
Daily sitting 11

Thursday, November 2, 2023

1 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

Ms. Thériault, Member for Caraquet, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging government to fund breast prosthesis due to cancer surgery or malformation. (Petition 5)

Ms. Landry gave Notice of Motion 21 that on Thursday, November 9, 2023, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Thériault:

WHEREAS the right to food is a basic right, families are struggling to obtain enough quality food, and food is the market basket item that has increased in price the most;

WHEREAS school breakfasts are important to give children the energy and food they need to start the day right, and not all children have access to a nutritious breakfast (which can include fruit, milk and dairy products, eggs, cereal, and wholegrain bread);

WHEREAS these programs aim to reduce absenteeism and promote healthy eating habits;

WHEREAS education and health are intrinsically linked to children's success, and a free, universal breakfast program provides equal opportunity to access food and improves the health, wellbeing, and academic performance of all students;

WHEREAS many regions provide school breakfast programs to ensure that all students have access to a nutritious meal in the morning;

WHEREAS the current program in New Brunswick is inequitable, since it only funds schools with no community or volunteer involvement;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to introduce and fund a public and universal breakfast program to provide a free morning meal to all students in every public school, regardless of their financial or social situation, before the beginning of the 2024-25 school year.

Mr. Arseneau gave Notice of Motion 22 that on Thursday, November 9, 2023, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Coon:

WHEREAS many New Brunswickers are struggling with an escalating affordability crisis that has seen skyrocketing prices for essentials, including food, housing, medication, heating oil and gasoline;

WHEREAS, although New Brunswick recently increased the minimum wage to \$14.75 per hour, it remains the lowest in Atlantic Canada and the second lowest in Canada;

WHEREAS the Human Development Council calculates living wages in New Brunswick by investigating the real-life and real-time costs of living and considers the current living wage to be an average of \$20 per hour in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS ensuring that all New Brunswickers earn a living wage is crucial to lift individuals out of poverty, increase economic security, reduce financial stress, support one's physical and mental wellness, encourage healthy child growth and development, promote social inclusion and belonging, and improve quality of life;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to create a plan to increase the minimum wage to a living wage;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to create a program to provide temporary financial support to help employers with any increased costs resulting from the transition from a minimum wage to a living wage.

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 11, Mr. Legacy moved, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson:

WHEREAS the tax applied to electricity rates disproportionately impacts low-income individuals and families who spend a larger percentage of their income on basic necessities of life;

WHEREAS the rising cost of living for necessities including rent, fuel, and groceries is forcing people to make difficult choices;

WHEREAS home heating is a basic necessity of life in New Brunswick and 45% of New Brunswickers rely on electricity as their primary source for home heating;

WHEREAS the government has increased funding to accelerate the adoption of heat pumps in households across New Brunswick and is proud of its fiscal position, which includes a \$1-billion surplus;

WHEREAS, in the 2nd session of the 60th Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Assembly adopted Motion 30, urging the government to study the financial impact of removing the provincial portion of HST from residential electricity bills;

WHEREAS the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development has received the relevant information on the financial impact;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to remove the provincial portion of HST from residential electricity bills from January 1, 2024.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put, Motion 11 was resolved in the negative on the following recorded division:

YEAS - 19

Mr. Arseneault	Mr. Coon	Mr. Mallet
Mr. Legacy	Ms. Mitton	Mr. Arseneau
Ms. Holt	Mr. J. LeBlanc	Mr. Losier
Mr. McKee	Mr. K. Chiasson	Mr. M. LeBlanc
Ms. Thériault	Mr. D'Amours	Ms. Landry
Mr. Gauvin	Mr. LePage	
Mr. C. Chiasson	Mr. Bourque	

NAYS - 25

Hon. Mr. Hogan	Hon. Ms. Dunn	Mr. Holder
Hon. Mr. G. Savoie	Hon. Mr. Crossman	Mr. Cullins
Hon. Mr. Steeves	Hon. Ms. Johnson	Ms. Shephard
Hon. Ms. Green	Hon. Mr. Ames	Mr. Wetmore
Hon. Mr. Fitch	Hon. Mr. Turner	Mr. Dawson
Hon. Mr. Holland	Hon. Ms. Bockus	Ms. Conroy
Hon. Mr. R. Savoie	Hon. Ms. M. Wilson	Mr. Carr
Hon. Ms. Scott-Wallace	Hon. Ms. S. Wilson	
Hon. Mr. Austin	Mr. Allain	

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 12, Mr. McKee moved, seconded by Mr. Arseneault:

WHEREAS there is a need to revisit the decision regarding the funding of the new RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) vaccine for seniors to enhance their overall health and well-being;

WHEREAS there is a general consensus on the importance of funding the RSV vaccine for seniors to alleviate the strain on hospitals and ensure more efficient healthcare resource allocation;

WHEREAS it is evident that RSV is a significant contributor to hospital admissions during certain periods of the year and that redirecting the funding of the associated hospital costs could serve to provide vaccines to a substantial number of seniors in need;

WHEREAS RSV disproportionately affects people aged 65 and older, infants, and immunocompromised individuals, leading to hospitalization and, in some cases, fatalities;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to fund the voluntary RSV vaccine beginning in 2023 for seniors and other vulnerable groups, considering the potential benefits it represents for public health and healthcare system efficiency;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to classify RSV as a notifiable disease under public health regulations, which will enable the collection of essential data for a more informed response to this health challenge.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

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

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

And then, 6 p.m., the House adjourned.

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:

Response to Petitions 1, 2

November 1, 2023