

# Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick

## Oral Questions



**March 28, 2024**

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### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past month or so, I've travelled all over the province visiting long-term care facilities in every corner. I've met some really incredible people who are caring for some of our oldest and most vulnerable New Brunswickers in special care homes, long-term care facilities, and nursing homes around the province. They provide an exceptional service under very challenging circumstances. I got to see many of those challenges first-hand, from aging infrastructure to staffing shortages to policies that serve as a barrier, to deliver the kind of care that the staff want to give and that New Brunswickers deserve.

A few weeks ago, the Seniors' Advocate tabled a report called *What We All Want*. It was an extensive report that was well served by an advisory committee. I'd like to know that the Premier has now had time to read it. I hope that he can tell us this: What recommendations within this report will his government act upon?

**Hon. Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, Minister responsible for Seniors, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have read the report, all 198 pages I believe it was. We will review the report more fully and act upon those items that are necessary. Right now, we're undertaking an assessment of all the nursing homes in the province to see where the work is needed, what needs to be done, and how we can do it.

We've also looked at wages, and, if I can read these, we have a \$2.50 hourly wage increase provided to home support agency workers in 2023-24. As of April 1, 2023, the hourly wage is \$20 per hour. We've also given funding to home support agencies. Wages were increased by \$2.50 per hour for 2023—

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you, minister.

[Translation]

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to hear that the minister has read the report. Could she tell us when we can expect a response to each of these recommendations? If I may, I would like to highlight Recommendation 4.8.

[Original]

They call for Recommendation 4.8, and there's an urgency to this:

*By May 2024, a costed plan should be presented to the Legislative Assembly to increase the hours of care in long-term care facilities to 4 hours a day by the 2025-26 fiscal year.*

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Could the member share with us whether that particular recommendation has been reviewed, given its time sensitivity and the urgent need to be able to provide care in New Brunswick that's up to our provincial standard?

**Hon. Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, Minister responsible for Seniors, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the Minister of Social Development and housing and I have had discussions on each of the points in this report. I know the staff are reviewing it. We will follow up as soon as we can. Thank you.

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take the opportunity to flag one more recommendation. Maybe I could get a little more clarity on what "as soon as we can" might mean. I think we all know the crisis we're facing in the health care system, and some of that crisis has been experienced in hospitals in New Brunswick because so many of their rooms and beds are being taken up by patients who would be much better served in a long-term care facility but are receiving an alternate level of care. I think that's up to 30. It's a significant number at the Chaleur Regional Hospital. I think it's at 50%. It's 400 beds across the province.

Recommendation 4.9 in the advocate's report calls for this:

*A clear, costed action plan, establishing hard targets each six months for reductions in the number of patients in Alternate Levels of Care, should be presented to the Legislative Assembly by June 2024.*

Could the minister reassure me that this priority, given the nature of our health care system, is going to get urgent attention?

**Hon. Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, Minister responsible for Seniors, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are well aware of the situation with seniors in our hospitals who are waiting for long-term care beds in the nursing homes. We are working on that. There are some things that I can't talk about right at the moment, but we are working on fixing that issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There is another question I would like to ask. I think a group was here last week to make a request, which, in my opinion, was quite clear and simple.

[Original]

For folks who aren't familiar with the nursing home system, I want to describe what the comfort and clothing allowance is. Residents in long-term care are allowed \$135 per month

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to spend on their personal needs, which includes their drugs, foot care, dental care, vision care, television, clothing, and any little luxury. It has been \$135 per month since 2005—nearly 20 years. I think we can all appreciate how much the cost of living has changed since 2005 and what a dire need there is to move that allowance to a figure that's much more appropriate to allow seniors to live with dignity in long-term care. Could the minister commit to increasing that allowance, please?

**Hon. Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, Minister responsible for Seniors, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's almost as though the Leader of the Opposition has my office bugged, maybe. We are talking about just that—the comfort allowance. According to my information, the comfort allowance has not been increased since 2007. Each resident of a nursing home gets \$108 per month, and in special care homes, a resident gets \$135 per month. We realize all the items that have to come out of that, which have been outlined by the leader. We are working on that, but we have to get our budgetary items in line. I've spoken to the Minister of Social Development, and we are well aware that this needs to be addressed, and soon, because of the rising costs to our seniors. Thank you.

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am encouraged to hear that it's on the desk. I appreciate words like “this needs to be addressed, and soon”, except that I didn't see it in the budget for the year ahead. Is it going to be addressed within this next fiscal year? Or is “soon” into 2025-26?

