

May 17, 2011

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**MR. SPEAKER (Fitzgerald):** Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Today the Chair would like to welcome some special guests. First, the members of the Cystic Fibrosis Canada Chapter: Chapter President, Betty Sheppard; former National President, Mr. Phil Wall; Chapter members, Joan Monk, John Bennett, and Bernadette Nolan.

Welcome to the House of Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Chair would also like to welcome three classes of Grade 3 students from St. Matthew's Elementary from the District of St. John's West. The students are accompanied by their teachers Mme Regular, Mrs. Bishop, Ms Ryan and a number of chaperones.

Welcome to the House of Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

#### **Statements by Members**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The following members' statements will be heard; the hon. the Member for the District of Bay of Islands; the hon. the Member for the District of St. John's North; and the hon. the Member for the District of Mount Pearl North.

The hon. the Member for the District of the Bay of Islands.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LODER:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to recognize Mrs. Hilda Bellows of Summerside in the beautiful District of Bay of Islands.

Mr. Speaker, April 10-16 has been marked as National Volunteer Week of Canada and the Canadian 4-H Council announced seven recipients of the 2010 Co-operators/4-H National Volunteer Leader of the Year Award.

Mr. Speaker, Hilda was one of these recipients who have been selected and the first leader ever to receive this award for Newfoundland and Labrador. She is presently co-ordinator and project leader for the Summerside Rockets 4-H Club, the largest and longest running 4-H club in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, Hilda also won the Leader of the Year Award for Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Council.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Bellows has provided twenty years of leadership within the club and plays a very important role in member recruitment and ensuring the 4-H members are actively involved in the community.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian 4-H Council recognizes all 8,000 of their volunteers who help more than 26,000 youth "Learn to Do by Doing".

Mr. Speaker, Hilda Bellows is a great example of a dedicated and committed 4-H leader and I ask all members here today to show our appreciation for the unselfish time she provides to the children and youth of Summerside and surrounding communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of St. John's North.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. RIDGLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, May is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month and it is a disease that affects the lungs. It is the most common fatal genetic disease that attacks children and young adults. It is a disease for which unfortunately now there is no cure at present and each week in Canada two children are diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis and one person dies from the disease.

Cystic Fibrosis Canada is a national health charity with over fifty volunteer chapters and, especially during the month of May, will be organizing many activities and events to raise awareness and funds in support of vital Cystic Fibrosis research and care.

In speaking about Cystic Fibrosis, Mr. Speaker, as a life member of Kinsmen, I would be remiss if I did not mention the tremendous support that Kinsmen and Kinettes have given to Cystic Fibrosis Canada. Since 1964, Kin Canada has raised more than \$35 million for Cystic Fibrosis research and treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in commending the work of CF Canada and Kin Canada for their efforts in trying to find a cure for this terrible disease.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Mount Pearl North.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize the Mount Pearl Youth Action Team. This youth group works together for the betterment of all young people in Mount Pearl. They have been active for several years and they are truly a voice for youth in our community.

The Mount Pearl Youth Action Team is very busy this week because it is Youth Week in the City of Mount Pearl. It runs from May 15 to May 21. Some of the events and activities during Youth Week include the annual focus on youth awards, several public forums, a youth concert and a youth debate – which the Member for Mount Pearl South and I had the privilege of judging last night – and lots of other fun engaging activities. I encourage all youth to get out and enjoy the events and activities that will be ongoing during Youth Week.

The Mount Pearl Youth Action Team also gets involved in volunteering in the community, participating in food drives and helping with the Mount Pearl Citizens Crime Prevention Committee. They will be partnering this spring with the City of Mount Pearl to help clean up the Waterford River.

There are lots of good things happening with youth and I feel that it is important to recognize those who are involved in making a difference in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating the Mount Pearl Youth Action Team on the work they have been doing and wish them all the best during Youth Week 2011.

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Statements by Ministers.

#### Statements by Ministers

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister Responsible for the Volunteer and Non-Profit Sector.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. DENINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to acknowledge the recipients of the 2011 URock Volunteer Awards. This past Saturday night we had an amazing awards gala where we were delighted to have our Premier, the hon. Kathy Dunderdale, present the eight deserving recipients with their awards. Like last year, Mr. Speaker, the 2011 winners blew us away with what they have accomplished and the work they have done, not only in this Province but around the world.

