



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NEW BRUNSWICK First Session, 60th Legislative Assembly

ORDER AND NOTICE PAPER – Sitting No. 19
Friday, March 19, 2021

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Prayers
Introduction of Guests
Statements of Condolence and Congratulation
Statements by Members
Oral Questions (30 minutes)
Tabling of Documents
Statements by Ministers
Presentations of Petitions
Answers to Petitions and Written Questions
Presentations of Committee Reports
Introduction of Bills
Notices of Motions
Notice of Opposition Members' Business
Government Motions for the Ordering of the Business of the House
Deferred Recorded Divisions
Orders of the Day

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS

Motion 28 by Hon. Mr. Steeves, seconded by Hon. Mr. Higgs to propose the following resolution on Tuesday, March 16, 2021:

THAT this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Debate adjourned by Mr. Coon.

Debate to resume on Friday, March 19, 2021.

GOVERNMENT BILLS FOR SECOND READING

Bills Ordered for Second Reading

Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Gasoline and Motive Fuel Tax Act – Hon. Mr. Steeves
 Bill 33, An Act to Amend the Insurance Act – Hon. Mr. Steeves
 Bill 34, An Act to Amend the New Brunswick Income Tax Act – Hon. Mr. Steeves
 Bill 35, An Act Respecting Empowering the School System – Hon. Mr. Cardy
 Bill 36, An Act to Amend the Highway Act – Hon. Ms. Green
 Bill 37, An Act to Amend the Fish and Wildlife Act – Hon. Mr. Holland
 Bill 38, An Act to Amend the Service New Brunswick Act – Hon. Ms. Wilson

BILLS AWAITING ROYAL ASSENT

Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Early Childhood Services Act – Hon. Mr. Cardy
 Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Notaries Public Act – Hon. Mr. Flemming, Q.C.
 Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act – Hon. Mr. Holder
 Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission and
 Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal Act – Hon. Mr. Holder
 Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Saint John Transit Commission Act – Mrs. Anderson-Mason, Q.C.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Capital Estimates, 2021-2022

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion 24 by Hon. Mr. Savoie, seconded by Hon. Mr. Higgs to propose the following resolution on Tuesday, December 15, 2020:

THAT in addition to the existing sitting hours prescribed in Standing Rule 29(1) and by Special Order of the House adopted November 18, 2020, the House may sit on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

THAT this Special Order shall come into effect on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, and shall remain in effect until Thursday, December 31, 2020.

CONCLUDED

Motion 1 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Carried November 18, 2020.

Motion 2 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Carried November 18, 2020.

Motion 14 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Carried November 18, 2020.

Motion 15 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Carried November 20, 2020.

Motion 17 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Carried November 20, 2020.

Motion 18 by Hon. Ms. Green. Carried November 24, 2020.

Motion 20 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Carried December 8, 2020.

Motion 21 by Hon. Mr. Savoie. Debated and carried December 16, 2020.

Motion 22 by Hon. Mr. Steeves. Debated and carried December 15, 2020.

Motion 27 by Hon. Mr. Higgs. Carried December 18, 2020.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Elections Act – Mr. K. Chiasson

Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Tobacco and Electronic Cigarette Sales Act – Mr. D'Amours

Bill 18, An Act to Amend The Residential Tenancies Act – Mr. Coon

Bill 26, An Act to Amend The Residential Tenancies Act – Mr. Gauvin

Bill 29, Local Food Security Act – Mr. Arseneau

Bill 39, An Act to Amend the Auditor General Act – Mr. McKee

Adjourned Debates

Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Municipal Elections Act – Mr. K. Chiasson

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Debatable Motions

Motion 5 by Ms. Thériault, seconded by Mr. D'Amours to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS the various communities that make up New Brunswick are committed to the preservation and development of their respective cultural identities;

WHEREAS countries are becoming more and more economically integrated and it is all the more important that cultural communities be able to preserve their identity and a strong sense of belonging;

WHEREAS entrepreneurs in the book chain such as bookstores and publishers in New Brunswick play a fundamental role in the development of the book industry and literacy in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS the Canadian Free Trade Agreement adopted in 2017 includes Article 809, which constitutes a cultural exception that allows for the adoption and maintenance of programs and policies favouring the distribution and development of artistic expression or content;

WHEREAS all international trade agreements signed by Canada provide exceptions for cultural industries;

WHEREAS entrepreneurs in the book chain are suffering the financial consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and no additional assistance is currently provided to them by the provincial government;

WHEREAS stakeholders in the cultural industry have been calling for the implementation of a book purchasing policy since the adoption of the New Brunswick Book Policy in 2009;

WHEREAS a book purchasing policy would make it possible to consolidate the local book chain and foster the development of reading of works produced in New Brunswick;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to develop and implement a book purchasing policy requiring institutional purchasers, including government departments and agencies, school districts, schools and agencies under their jurisdiction, and public libraries, to acquire books from New Brunswick independent bookstores and publishing houses.