**Hon. Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, Minister responsible for Seniors, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the complete answer to that question could be received in main estimates when we appear before that committee. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gauvin** (Shediac Bay-Dieppe, L): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, my questions will be for the Minister responsible for Seniors. The day before yesterday, there was good news from the federal government. It was about over \$100 million going to seniors.

It's known that some nursing home workers have not received a wage increase. Nurses are leaving their profession for reasons other than retirement. This is not a good sign. It can't help with recruitment when new people arriving to work in the sector are seeing people aged 30, 40, and 50 leaving their jobs for reasons other than retirement.

Can the minister tell me whether part of the money provided by the federal government two days ago will be used for staff retention? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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[Original]

**Hon. Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, Minister responsible for Seniors, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I cannot provide a breakdown of how much of that \$117 million will be going to wages, that \$117 million that we had an announcement about in Moncton Tuesday morning, which is in the budget. I certainly will provide that information once I have it.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that anytime that I receive a question about seniors in our province, my department and I are very quick to act. We recently had an opportunity to meet with a couple of members from across the way. We scheduled a video conference. I had staff lined up to answer any questions because we weren't quite clear on what the questions would be. One of the members didn't even bother to show up. The other said that he was interested in funding for a seniors' group. We did provide that information to him.

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gauvin** (Shediac Bay-Dieppe, L): I don't think the bar is high here this morning. We're talking about people leaving the profession. They're going elsewhere. Nursing homes may have to close this summer because they won't have any staff. Other people may leave their jobs because they're not getting a raise. You just received \$117 million from the federal government, and this is the kind of response you give. It's the kind of response you give even as these people are listening. You just showed you are not serious about this issue by attempting to strike a low blow about someone who was unable to attend a meeting. Tell us how much money you are going to reserve for staff before they leave and nursing homes in New Brunswick close. It is your responsibility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Original]

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Yes, Mr. Speaker, once an actor, always an actor. We found out about the federal funding last Tuesday, \$480 million for a 10-year program. It's \$48 million per year, with a number of areas to be focused on. As we go through main estimates, and as we go through the budget process, all of this will be understood. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, we are in negotiations right now. We are going through wages and salaries and what the issues are. We always find out that a lot more than salaries is part of the problem. It is working conditions. It is the hours of work. It is the place of work and the demands that are put on the employees in the workplace.

There is no simple solution. I know that it's a one-trick-pony across the hall, Mr. Speaker—spend more money and it will get better. Well, they've done that over and over again. Ask Prime Minister Trudeau. He's spending lots more money. Is this country getting better, or is every province having problems trying to survive?

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We will look at this seriously, as we do everything, and we will find a solution that is best for the workers, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gauvin** (Shediac Bay-Dieppe, L): First of all, I would like to apologize on behalf of the Premier to all the artists who are listening. I do not think the acting profession is inferior to any other. There are presidents on the planet who have done this work, and they have been much more courageous than what I'm seeing on the other side of the House.

[*Original*]

(Interjection.)

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Order.

[*Translation*]

Now, the Premier, who came to his minister's rescue, told us it wasn't necessary to spend money to pay workers. I can guarantee you that the number of nurses who have left their jobs over the past four years for reasons other than retirement is more than 400. Of all the people I talked to, some of whom live in the same region as the Premier, not one of them left their job to accept another position for less pay. So, this argument is hogwash on the part of the Premier. However, why would we expect better than that? Are you going to tell us what percentage of the \$117 million you will give to these people so that they don't leave their jobs, on behalf of seniors who will no longer have anyone to help them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[*Original*]

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that facts matter, but sometimes they aren't always what you hear. In fact, with hiring nurses, we are ahead of the curve. We are hiring more nurses than are leaving. The ones who have left didn't leave because of salary. Many were of retirement age. Many were saying that their working conditions weren't right. I know these...

It goes back to one fundamental idea that if you just put more money into the system, it will be better. But Mr. Speaker, we are looking further and further beyond that. In the nurses' case, we knew 10 or 15 years ago that the nurses' demographics in this province were going to be a challenge. But what was done until we showed up and started having universities graduate nurses and community colleges graduate more nurses? Nothing. In fact, the number of nurses who are now being graduated is double what it was when we

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started in 2018. That is double. We see the horizon. We are meeting the challenges on the horizon, Mr. Speaker. We are working to improve conditions and—

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you.

