

# Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick

## Oral Questions



**December 11, 2024**

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[*Translation*]

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and good morning. Yesterday, the government tabled its capital budget in the House. As promised in my remarks yesterday following the tabling, I will have questions concerning the capital budget. I'll start by talking about this one.

[*Original*]

During the electoral period, the Premier committed to opening 30 collaborative care clinics across the province at a cost of \$115 million. In the same article, the Premier stated that the first four clinics will be open in 2025, specifically, Campbellton, Sussex, Fredericton, and St. Stephen. In the throne speech, the government said 10 will be supported in 2025, specifically, Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, Edmundston, Campbellton, Carleton North, the Acadian Peninsula, St. Stephen, and Sackville. In the Minister of Health's mandate letter, it states that 10 clinics will be open in 18 months. Can the Premier tell us what the commitment actually is? Is it 2025 or 18 months?

**Hon. Ms. Holt** (Fredericton South-Silverwood, Premier; Minister responsible for Official Languages, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and thank you very much for the question. Getting those collaborative care clinics established quickly is one of the number one priorities of our team, so we will be opening 10 of those clinics in 2025.

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Well, thank you very much, Madam Speaker. There was a little bit of clarity there, but, to reiterate, we've gone from 4 clinics in 2025, to 10 clinics in 2025, to 10 clinics in 18 months. The Premier has said there will be 10 in 2025. Can she tell us how much these 10 clinics will cost? If the government is going to be opening 10 clinics in 2025, then that tells me that the government knows where these clinics are going to be, what the addresses are, and what the associated costs will be. I would like to hear from the Premier. For these 10 clinics, can she identify them, their locations, and what they are going to cost in 2025?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Ms. Holt** (Fredericton South-Silverwood, Premier; Minister responsible for Official Languages, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The work we're doing for the 10 clinics is different. It involves cooperation on the ground with professionals in the health care system.

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[Original]

We have been collaborating with the health networks, the health care professionals in communities, the municipalities, and the real estate leaders in communities. It looks different in every place, and not every place has an address identified.

I will give you the example of St. Stephen, where there's a potential municipal location that we're talking to the municipality about. There's a potential location on the third floor of the hospital there that we're talking to the health authorities about. We have two options, and we're engaging with health care professionals to determine where they want to practice. What's the environment they want to get into? Both spaces are ready to go. As we get the teams in place and get the compensation model in place to make it work, we'll finalize that location. The costs will be different at each location, because, in some cases, it's the physicians and the municipal professionals taking on the infrastructure costs, and, in other cases, it's the health authority.

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I definitely would like to have the details on what the municipalities are going to be expected to pony up and whether these costs are going to be downloaded.

In the government's capital budget, there is \$226 million in infrastructure spending, of which \$186 million is earmarked to continue renovations, additions, and other improvements at our hospitals around the province. Does this \$186 million include capital costs for any collaborative care clinics? I know that the Premier just said, well, some are going to be different. You can't make me believe that all these clinics are going to be opened in municipal offices or in spaces that already exist that are turnkey and where they will be able to just start accepting patients. There have to be some capital costs associated with these clinics. So, I'm asking about this specifically: If they have these locations identified or are getting close to it, they must have an associated budget that they can share with the House today. Thank you.

**Hon. Ms. Holt** (Fredericton South-Silverwood, Premier; Minister responsible for Official Languages, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am surprised that the member opposite is struggling to understand this, because I know that his government worked for a long time to try to get four clinics opened. Thanks to some of that work, we have a clinic on the Northside of Fredericton that is almost ready. His government put in some work there to find a space and to get it ready. It's near completion.

In other cases, Horizon has been doing work in Sussex and identifying space in St. Stephen. In other cases, we have the private sector working, as it is in Woodstock, where the municipality, the real estate community, and health care professionals have identified the space and the contributors, and they're ready to go.