Motion 6 by Ms. Thériault, seconded by Mr. Gauvin to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS the direct contribution of cultural industries to New Brunswick's GDP was \$550,379,000 in 2017;

WHEREAS the number of jobs related to culture in New Brunswick was 7,750 in 2017;

WHEREAS the typical artist had a median income of \$24,200 in 2016, an amount that is 38% less than the median income of the New Brunswick labour force, which is \$38,800;

WHEREAS there is no legislation on the status of the professional artist in New Brunswick and no body to assess and define the legal status of artists, resulting in a lack of recognition of status and the existence of glaring socio-economic inequalities for those in the profession;

WHEREAS most artists do not have access to employment insurance, health insurance, measures covering business risks and fluctuating income, workplace safety insurance or retirement on comparable terms as other professionals;

WHEREAS current programs covering benefits, employment insurance and pension plans are employee-based and do not take into account the realities of the artistic profession such as invisible work, which includes research and creation;

WHEREAS improving the socio-economic conditions of artists requires a link between the governments of New Brunswick and Canada, particularly with respect to: social benefits such as the pension plan; tax measures that take into account annual fluctuations in income, such as income averaging, exemptions on royalties and creation grants; measures related to remuneration and underemployment, such as a guaranteed annual income or employment insurance better adapted to self-employed workers and taking into account invisible work and the periodicity of earnings; measures providing for sick, parental or compassionate leave;

WHEREAS the Premier's Task Force on the Status of the Artist was established in July 2014 and is expected to report shortly;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge government to commit to the adoption of a Status of the Artist Act that is not merely declaratory but that contains concrete measures to substantially improve the socio-economic status of professional artists;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to establish, following the tabling of the report of the Premier's Task Force on the Status of the Artist, a Standing Committee on the Status of the Artist under the Office of the Premier to be responsible for the implementation of all of the report's recommendations, including those calling for a link between the provincial and federal governments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to put in place, following the tabling of the report of the Premier's Task Force on the Status of the Artist, a timeline for the implementation of the recommended government measures to cover all of the economic and social risks associated with the artistic profession, including those that call for a link between the provincial and federal governments.

Motion 7 by Mr. McKee, seconded by Mr. Landry to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS the Mental Health Court offers an alternative for offenders with mental health issues;

WHEREAS this program is widely praised by mental health advocates for its focus on community treatment as opposed to incarceration or other penalties;

WHEREAS the Mental Health Court program was developed based on best practices in other jurisdictions and informed by research;

WHEREAS the Gallant Government reinstated the Mental Health Court through the Provincial Court system in Saint John with plans to expand Mental Health Court services throughout the province;

WHEREAS there is a need to expand the Mental Health Court program to other regions of the province so that more offenders with mental health issues can avail themselves of this invaluable service for addressing their mental health needs;

WHEREAS other provinces including our neighbouring province of Nova Scotia have recognized the benefits of having a Mental Health Court and have made a commitment to expanding availability;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to expand the Mental Health Court program throughout the province and announce a specific time frame for doing so.

Motion 8 by Mr. Gauvin, seconded by Ms. Thériault to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS there is an alarming lack of affordable housing in many areas of the province and the situation is getting worse;

WHEREAS increased demand for rental units has resulted in significant increases to monthly rents for many people who cannot afford it;

WHEREAS there is insufficient subsidized housing to meet the demand;

WHEREAS chronic homelessness is a serious social problem that must be addressed;

WHEREAS, in 2018, the previous Liberal government signed a 10-year \$300-million cost-shared agreement with the federal government to tackle the issue of affordable housing;

WHEREAS this agreement provided for a pathway to protect, renew, and expand social and community housing;

WHEREAS municipalities like the City of Moncton have indicated that they are prepared to partner with the community and the province to make significant investments in social housing and support community housing initiatives like the Rising Tide project;

WHEREAS there have been two years of inaction by the Higgs government in addressing this serious issue that is a threat to the safety and security of many New Brunswickers who desperately need affordable housing;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government of New Brunswick to provide its share of the funding under the federal-provincial housing agreement and make affordable housing a priority;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government of New Brunswick to partner with municipalities and community housing organizations to provide funding support for community housing initiatives.

Motion 9 by Ms. Landry, seconded by Mr. Legacy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS, as a result of the Climate Change Fund, the province is receiving significant tax revenues of over \$128 million for the 2020-21 fiscal year, which includes \$83 million going into general revenues;

WHEREAS, unlike the federal government, the province of New Brunswick has decided not to rebate the monies received through the federal carbon pricing plan to consumers;

WHEREAS, although certain tax revenues are being used to offset increases in excise taxes on gasoline and natural gas, there are additional tax revenues that could be used for funding climate change measures such as energy efficiency initiatives;

WHEREAS energy efficiency programs help businesses and consumers reduce energy consumption costs, support local business suppliers, and create jobs;

WHEREAS energy efficiency programs contribute to fighting the impacts of climate change:

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to direct that all additional carbon pricing revenues beyond those used to offset fuel prices be used to create a comprehensive energy efficiency and retrofit program for businesses and residential property owners and any excess be directed to other climate change initiatives.

