

Daily sitting 24

Thursday, April 5, 2012

11 o'clock a.m.

Prayers.

Mr. Fraser, Member for Miramichi-Bay du Vin, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the government to build a new nursing home with additional beds to replace Mount St. Joseph Nursing Home and that full-time palliative care nurses be reinstated at the Miramichi Regional Hospital. (Petition 75)

Mr. Bertrand LeBlanc, Member for Rogersville-Kouchibouguac, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging the government to build a new nursing home with additional beds to replace Mount St. Joseph Nursing Home and that full-time palliative care nurses be reinstated at the Miramichi Regional Hospital. (Petition 76)

Mr. Doucet, Member for Charlotte-The Isles, laid upon the table of the House a petition on behalf of seniors in opposition to the Tax Deferral program. (Petition 77)

Hon. Mr. Olscamp requested unanimous consent to make a lengthy Minister's Statement, and unanimous consent was denied.

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:

By Hon. Mr. Leonard on behalf of Hon. Ms. Blaney,
Bill 26, *An Act to Amend the Electricity Act*.

By Hon. Ms. Blais, Q.C.,
Bill 27, *An Act to Amend the Queen's Counsel and Precedence Act*.

By Hon. Mr. Olscamp on behalf of Hon. Mr. Northrup,
Bill 28, *Species at Risk Act*.

Mr. Fraser gave Notice of Motion 41 that on Thursday, April 12, 2012, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Boudreau:

WHEREAS the Premier committed during the 2010 election campaign to guaranteeing that the annual budget for the Department of Health will increase each and every year of a four-year mandate by a minimum of three per cent;

AND WHEREAS the most recent budget limits the increase of the budget for the Department of Health to 1.6 per cent growth;

AND WHEREAS the budget for the Department of Health has increased by an average of approximately 7 per cent annually between 2006 and 2010;

AND WHEREAS this health budget reduction will mean the Department of Health will likely have to make drastic cuts to programs and services of more than \$136 million to meet this budget target;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to provide detailed information on the specific cuts to programs and services to the health care system that will be required to meet this difficult budget target.

Mr. Fraser gave Notice of Motion 42 that on Thursday, April 12, 2012, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Kenny:

WHEREAS investments in preventative health care now will result in primary care savings in the future;

WHEREAS obesity is a major roadblock to healthy living in our province, which consistently ranks among the highest in Canada in obesity rates;

WHEREAS an obesity clinic pilot program in Bathurst has helped approximately 800 patients manage their diabetes, high blood pressure and other obesity-related conditions;

WHEREAS the provincial government has cut funding to the clinic;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislature urge the provincial government to reinstate funding to the obesity clinic program as an investment in preventative health care.

Mr. Kenny gave Notice of Motion 43 that on Thursday, April 12, 2012, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Haché:

WHEREAS Brunswick Mines is due to cease operation in Bathurst next year;

WHEREAS Brunswick Mines is an important employer in northern New Brunswick, with more than 900 employees and more than 1,200 jobs indirectly linked to the mine;

WHEREAS the closure of the mine will have a significant and detrimental effect on the economy of northern New Brunswick;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislature urge the provincial government to develop and release a strategy to stimulate and improve the northern New Brunswick economy to lessen the blow of the mine closure.

Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud gave notice that on Tuesday, April 10, 2012, Bills 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 would be called for second reading.

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 29, Mr. Melanson moved, seconded by Mr. Kenny:

WHEREAS the Alward government is aiming for a balanced operational budget by 2014;

WHEREAS the Alward government is mostly focusing on the expenditure side of the provincial balance sheet to achieve this;

WHEREAS in addressing the provincial financial situation, a balanced approach is needed;

WHEREAS the province of New Brunswick has experienced negative job growth since the Alward government took office;

WHEREAS New Brunswickers understand that to reach this objective of a balanced budget by 2014, additional revenues are needed;

WHEREAS a significant way to increase provincial revenues is through job creation;

WHEREAS the Alward government has yet to develop a strategic job creation plan;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the New Brunswick Legislature urge the provincial government to immediately develop and release a comprehensive job creation plan, including objectives and measurable targets.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

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

And after some further time, Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud, seconded by Hon. Mr. Higgs, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 29 be amended:

