

May 6

Journal of Assembly

1

Daily sitting 21

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

1 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

Mr. Coon, Member for Fredericton Lincoln, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging government to reinstate funding to school districts. (Petition 7)

Mr. Robichaud, from the Standing Committee on Estimates and Fiscal Policy, presented the First Report of the Committee for the session which was read and is as follows:

May 6, 2025

To The Honourable
The Legislative Assembly of
The Province of New Brunswick

Madam Speaker:

Your Standing Committee on Estimates and Fiscal Policy begs leave to submit this, their First Report.

Your Committee met in the Legislative Assembly Chamber on April 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 22 and 23, 2025, to consider the estimates referred to your Committee by resolution of the House adopted March 28, 2025.

Your Committee wishes to report that they have passed all estimates referred to them and outlined in this report. Your Committee recommends that these estimates be concurred in by the House.

(Sgd.:) Luc Robichaud, M.L.A.
Chair

The following are the items that were passed by the Committee:

MAIN ESTIMATES, 2025-2026

RESOLVED, that there be granted to His Majesty sums not exceeding the following to defray the expenses of the following program allocations for the fiscal year ending the 31st of March, 2026:

ORDINARY ACCOUNT	Voted (\$)
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES	
Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries	50,485,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	50,423,000

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT	
Corporate and Other Education Services	133,805,000
School Districts	1,601,992,000
Early Childhood Development	375,503,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	2,111,238,000
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	
Energy	78,444,000
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
Corporate Services and Community Funding	3,879,000
Policy, Public Education and Engagement	1,746,000
Local Government	120,489,000
Local Governance Commission	1,138,000
Authorizations and Compliance.....	11,449,000
Environmental Science and Protection	6,759,000
Climate Change.....	41,742,000
Less amounts authorized by law	124,000
Voted.....	187,078,000
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OFFICE	
Office of the Clerk and Head of the Public Service and Executive Council Secretariat.....	3,998,000
Communications and Marketing	7,999,000
Office of the Lieutenant-Governor	594,000
Voted.....	12,591,000
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND TREASURY BOARD	
Budget and Financial Management	909,000
Corporate Services	6,148,000
Treasury Management and Fiscal Policy	2,920,000
Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer.....	5,004,000
Office of the Chief Information Officer.....	8,219,000
Office of the Comptroller.....	3,244,000
Revenue Administration	5,691,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	32,073,000
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	
Indigenous Affairs	7,620,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	7,558,000
Commissions Paid to Collectors of Pari-Mutuel Taxes	455,000
Electricity Rebate.....	92,600,000
Enterprise Resource Planning	56,645,000
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	688,000
Intergovernmental Affairs.....	11,520,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	11,458,000

Legislated Pension Plans, Benefit Accruals, Subsidies, and Supplementary Allowances	87,903,000
Less amounts authorized by law	153,000
Voted.....	87,750,000
 Pension and Employee Benefits Plans	 391,357,000
Less amounts authorized by law	2,000
Voted.....	391,355,000
 Provision for Losses.....	 14,200,000
Revenue Sharing Agreements with First Nations	14,950,000
Service New Brunswick.....	253,666,000
Supplementary Funding Provision.....	501,630,000
Women's Equality	23,630,000
 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	
Corporate and Other Health Services	345,378,000
Medicare	899,887,000
Pharmaceutical Programs.....	263,207,000
Part III Health Services.....	2,582,616,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	4,091,026,000
 DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY	
Technical Safety and Corporate Services Division.....	28,718,000
Community Safety Division	259,882,000
Security and Emergencies Division	27,408,000
Office of the Attorney General	35,370,000
Justice Services Division	34,400,000
Legal Aid	17,435,000
Less amounts authorized by law	124,000
Voted.....	403,089,000
 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	
Members' Allowances, Committees and Operations.....	11,569,000
Less amounts authorized by law	4,800,000
Voted.....	6,769,000
 Office of the Legislative Assembly	 4,896,000
Office of the Auditor General	4,152,000
Offices of Leaders and Members of Registered Political Parties.....	2,067,000
Elections New Brunswick.....	7,991,000
Office of the Ombud	3,042,000
Office of the Child, Youth and Senior Advocate.....	2,620,000
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.....	876,000
Office of the Consumer Advocate for Insurance	710,000
Office of the Integrity Commissioner	441,000