The URock Volunteer Awards were developed to acknowledge the unique and creative ways young people are volunteering. Nominations may be made in two categories: individuals and organizations or non-profits. Individual nominees must have made outstanding voluntary contributions, be thirty years of age or under, a current or past resident of Newfoundland and Labrador. Organizations or non-profit groups must be led by young people and have made an outstanding contribution.

Mr. Speaker, the work of all these nominees was truly exceptional. Their stories were remarkable, they all made an impact on their communities, their Province, their country and the world. They are inspirational and examples of the kind of positive change that can be made with leadership, dedication, compassion and hard work.

Mr. Speaker, based on the calibre of all the young people who are nominated, and especially those who received the award this year, I have every confidence that the future of volunteer and non-profit sector in this Province is in good hands.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the recipients of the 2011 URock Volunteer Awards: Bishops College Youth Action Committee of St. John's; Bridgette Abbott, Musgrave Harbour; Juliette Dupre, St. Lawrence; Jonathon Earle, Red Bay; Corey Hudson, Norman's Cove-Long Cove; Liam Kelly, Paradise; Kara Snow, St. Anthony; and Courtney Young, Port Saunders.

Mr. Speaker, each recipient received a custom-designed electric guitar and were treated to performances from some of the Province's top musical acts. The talented Jonny Harris hosted the event and the amazing Holy Heart of Mary Intercultural Choir opened the show. It was a night that they will always remember.

I would like to thank those who took the time to nominate these outstanding young people in our Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and also those who came out Saturday night to support them. Mr. Speaker, the URock Volunteer Award winners are leaders in this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and I hope that by recognizing their amazing work, other young people will be encouraged to get involved in their communities and non-profit organizations and prove they too "rock".

Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

**MR. KELVIN PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. We also would love to extend our congratulations to these recipients as well. It is good to see that they are from all across the Province, from far and wide, here in the capital city region but, of course, up in Labrador and the Northern Peninsula as well. That is great to see, and it is great to see that they are being recognized. When you have youth giving of their time and volunteering for their communities and the organizations in their communities, it is certainly good to see that government would indeed acknowledge and recognize them.

These young people who are volunteers today, of course, are going to be the backbone of our communities in our Province as the years go on. So, we would certainly like to extend our congratulations to them as well. It is also very positive when you see young people volunteering. Normally if you get involved in volunteerism at such a young age, you tend to stay involved in your adult life as well.

I think we are in very good hands. It was great to see they were acknowledged and recognized. We would certainly extend our congratulations to them as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Signal Hill-Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. I am very happy to join with him and the Opposition House Leader in congratulating the winners, but in congratulating all of the youth in the Province who are doing volunteer work. Obviously, these winners were recognized by the organizations they work with because they were nominated. It is good that we do pick out those who stand out, but they are representative of a large group, as pointed out by the Opposition House Leader, right around the Province. It is good to see that the eight winners are from everywhere in the Province, Mr. Speaker.

We do not move forward without our young people. Everything that we can do to encourage them, both in the volunteer sector and every other way, is only good for our whole society here, the whole community, Newfoundland and Labrador. So, it is good that the government does take the time to have this event and to recognize the volunteers. I am sure that, as years go on, we are going to see these eight young people in many other ways operative in leadership in our Province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FRENCH:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to highlight the provincial government's newly-designed tourism Web site. We needed to update our Web site to keep up with the new designs and technologies, and to ensure we continue to meet the demands of visitors to Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am pleased to say NewfoundlandLabrador.com is getting a very positive response. In fact, at the Canadian e-Tourism Awards, held in March, the site was named best Web site out of fifteen nominations from across the country including Banff Lake Louise Tourism, Travel Alberta, Tourism Quebec, and Tourism and Parks New Brunswick. The Web site received the top score of ten from the judges in all the required criteria. Carol Alderdice, Chair of the Canadian e-Tourism Awards Council was quoted as saying, "You deserve it ... you won this one hands down."