Motion 10 by Mr. LePage, seconded by Mr. McKee to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS we are fortunate that many New Brunswick businesses are able to stay open despite the COVID-19 pandemic, many of which are seeing their revenues reduced significantly and are struggling to survive;

WHEREAS the Government of New Brunswick has provided very little support for businesses, compared to other provinces;

WHEREAS generous business support programs provided by the federal government such as the wage subsidy program have helped many businesses survive that might otherwise have had to close or downsize significantly;

WHEREAS many New Brunswick businesses are worried about how they will survive when the federal subsidies are no longer available;

WHEREAS, unlike the federal business support programs and those of other provinces, the meagre business support programs provided by the Government of New Brunswick are non-forgivable loans that merely add to the debt of a business and put it at further risk;

WHEREAS the Government of New Brunswick has not even provided financial support to help businesses pay for the cost of personal protective equipment for their employees or to offset the costs they have incurred to modify their business premises to accommodate health and safety requirements imposed under the Emergency Order;

WHEREAS small and medium-sized businesses and the jobs they provide are crucial to our economy and are deserving of needed support;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislature urge the Government of New Brunswick to bring forward a more comprehensive program of financial support to help New Brunswick businesses survive the pandemic.

Motion 11 by Mr. LePage, seconded by Mr. Mallet to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS there are many areas within New Brunswick that do not have adequate access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS access to high-speed Internet is crucial for many businesses and the lack of high-speed Internet creates an economic disadvantage for them in communities where it is not available;

WHEREAS access to high-speed Internet is also vital for individuals and communities;

WHEREAS the previous Liberal government invested \$10 million in high-speed Internet and was committed to ensuring all areas of the province would have access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS, as a result of COVID-19, many students in our regular school program have had to access learning programs remotely, and there is a risk that, in the event of a further outbreak requiring the closure of schools, they and probably more students may have to do so again;

WHEREAS parents of students living in areas without access to high-speed Internet have expressed concern about the educational disadvantage faced by their children;

WHEREAS many post-secondary institutions have moved to an online platform to deliver their education and training programs and postsecondary students require access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS many New Brunswickers are now asked to work from home and thus need access to high-speed Internet;

WHEREAS many health services, including doctors' visits, are increasingly being delivered virtually as a result of the health and safety restrictions associated with the pandemic;

WHEREAS individuals, businesses, and communities in mostly rural areas of the province deserve access to high-speed Internet;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to make access to high-speed Internet for all areas of the province a top priority;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to invest in the necessary infrastructure to ensure access to high-speed Internet.

Motion 12 by Mr. LePage, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS, as a result of the pandemic, there have been significant job losses including layoffs at WestJet, Mount Allison University, Air Canada, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation, and Caribou Mine;

WHEREAS many small businesses all over the province have also suffered as a result of the pandemic which caused reduced business revenues;

WHEREAS other provinces are announcing programs to spur economic recovery with strategic infrastructure investments;

WHEREAS the Higgs government has made very few infrastructure investments under the Canada-New Brunswick Infrastructure Agreement signed by the previous Liberal government;

WHEREAS, unlike other premiers, Premier Higgs has indicated that he is not interested in the new federal-provincial infrastructure program that provides an even more generous cost-sharing structure for provinces;

WHEREAS there are many worthwhile and beneficial infrastructure projects that would create jobs and spur economic growth at a time when we should be focused on economic recovery;

WHEREAS there are many critical municipal infrastructure needs that could be addressed through the proposed federal-provincial infrastructure program;

WHEREAS, not only will strategic infrastructure investments create jobs and spur economic growth, these investments will help address serious issues like the challenge of climate change, and avoid future costs;

WHEREAS, if New Brunswick does not make strategic infrastructure investments, economists predict that economic recovery will be slow and other provinces will recover at a much faster rate;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the Government of New Brunswick to recognize the importance of economic recovery and take advantage of the federal-provincial infrastructure program by making strategic infrastructure investments throughout the province a top priority.

Motion 13 by Mr. Bourque, seconded by Mr. LePage to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS the pandemic has created considerable challenges for the daycare sector;

WHEREAS, as a result of the pandemic, licenced daycares must implement health and safety measures that add additional expenses, including extra staffing;

WHEREAS, as a result of this additional cost burden, many daycare operators are struggling to keep their businesses open;

WHEREAS having access to daycare services is critical for many parents, including health care workers;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick government has not stepped up to assist licenced daycares;

WHEREAS, without additional support, there is a risk that many licenced daycares may have to close;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to put a support program in place to support licenced daycares which includes financial support to New Brunswick daycare operators.

