The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:

By Hon. Ms. Blais, Q.C.,

Bill 2, *An Act to Amend the Securities Act*.

By Hon. Mr. Trevors,

Bill 3, *An Act to Amend the New Brunswick Building Code Act*.

By Hon. Mr. Fitch,

Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Municipal Assistance Act*.

Bill 5, *An Act to Amend the Municipalities Act*.

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Hon. Mr. Northrup gave Notice of Motion 1 that on Wednesday, November 30, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Hon. Ms. Blaney:

WHEREAS New Brunswick's natural resources represent a collective good to be developed responsibly for the benefit of our Province; and

WHEREAS Natural Gas represents an opportunity to employ New Brunswickers and to raise revenue to assist in reducing the province's debt and help fund social programs, including health care, senior care, and education; and

WHEREAS the Members of this Legislature wish to encourage the development of industry that provides meaningful opportunities to keep our people in the Province and provide work to bring New Brunswickers home from the oil and gas sector in western Canada; and

WHEREAS exploration for Natural Gas reserves has the beneficial effect of increasing knowledge about all of the Province's underground resources; and

WHEREAS prior governments have granted permissions to explore for Natural gas and other natural resources in New Brunswick; and

WHEREAS the Members of this Legislature believe that the Government must ensure that a strong comprehensive regulatory framework must be in place to provide for the protection of our groundwater and the environment; and

WHEREAS this Government will only allow extraction if it is conducted in a manner that protects the health of our residents, the quality of our drinking water and protects the environment; and

WHEREAS energy derived from natural gas is more environmentally sound than energy derived from coal or oil and results in decreased greenhouse gas emission; and

WHEREAS Oil and Natural Gas wells, using various extraction technologies, including hydraulic fracturing, have been in production in New Brunswick since 1859;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly supports the policy of continued responsible exploration of New Brunswick's Natural Gas reserves in conjunction with the development of a framework of world class regulations to ensure the protection of the residents of New Brunswick, our groundwater, and the environment.

Mr. Bernard LeBlanc gave Notice of Motion 2 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Kenny:

WHEREAS the Alward government proposed changes to the Prescription Drug Program that doubled the co-pay amount payable by seniors from \$250 to \$500;

WHEREAS seniors feel this increase breaks the Premier's campaign promise to "provide a better deal for seniors";

WHEREAS this sudden increase creates considerable financial hardship for low-income seniors;

WHEREAS the extra cost may prevent seniors from getting the medications they need;

WHEREAS the loss of medications could be harmful to the fragile health of seniors;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association, the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, and others have suggested ways to find additional savings within the Prescription Drug Program, which would avoid the need for drastic fee increases;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick urge the government to reverse the sudden fee increase, keep the Premier's campaign promise to "provide a better deal for seniors", and explore alternate savings through the Prescription Drug Program.

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On motion of Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud, seconded by Mr. Fraser:

RESOLVED, that when the House adjourns at the end of this sitting day, it stand adjourned until Friday, November 25, 2011, at 11 o'clock a.m.

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Mr. D. Landry gave Notice of Motion 3 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Bertrand LeBlanc:

WHEREAS the Minister of Natural Resources publicly stated on November 3, 2011, the "need for stronger regulations on the emerging industry" of shale gas exploration;

WHEREAS the Minister of Natural Resources publicly admitted on October 19, 2011, to a “grey area” in the existing regulations surrounding shale gas exploration;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislature urge the government to announce a moratorium on shale gas exploration and strike a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly with the mandate to review and hold public hearings on all proposed legislation, regulations, and plans for monitoring and oversight of the shale gas industry, and to make final recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.

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With leave of the House, Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud moved, seconded by Mr. Fraser: (Motion 4)

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 come into effect on December 9, 2011, and shall remain in effect during the remainder of the Second Session of the Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly.

