

Daily sitting 2

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

10 o'clock a.m.

Prayers.

Mr. Speaker introduced the new pages for the session: Lily Collier, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba; Maxim Marmen, Edmundston; Dhruv Manish, Lucknow, India; Tyler Dupuis, Shediac; Tim Shibre, Fredericton.

The returning pages were: Jillian Coggan, Hampton; Keira Vnuk, Quispamsis; Head Page Sunaa Hansen, Bear Island.

Mr. LePage offered condolences to the family of the late Roy Boudreau, former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Liberal MLA for Campbellton (2003-2006) and Campbellton-Restigouche Centre (2006-2010).

It was agreed by unanimous consent to extend the time allotted for Oral Questions by fifteen minutes.

Mr. Speaker laid upon the table of the House the *Independent Auditor's Report on the financial statements of the Office of the Auditor General for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023*.

Ms. Mitton, Member for Memramcook-Tantramar, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging NB Liquor to grant an agency license to Loella's Country Market in Shemoque. (Petition 1)

Ms. Mitton, Member for Memramcook-Tantramar, laid upon the table of the House a petition urging government to upgrade Highway 955. (Petition 2)

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:

By Hon. Mr. Crossman,

Bill 2, *An Act to Repeal the Beverage Containers Act*.

By Hon. Ms. Dunn,

Bill 3, *An Act Respecting the Fisheries Bargaining Act and the Industrial Relations Act*.

By Hon. Ms. M. Wilson,

Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the New Brunswick Liquor Corporation Act*.

Mr. Coon requested leave of the House to move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Mitton: (Motion 1)

WHEREAS, on September 20, the Premier of New Brunswick told protesters outside the Legislative Assembly, “children are being taught to lie to their parents” by teachers;

WHEREAS that statement by the Premier of New Brunswick was disrespectful to teachers;

WHEREAS the teachers of New Brunswick play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our province through their dedication and hard work in educating our children;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier of New Brunswick to issue a formal apology to the teachers of New Brunswick.

Leave to dispense with Notice of Motion 1 was denied. Accordingly, notice was given for Thursday, October 26, 2023.

Mr. Coon gave Notice of Motion 2 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Ms. Mitton:

WHEREAS the Human Development Council reported that there are at least 560 unhoused people living in New Brunswick’s three major cities who cannot be housed without significant support mechanisms;

WHEREAS British Columbia offers complex care housing, which provides an enhanced level of health and social supports to address the needs of people who have overlapping mental health and substance use issues, trauma, or acquired brain injuries who are often left to experience homelessness or at risk of eviction;

WHEREAS there is limited peer-supported housing with wrap-around services for homeless people or people at risk of becoming homeless in New Brunswick;

WHEREAS providing wrap-around services such as mental health support, addiction treatment, employment assistance, and case management is crucial to preventing more New Brunswickers from experiencing homelessness and addressing the complex needs of homeless individuals;

WHEREAS a comprehensive and holistic approach to homelessness can significantly reduce the strain on social services, healthcare, and law enforcement while promoting community well-being;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to take immediate action to fund and implement a comprehensive program for peer-supported housing for the homeless, along with wrap-around services to address their diverse needs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to set targets and measurable outcomes to gauge the success of this program, with regular reporting to the public.

Mr. Arseneau gave Notice of Motion 3 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, he would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Coon:

WHEREAS New Brunswickers are facing financial challenges due to the rising costs of gasoline, which are affecting their daily lives, commuting, and overall cost of living;

WHEREAS the Parliamentary Budget Officer estimated that the average New Brunswick household is expected to pay at least \$501 more on gas per year;

WHEREAS the Higgs government authorized a new tax to be added to regulated fuel prices to force consumers to pay for Irving Oil's additional costs in complying with the federal clean fuel regulations;

WHEREAS the Higgs government gas tax has added as much as seven cents for a regular unleaded litre of gasoline since its introduction on July 1, 2023, making New Brunswick's gasoline among the most expensive in Canada;

WHEREAS there was no need for the Higgs government to make it legally possible for Irving Oil to pass the costs for cleaning up their petroleum products to New Brunswickers since there was a 36-cent increase in refinery margins in New Brunswick between 2019 and 2022;

WHEREAS the Energy and Utilities Board plans to review the Higgs government's gas tax formula after six months of its implementation;

WHEREAS there is no way for customers who have been paying the Higgs government gas tax to get their money back if, after its review, the Energy and Utilities Board finds that the tax was too high or unnecessary;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately eliminate the Higgs government's tax on gasoline prices.

Ms. Mitton gave Notice of Motion 4 that on Thursday, October 26, 2023, she would move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Arseneau:

WHEREAS consecutive Liberal and Conservative governments have implemented policies to centralize the management of New Brunswick's healthcare system;

WHEREAS the decentralization of our healthcare system will provide better decision-making that reflects local realities, allowing for more responsive and effective healthcare services;

WHEREAS involving local decision-making can improve healthcare services, increase community engagement, and lead to more innovative solutions to address healthcare issues at the grassroots level;

WHEREAS an Angus Reid Institute survey, in collaboration with the Canadian Medical Association, indicates that New Brunswickers' dissatisfaction towards the province's management of the healthcare system was the highest in Canada, with a combined 82% saying they are either "moderately" or "very dissatisfied";

WHEREAS the same survey shows that 82% of New Brunswickers feel that the overall quality of healthcare in New Brunswick has deteriorated over the past 10 to 15 years;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to reinstate locally elected board members for the Regional Health Authorities boards;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to re-establish the essential role of hospital administrators to manage their local hospitals, in collaboration with the medical and non-medical staff who work there.

On motion of the Honourable the Premier, seconded by Hon. Mr. G. Savoie,

RESOLVED, that Michelle Conroy, Member for the electoral district of Miramichi, be appointed Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Mr. G. Savoie gave notice that on Friday, October 20, 2023, Bills 2, 3 and 4 would be called for second reading.

And then, 11.49 a.m., the House adjourned.