Mr. Speaker, the intention of the tourism Web site is to communicate timely information about the Province as a vacation destination and to increase the value of the Web site as a trip-planning tool. The site offers engaging content, a rich media experience, and motivation to travel off the beaten path in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Over the past number of years, the marketing of our Province has been absolutely incredible, highlighting the unique aspects of Newfoundland and Labrador and attracting potential visitors from throughout the world. Whether in print, on-line, or on television, our efforts have proven successful in making Newfoundland and Labrador a travel destination of choice.

With this recent acknowledgement from Canadian e-Tourism Awards, it is clear our innovative marketing efforts continue to pay off.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

**MR. KELVIN PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. Actually, I have had an opportunity to visit the site and indeed refer it to some friends of mine who are outside planning a trip here and wanted to know what they could see in the Province. It is a great tool if you are going to be designing where you can go and what you can see in this Province. That is probably the first thing anybody who intends to travel does today anyway. You find out where you would like to go, and then you find out what is happening there and what you can see while you are there. As a promotional tool, this site is truly second to none in this Province in showing off our Province.

There is no doubt that in tourism there are some minor concerns, or major, I guess, in how you look at them. The minister is well aware, of course, that not only do you design your trip to get here, but what kind of experience are you going to have once you get here. Issues like Marine Atlantic, the TODS program, and rental car availability and so on these are all issues that need to be resolved positively. The minister was quite frank and upfront about this in the Estimates this past week. It is good to see that he is getting his head around those things and making sure that these irritants to someone's travel will indeed be worked on.

We are a world-class destination; it is nice to be sure that when you get here you have a world-class experience. It is great to see that this is another promotional tool in doing that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Member for the District of Signal Hill-Quidi Vidi.

**MS MICHAEL:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. It is great to see that our tourism efforts are continuing to be recognized with awards. I have not looked at the new Web site yet this year, but I am really encouraged now to go ahead and do so. I certainly remember our site from last year and, obviously, it is nothing but better this year, as the award attests.

Anything that makes our beautiful Province more accessible to tourists is good news. I agree with the Opposition House Leader, we have to make sure that when tourists get here, we have everything here to make their holiday a good experience. I do encourage the minister to work with the industry to make sure that there are an adequate number of rental cars available and that they are affordable as compared to other provinces. I notice lately there are a lot of Nova Scotia licensed rental cars in the city, so the companies do seem to be bringing in cars from outside to make sure there are cars here.

Also, Mr. Speaker, with the enormous amount of summer theatre in our Province, which gets promoted by the minister's department, I encourage government to continue to invest more money into the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council. I know we have extra money in this year's Budget, but I think we need even more than that as time goes on. We must ensure that we are producing professional grade theatre in all of our communities. As we develop the culture of tourism, we have to put the money there for those in the industry to make sure they can deliver.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

**Oral Questions**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this week a man in Western Newfoundland was sentenced to three years in prison for molesting and assaulting two small children. The convicted man had access to these two children because his wife was caring for the children in their home.

I ask the minister today: In light of this incident, can she outline for me what provisions may be in place to protect children who are being cared for in unlicensed family homes?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MS JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the protection of our children is the utmost important thing to this government and to the people of this Province. Mr. Speaker, nobody wants to see any harm done to our children.

Mr. Speaker, in the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services we monitor and we regulate regulated family child care homes and in-child care settings. As part of that, there are procedures and policies that need to be met; standards that need to be met, and we are in there on a monthly basis, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is in this Province, there are unregulated spaces. We always encourage people to become regulated, not to say that all unregulated spaces are not safe because there are some that are very much safe, Mr. Speaker. Having said all that, Mr. Speaker, it is important that as a parent we are very comfortable and we feel comfortable where we leave our children. There are certain pertinent questions that we can ask, that I will get to next.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a precedent has been set both nationally and internationally for informal child care. Many areas are now requiring registration for informal style child care in their own home. Even in places such as Manitoba today, where it is not required, they have set up a voluntary license program and this includes having background checks for the child care provider.

I ask the minister today if she is open to examining that kind of a program for voluntary licensing which would give parents in this Province an option to find informal care that provides additional safeguards to protect their children.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MS JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member opposite would know, I think anybody can ask for a Certificate of Conduct or a police check. Certainly, as parents you want to make sure that the setting you are leaving your child in is a safe one from a health perspective, from an educational perspective, in terms of the meals that are provided. There are certain things parents can do in terms of asking for a Certificate of Conduct, for not only the person who is providing care for the child, but anybody who is over sixteen in that home, Mr. Speaker.