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Administration	9,383,000
Natural Resources	116,898,000
Mines	11,185,000
Land Management	4,002,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	141,406,000

NEW BRUNSWICK HOUSING CORPORATION

Corporate and Other Services	4,900,000
Housing Program Delivery	163,630,000
Housing Infrastructure	59,401,000
Tenant and Landlord Relations Office.....	5,027,000
Less amounts authorized by law	47,000
Voted.....	232,911,000

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

Administration	1,734,000
Less amounts authorized by law	93,000
Voted.....	1,641,000

OPPORTUNITIES NEW BRUNSWICK

Administration and Business Development Services	17,200,000
Financial Assistance	29,000,000
Competitiveness and Growth Program	25,000,000
Less amounts authorized by law	47,000
Voted.....	71,153,000

OTHER AGENCIES

Consolidated Entities	417,605,000
Less amounts authorized by law	417,605,000
Voted.....	0

Council of Atlantic Premiers	642,000
Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation	2,884,000
Labour and Employment Board.....	908,000
New Brunswick Police Commission	705,000
New Brunswick Women's Council	602,000
Premier's Council on Disabilities	353,000

DEPARTMENT OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION,
TRAINING AND LABOUR

Labour and Strategic Services	16,848,000
Post-Secondary Education	543,114,000
WorkingNB.....	147,272,000
New Brunswick Public Library Service	19,678,000
Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification.....	16,463,000
Immigration	14,357,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	757,670,000

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	
Development Projects and Operations	79,571,000
SERVICE OF THE PUBLIC DEBT	
Service of the Public Debt	673,000,000
Less amounts authorized by law	668,700,000
Voted.....	4,300,000
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Corporate and Other Services	12,949,000
Seniors and Long Term Care	1,121,586,000
Child Welfare and Youth Services	208,277,000
Income Security	363,592,000
Other Benefits	36,100,000
Less amounts authorized by law	109,000
Voted.....	1,742,395,000
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, HERITAGE AND CULTURE	
Administration	3,959,000
Provincial Parks	17,981,000
Sport and Recreation.....	9,375,000
Culture, Archaeology and Heritage	33,821,000
Tourism.....	19,704,000
Less amounts authorized by law	62,000
Voted.....	84,778,000
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
Administration	25,683,000
Policy and Legislative Affairs, Strategic Partnerships and Trade Corridors.....	1,929,000
Maintenance.....	105,586,000
Winter Maintenance.....	75,565,000
Bridge and Highway Construction.....	4,020,000
Buildings Group.....	157,140,000
New Brunswick Highway Corporation.....	29,011,000
Less amounts authorized by law	28,094,000
Voted.....	370,840,000
CAPITAL ACCOUNT	
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES	
Capital Equipment	315,000
Strategic Infrastructure	400,000
Voted.....	715,000
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT	
Public Schools - Capital Equipment	1,605,000
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
Rural Districts	1,000,000

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	
Public Hospitals - Capital Equipment.....	40,280,000
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT	
Capital Improvements	7,400,000
Mine Infrastructure	6,050,000
Musquash Watershed Infrastructure -	
Capital Improvements	900,000
Sentier NB Trail Infrastructure	3,000,000
Voted.....	17,350,000
NEW BRUNSWICK HOUSING CORPORATION	
Public Housing - Capital Construction	34,731,000
Public Housing - Capital Improvements	9,354,000
Voted.....	44,085,000
DEPARTMENT OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, TRAINING AND LABOUR	
Deferred Maintenance Program	2,200,000
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	
Canada - New Brunswick Integrated Bilateral Agreement...	30,500,000
Strategic Infrastructure Initiative	2,575,000
Voted.....	33,075,000
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Nursing Home Services - Capital Improvements	20,354,000
Nursing Home Services - Capital Maintenance	3,000,000
Voted.....	23,354,000
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, HERITAGE AND CULTURE	
Capital Improvements.....	11,589,000
Strategic Infrastructure	7,428,000
Voted.....	19,017,000
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
Bridges	92,550,000
Federal-Provincial Cost-Shared Program	76,028,000
Highways	313,036,000
Provincial-Municipal Highway Partnership.....	25,000,000
Public Works and Infrastructure	529,651,000
Vehicle Management Agency	39,000,000
Less amounts authorized by law	50,518,000
Voted.....	1,024,747,000