Motion 16 by Mr. Bourque, seconded by Mr. Landry to propose the following resolution on Thursday, November 26, 2020:

WHEREAS New Brunswick adopted the *Official Languages Act* in 1969, before Canada had even adopted an official languages act;

WHEREAS New Brunswick is the only officially bilingual province in Canada;

WHEREAS the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada both have standing committees on official languages;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick *Official Languages Act* contains a requirement that it be reviewed every 10 years;

WHEREAS the *Official Languages Act* is exceptional in that it prevails over all New Brunswick acts and regulations;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to establish a standing committee on official languages;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this committee enable its members, among other things, to play an active role in the review and the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* and *An Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick*, in the 10-year review of the *Official Languages Act*, and in the review of reports from the Commissioner of Official Languages;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT no party have a majority of members on this committee to ensure that no current or future government can make unilateral decisions regarding official languages.

Motion 19 by Mr. Coon, seconded by Ms. Mitton to propose the following resolution on Thursday, December 17, 2020:

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic is creating a great deal of uncertainty for anyone who is forced to move out of their apartment, especially in orange zones;

WHEREAS Nova Scotia instituted a rent cap of 2% for existing tenants, retroactive to September 1, 2020, that will remain in place until February 2021 or the state of emergency is lifted, whichever comes first;

WHEREAS Nova Scotia has banned renovations until February 2021 or when the state of emergency is lifted, whichever comes first;

WHEREAS renters in New Brunswick are facing similar problems to those in Nova Scotia due to a low vacancy rate;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to put a cap on rental increases;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to ban lease terminations due to renovations, also known as renovictions, until February 2021, or when the state of emergency in New Brunswick is lifted, whichever comes first.

Motion 23 by Mr. Melanson, seconded by Mr. Arseneault to propose the following resolution on Thursday, December 17, 2020:

WHEREAS the Legislative Administration Committee (LAC) is responsible for the administration, operation, management, maintenance, and control of the Legislative Building, the Legislative Library, and other lands, buildings, and facilities connected with the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS the committee, chaired by the Speaker, is also responsible generally for all matters relating to the Legislative Assembly and to the Members of the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS the meetings of the Legislative Administration Committee are held in camera without access by media and the public;

WHEREAS there is need for greater openness and transparency with respect to the affairs of the Legislative Assembly and the deliberations of its elected members;

WHEREAS, although there are discussions on certain matters before LAC that require confidentiality, including human resource issues, much of the business of LAC could be discussed in an open forum;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the Speaker to work with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to bring forward a plan for greater openness and transparency by the Legislative Administration Committee.

Motion 26 by Mr. Melanson, seconded by Mr. Arseneault to propose the following resolution on Thursday, December 24, 2020:

WHEREAS 49 MLAs represent the interests of their constituents throughout the province in the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS every Member of the Legislative Assembly should have the opportunity to participate fully in the business of the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, under the guidance of Public Health and Public Safety, the province has enacted an Emergency Order that imposes certain restrictions on gatherings which may vary from one region of the province to another based on outbreaks of the virus;

WHEREAS parliamentary bodies have had to adapt to the new reality of COVID-19 and modify the rules for participation by elected members in the affairs of Parliaments and/or Legislative Assemblies;

WHEREAS the technology is available to permit all elected members to participate in the affairs of the Legislative Assembly remotely through virtual participation;

WHEREAS the Parliament of Canada and other Legislative Assemblies have adopted the use of technologies that provide for virtual participation;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly has not adapted the use of technology for virtual participation for routine proceedings;

WHEREAS, given the ongoing threat of COVID-19, some Members of the Legislative Assembly may be reluctant to attend the Legislative Assembly out of concern for themselves and others;

WHEREAS a Member of the Legislative Assembly who might not be in favour of virtual technology should not be able to subvert the will of the Legislative Administration Committee whose members are supportive of using the technology for virtual sittings of the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Economic Policy met and agreed to use virtual technology that would permit elected members to participate remotely;

WHEREAS the technology is available, has been tested, and can be put in operation right away;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the Speaker to ensure that technology is immediately adopted in the Legislative Assembly that allows for virtual participation in the affairs of the Legislative Assembly.