By deleting the word “mostly” from the second WHEREAS clause;

By adding the words “, as is outlined in the Government’s vision for rebuilding New Brunswick through changes to the culture and structure of government” at the end of the third WHEREAS clause;

By deleting the fourth, fifth and seventh WHEREAS clauses;

By replacing the words “a significant” with “an important” and adding the words “and decrease provincial expenditures” after the word “revenues” in the sixth WHEREAS clause;

By adding the following clauses before the resolution clause:

“WHEREAS this government believes that responsible management of the province’s finances is paramount;

WHEREAS this government believes that we must provide the environment for sustainably growing the economy to create and maintain high-quality jobs across the province;

WHEREAS a culture of healthy, growing communities and an enhanced quality of life for all New Brunswickers is a priority for this government;”

In the resolution clause, by replacing all the words following “the provincial government to” with “continue with the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy that includes a job creation plan, with performance indicators that measure economic progress, quality of life, and fiscal management”.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker put the question on Motion 29 as amended as follows:

WHEREAS the Alward government is aiming for a balanced operational budget by 2014;

WHEREAS the Alward government is focusing on the expenditure side of the provincial balance sheet to achieve this;

WHEREAS in addressing the provincial financial situation, a balanced approach is needed, as is outlined in the Government's vision for rebuilding New Brunswick through changes to the culture and structure of government;

WHEREAS an important way to increase provincial revenues and decrease provincial expenditures is through job creation;

WHEREAS this government believes that responsible management of the province's finances is paramount;

WHEREAS this government believes that we must provide the environment for sustainably growing the economy to create and maintain high-quality jobs across the province;

WHEREAS a culture of healthy, growing communities and an enhanced quality of life for all New Brunswickers is a priority for this government;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the New Brunswick Legislature urge the provincial government to continue with the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy that includes a job creation plan, with performance indicators that measure economic progress, quality of life, and fiscal management.

And the question being put, Motion 29 as amended was resolved in the affirmative.

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 32, Mr. Melanson moved, seconded by Mr. Collins:

WHEREAS many factors contribute to economic growth;

WHEREAS a qualified workforce is critical to job creation and economic sustainability;

WHEREAS the business community has identified the lack of access to a qualified workforce as a significant roadblock to growth;

WHEREAS the Alward government has not addressed this issue through the creation of a fully integrated job creation plan that would include specific initiatives in response to this need;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick urge the provincial government to organize and facilitate a provincial employment summit before the end of May 2012, which would bring together stakeholders from the business community, the nonprofit sector, and postsecondary institutions, in order to understand the needs, identify the gaps, and propose a solution.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

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

Hon. Ms. Blais, after requesting that Mr. Speaker revert to Government Motions for the Ordering of the Business of the House, moved, seconded by Hon. Mr. P. Robichaud:

THAT when the Assembly adjourns on Friday, April 13, 2012, it shall stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 24, 2012; and

THAT when the Assembly adjourns on Friday, May 18, 2012, it shall stand adjourned until Tuesday, May 29, 2012.

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

With leave of the House, Hon. Ms. Blais moved, seconded by Mr. Boudreau: (Motion 44)

THAT, pursuant to Standing Rule 109, all estimates contained in the *Main Estimates 2012-2013* and *Capital Estimates 2012-2013* not yet adopted by the Committee of Supply shall be referred to the Standing Committee on Estimates, which shall report its progress to the House on Tuesday, April 24, 2012;

That the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Estimates shall be televised and shall take place in the Legislative Assembly Chamber on the following dates and times:

Tuesday, April 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.;

Wednesday, April 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.;

Thursday, April 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.;

Friday, April 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.;

That all estimates remaining for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Estimates at the conclusion of the proceedings on April 20 shall be referred back to the Committee of Supply for its consideration;

That the Standing Committee on Estimates shall operate and conduct its proceedings in the same manner as the Committee of Supply, which operates largely as an Opposition forum where Members of the Official Opposition question Ministers on their departmental estimates.

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

And then, 4.05 o'clock p.m., the House adjourned.

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

Annual Report 2010-2011
Department of Justice and
Consumer Affairs, Insurance

April 4, 2012