LOANS AND ADVANCES

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES	
New Brunswick Agricultural Insurance Commission	1,600,000
Loan Programs	7,000,000
Voted.....	8,600,000
NEW BRUNSWICK HOUSING CORPORATION	
Housing.....	3,224,000
OPPORTUNITIES NEW BRUNSWICK	
Financial Assistance to Industry	50,000,000
DEPARTMENT OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, TRAINING AND LABOUR	
Student Loan Advances	90,500,000

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 2023-2024, Volume 1

RESOLVED, that there be granted to His Majesty sums not exceeding the following to defray the expenses of the following program allocations for the fiscal year ending the 31st of March, 2024:

ORDINARY ACCOUNT

Voted (\$)

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
Local Government and Local Governance Reform	1,712,512.48
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	
Legislated Pension Plans, Benefit Accruals, Subsidies, and Supplementary Allowances	40,113,456.60
Natural Gas Distribution Program	1,386,123.24
New Brunswick Advantage Savings Fund	1,600,000.00
Revenue Sharing Agreements with First Nations	2,278,707.34
Women's Equality	2,606,682.47
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	
Corporate and Other Health Services	37,613,000.00
Part III Health Services	52,211,094.17
Voted.....	89,824,094.17
OTHER AGENCIES	
Electoral Boundaries and Representation Commission	1,071.20
SERVICE OF THE PUBLIC DEBT	
Service of the Public Debt	277,532.43
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Income Security	789,888.93

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Public Hospitals - Capital Equipment..... 24,093.29

Pursuant to Standing Rule 78.2, Madam Speaker put the question on the motion deemed to be before the House, that the report be concurred in, and it was resolved in the affirmative.

Hon. Mr. McKee, from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, presented the First Report of the Committee for the session which was read and is as follows:

May 6, 2025

To The Honourable
The Legislative Assembly of
The Province of New Brunswick

Madam Speaker:

I have the pleasure to present herewith the First Report of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments for the session.

The report is the result of your Committee's deliberations on Bill 4, *An Act Respecting Petroleum Products Pricing*, the subject matter of which was referred to your Committee for consideration.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish to thank those who appeared before the Committee. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the Committee for their contribution in carrying out our mandate.

Your Committee begs leave to make a further report.

Respectfully submitted,

(Sgd.): Hon. Robert McKee, K.C., M.L.A.
Chair

The full report of the Committee as presented follows:

Madam Speaker:

Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments begs leave to submit their First Report of the session.

On November 20, 2024, Bill 4, *An Act Respecting Petroleum Products Pricing*, was introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

The purpose of Bill 4 is to repeal the cost of carbon adjustor, a component of the maximum price of petroleum products under the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* and regulation.

On December 10, 2024, by resolution of the House, consideration of the subject matter of Bill 4 was referred to the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

On February 5, 2025, your Committee met and decided to select and invite interested stakeholders to provide input and advice to the Committee with respect to the issues raised by Bill 4.

Your Committee held a public hearing on February 25, 2025, and heard from six invited presenters.

On March 27, 2025, your Committee met to consider the input received and to formulate a report with recommendations to the House.

The Committee wishes to express its appreciation to the presenters who appeared at the public hearing.

The following is a summary of the input received on the issues raised by Bill 4, with recommendations to the House.