### SMALL MODULAR REACTORS

**Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst West-Beresford, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last winter, during a committee meeting for consideration of Bill 10, *An Act to Amend the Electricity Act*, I asked the Minister of Energy what I thought was a routine question about small modular reactors (SMRs). He didn't have the answer, and he directed us to the Minister responsible for ONB to get the answer. My colleague from the Edmundston-Madawaska Centre riding asked the minister many times in the House and did not get a response, so he then sent a written question to the Minister responsible for ONB. We did get a response a couple of weeks ago, but the minister is directing us to ask the questions to the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development. So, here we are again. I would like to ask the minister again. For ARC Clean Energy SMRs, there was a \$20-million agreement. Was all the money allocated, and were all the strict conditions that were brought up answered to?

**Hon. Mr. Holland** (Albert, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development; Minister of Indigenous Affairs, PC): Thank you very much. I appreciate the member opposite and the preamble to his question. He had an opportunity to go through the very thorough process that we went through interdepartmentally to make sure that information was gathered and put together so that we could talk about that. The question was about the \$20-million investment in ARC Clean Energy. That was done in a series of tranches. At every step along the way, there was accountability for the government, the utility, and the company. All the benchmarks had been met, and all the financial guidelines had been met. I believe there was almost the entire amount. Off the top of my head, the entire \$20 million didn't get allocated because of the final tranche at that point, and I don't believe the entire amount was required at that particular moment. All the funding requirements were put in place. All the benchmarks were met.

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you, minister.

**Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst West-Beresford, L): Just to clarify, my understanding is that three tranches were paid off for \$15 million, and the last \$5 million is just... Is it that the company didn't meet the requirements, or is it a question of timing? I believe there was a time limit on this amount. This is just for clarification. If there were some serious, I guess, conditions, and they weren't met, then, obviously, the system worked. I'm just trying to get clarification as to why the last \$5 million hasn't been paid yet.

**Hon. Mr. Holland** (Albert, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development; Minister of Indigenous Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, there was no issue with not meeting benchmarks and guidelines. It was broken up into a series of



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tranches, which is something that we should all look to for a model when it comes to funding projects in the future. Each and every time that there was a tranche of funding, there had to be an escalated increase in the amount of the private company's contribution. We did that in a way that protected the province's finances at every step along the way. The calendar year of that final tranche ended prior to the completed total amount of funding, but it wasn't an issue related to anything about progress. In fact, this company has since moved on and met many benchmarks since that point. It has completed the vendor design review 2, worked toward the development of significant progress toward the development of medical isotopes, and a number of other points.

Recently, we were in France talking about the technology, and not too long ago in Ottawa. We're on the move when it comes to the—

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you, minister.

**Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst West-Beresford, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer from the minister. It's just for clarification, as it has been a little while. Just to connect some dots, the Premier went to Ottawa and got some funding from the federal government for, I believe, ARC again. In the budget speech last week, the Minister of Finance mentioned \$12.5 million for the site prep at Point Lepreau. Was that funding that was gathered from Ottawa included in that \$12.5 million, or is it something separate? Just so we can trace it for budget estimates, when it comes to that \$12 million, which budget is the provincial portion coming out of?

**Hon. Mr. Holland** (Albert, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development; Minister of Indigenous Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, thank you for the question. An allotment of \$7 million came from the federal predevelopment fund. That investment went directly into the corporation. They were not provincial funds. The amount listed in the budget is money listed for site preparation. It's important to note that it's not technology-dependent and it's not earmarked for anything in particular. It would be called technology-agnostic, if you will.

NB Power is going to be the site for the first of a kind. It needs to be able to do some site work preparation. Current regulations and legislation mean it cannot use ratepayers' money. That's another means of protection for the province's ratepayers. So the New Brunswick government is investing in site preparation. As you saw in our clean energy strategy, we're preparing and laying the groundwork for an additional 600 MW of nuclear energy here and into the future. This work is all tied up in preparing the site and getting ready to continue to be a world leader for nuclear energy.

## RECYCLING

**Mr. LePage** (Restigouche West, L): Mr. Speaker, beginning on April 1, New Brunswickers will be able to take their beverage containers to recycling depots across the province to get

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a little bit more money. However, in typical fashion, the government rushed these changes and has left some smaller redemption centres in a situation where they will be pushed to the brink. In fact, some of these centres have already said these changes will see them having to shut down their operations. The redemption centres were proposed a first agreement in February, less than three months before it went into effect. A second and modified agreement was then proposed in March, and today, we know some redemption centres have still not signed these agreements. Can the Minister of Environment explain why agreements effective April 1 between the redemption centres and Encorp Atlantic are not yet signed and what he is doing to make sure this service will not be interrupted across the province next week?

**Hon. Mr. Crossman** (Hampton, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, PC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On that note, discussions continue today with the redemption centres. I don't expect any stoppage in the work next week by any of the stores. We're not hearing that.

