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Daily sitting 7

Thursday, November 3, 2022

*10 o'clock a.m.*

Prayers.

Ms. Landry welcomed to the House Chris Collins, former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Liberal MLA for Moncton East (2007-2014) and Moncton Centre (2014-2018).

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Ms. M. Wilson welcomed to the House Max White, former Confederation of Regions MLA for Sunbury (1991-1995).

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Mr. Bourque offered condolences to the family of the late Conrad Landry, former Liberal MLA for Kent North (1982-1995).

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Mr. Arseneault, Member for Campbellton-Dalhousie, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging government to safeguard services offered at the Campbellton Regional Hospital. (Petition 4)

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Ms. Mitton, Member for Memramcook-Tantramar, laid upon the table of the House a petition in support of a ban on the spraying of glyphosate in Crown forest management. (Petition 5)

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Mr. LePage, Member for Restigouche West, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging government to safeguard services offered at the Campbellton Regional Hospital. (Petition 6)

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Mr. K. Chiasson gave Notice of Motion 6 that on Thursday, November 10, 2022, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. LePage:

WHEREAS the government cancelled the Free Tuition Program and the Tuition Relief for the Middle Class program that provided many students with the opportunity to enroll in a post-secondary institution;

WHEREAS the province decided to cancel the NB-EI Connect Program that helped students pay for their food and lodging as they pursued their studies;

WHEREAS the program brought forward by the government for interest relief on the provincial portion of student loans does not support access to post-secondary education;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to bring forward a comprehensive assistance program to support access to post-secondary education.

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Mr. Legacy gave Notice of Motion 7 that on Thursday, November 10, 2022, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. K. Chiasson:

WHEREAS the reduction in personal income tax benefits those with higher incomes but ignores people struggling to make ends meet;

WHEREAS the rising cost of living for necessities including rent, fuel, and groceries is forcing people to make difficult choices;

WHEREAS the government cancelled the Home Energy Assistance Program, which helped over 33,000 New Brunswickers with their energy costs;

WHEREAS the government brags about its record of service but is doing little to help those in need;

WHEREAS the heat pump program will not be rolled out in time for this winter to help many New Brunswickers reduce their heating costs;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to reinstate and enhance the Home Energy Assistance Program;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to remove the HST from heating fuels.

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Hon. Mr. G. Savoie, Government House Leader, announced that it was the intention of government that the House consider an adjournment motion; following which the House would resume the adjourned debate on the motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, with the lunch hour extended to 1.30 p.m.; following which Opposition Members' Business would be considered.

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Hon. Mr. G. Savoie moved, seconded by the Honourable the Premier:

THAT when the Assembly adjourns on Friday, November 4, 2022, it stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 15, 2022.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put on the motion, it was resolved in the affirmative.

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The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Hon. Mr. R. Savoie, seconded by Mr. Dawson:

THAT the following Address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to offer the humble thanks of this House to Her Honour for the gracious speech which she has been pleased to make to the Legislative Assembly, namely:

Fredericton, N.B.  
October 25, 2022.

To Her Honour,  
The Honourable Brenda Murphy,  
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of New Brunswick.

May It Please Your Honour:

We, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of New Brunswick, now in session, beg leave to extend our humble thanks to Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has addressed to us, and we assure Your Honour that all matters which may be submitted to us during the session will receive our most careful attention and consideration.

At 12 p.m. the House recessed. At 1.32 p.m. the House resumed.

And the debate continuing, after some time it was on motion of Hon. Mr. G. Savoie, on behalf of the Honourable the Premier, adjourned over.

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Pursuant to Notice of Motion 1, Ms. Landry moved, seconded by Mr. Bourque:

WHEREAS the Auditor General has cautioned against moving too quickly to implement changes in French language instruction;

WHEREAS, in the *2021 Review of the Official Languages Act of New Brunswick: Report on second language learning*, the commissioners expressed concern that “[d]ecades of constantly changing plans and strategies have created significant instability in the system” and suggested making changes to the French immersion program in a strategic manner that is supportive rather than disruptive;

WHEREAS the commissioners also suggested that the approach be strengthening rather than dismantling;

WHEREAS data on the existing programs, confirmed by provincial assessments, indicate that over 90% of students who complete the French immersion program achieve at least an intermediate level of French or conversational level of proficiency;

WHEREAS the Commissioner of Official Languages suggests enhancing French language instruction, but warns about “throwing the baby out with the bathwater”;

WHEREAS the Canadian Association of Immersion Professionals believes that the French immersion program should co-exist with a new base-level program but should not be eliminated;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick chapter of Canadian Parents for French has expressed the same concerns;

WHEREAS there have been significant disruptions in learning over the past two years and there is a need to focus on a plan to ensure students who have fallen behind receive the support they need;

WHEREAS teachers are focused on trying to ensure the educational needs of all children are being met, and a major change to educational programming may have serious impacts on learning;

WHEREAS there is grave concern that there would not be enough teachers with a background in French language instruction to implement the educational program changes proposed by government;

WHEREAS the New Brunswick Teachers’ Association has announced that it has withdrawn from French as a second language consultations because of the government’s unreasonable timeline for implementing changes, saying that it will destabilize the education system;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government not to eliminate the French immersion program, but rather to enhance it;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, prior to moving forward with major changes to the education system to provide for additional French language learning opportunities for students who have not opted for French immersion, the Legislative Assembly urge the government to prepare a detailed implementation plan with realistic timelines for implementation, adequate funding, and a recognition of the supports that must be in place to support these changes.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

And the debate being ended, and the question being put, Motion 1 was resolved in the negative on the following recorded division:

YEAS - 18

Mr. Arseneault	Mr. C. Chiasson	Mr. Bourque
Mr. Gauvin	Mr. Coon	Mr. Mallet
Mr. McKee	Ms. Mitton	Mr. D'Amours
Mr. Legacy	Mr. Guitard	Ms. Landry
Ms. Thériault	Mr. LeBlanc	Mr. Arseneau
Mr. K. Chiasson	Mr. LePage	Mr. Landry

NAYS - 21

Hon. Mr. G. Savoie	Hon. Ms. Dunn	Ms. S. Wilson
Hon. Mr. Steeves	Hon. Mr. Crossman	Ms. M. Wilson
Hon. Ms. Shephard	Hon. Ms. Johnson	Mr. Cullins
Hon. Mr. Fitch	Hon. Mr. Allain	Mr. Wetmore
Hon. Mr. Holland	Hon. Mr. Hogan	Mr. Ames
Hon. Ms. Scott-Wallace	Hon. Mr. Austin	Ms. Bockus
Hon. Ms. Green	Mr. Turner	Ms. Conroy

Pursuant to Notice of Motion 3, Ms. Landry moved, seconded by Mr. Bourque:

WHEREAS, as a result of educational disruptions caused by COVID-19 over the past two years, many parents are concerned that their children have fallen behind with respect to their education and learning;

WHEREAS the last two years have been stressful for teachers and students alike;

WHEREAS there is uncertainty as to whether there may be new instructional disruptions if there are further significant outbreaks of COVID-19 in the future;

WHEREAS there is a need to ensure that New Brunswick schoolchildren do not fall behind educationally as a result of learning disruptions;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to assess the educational impact of learning disruption, bring forward a comprehensive and detailed plan to address educational “catch-up”, and provide sufficient resources to implement it;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to develop a plan to address any future disruptions in learning so that students are not educationally disadvantaged should this occur again.

And the question being put, a debate ensued.

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

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