OVERVIEW

The cost of carbon adjustor (“CCA”), which Bill 4 proposes to repeal, is a component of the regulated maximum wholesale and retail price of liquid petroleum products. Specifically, the CCA is added to the price of motor fuel (gasoline and diesel) sold by wholesalers and retailers in New Brunswick. The Legislature adopted the CCA in December 2022 by amending the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* and regulation.

The CCA is defined in the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* as a monetary adjustment intended to mitigate for wholesalers and retailers the effect of costs incurred by a primary supplier of liquid petroleum products to comply with the federal *Clean Fuel Regulations* or other similar federal regulations. The federal regulations require primary suppliers (producers and importers) to reduce the carbon intensity of the fuels they supply beginning in July 2023.

The New Brunswick Energy and Utilities Board (“EUB”) is tasked under the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* with setting the amount of the CCA, together with the other components that make up the maximum price of fuel. The EUB decided on a formula to calculate the CCA and first added it to the maximum price of gasoline and diesel as of July 2023. While the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* contemplates that the CCA could also be added to the maximum price of heating fuel, the EUB decided not to do so because the federal regulations do not currently apply to heating fuel.

The CCA is calculated each week by the EUB, and, for example, for the week beginning February 28, 2025, the CCA added 7.4 cents per litre to the maximum price of gasoline and 8.25 cents per litre to the maximum price of diesel.

The Committee notes that, following its public hearing, the federal government eliminated the federal fuel charge (commonly referred to as the carbon tax) effective after March 31, 2025. The fuel charge is another component of the maximum price of fuel under the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* separate from, and in addition to, the CCA. Before its elimination, the fuel charge added 17.61 cents per litre to the maximum price of gasoline and 21.39 cents per litre to the maximum price of diesel.

PUBLIC HEARING

New Brunswick Energy and Utilities Board

The Acting Chairperson of the EUB advised that its role is not to express a preference for or against Bill 4 but to implement the policy chosen by the Legislature. He explained the EUB's role in setting maximum prices for petroleum products. It is required by legislation to set the maximum price that wholesalers and retailers may charge for petroleum products. However, it does not regulate the price at which primary suppliers sell to wholesalers and retailers.

Following the 2022 amendments to the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* and regulation that created the CCA, the EUB engaged a consulting firm, Grant Thornton, to conduct a review and recommend a mechanism to calculate the CCA. The federal *Clean Fuel Regulations* mandate that primary suppliers reduce the carbon intensity of their fuels, and the CCA was intended to allow the compliance costs incurred by primary suppliers to flow through to the end user of the fuels as a component of the maximum price. Following a public hearing, the EUB adopted a formula proposed by Grant Thornton. Since July 2023, the CCA has been a component of the maximum price of gasoline and diesel, calculated weekly. Other components include the benchmark price, the federal fuel charge, wholesale and retail margins and HST.

The EUB adopted Grant Thornton's CCA formula on an interim basis to be used over an 18- to 24-month period until a Canadian carbon credit trading market was expected to be more fully developed. Once this market matures, it will serve as the best indicator of the cost of compliance with the *Clean Fuel Regulations*. The interim formula uses the import value of renewable diesel as a proxy for the cost of compliance. When questioned by the Committee about using a proxy that is – according to some presenters – one of the most expensive compliance options, the EUB indicated that Grant Thornton's recommended formula was subject to an initial public hearing and a

review hearing nine months later at which industry stakeholders and the Public Intervener had an opportunity to challenge it, and that other options could be adopted based on the evidence presented during a future review of the formula.

The EUB also addressed concerns about its review of wholesale and retail margins. The Committee heard from retailers and fuel distributors that they must apply to the EUB for a review of, and increase to, their margins to account for their increasing costs. The Committee heard from these presenters that the review process is lengthy and complicated and that the EUB is not as responsive as they would prefer. The Acting Chairperson apologized for the delay and lack of responsiveness, clarifying that this was partly due to staffing issues. The EUB is currently proceeding with a review of wholesale and retail margins.

