

Daily sitting 4

Friday, October 20, 2023

*9 o'clock a.m.*

Prayers.

At 9.03 a.m. the House recessed due to technical difficulties. At 9.22 a.m. the House resumed.

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Ms. Holt offered condolences to the family of the late John Winston Foran, former Liberal MLA for Miramichi Centre (2003-2010).

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Mr. Allain offered condolences to the family of the late Omer Léger, former Progressive Conservative MLA for Kent (1971-1974) and Kent South (1974-1978, 1982-1987).

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Mr. McKee gave Notice of Motion 5 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Losier:

WHEREAS New Brunswick's healthcare system has been grappling with a multitude of challenges, including critical shortages of healthcare workers and staffing retention issues that need to be addressed;

WHEREAS patients in New Brunswick endure prolonged wait times for essential healthcare services;

WHEREAS New Brunswick has a significant senior population and one of the highest rates of chronic health conditions in the nation, which further emphasizes the pressing need for a healthcare system that is readily accessible to all residents;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to table, no later than April 1, 2024, a healthcare worker retention plan.

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Mr. Gauvin gave Notice of Motion 6 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. LePage:

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic emphasized the risk of spread of airborne illnesses in public institutions such as schools, hospitals, and nursing homes if significant improvements to air quality systems in government buildings are not made;

WHEREAS the Auditor General's report on the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that 73% of nursing homes do not meet design standards that are now almost a decade old and that departmental staff acknowledged that they believe that the infrastructural deficiencies in nursing homes contributed to the COVID-19 outbreaks because the buildings were inadequate to mitigate airborne diseases;

WHEREAS the Auditor General's same report also acknowledged that the Department of Social Development has no formal plan to bring these nursing homes up to standard;

WHEREAS in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, the House unanimously adopted Motion 36 urging the government to modernize the *Clean Air Act* and urging the government to bring forward a plan to monitor, report on, and improve air quality systems in public buildings;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to table a strengthened *Clean Air Act* in this session;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to present a formal plan of capital investment, no later than April 1, 2024, to bring all nursing homes to the most recent departmental design standards.

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Mr. Gauvin gave Notice of Motion 7 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Holt:

WHEREAS seniors prefer to stay in the familiar surroundings of their homes for as long as possible;

WHEREAS caregivers play an important role in supporting seniors to stay in their homes, which may delay or even avoid the need for more costly forms of long-term care services and may also lead to better overall health and quality of life for seniors;

WHEREAS caregiving comes at considerable personal and professional sacrifice with significant financial cost for the caregiver, who is expected to cover fuel when transporting seniors to medical appointments or other household spending such as snow removal or lawn care;

WHEREAS the gendered nature of caregiving imposes undue burdens on women for family care work, which the University of Alberta's Research on Aging Policies and Practice Centre estimates to be worth an economic value of \$2.4 billion in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS legislative regimes in other jurisdictions maintain programs that support caregivers through direct compensation, which produce positive benefits for both the caregiver and the cared;

WHEREAS the support of caregivers and their role in providing essential aid is of significant importance to New Brunswick;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to establish a direct compensation benefit to caregivers in the 2024-2025 budget.

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Ms. Landry gave Notice of Motion 8 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Thériault:

WHEREAS the government in its Speech from the Throne has committed to creating 550 additional designated childcare spaces, despite a waitlist of 3,300 and continued population growth, which increases the demand on childcare services in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS families in New Brunswick are struggling with the growing cost of living, including access to affordable childcare services;

WHEREAS limited access to childcare is a major obstacle, especially for women returning to the labour market;

WHEREAS families in New Brunswick face increased childcare costs for school-aged children;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to table, no later than April 1, 2024, a human resources plan for the childcare sector;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to present a formal plan, no later than April 1, 2024, to allocate additional subsidized childcare spaces to eliminate the waitlist and respond to expected demographic growth.

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Hon. Mr. G. Savoie, Government House Leader, announced that it was the intention of government that the House resume the adjourned debate on the motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

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The Order of the Day being read that the House proceed to take into further consideration the amendment to the proposed Address in answer to Her Honour's speech at the opening of the session,

And the debate continuing,

And after some time, Ms. Conroy, the Deputy Speaker, took the chair as Acting Speaker.

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

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

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And then, 2 p.m., the House adjourned.