Motion 29 by Mr. Melanson, seconded by Mr. LePage to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on New Brunswick businesses and the economy;

WHEREAS a new report by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business indicates that one in four small and medium-sized businesses in New Brunswick is at risk of closing;

WHEREAS the report further indicates that the findings in New Brunswick were among the worst in the country;

WHEREAS, in response to concerns about the state of businesses, Fredericton Chamber of Commerce CEO Krista Ross, expressing the need for business support and concern about austerity, wrote in an op-ed on January 28, 2021, that the first order of business must be *“supporting the businesses that are here now, that have been hanging on by an increasingly fraying thread this past year”*;

WHEREAS economist Richard Saillant wrote in an article January 15, 2021, entitled *“Higgs deficit obsession threatens New Brunswick’s recovery”*: *“New Brunswick, meanwhile is doing much less to support its people, businesses and communities”* and *“Yet there is little to suggest that Higgs has a credible plan to ensure a successful recovery”*;

WHEREAS economist Herb Emery, in an article featured in *Huddle* on May 10, 2020, warned that *“For New Brunswick, a province that was struggling before the pandemic, the outbreak is exacerbating existing economic issues”*;

WHEREAS a recent opinion piece in *L’Acadie Nouvelle* on June 3, 2020, recognized that New Brunswick will need to rely more on its resources in the years to come and there must be a focus on economic growth;

WHEREAS economists like Donald Savoie have indicated publicly that we need to invest in growth areas like the food industry to transform our economy;

WHEREAS, in a *L’Acadie Nouvelle* article dated January 15, 2021, economist Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, comparing the significant investments being made by other provinces, echoed the concerns of OECD economist Laurence Boone about the dangers of fiscal rigour at this time and the need for stimulus investments;

WHEREAS an increasing number of business leaders and economists are echoing a concern about the lack of business support and investment in New Brunswick, the lack of a plan for economic growth, and a preoccupation by the Premier with cuts and budget tightening;

WHEREAS the Premier has gutted ONB, which played a key role in job creation;

WHEREAS the Higgs government ranks dead last in provincial support for the private sector;

WHEREAS, unlike other provinces, New Brunswick is not taking advantage of significant cost-shared infrastructure and program funding being offered by the federal government;

WHEREAS the provincial government has not brought forward an economic recovery plan with a focus on business support and economic growth;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to introduce, as soon as possible, an economic recovery plan that builds on the innovative products, services, and business practices born of necessity and of New Brunswick ingenuity to boost our economic growth potential;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to focus the plan on bold ideas focused on exports and domestic opportunities, tourism and hospitality, addressing our labour shortage through training and population growth, housing, supply chain management, food security, green economy, advanced manufacturing, transportation, infrastructure, information technology, cybersecurity, and research and development, supported by strategic investments in partnership with government and the private sector;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to make New Brunswick's economic recovery plan inclusive of women, newcomers, and Indigenous communities.

Motion 30 by Mr. Arseneault, seconded by Mr. Melanson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

WHEREAS the legislative branch of government is independent from the executive branch of government;

WHEREAS, despite this independence, it is the Executive Council that ultimately nominates Legislative Officers when a vacancy occurs or an office is created;

WHEREAS there is a growing chorus of voices that suggest that in order to avoid conflicts of interest, the appointment process for Legislative Officers should be independent of the Executive Council;

WHEREAS Brent White, an Associate Professor at Mount Allison University and former auditor with the provincial Auditor General, recently released a dissertation calling for changes to the selection process for the next Auditor General to foster public confidence in the appointment process;

WHEREAS, in 2010, Queen's University Business Professor Steven Salterio raised similar concerns;

WHEREAS the Premier has moved to consolidate power in the Executive Council Office, raising even greater concerns about the need for independence in the selection process;

WHEREAS there is a need to maintain public confidence in the selection process for Legislative Officers;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to review the selection process for Legislative Officers and bring forward a revised selection process that is independent of the Executive Council.

Motion 47 by Mr. Austin, seconded by Ms. Conroy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

WHEREAS there are approximately 26,000 small businesses in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS the small business tax rate in New Brunswick is 2.5% and the general rate is 14%;

WHEREAS New Brunswick is one of Canada's most open provinces, with CFIB indicating that 67% of small businesses in the province are fully open and 24% of those have normal sales;

WHEREAS dozens of Chambers of Commerce agree that a reduced tax would be of great benefit to small businesses and would assist them through the difficulties they are facing and would allow them to continue operating;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to eliminate the Corporate Income Tax on small business during the state of emergency.

Motion 48 by Ms. Conroy, seconded by Mr. Austin to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

WHEREAS in New Brunswick there is an urgent need to reduce healthcare wait times;

WHEREAS optometrists have indicated a willingness to take an expanded role to ease the backlog and to improve wait times;

WHEREAS these organizations have stated that billing for these services will remain with third party insurance companies and/or direct patient billing;

WHEREAS this will not place an added financial burden on the provincial Medicare system;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister of Health and the Government of New Brunswick to take immediate action to expand the scope of optometry to include treatment of glaucoma and oral medications for eye conditions.