In reference to Bill 4's elimination of the CCA, the Acting Chairperson confirmed that if the Bill passes, wholesalers and retailers would likely be forced to absorb the primary suppliers' costs of compliance with the *Clean Fuel Regulations*.

A planned review of the CCA formula was postponed following the introduction of Bill 4. The EUB and stakeholders would therefore find it helpful to know as soon as possible whether Bill 4 will be adopted.

Two categories of presenters – independent fuel retailers and fuel distributors – spoke against Bill 4.

Independent Fuel Retailers

The Committee heard from two independent fuel retailers, one of which is the corporate owner of nine convenience store locations, and the other, the owner of a single location, who both voiced their opposition to repealing the CCA. If Bill 4 were enacted, retailers would have to absorb the cost of primary suppliers' compliance with the *Clean Fuel Regulations* because the retailers' cost to purchase the fuel includes this compliance cost, but without the CCA the maximum price that retailers would be permitted to charge consumers would not. They said that independent fuel retailers, particularly in rural areas, would be disproportionately affected, as these businesses operate on lower volumes and higher product costs. They emphasized that retail margins on fuel sales are already thin and out of date due to delays in the EUB margin review process. Any further increase in costs would directly and negatively impact their financial viability. In fact, they asserted that removing the CCA would have an immediate crippling impact, resulting in the closure of many small retailers, as it would force them to sell fuel at a loss.

Presenters went on to outline the chain of effects that would occur if independent retailers were required to absorb the cost of *Clean Fuel Regulations* compliance. First, even if retailers were able to continue operating, fuel supply could be jeopardized, as fuel distributors would also be impacted by this change and the cost of supply would be higher. Second, if independent retailers were forced to close, rural residents would have to travel greater distances to obtain fuel to go to work and obtain essential services, resulting in increased out-of-pocket expenses. Competition may be reduced, resulting in increased prices for consumers.

Moreover, with the closure of independent fuel retailers, many rural residents would lose employment as well as a vital hub for community activity. Many independent gas stations are a place for socialization within communities with some offering food services, community activities and charitable support to groups in need. Presenters stressed that entire communities would be negatively affected if Bill 4 becomes law.

Fuel Distributors

The Committee heard from representatives of New Brunswick fuel distributors, who addressed some of the same concerns as independent retailers. The presenters emphasized that fuel distributors are not “Big Oil”. They are independent businesses who deliver fuel directly to gasoline and diesel retailers and to industries that require on-site delivery, including hospitals, schools, agriculture, construction and the military. For some aspects of their operations, they are considered retailers and for others they are wholesalers. The presenters stated that if Bill 4 were enacted, they would have to stop delivering fuel as it would no longer be economical to continue. The supply of fuel to essential services could therefore be jeopardized.

The presenters outlined challenges with the regulation of petroleum products pricing, asserting that New Brunswick’s formula is flawed and outdated. The EUB calculates maximum wholesale and retail prices for gasoline and diesel using the New York Harbour Price as the benchmark. However, fuel distributors purchase fuel in Canada at rack prices that are higher than the benchmark and they therefore earn less than the regulated margin. By contrast, Prince Edward Island uses the Canadian rack price as the benchmark, and this already includes any *Clean Fuel Regulations* compliance costs.

If the CCA were removed as a component of the maximum price, fuel distributors would be forced to absorb the cost of suppliers’ compliance with the *Clean Fuel Regulations*. One fuel distributor explained using the example of a recent weekly EUB price schedule and the distributor’s actual cost to purchase gasoline – which was more than the benchmark price – that its true wholesale margin was less than the amount allowed in the EUB pricing formula. The distributor showed that if the CCA were not added to the maximum wholesale price, it would be selling gasoline at a loss.

Like the independent retailers, the fuel distributors also addressed concerns about the EUB's process to adjust their allowable margins to account for their increasing costs. The presenters recommended that the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* be reviewed to ensure that pricing is fair and equitable to all market participants. They also recommended that an annual margin review be completed or that a mechanism be established to adjust margins in a timely manner to reflect current market conditions.