I certainly thank you for your question on the redemption centre program. It does start on April 1. There is some background information we're excited about. It's a good-news story. We hope people can get on board and make it happen. The changes should increase the number of bottles and cans returned to the centres, for less fill in the landfills. This transition period will take some time. Many are on board, and there's more to come. As you said, today, we are also discussing the hours across the province. I don't think it's black or white. There may be some grey areas for redemption centres in rural areas as opposed to those in cities. For example, Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton have more goods coming back.

I mentioned that these discussions between Encorp Atlantic and its membership are continuing today. We met last week with another minister from the area. I mentioned that earlier.

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you, minister.

**Mr. LePage** (Restigouche West, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By the way, the meeting has already ended, and we have the results. The minister can check his facts.

It's clear once again that the government failed to listen to the concerns of those who actually work in depots and redemption centres. Their operations and owners are worried, frustrated, and uncertain about the future of their businesses. There has clearly been a lack of communication and understanding since the conception of the changes in their operations. Mr. Speaker, despite the government's best effort to finally do something meaningful for the environment, this looks more and more like a cruel April Fool's Day joke being played on small depots and redemption centres. For those who may be unfairly forced to deal with those ill-thought-out and rushed efforts, can the minister explain his implication and authority around the handling fees, the four-year agreement ending in



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2028, the conditions surrounding the renewal of the agreement, and the type and location—

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you, member.

**Hon. Mr. Crossman** (Hampton, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, PC): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again to the member opposite for the question. We are working through this. Over the past three years, just to clarify, the department has completed extensive engagement with stakeholders, including producers, redemption centre owners, and providers. There are two or three across the province. I haven't had many emails, maybe two or three, from stakeholders who are worried about a possible closure. There might be a small ma-and-pa backyard garage that's not a large redemption centre. They're all important. I'm not downplaying that at all.

The conversion we're planning for, which you haven't mentioned, member, is about the half-back deposit refund becoming a full-back refund. You will now get back what you paid for as a deposit as long as you or someone returns it. In addition, the department released its strategic plan in 2023, with the goal of reducing solid waste in landfills by 40 000 t.

We hope to make that happen. The more goods that go back, the more money is back in your pocket, and there will be less debris on the roadside and in landfills.

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Thank you, minister.

## HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

**Ms. Mitton** (Memramcook-Tantramar, G): Mr. Speaker, today we finally found out what the Premier's real climate change plan is: to frack, baby, frack. His plan is not to reduce New Brunswick's emissions, but to substantially increase them by creating a fracking industry in our province. Maybe the Premier doesn't remember 2014, when his previous government lost an election on this very issue. New Brunswickers made it clear that they don't want fracking. They want climate action. The science clearly says that we cannot create any new fossil fuel infrastructure. To even consider it when, to quote UN Secretary-General António Guterres, "we are headed for a global catastrophe" is among the most irresponsible things you could do. It is reckless. It is completely unacceptable. How does this Premier consider expanding the fossil fuel sector to be an acceptable solution to the climate crisis?

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am certainly glad that the member opposite brought up the science, because that is what this is all about: science. We will say that we want to reduce our emissions, which are 1.5% of the world emissions, and we will call that success. The Paris Agreement said that we had to do our part in global emissions reduction, and we are doing our part. We can meet that. But we can do more than our part. What is the United States



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doing? What are other countries doing? What are energy companies doing in the world? They are developing their natural gas resources, and this is not only to manage affordability and the issues in the crisis that we are feeling in this province every day with higher and higher energy prices; they are also doing it to shut down coal plants, reducing emissions by 50% for every single coal plant they shut down. We have a transition for the next 15 or 20 years in relation to when hydrogen and nuclear will play the significant or dominant role. And right now, in Europe, we have people who want to sign up for 20-year agreements. So let the science prevail. I am very comfortable with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Ms. Mitton** (Memramcook-Tantramar, G): I don't think that this Premier is very in touch with the science on the climate crisis. Frankly, shale gas is a bridge to nowhere, Mr. Speaker. This Premier is stuck in another century. The Premier said that he started out on a mission to save New Brunswick, and now he sounds as though he is on some misguided crusade to save the world. What is it that this Premier doesn't get about leaving fossil fuels in the ground? What does this Premier not understand about the International Energy Agency saying that we must not build any new fossil fuel infrastructure? What is it that he doesn't get about the fact that fracking creates greenhouse gas emissions? Despite what the Premier claims, shale gas cannot be responsibly developed. Considering the alarming warnings from scientists, the lack of consultation with First Nations, and the lack of a social license from New Brunswickers, how can the fracking Premier of New Brunswick support the creation of a shale gas industry on unceded and unsurrendered Wabanaki territory?