Motion 49 by Mr. McKee, seconded by Mr. D'Amours to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS the tragic death of 16-year-old Lexi Daken has drawn attention to the gaps in our mental health services that desperately need to be addressed;

WHEREAS Lexi's story was a catalyst for many other families to come forward with other tragic stories of how our mental health system has failed their loved ones who were not able to receive the help they needed when they needed it;

WHEREAS, while the reviews undertaken by the Child and Youth Advocate and Horizon Health in relation to the events leading up to the death of Lexi Daken are appropriate, there is a recognition that mental health services have been chronically underfunded for many years, which must be addressed;

WHEREAS mental health experts and advocates believe the mental health crisis is worsening and believe there is an urgent need to ensure our healthcare system can respond to those struggling with mental health issues who need immediate help;

WHEREAS the Official Opposition brought a motion forward in the Legislative Assembly in 2019 calling for the position of Mental Health Advocate to be created;

WHEREAS this motion received unanimous support from all Members of the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS the Official Opposition has also called for the expansion of the mental health court to ensure that people appearing in the courts with mental health issues have access to the treatments and services they require;

WHEREAS the Minister of Health has just announced an Addiction and Mental Health action plan for priority areas for 2021-2025;

WHEREAS there is a need for urgent action on improvements to our mental health system;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to accelerate the timeline for the implementation of all the measures contained in the action plan from 5 years to 3 years;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately enhance the funding for mental health services to achieve this objective;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to establish the position of Mental Health Advocate without delay.

Motion 50 by Mr. Gauvin, seconded by Mr. Melanson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS, in January 2017, a 10-year aging strategy entitled *We are all in this together: An Aging Strategy for New Brunswick* was released;

WHEREAS the strategy was created under the *Healthy Aging and Long-term Care Act* which provides for the creation of an Aging Secretariat with certain responsibilities including tracking actions under the strategy;

WHEREAS the Auditor General undertook a review of the aging strategy and the progress made in implementing the action items contained in the strategy;

WHEREAS the Auditor General found that the Department of Social Development had failed to set targets for the initiative "Access to care and services" which was designed to improve access to adequate care for seniors;

WHEREAS the Auditor General further found that the department had failed to develop an implementation plan for the aging strategy;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to set specific targets for its "Access to care and services" initiative;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to develop an implementation plan for the aging strategy with clear objectives, performance indicators for success, relevant program inputs and outputs required to achieve action items, a progress monitoring plan, and a timeline for when and how results will be reported.

Motion 51 by Ms. Landry, seconded by Mr. LePage to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed through the various phases, many in-person services provided by government to the members of the public were limited;

WHEREAS, in recognition of the need for the public to continue to access many of the government programs and services during the pandemic, many more services were offered online;

WHEREAS, while it is commendable that government will make access to more programs and services available online, there is a concern for many New Brunswickers who are unable to access online services;

WHEREAS the reasons for being unable to access online services include factors such as lack of access to high-speed Internet, lack of technological literacy, and lack of access to computers, tablets, or other devices;

WHEREAS a lack of future access to many in-person services for people seeking government programs and services will disadvantage many New Brunswickers;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to ensure that in-person access to government programs and services is not significantly reduced as a result of a move to increase availability of online services when eased health restrictions permit these services to be offered.

Motion 52 by Ms. Thériault, seconded by Mr. Melanson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS it is in the best interests of the people of New Brunswick to have more women elected to serve as Members of the Legislative Assembly;

WHEREAS women are often the primary caregiver of children, and a significant barrier to participation by more women in the provincial political process that is often cited is the fact that the rules governing parliamentary institutions are not family-friendly or parent-friendly;

WHEREAS many other jurisdictions nationally and internationally are moving forward with reforms to make their parliaments or governing institutions more parent-friendly;

WHEREAS New Brunswick's "Women for 50%", which is focused on gender parity in the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly, supports reforms that are more parent-friendly;

WHEREAS British MPs voted to bring in family friendly reforms like a system of "baby leave" that would provide new parents in the House of Commons with proxy votes that could be utilized by their legislative colleagues, which allows MPs to care for their families while doing their jobs;

WHEREAS certain provinces allow childcare costs as eligible campaign expenses;

WHEREAS legislatures have adopted measures that permit virtual participation in proceedings;

WHEREAS reforms dealing with shared legislative responsibilities, the availability of on-site childcare, changes to the sitting hours, and additional initiatives that reduce barriers to participation in the political process have been adopted by other jurisdictions;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly direct the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privileges and Legislative Officers to undertake a review of initiatives that will encourage more women to offer as candidates to represent New Brunswickers in the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly and report back to the Legislative Assembly within three months with specific recommendations.