Two presenters – the Conservation Council of New Brunswick and the Human Development Council – spoke in favour of Bill 4.

Conservation Council of New Brunswick

Representatives from the Conservation Council of New Brunswick (“CCNB”) expressed their concern that the CCA formula developed by Grant Thornton is not a reliable method to calculate the actual cost of compliance with the *Clean Fuel Regulations*. They challenged the use of renewable diesel as a proxy for the cost of compliance, arguing that assuming the industry is using the most expensive compliance option inflates consumer prices. They supported this position by noting that other jurisdictions rejected the Grant Thornton formula due to insufficient evidence that renewable diesel was the best proxy to use among a variety of other options.

The CCNB criticized the CCA formula for overstating compliance costs by using marginal instead of average cost pricing. It also raised concerns about the lack of public data on the fossil fuel industry's compliance credit trading prices, which were estimated by the federal government to be far lower than the amount charged to consumers under New Brunswick's CCA formula.

According to the CCNB, industry should pay for the cost of compliance with the federal regulations. Amendments to provincial legislation are needed to ensure that the polluters themselves are absorbing these costs and not New Brunswickers. The CCNB therefore supports the repeal of the CCA.

In addition, the EUB lacks a clear statutory directive to facilitate decarbonization. The CCNB recommends including a net-zero mandate in legislation, as this would require the EUB to exercise its regulatory authority in a manner that aligns with the Province's climate commitments and supports the transition to a clean energy future. These changes would empower the EUB to make decisions that promote renewable energy development, modernize the grid, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining affordability and reliability.

Human Development Council

The Human Development Council (“**HDC**”), a social planning council with a mission to coordinate and promote social development, supports the elimination of the CCA, arguing that its removal would provide much-needed relief to New Brunswickers struggling with the affordability crisis.

The HDC provided context on the affordability crisis in New Brunswick. Statistics on current levels of poverty in each city in New Brunswick indicate high income poverty rates and uneven distribution of poverty across the Province. Indicators of financial distress include low median household incomes in New Brunswick, a growing gap between the minimum wage and a true living wage, growing food insecurity, high rates of energy poverty, and a rising number of individuals receiving social assistance at rates far below the poverty line.

It was noted that gasoline prices increase costs across the entire economy. Eliminating the CCA would remove an inflationary pressure point that is making life more expensive for all New Brunswickers. The HDC argued that oil refineries and suppliers have financial capacity to bear the cost of compliance rather than passing it on to consumers who can least afford it.

The HDC emphasized that if Bill 4 reduces the price of gasoline by several cents per litre, this would provide immediate and direct relief to individuals struggling to make ends meet. The money New Brunswickers save on fuel could then be directed to other necessary expenses. Rural residents, who do not have access to public transit, and lower-income individuals would benefit the most as they spend a greater proportion of their incomes on gasoline.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee wishes to report the concerns raised by independent retailers and fuel distributors that the elimination of the cost of carbon adjustor could harm their businesses, that their regulated margins have not kept pace with their increasing costs, and that the petroleum products pricing legislation should be reviewed. The Committee also acknowledges the concerns expressed by other presenters that New Brunswickers are facing an affordability crisis and that the current method of calculating the cost of carbon adjustor may impose a higher than necessary cost on consumers. Accordingly, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. THAT the Minister responsible for Energy consider directing the New Brunswick Energy and Utilities Board under subsection 24(1) of the *Energy and Utilities Board Act* to investigate:
 - (a) means of establishing the true cost of compliance with the *Clean Fuel Regulations* rather than using a proxy; and
 - (b) establishing and undergoing an annual review, or a different mechanism, to adjust margins in a timely manner to reflect and respond to changing market conditions.
2. THAT the government consider undertaking a review of the *Petroleum Products Pricing Act* to ensure that pricing is fair and equitable to all market participants.

Pursuant to Standing Rule 78.1, Madam Speaker put the question on the motion deemed to be before the House, that the report be concurred in, and it was resolved in the affirmative.