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

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Mr. Collins gave Notice of Motion 5 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Albert:

WHEREAS the Alward government is proposing a two-tiered minimum wage for the province of New Brunswick, wherein servers and wait staff would earn a lower minimum wage than other workers;

WHEREAS a two-tiered minimum wage is a direct attack on the most vulnerable wage earners;

WHEREAS tipping is designed to reward excellent service, not supplement wages;

WHEREAS the scheduled increase to the minimum wage that was supposed to have taken place in September as mandated by the Poverty Reduction Plan has not yet been implemented;

WHEREAS the Poverty Reduction Plan did not suggest a two-tiered minimum wage;

WHEREAS the Alward government's public consultation on a two-tiered minimum wage consists of an online survey which contains questions which have been criticized as being designed to tip the balance of the results in favour of a two-tiered minimum wage;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly call on the government of New Brunswick to respect the spirit and intent of the Poverty Reduction Plan, reject a two-tiered minimum wage and immediately implement the recommendation of the Poverty Reduction Plan to raise the minimum wage to \$10.

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Mr. Bernard LeBlanc gave Notice of Motion 6 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Boudreau:

WHEREAS the previous Liberal government undertook an unprecedented public engagement in 2009 with the business sector, the non-profit sector, and citizens living in poverty, which resulted in a bipartisan poverty reduction plan;

WHEREAS the Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, participated fully in the engagement process and the announcement of the poverty reduction plan;

WHEREAS the Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, stated that he was "proud" to have participated in the process and committed his party to implementing the recommendations of the poverty reduction task force;

WHEREAS the Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, stated in an opinion column published in various provincial newspapers in November 2009 that we have to do more;

WHEREAS, since forming the government, the Alward Conservatives have ignored or postponed several important deadlines for the implementation of poverty reduction initiatives;

WHEREAS there is considerable disparity between what Premier Alward said while he was in the opposition and what he has done since forming the government;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislature urge the government to honour the commitments made by the Premier when, as Leader of the Opposition, he expressed his support for the poverty reduction plan.

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Mr. Melanson gave Notice of Motion 7 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Collins:

WHEREAS Halifax Shipyard has been awarded a \$25-billion contract to build new combat ships for the Canadian Navy;

WHEREAS Rona Ambrose, the federal Minister of Public Works and Government Services, the department that handles procurement, said the contracts will provide 75 million hours of work and 15 000 jobs annually over the next 30 years;

WHEREAS this contract represents an important economic opportunity not just for Halifax, but for the entire Atlantic region, including New Brunswick;

WHEREAS there could be valuable opportunities for New Brunswick businesses with skilled workers to benefit from the shipbuilding contract in subcontract and supply work;

WHEREAS more New Brunswick workers would like the training to be able to participate in these skilled labour opportunities;

WHEREAS the former Liberal government made considerable investments in NBCC and CCNB to position the colleges to offer the trades training that will be required for many of these jobs, with plans to add 1 500 more seats to the college systems;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately develop a comprehensive strategy to maximize opportunities for New Brunswick businesses and workers.

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Mr. Kenny gave Notice of Motion 8 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Haché:

That an address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation including correspondence, however

recorded, stored or archived, by electronic means or otherwise, between NB Power, the Department of Energy, and any third party in relation to all expenses and costs included in the Deferral account associated with the refurbishment of the Point Lepreau generating station since March 28, 2008, including an itemized list of these costs and expenses.

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Mr. Doucet gave Notice of Motion 9 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Albert:

That an address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation since October 13, 2010, including correspondence, however recorded, stored or archived, by electronic means or otherwise, including, but not limited to, all proposals, contracts, engagement letters and records of meetings between the Department of Transportation and all consultants, corporations, individuals with respect to the conduct of any reviews, assessments or evaluations on the operations of the Department of Transportation.

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Mr. Kenny gave Notice of Motion 10 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Haché:

That an address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation since October 13, 2010, including correspondence, however recorded, stored or archived, by electronic means or otherwise, between the Department of Energy, the Premier's Office, The Executive Council Office, NB Power and any other individuals, or corporations with respect to the engagement of the consulting firm Alexander Proudfoot by NB Power including, but not limited to all correspondence, memos, contracts, directives, and proposals.

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Mr. Arseneault gave Notice of Motion 11 that on Thursday, December 1, 2011, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Haché:

That an address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, including correspondence, however recorded or stored, by electronic means or otherwise, between the



Office of the Premier, Executive Council Office, Communications New Brunswick, Department of Environment, Office of the Auditor-General and the Greater Moncton Sewerage Commission related to the release of the 2011 Auditor-General's report of wastewater commissions.

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And then, 3.40 o'clock p.m., the House adjourned.