Motion 55 by Mr. Austin, seconded by Ms. Conroy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS Lexi Daken's tragic case is not an isolated incident, as there are many health zones with many cases;

WHEREAS the demand for mental health services in New Brunswick has seen a dramatic jump in the past five years with 117,000 people receiving help from CMHC in New Brunswick through online services from April to December 2020;

WHEREAS New Brunswick provides between 4% and 7% of the public health care budget to mental health;

WHEREAS CMHC has been advocating for mental health parity with physical health care resources, but no government has yet raised the mental health care budget;

WHEREAS mental health problems manifest physically in the body and, too often, doctors and nurses in the ER do not have sufficient training in mental health to identify the signs and provide the care these people need;

WHEREAS low to moderate cases are placing a huge strain on the health system and the ER is not the best place for people with mental health illness to go;

WHEREAS, before COVID-19, 2% of New Brunswickers had suicidal thoughts, in April 2020 that number increased to 6%, and, in the fall of 2020, that number jumped to 10%;

WHEREAS, in 2018, suicide was the leading cause of death among male youth aged 15 to 19 and was the second leading cause of death among female youth in Canada;

WHEREAS there are over 100 suicides in New Brunswick each year, and New Brunswick has a higher suicide rate per capita than any other province (particularly among men);

WHEREAS 70,000 people in New Brunswick do not have a family doctor, thus ending up at the ER, and the current wait time for specialists such as psychiatrists through the province is 12 months;

WHEREAS approximately 40% of those people who use virtual healthcare to see doctors and nurse practitioners online (allowing people to be assessed quickly) do not have a family doctor;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government of New Brunswick to issue a directive for both the Horizon and Vitalité Health Authorities that no minor will be turned away when presenting themselves at any Department of Health facility without being properly evaluated for their mental health concerns.

Motion 56 by Mr. Austin, seconded by Ms. Conroy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS rural hospitals face unit closures or shutdowns for periods of time due to staffing shortages;

WHEREAS New Brunswick health authorities are unable to recruit enough doctors to address the need of countless people who are waiting for a family physician;

WHEREAS nurses who take 811 calls cannot diagnose or treat people who call NB tele-care;

WHEREAS virtual healthcare allows patients to see doctors and nurse practitioners online providing access, diagnosis, and treatment quickly without patients leaving their home;

WHEREAS the mental health crisis, overcrowded emergency rooms, and doctor shortages are among the many issues the province's broken healthcare system could address through a virtual care model;

WHEREAS other jurisdictions throughout North America have had success with various virtual care models including 20 hospitals in Canada using some form of virtual care in their ER departments;

WHEREAS since 2020, the eVisitNB virtual healthcare platform had over 13,000 visits to its platform from people who are being seen by doctors and nurse practitioners currently working in the province when they are available.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the Government of New Brunswick to expand the use of virtual care in emergency rooms, rural clinics, and any other healthcare facility under the Department of Health as well as promoting access to virtual care availability for patients outside these facilities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the government to give the virtual care model equal remuneration to that of in person visits as it relates to Physician and Nurse Practitioner billing.

Motion 57 by Ms. Conroy, seconded by Mr. Austin to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

WHEREAS the Auditor General's Report indicated the number of New Brunswick seniors aged 75 and older will double by 2036;

WHEREAS nursing home waitlists continue to grow, and there continue to be long wait times for nursing home placements, thus creating added pressure and costs for hospitals as about half of those seniors are waiting in hospitals;

WHEREAS, as indicated in the 2011-16 Nursing Home Renovation and Replacement Plan (as of November 2020), of the 704 specialized memory care beds to be added, only 428 were completed and 276 were not;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick Nurses Union has called on government to order an independent inquiry into the long-term care sector, citing increasing severity of several issues, including low staffing ratios, residents going without basic personal care, and an increase in violence;

WHEREAS the Department of Social Development has produced a 2011-2016 Nursing Home Renovation and Replacement Plan, a 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan and a 10-year Aging Strategy in collaboration with other stakeholders and, also taking into consideration the Department of Finance and Treasury Board's financial analysis of the nursing home delivery model, the Department of Social Development has failed to address the nursing home capacity demand;

WHEREAS the Auditor General made the recommendation in the 2016 Auditor General Report that the Department of Social Development evaluate whether there is an economic benefit to providing nursing home beds under the for-profit model versus the traditional model, and the recommendation has not been implemented;

WHEREAS the Department of Social Development needs to compare actual costs and overall quality of service to determine if the for-profit operated model has more economic benefit than the traditional model;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly urge the Department of Social Development to initiate and release a report on the comparison of actual costs of providing nursing home services under the for-profit model versus the traditional public model, and, in addition, do a detailed comparison of quality of service between the two models.

Motions for Returns

Motion 25 by Mr. Arseneault, seconded by Mr. LePage to propose the following resolution on Thursday, December 17, 2020:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, information, notes, memos, records, correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including but not limited to, e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and SMS text messages regarding discussions and agreements with Groupe Lokia, its long-term care and special care facilities in New Brunswick including Manoir de la Vallée, Manoir Brise de l'Oasis, Manoir Oasis de la Baie, Manoir Sugarloaf, Manoir Sunrise, and its representatives and agents, in relation to, but not limited to, the pilot project, staffing ratios, and care levels.

Motion 31 by Mr. Arseneault, seconded by Mr. Melanson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to the expenses for all members of the Premier's Office staff since June 2020.