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:

- By Hon. Mr. Legacy,
Bill 22, *An Act Respecting Property Tax Affordability Measures*.
- By Hon. Mr. Dornan,
Bill 23, *An Act Respecting the Prescription Monitoring Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. McKee, K.C.,
Bill 24, *An Act to Amend the Mental Health Act*.
Bill 25, *An Act Respecting Subordinate Judicial Officials*.
- By Hon. Mr. Legacy,
Bill 26, *An Act to Amend the Atlantic Provinces Harness Racing Commission Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. McKee, K.C.,
Bill 27, *An Act to Amend the Provincial Court Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. Herron,
Bill 28, *An Act to Amend the Trespass Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. McKee, K.C.,
Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Executive Council Act*.
- By Hon. Mr. Legacy,
Bill 30, *Loan Act 2025*.
Bill 31, *Appropriations Act 2025-2026*.
Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriations Act 2023-2024 (1)*.
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Madam Speaker announced that pursuant to Standing Rule 42.3(1), Bills 31 and 32 were ordered for second and third reading forthwith.

The following Bills were read a second time:

Bill 31, *Appropriations Act 2025-2026*.

Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriations Act 2023-2024 (1)*.

The following Bills were read a third time:

Bill 31, *Appropriations Act 2025-2026*.

Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriations Act 2023-2024 (1)*.

Ordered that the said Bills do pass.

Mr. Coon gave Notice of Motion 30 that on Thursday, May 15, 2025, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Mitton:

WHEREAS access to affordable solar energy can significantly lower household energy costs, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and create local jobs in New Brunswick's growing renewable energy sector;

WHEREAS the Premier has committed to establishing a provincial solar retrofit program to make solar energy more accessible and affordable for New Brunswickers;

WHEREAS high upfront costs remain a significant barrier to installing solar power systems, preventing many New Brunswickers from benefiting from clean, renewable energy;

WHEREAS innovative and affordable solar solutions, such as plug-in solar panels widely available in European countries, enable tenants to reduce their power costs with free energy from the sun;

WHEREAS expanding access to solar energy will empower New Brunswickers to save money, strengthen energy resilience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to implement a comprehensive and accessible solar retrofit program that removes financial barriers and expands access to solar energy for all New Brunswickers.

Ms. M. Johnson welcomed to the House Danny Soucy, former Progressive Conservative MLA for Grand Falls–Drummond–Saint-André (2010-2014).

Mr. M. LeBlanc gave notice that on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, Bills 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 would be called for second reading.

Mr. M. LeBlanc, Government House Leader, announced that it was the intention of government that Bills 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20 and 21 be called for second reading until 4 p.m.; at which time the House would adjourn.

The Order being read for second reading of Bill 13, *An Act Respecting the Firefighters' Compensation Act and the Workers' Compensation Act*, a debate arose thereon.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put that Bill 13 be now read a second time, it was resolved in the affirmative.

Accordingly, Bill 13, *An Act Respecting the Firefighters' Compensation Act and the Workers' Compensation Act*, was read a second time and ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Policy, as designated by the Government House Leader.

The Order being read for second reading of Bill 14, *An Act to Amend the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*, a debate arose thereon.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put that Bill 14 be now read a second time, it was resolved in the affirmative.

Accordingly, Bill 14, *An Act to Amend the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*, was read a second time and ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Policy, as designated by the Government House Leader.

The Order being read for second reading of Bill 15, *An Act Respecting the Highway Act*, a debate arose thereon.

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

And then, 4.01 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:

Business Plan 2025-2026, Office of the Auditor General	March 28, 2025
Annual Report 2023-2024	
Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission	April 3, 2025
Annual Report 2023	
Office of the Chief Coroner	April 4, 2025
Response to Petitions 5, 6	April 11, 2025
Residential Customer Assessment, prepared by KPMG for the New Brunswick Power Corporation	April 25, 2025
Children Cut First: Installment #1 of the Advocate's Review of the 2025-2026 Budget, April 2025, Child, Youth and Senior Advocate	April 30, 2025