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is how the science supports a major initiative here that can effect climate action in the country and in the world, and that is the goal. And yes, First Nations need to be a key component of this. Even in a small component of what we have available to us, the First Nations benefit could range anywhere between \$800 million and \$1.6 billion. And yes, they need to be part of the expansion and growth in this industry. Mr. Speaker, it will be the largest single opportunity that we will have in a generation in New Brunswick to have the biggest impact anywhere. The power of New Brunswick hasn't even been recognized, because we sit in a bubble and don't look at the opportunities worldwide.

I want to go back to what the member of the Green Party stated. Let's look at the science, let's look at the options, and let's look at the gap—the gap that exists between the usage and the increased usage of energy and who is going to fill that. We can fill the gap, Mr. Speaker.

## COST OF LIVING

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many ministers and members opposite talked today, yesterday, and over this past week about the affordability crisis that New Brunswickers are



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experiencing. The Minister of Education even described his own recent sticker shock at the grocery store, as if this were now news to him. Our team has long been aware of the challenges that New Brunswickers are experiencing trying to pay their bills and fill up their tanks, and we have provided specific, actionable, affordable solutions that are within the power of this House and these government members to implement immediately. But do they take them?

No, they are more obsessed with Trudeau than with New Brunswickers. If you really cared about the price of gas in New Brunswick, you would cut the cost by 4¢ or 5¢ today. So, will the Premier stop being a hypocrite and take the fuel adjustor off gas now?

(Interjections.)

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): So, Mr. Speaker, I don't like to talk about hypocrites, but if you want to... I can appreciate why the member opposite wants to separate herself from the Trudeau government. I wouldn't want anything to do with the Trudeau government, so I can appreciate that distancing is important. However, the member of the opposition, after listening during her tour across the province, has recognized that this carbon tax is a problem. It is a problem for her and a problem for Trudeau. It is a problem because it is not working, and we can do much better.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would say to the Leader of the Opposition, thank you for joining the team that says axe the tax and spike the hike, because we don't need more cost to the citizens in this province.

Let's start with the root cause. Let's not have a federal government dictating policies that are flawed, with increased costs to every consumer in our province, and let's not have the Leader of the Opposition ignore that reality. Deal with the root cause of the problem, deal with the federal policies, and let's move forward.

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): Again, we have a Premier who is more interested in Ottawa than in New Brunswickers, who has the power to reduce the price of gas today and chooses not to. Six cents. He could do it; he won't. He doesn't care about the cost of gas.

## MLAS

I want to take a moment to acknowledge some of the people that we are losing, because it has been difficult to see the number of Progressive Conservatives who have left the House. So, I want to take the opportunity to acknowledge the member for Albert; the member for New Maryland-Sunbury; Arlene Dunn, who is no longer here; the member for Moncton East; the member for Hampton; the member for Gagetown-Petitcodiac; the member for



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Saint John Lancaster, and now the member for Portland-Simonds. They are all leaving us and leaving what appears to be a leadership model that doesn't suit them anymore.

I wonder if the Premier has taken a chance to look in the mirror and ask himself: I wonder why these folks are leaving my team.

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): Well, Mr. Speaker, I can certainly understand why the Leader of the Opposition wanted to get off Trudeau. There is every reason for avoiding the real issues in this province. We have colleagues who are going on to different aspects of their lives. Some are retiring, and some are going on to new vocations. Yes, that is happening, and we have an opportunity now in this party to really look at new people coming in. We are all looking at this: Okay, how do we represent the entire province? How do we include more people in the system?

(Interjections.)

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Order.

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): But, Mr. Speaker, firstly, we have to recognize the issues that are facing the province and ask who is going to address them and who is not. So, are we going to have more of Trudeau's policies here in New Brunswick? Is that what is going to happen? Because that is where we are headed: More of Trudeau here in New Brunswick.

(Interjections.)

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Order.

**Hon. Mr. Higgs** (Quispamsis, Premier, Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, PC): So, I know why the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about something else, but something else is that we have a province that is moving in a direction economically in a way that it never has, with a population that it has never had. It is moving in a direction with new tourism and new people moving in. It has never been like this before.

**Mr. Speaker** (Hon. Bill Oliver): Members, during the Leader of the Opposition's second-to-the-last question, she used a term that is unparliamentary. I would ask you to withdraw that. We don't want to get into name-calling.

**Ms. Holt** (Bathurst East—Nepisiguit—Saint-Isidore, Leader of the Official Opposition, L): I withdraw.