Motion 32 by Mr. Arseneault, seconded by Mr. Melanson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, information, notes, memos, records, correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including but not limited to, e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and SMS text messages regarding discussions between staff of the Premier's Office and Jeannot Volpé for the period November 1, 2020, to January 8, 2021.

Motion 33 by Mr. Arseneault, seconded by Mr. Melanson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to meetings held between members of the Executive Council and interest groups, community groups, and communities.

Motion 34 by Mr. Guitard, seconded by Mr. Legacy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to the number of persons hired by government, by department, including full-time employees, casual and term employees, and personal services contracts, since November 2018, and the names of the persons hired.

Motion 35 by Mr. Guitard, seconded by Mr. Legacy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House the names of all full-time employees terminated by government since December 1, 2018.

Motion 36 by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Bourque to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to information provided to the public and stakeholders on the health reform process including the consultation process and all information related to advertising and informing the public.

Motion 37 by Mr. K. Chiasson, seconded by Mr. Mallet to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to all persons hired by government, by department, as political staff under the hiring competition exemption provided under Section 18 of the *Civil Service Act*, since November 15, 2018.

Motion 38 by Mr. K. Chiasson, seconded by Mr. Mallet to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all calendars and meeting schedules of the Premier and Members of the Executive Council since November 2018.

Motion 39 by Mr. Gauvin, seconded by Mr. LeBlanc to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to amounts paid for any cost of living and/or accommodation allowance for members of the staff of the Premier of New Brunswick, Executive Council staff, deputy ministers and senior staff in Part 1 of the public service, and all persons hired under a Personal Services Contract, since November 2018.

Motion 40 by Mr. Mallet, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to virtual and/or Zoom meetings between the Premier and third parties.

Motion 41 by Mr. Mallet, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to deputy heads, members of the Executive Council, their staff, and the staff of the Premier's Office who applied for and received a rebate under the Explore NB Travel Incentive program.

Motion 42 by Ms. Thériault, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, information, notes, memos, records, correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including but not limited to, e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and SMS text messages between the Minister of Health and the Health Authorities related to the proposed health reform process.

Motion 43 by Mr. McKee, seconded by Mr. Bourque to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, information, notes, memos, records, correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including but not limited to, e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and SMS text messages regarding all meetings and/or representations by persons registered under the *Lobbyists' Registration Act* and all members of the Executive Council.

Motion 44 by Mr. Legacy, seconded by Mr. Guitard to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, information, notes, memos, records, correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including but not limited to, e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and SMS text messages regarding the decision to have the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development write to the Energy and Utilities Board with respect to the application by Irving Oil for an increase in fuel margins, including but not limited to all discussions between the Premier's Office and third parties.

Motion 45 by Mr. Bourque, seconded by Mr. Legacy to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation, information, notes, memos, records, correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including but not limited to, e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and SMS text messages regarding the review of the *Official Languages Act*, including but not limited to the consultation process.

Motion 46 by Mr. LePage, seconded by Mr. Guitard to propose the following resolution on Thursday, February 18, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation related to contracts entered into and purchases made since March 15, 2020, for which exemptions under the *Procurement Act* were utilized.

Motion 53 by Mr. Arseneau, seconded by Mr. Coon to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documents, information, memos, records, and correspondence, however stored, electronically or otherwise, including e-mails, mobile to mobile device communication, PINs, and text messages about discussions, agreements, and service contracts concerning the organization of Destination Acadie events between 2014 and 2020.

Motion 54 by Mr. Arseneau, seconded by Mr. Coon to propose the following resolution on Thursday, March 25, 2021:

THAT an address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that she cause to be laid upon the table of the House all documentation regarding expenditures of the government of New Brunswick related to organizing and holding Destination Acadie events between 2014 and 2020.

CONCLUDED

Motion 3 by Ms. Harris. Debated and carried as amended December 10, 2020.

Motion 4 by Ms. Thériault. Debated and carried as amended December 17, 2020.

PETITIONS

Petition 1: Mr. Arseneau, November 20, 2020.	(Response, February 10, 2021)
Petition 2: Mr. Arseneau, November 20, 2020.	(Response, February 9, 2021)
Petition 3: Mr. Bourque, December 11, 2020.	(Response, December 22, 2020)
Petition 4: Ms. Mitton, February 12, 2021.	(Response, March 1, 2021)
Petition 5: Mr. Coon, March 17, 2021.	

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Legislative Administration Committee	First Report, December 18, 2020
Standing Committee on Economic Policy	First Report, December 8, 2020
	Second Report, December 15, 2020
	Third Report, December 16, 2020
	Fourth Report, December 17, 2020
	Fifth Report, December 18, 2020
	Sixth Report, February 12, 2021
Standing Committee on Private Bills	First Report, December 15, 2020
	Second Report, February 12, 2021

Standing Committee on Procedure,
Privileges and Legislative Officers

First Report, March 17, 2021

Shayne Davies
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly