
Daily sitting 19

Thursday, December 4, 2025

1 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

Ms. Mitton welcomed to the House Elizabeth Weir, former New Democratic MLA for Saint John Harbour (1991-2005). Hon. Mr. Hickey and Mr. Savoie joined in this regard.

Hon. Mr. D'Amours, Member for Edmundston-Vallée-des-Rivières, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging government to fund breast prosthesis due to cancer surgery or malformation. (Petition 6)

Ms. Wilcott, from the Standing Committee on Economic Policy, presented the Sixth Report of the Committee for the session which was read and is as follows:

December 4, 2025

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

Your Standing Committee on Economic Policy begs leave to submit this, their sixth report.

Your Committee met on December 3, 2025, and had under consideration:

Bill 21, *An Act to Amend the Child and Youth Well-Being Act*;

and have agreed to the same.

And your Committee begs leave to make a further report.

(Sgd. :) Natacha Vautour, M.L.A.
Chair

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.

Ms. Mitton gave Notice of Motion 21 that on Thursday, December 11, 2025, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Coon:

WHEREAS New Brunswickers facing serious illnesses, such as cancer, should not have to choose between seeking life-saving treatment and job security;

WHEREAS the current length of job-protected leave in New Brunswick is insufficient to cover the average treatment and recovery period for many common cancers, which can last over 36 weeks;

WHEREAS the federal government has extended the EI sickness benefit to 26 weeks, yet New Brunswick workers risk losing their jobs if provincial job protection is not extended accordingly;

WHEREAS other provinces, including Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Ontario, have extended job-protected leave to at least 26 weeks, aligning with the federal EI sickness benefit;

WHEREAS 85% of New Brunswickers support extending job-protected leave to 26 weeks;

WHEREAS extending job protection would ensure New Brunswick workers can focus on recovery without the fear of losing employment;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to introduce legislation extending unpaid job-protected leave for serious illness from the current 5 days to at least 26 weeks.

Debate resumed on Motion 1, moved by Mr. Ames, seconded by Mr. Hogan, on November 20, 2025.

And after some time, Mr. Bourque, the Deputy Speaker, took the chair as Acting Speaker.

And after some further time, Hon. Mr. McKee, seconded by Ms. Vautour, moved in amendment:

AMENDMENT

That Motion 1 be amended in the resolution clause by adding “, as part of a provincial plan for addiction recovery that aligns client demand and program resources,” after “to invest” and by adding “voluntarily” after “addiction can”.

Mr. Deputy Speaker put the question on the proposed amendment and a debate ensued.

At 2.49 p.m. the House recessed. At 2.53 p.m. the House resumed.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put, the amendment was adopted on the following recorded division:

YEAS - 41

Hon. Mr. Gauvin	Hon. Mr. Hickey	Mr. Austin
Mr. M. LeBlanc	Hon. Mr. Randall	Mr. Monahan
Hon. Mr. Legacy	Hon. Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Ames
Hon. Ms. C. Johnson	Hon. Ms. Townsend	Ms. M. Wilson
Hon. Mr. Dornan	Ms. Wilcott	Mr. Coon
Hon. Ms. Miles	Mr. Mallet	Ms. Conroy
Hon. Mr. LePage	Mr. Arseneault	Mr. Oliver
Hon. Mr. D'Amours	Mr. J. LeBlanc	Mr. Russell
Hon. Mr. McKee	Ms. Vautour	Ms. S. Wilson
Hon. Mr. C. Chiasson	Mr. Johnston	Mr. Cullins
Hon. Ms. Boudreau	Mr. Robichaud	Ms. Bockus
Hon. Mr. K. Chiasson	Mr. Hogan	Mr. Lee
Hon. Mr. Finnigan	Mr. Savoie	Ms. Mitton
Hon. Mr. Herron	Ms. Scott-Wallace	

Mr. Deputy Speaker put the question on Motion 1 as amended as follows:

WHEREAS drug addiction and recovery are critical public health and public safety issues that deeply impact individuals, families, small businesses and communities across New Brunswick;

WHEREAS the last report from Correctional Service Canada from 2019 estimated that 78% of offenders in correctional institutions struggled with substance use;

WHEREAS the chief of the Saint John police has attributed the 8% increase in violent crime in Saint John to illicit drugs;

WHEREAS therapeutic community models / therapeutic living units have been successfully implemented in correctional settings in North America and Europe, and have consistently demonstrated that these corrections-based programs are effective in reducing post-release criminal activity and re-incarceration rates;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to invest, as part of a provincial plan for addiction recovery that aligns client demand and program resources, in developing therapeutic living units in all provincial correctional facilities in New Brunswick, complete with transition programs and follow-up supports, so inmates struggling with addiction can voluntarily access the treatment that they need while incarcerated, allowing them to work toward a healthy future, free from substance-use disorder during and after their sentence.

And the question being put, Motion 1 as amended was resolved in the affirmative on the following recorded division after leave was granted to dispense with the ten-minute time allotted for the ringing of the bells:

YEAS - 41

Hon. Mr. Gauvin	Hon. Mr. Hickey	Mr. Austin
Mr. M. LeBlanc	Hon. Mr. Randall	Mr. Monahan
Hon. Mr. Legacy	Hon. Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Ames
Hon. Ms. C. Johnson	Hon. Ms. Townsend	Ms. M. Wilson
Hon. Mr. Dornan	Ms. Wilcott	Mr. Coon
Hon. Ms. Miles	Mr. Mallet	Ms. Conroy
Hon. Mr. LePage	Mr. Arseneault	Mr. Oliver
Hon. Mr. D'Amours	Mr. J. LeBlanc	Mr. Russell
Hon. Mr. McKee	Ms. Vautour	Ms. S. Wilson
Hon. Mr. C. Chiasson	Mr. Johnston	Mr. Cullins
Hon. Ms. Boudreau	Mr. Robichaud	Ms. Bockus
Hon. Mr. K. Chiasson	Mr. Hogan	Mr. Lee
Hon. Mr. Finnigan	Mr. Savoie	Ms. Mitton
Hon. Mr. Herron	Ms. Scott-Wallace	

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 9, Mr. Austin moved, seconded by Mr. Ames:

WHEREAS mental illness and addiction are not moral failings but health conditions that affect families and communities in every corner of this country, and each year in Canada, over 4,800 people die by suicide, while over 20 Canadians die every single day from toxic drug poisonings;

WHEREAS behind these statistics are loved ones — parents, children, neighbours, friends — whose suffering often unfolds in silence and desperation, leaving families and communities powerless and legally unable to intervene until it is too late;

WHEREAS in New Brunswick, suicide and overdose deaths have climbed steadily in recent years, with suicide rates among the highest in Atlantic Canada and the province seeing a more than 60% increase in suspected drug poisoning deaths since 2016, while emergency rooms and law enforcement agencies face increasing crisis calls with limited tools to respond effectively;

WHEREAS leading jurisdictions such as Portugal, Norway, and parts of Canada have shown that combining compassionate, legally safeguarded intervention with wraparound care — housing, treatment, counseling, and long-term follow-up — can reduce emergency visits, lower overdose deaths, and reconnect people with their families and communities;

WHEREAS the absence of a structured, compassionate intervention framework in New Brunswick leaves families without options, police without adequate supports, and people in crisis without a pathway to sustained recovery;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government of New Brunswick to establish a framework where individuals in severe crisis can be compassionately intervened upon — with safeguards, wraparound services, and clear oversight — ensuring dignity, safety, and the best chance for recovery.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And after some time, Madam Speaker resumed the chair.

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

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