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In some cases, that amount in the capital budget covers additions to things such as the Sussex Health Centre, where there is going to be space for collaborative care, and, in other cases, renovations to hospitals for the acute care that they're delivering.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

[*Original*]

The only struggle here is in trying to understand that the government put out a capital budget and, as I'm trying to ascertain, or at least to show people, there is absolutely no way that, of the 30 clinics that the government is going to open in the next four years and the 10 it is promising to do this year, there aren't any capital costs associated with them. So, I'm asking government to basically show New Brunswickers the transparency that it promised it was going to have.

With 10 clinics, it takes time to make spaces ready for hospital-level or medical-level care. It's not like you can just turn the key and go. What I'm not seeing in the capital budget is money that has been allocated to these collaborative care clinics. All that I'm asking is for the Premier or the government to stand up and say: In this location, we're going to do this, and in this location, we're going to do that, and here's how much it's going to cost. That's what the government promised New Brunswickers. What we, as an opposition, are doing is holding the government to account for that promise.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Ms. Holt** (Fredericton South-Silverwood, Premier; Minister responsible for Official Languages, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

[*Original*]

I really appreciate the question because I think that it reflects where New Brunswickers are coming from. They're very keen to see these collaborative care clinics established. They want to know where they're going to be in their communities and when they're going to be open. We've identified the communities, and we've identified the timelines. Now, we're doing the collaborative work to figure out the exact spaces, some of which are in hospital environments and under the health authorities, and some of which are in community environments, with the nurse practitioners, doctors, and pharmacists who are going to be delivering care in those spaces.

I appreciate the request to have an itemized list of where the clinics are going to be in each community. Maybe you have seen that our team has hit the ground running, and we move

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fast. While it may have taken the previous government years to get four clinics opened, our team can actually deliver 10 clinics in 12 months because we're doing it in partnership with the people on the ground.

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): I guess, unfortunately, Madam Speaker, you're going to have to call me a doubting Thomas. Until I see those 10 clinics in 2025... Considering the fact that, in their own mandate letter, they couldn't even keep consistent with that and say, oh, well, we're going to do it in 12 months, in 2025... In the Minister of Health's mandate letter, it's actually 18 months. So, no, I'm sorry, that doesn't wash for me, Madam Speaker.

The government is going to have to show New Brunswickers. All we're doing is simply being a conduit through which those questions can be answered.

If health care is so important to this government... We haven't seen any action from it on this collaborative care clinics file. There is a lot of talk. I know that there is a lot of prep work. You cannot walk into a space and expect that it is going to be tailor-made for what you need. In this capital budget, there should have been money set aside. If the government members have this plan in place at all and they know where these locations are, they should be able to show that. That's what I'm asking for. Will they provide it and put it on the table of this House?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Ms. Holt** (Fredericton South-Silverwood, Premier; Minister responsible for Official Languages, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[*Original*]

In this capital budget, there are instances in which there are funds allocated to create collaborative care spaces in physical infrastructure that belongs to the government of New Brunswick through the health authorities. We can get you the specific dollar amounts that are going into the Sussex Health Centre and the St. Stephen hospital. In some cases, there is an investment to create a collaborative care opportunity even though the final decision hasn't been made as to whether it's going to be here or there. We'll get those details for you.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

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[Original]

I would also appreciate knowing what the capital costs are going to be in the locations that aren't owned by the province.

### CARBON TAX

I will pivot now to the cost of carbon adjustor. In their platform, the Liberals committed to scrapping the cost of carbon adjustor immediately upon forming government. We are now nearing the end of this legislative session, and there is still no relief from the carbon adjustor as promised. Will the Premier now admit that our concerns are valid? Is this what led to the delay, revision, or breaking of this promise?

**Hon. Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for the question. I'm a little confused. For the past few weeks, we've been having some conversations where you were pushing us not to move ahead with this, and now you're upset that we actually listened.

I heard the member opposite talk about mandate letters and platforms, and I understand that it's confusing for them because they never had mandate letters and never discussed or collaborated with anybody while making decisions. We have decided to speak to different people and have them come in to present their cases to make sure that we don't create any chaos, and I'm perfectly fine with that. We are a government that moves very fast, and what comes with that is the ability to shift, listen, and adjust. We've gone through six years of dogmatism, hearing: We're going one way, and we're not moving anywhere; we're going to do it like we said, no matter what happens. We're a government that listens and is ready to move.

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Well, it's very clear, considering the Minister of Finance's comments, that I'm living rent-free in his head. I wonder whether he's going to put a rent cap on that as well.

Look, Madam Speaker, at the end of the day, it's very clear that this is not an example of a government listening. This is an example of a government making a promise without knowing or understanding the ramifications of it and then having to say: Oops, now we have to change course. My job here is to hold the government to account for the promises it made, and I have no issue with the government making an adjustment if it's going to benefit New Brunswickers. The issue here is that I know where the government members are heading with this, and it's not going to work. They introduced an amendment to their own bill to send it to the law amendments committee next February, which is far from the immediate relief for New Brunswickers that was promised. If they're sending this to law

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amendments in February and they are considering deregulation, is it their intent to let this bill die on the Order Paper?

**Hon. Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are going through a legislative process that is offered to us to have experts and representatives from industry and associations come present to the Legislature and the members so that we can have a good discussion on where we're going. What's happening through this process, which is really interesting, is that there is potential to have a discussion about deregulation. That's an offshoot of the discussion. It's interesting. Nobody has exactly presented any pros or cons for this. We need to have the discussion. Right now, we want to make sure that we get affordability measures in place and that we don't create any problems in another place, which would be industry.

Now, the problem is that, over the years, we haven't had a debate in relation to these small retailers. What we've had is the opposition members, when they were in government, trying to play politics in Ottawa and talk about carbon up there as opposed to actually talking about the retailers that might have a problem. We are willing to listen and have them come present their case to us.

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Let's talk about playing politics, Madam Speaker. We have a provincial government that is rolling over to the federal government to the tune of \$60 million to \$70 million, which its members won't stand up for. Let's talk about playing politics. This comes down to a government that made a promise while not having any idea what it was going to do. It just looked good on paper. The government members thought it was going to get them elected, and now, they're finding out, oops, there are ramifications to what they've done.

The Premier made New Brunswickers believe they would get a 4.5¢ drop in gas prices immediately if they voted for her. The Premier also made all nurses believe they would get a \$10 000 bonus. Let's not forget that. How does the government delaying this bill until next spring provide relief for New Brunswickers immediately?

**Hon. Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's nice to see the Leader of the Official Opposition cherry-picking from a platform, because his party made no promises to New Brunswickers. Yes, we did talk about it being immediately, and we are going to look into February for the carbon adjustor. But he was upset because we're about to move up the release of the PST on the electricity bills. It was supposed to be on April 1, but now the opposition members are upset because we're doing it on January 1. It's too early. It's too fast. As my esteemed colleague from Tracadie always says: You're going to be asked to suck



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and blow at the same time in this role. I didn't realize it was going to be from the opposition.

You know, we have to be able to adjust, and we're moving.

(Interjections.)

**Hon. Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Yes, I threw him under the bus, but he says that all the time.

Cherry-pick what you want. We're looking to make things more affordable for New Brunswick, and we will do it in a measured way that helps everyone. Pick and choose what you want, and attack where you want. Spend more. Spend less. Don't make promises. Back up on promises. Keep on.

**Mr. Savoie** (Saint John East, Leader of the Official Opposition, PC): Madam Speaker, I can honestly admit that there haven't been many times in my life when I've been rendered speechless. Unfortunately for the government, this time is not one of them.

What I'm doing here is asking the government to explain why it promised affordability immediately. That word—immediately—is used all through its document, and now the Minister of Finance is trying to skate and point things back to the old government—tired, weak. Hold yourselves accountable and responsible for what you have chosen. If you want to send a clear message to New Brunswickers, stand up in this House and say: We, as government, were wrong. We shouldn't have promised you affordability we couldn't deliver on, so we're now going to have try to switch lanes. That's what the government members should be doing.

I still have 13 seconds. I know they're all excited. It's like Christmas, right? It's getting closer. Everyone is getting excited. At the end of the day, please tell New Brunswickers what you're going to do for this 4.5¢ affordability, yes or no.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Ms. Holt** (Fredericton South-Silverwood, Premier; Minister responsible for Official Languages, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[*Original*]

We are all excited here. I can feel the Christmas energy. I appreciate the point that's being made because we do want to provide this relief immediately. We did make a commitment to New Brunswickers to take the carbon adjustor off the price of gas, and that's why we tabled that legislation in this Legislature as soon as we opened the doors.

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Then we heard opposition. The opposition members on the other side spent a lot of time asking us to pause on the rent cap, which was an affordability measure for New Brunswickers. They spent a lot of time and used up a lot of air on that. Then they expressed their discontent with the removal of the 4¢ carbon adjustor. They stood up and gave speeches to tell us why we shouldn't do that. I can appreciate that they were surprised we were listening to them. We're also listening to some folks in rural areas who told us they were unsure of their gas retailer's future. We're listening and trying to find a path forward that respects the urgency of what New Brunswickers want to see with respect to affordability and that also respects the opposition and the points being brought forward.

### SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**Ms. M. Johnson** (Carleton-Victoria, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On November 2, the new Liberal government was sworn in, and on November 15, 55 000 Canada Post workers went on strike. On November 28, we learned the union had reached out to this new government offering to deliver social assistance cheques. We learned this through independent media on the NB Media Co-op quoting Line Doucet, the Moncton local President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. The article said:

*"We sent multiple emails to the Minister of [Social Development] in Fredericton to try to say that this is deplorable, that you're making these people go pick up their cheques while we volunteered to go deliver them, and they didn't change it," she said. There was no response from the Minister, according to Doucet.*

Madam Speaker, will the minister update the House on the delivery of people's cheques, please?

**Hon. Ms. Miles** (Hanwell-New Maryland, Minister of Social Development; Minister responsible for the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, L): Madam Speaker, through you to the member opposite, thank you.

[Translation]

Thank you very much for the question.

[Original]

It's a very important question. What I can say today is that of the 22 380 folks in New Brunswick who need and deserve these cheques, 90% of them have them in hand. We had our numbers updated on Monday, and it's a top priority for our department. Tomorrow, I'll have updated numbers to share with the House. Again, thank you so much for asking.



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**Ms. M. Johnson** (Carleton-Victoria, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In that same NB Media Co-op story, quoting Line Doucet again, the President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers said:

*There were other Ministers that were also called and approached and told, 'You still have time to change this*

It must be very distressing for people who have to travel for their cheques to learn that more members of Cabinet, along with the minister, were aware of the issue yet did nothing. I suspect people would like to know whether their local Liberal MLAs were among those who knew, and I suspect they'd like to learn whether the Premier knows how many of her ministers had a chance to get people's cheques delivered and did nothing. Does the Premier know how many of her ministers were called with the offer to deliver those cheques? If she doesn't know, can she find out and report back?

**Hon. Ms. Miles** (Hanwell-New Maryland, Minister of Social Development; Minister responsible for the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, L): Madam Speaker, through you to the member opposite, I don't have the answers to your questions right now. They are great questions. Through the Speaker, I will find out those answers for you if they are available.

## NURSES

**Mr. Hogan** (Woodstock-Hartland, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Imagine, if you will, a world where all does not mean all, each does not mean each, and immediately means anything but immediately. You don't have to imagine it, because that is the world of the new Liberal Holt government. While encouraging voters to mislead themselves on the timing of the promise delivery, this Premier promised to do many things immediately. These promises are broken. While saying anything for votes, this Premier promised to balance the budget in each year of her mandate. This promise has been revised, but not yet broken. While promising anything and everything for votes, this Premier promised \$10 000 bonuses for all nurses. This was according to her party's election platform costing, but the promise is broken.

My question for the Premier is this: Does she know exactly how many of the nurses who took her at her word will not be getting anything from the \$10 000-bonus broken promise?

**Hon. Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have found these questions periods on this subject over the past couple of days to be interesting. It is quite a high horse indeed that the opposition members are coming off for this one. They keep nitpicking about who, when, and which nurse is going to get the bonus.



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This is not a new concept. It has been going on for years. Nova Scotia paid bonuses to its nurses years ago, but the opposition members refused to even entertain any nurse getting any bonus. The fact that they, opposition members who were in government but did not do this because they were not interested, have started picking and choosing, while we drew a line and said that we'd go with retention and try to pick the nurses who have contracts with us so we can keep them in our system, is hilarious. It's a very high horse, indeed.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Ms. Mitton** (Tantramar, G): Madam Speaker, New Brunswickers may be surprised to learn that nobody in the provincial government is in charge of public transportation. This has resulted in poor to non-existent intercity buses and rail services to connect our communities. As a result, nobody is at the table to negotiate fixing the rail line between Campbellton and Moncton so that trains can travel faster than cars, enabling commuter rail to connect the north and south. Nobody is in charge of implementing affordable intercity bus services such as the toonie transit that exists to connect regions in Prince Edward Island. Public transportation was completely absent from the Liberal election platform, the government's throne speech, the capital budget, and the Premier's mandate letters. Will the Premier give the mandate of improving inter-regional public transportation in the province to one of her Cabinet ministers?

**Hon. C. Chiasson** (Grand Falls—Vallée-des-Rivières—Saint-Quentin, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, L): Thank you very much for the question. Transportation by rail is certainly an important mode of transportation for all New Brunswickers. Improving the rail lines that travel through our province is certainly of the utmost importance as well.

That's something that CN Rail and the federal government are responsible for. Those talks could be happening. There are people within CN Rail with whom I have been in contact. That's a topic that needs to be discussed, for sure. A discussion about how it pertains to other modes of public transportation also needs to happen, for sure. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Mitton** (Tantramar, G): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[*Original*]

Those talks are happening, but we're not at the table.

[*Translation*]

Successive governments have failed to take action on public transportation because no one has been responsible for the file. This has been a failure for successive governments,

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because New Brunswickers don't have access to reliable and affordable public transportation between regions.

Seven years ago today, the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation presented a report titled *From Surfaces to Services: An inclusive and sustainable transportation strategy for the province of New Brunswick, 2017-2037*. Seven years later, the report hasn't been implemented. Why? Because no one is responsible for doing so. Will the Premier remedy this situation by giving one of her ministers the mandate of public transportation in the province?

[Original]

**Hon. C. Chiasson** (Grand Falls—Vallée-des-Rivières—Saint-Quentin, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, L): Thank you again for the question. It is important that we have some sort of public transportation system, especially in rural New Brunswick. I know there's lots of work going on in the regional service commissions to try to effectuate some kind of regional transportation that is going to help people living in rural communities. I'm not really up to speed on the extent to which those plans have been developed and exactly what those plans are. I can certainly look into that and find out what's going on with the regional service commissions.

**Ms. Mitton** (Tantramar, G): Madam Speaker, New Brunswick is missing the train when it comes to public transportation. The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure is standing up to respond to my questions; however, he is not responsible for public transportation. No one is. He doesn't know what's happening with the regional service commissions or what's happening with public transportation, which does not connect the regions. That is a major gap.

There have been talks happening with VIA Rail, for example, to make sure investments are made in Ontario. But what about New Brunswick? We need someone at the table. We need someone responsible for making sure New Brunswickers have access to public transportation in order to address affordability and provide accessibility for those who don't have their own vehicles. It has been seven years since the ESIC report, *From Surfaces to Services*, was released. It has been seven years today, and we still don't have someone responsible. Will the Premier make someone responsible for public transportation?

**Hon. C. Chiasson** (Grand Falls—Vallée-des-Rivières—Saint-Quentin, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, L): Again, thank you to the member opposite for the question. Yes, you're right. Transportation is a very important thing in this province. People who don't have modes of transportation certainly need to be connected. That's why the regional service commissions are taking the lead on rural transportation as it pertains to the travelling public and those who have difficulty getting to appointments and so on. At this point in time, the regional service commissions are the leads on this.

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### WORKSAFENB

**Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm proud to rise today as part of His Majesty's loyal opposition and to ask a question on behalf of the people of New Brunswick and particularly our small business people. I note that in the Liberal election platform, there was no mention of business people. The word "business" is only in there once, and the word "WorkSafe" does not appear at all.

The people who create jobs are being hit with the same rising costs as everyone else. It's a challenge for them. The reduction of WorkSafeNB premiums has been a positive action thanks to the hard work of the previous government. Can the minister confirm that this government has no immediate plans that will affect WorkSafeNB premiums?

**Hon. Mr. Randall** (Fredericton North, Minister responsible for Opportunities NB; Minister responsible for Economic Development and Small Business; Minister responsible for NB Liquor and Cannabis NB, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for the question. I really appreciate it. This is my first question in the House.

Certainly, having been a small business person all of my life, I recognize that WorkSafeNB premiums are extraordinarily important, as are all the other input costs. This government is certainly cognizant of rising costs, and I will certainly take that question under advisement. I will continue to represent small businesses and try to keep those costs lower for small business people in this province.

**Ms. Bockus** (Saint Croix, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for that response, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Ottawa has started to give back \$2.5 billion in carbon tax that small businesses are owed. Some \$87 million of that money is being returned to New Brunswick small businesses, and Ottawa has made this refund tax-free. Shortly, WorkSafeNB is going to redistribute over \$180 million to businesses thanks to the work of the previous government and the board. My question is for the Premier or the minister. In negotiations with Ottawa on the HST holiday, knowing that your government would be sending out this historic WorkSafeNB rebate of \$180 million to our businesses, was making it non-taxable discussed? If not, why not?

**Hon. Mr. Legacy** (Bathurst, Deputy Premier; Minister of Finance and Treasury Board; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, L): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I understand there are a lot of questions around the tax holiday that has been brought up by the federal government. We've had some bilateral discussions on different aspects of that specific holiday. That aspect was not discussed when the rebate was brought up at those meetings.

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### NURSES

**Mr. Austin** (Fredericton-Grand Lake, PC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. More and more, we're hearing from nursing home caretakers and organizations that nursing homes are really struggling to keep staff, to retain them. I have three in my riding. In one, only 3 of the 50 staff at this nursing home are going to get this nursing bonus that the Premier has promised. What makes this worse is that now the Premier is saying that if these casual staff members go full-time with Horizon or Vitalité, then they'll get the bonus. My question, really, is for the Minister of Social Development. What is she going to do when we already have a system with low numbers of staff in nursing homes that can't keep up? What is she going to do when Horizon and Vitalité poach all these staff from these non-profit nursing homes? How many more nursing home beds are we going to have to lose in order to accommodate this retention bonus that the Premier has put out?

[Translation]

**Hon. Mr. Gauvin** (Shediac Bay-Dieppe, Minister of Public Safety; Minister responsible for la Francophonie, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Yes, this is a very important question. I know the subject and can talk about it because I was the critic for this field when I was on the opposition side.

It's all about nurse retention. In four years, with the previous government, we lost 500 nurses. These people left the profession in New Brunswick for reasons other than retirement. They did so because they weren't being treated well by the previous government, which is now on the opposition side.

That being said, the program we are proposing will help 10 000 nurses. If you do the math, it's really not complicated. That's 10 000 more people than would have received help from the previous government. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

[Original]

### Point of Order

**Madam Speaker** (Hon. Ms. Landry): State your point of order.

**Mr. M. LeBlanc** (Belle-Baie-Belledune, L): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. During question period, the member for Woodstock-Hartland, who is an experienced member of this Legislative Assembly, accused the Premier of misleading voters, which is clearly not permissible in this Legislative Assembly. I'd like you to ask him to retract those remarks.

**Ms. M. Johnson** (Carleton-Victoria, PC): Madam Speaker, if I could, I will address that. In looking at the member's notes, I see that he did not in fact accuse the Premier of misleading voters. Rather, he was talking about encouraging voters to mislead themselves and confuse

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the issue. I would encourage the Speaker to go back and review the tape and to then get back to us on the decision.

**Madam Speaker** (Hon. Ms. Landry): I will review the Hansard and come back if necessary.