There is a balance that we have to strike in terms of regulating homes where there are more than four children or more than three infants. Mr. Speaker, we have to strike the right balance for public safety because there are people who do leave their children with their grandmothers, and I am sure in those settings they are very comfortable, or a family member, then in that case if they are comfortable, Mr. Speaker, we do not want to over regulate either.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am somewhat disappointed that the minister would not be open to examining the program and looking at it for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I asked the Minister of Natural Resources in the House of Assembly some questions regarding Muskrat Falls. He said that when Muskrat Falls is built, the annual increase in the cost of electricity from the project will be less than 1 per cent. However, in a written submission by Nalcor to the joint review panel, they insist that the increase will be at least 2 per cent a year, which is what power rates have been going up in the Province, on an average, for the past six years. That is double, minister, what you said the costs and increases would be annually, yesterday.

I presume you read the same report, and I ask you why you would have provided that information to the House?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SKINNER:** Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in this House, we have done a fair bit of analysis regarding the rates that have occurred over the last ten years and what the projections are for the coming six to seven years. The best information that we have available indicates that the rates have been and will continue to increase as we move forward into the future. After 2017, they are projected to rise somewhere between 4 per cent and 6 per cent per annum. The information that we have indicates that with Muskrat Falls, after 2017, rates will rise less than 1 per cent per year, Mr. Speaker.

If there is any information that has been provided through the environmental assessment panel that may be able to provide further review by us as a government, we will certainly take that into



consideration, but the information we have today, Mr. Speaker, indicates that rates will rise by less than 1 per cent per year.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The minister can check the report; it was a submission to the joint review panel. It was submitted by Nalcor Energy and it outlines that the rate of increase would be at about 2 per cent a year.

Premier, neither one of your ministers would tell the people of the Province yesterday how much Emera Energy is going to make selling Muskrat Falls power to the Island. According to the Minister of Finance, Nalcor will earn \$500 million a year in profit from the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am asking today: How much will the profit be for Emera Energy, that is going to own 29 per cent of our transmission sales in the Province?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we will go back to basics again. Emera Energy will own \$1.2 billion worth of electricity being generated out of Muskrat Falls, which they will use in Nova Scotia to replace coal-fired generation. They have made an additional investment of \$600 million into transmission infrastructure here in the Province for which they will get an 8.38 per cent return – regulated return by the PUB.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has referred to that as a gouging of ratepayers here in the Province. That 8.38 per cent will be paid either to Emera, to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, or to Newfoundland Power; that is a regulated activity, the transmission of power here in this Province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we know now is that Emera Energy – not only will Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have to pay the highest cost for electricity, not only will people in the Maritimes get it cheaper than we will, but we are also going to have a private corporation out of Nova Scotia that is going to tack on another percentage to us for transmission in the Province.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was reported in the media that Muskrat Falls would be exempt from scrutiny by the Province's utility board. I ask the Premier today, if you can explain to us when this exemption was granted and why is it that you did not allude to it in the House of Assembly?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first of all let me begin by correcting a statement that the Leader of the Opposition made in her preamble. Mr. Speaker, we are not tacking on an 8.38 per cent to rates in this Province. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians pay that right now. They pay it to whoever owns the transmission, currently owned in this Province by either Newfoundland Power or Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, Emera is going to make an investment in transmission infrastructure here and they will get the same rate of return as the other two utilities. Emera is investing in Newfoundland and Labrador. They have become a Newfoundland and Labrador company as well, Mr. Speaker, and that is a very good thing.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the exemption; the exemption legislation for the Lower Churchill was passed in this House of Assembly by your government in 1999, exempting Lower Churchill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Premier that Emera Energy is in Newfoundland and Labrador today because they are getting free power to take to Nova Scotia, they are getting 29 per cent ownership in the transmission capacity of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Premier, if they were not here that 9 per cent you are saying would be going to Nalcor or going to someone else.

Why don't you tell us what the dollar figure is going to be, what the take-home pay is going to be, for Emera corporation at the end of the day from Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have to work hard to earn money to pay double the rates that you are going to charge them for Muskrat Falls?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I try to keep going back to the basics of electricity generation in this Province. She is comparing apples to oranges, Mr. Speaker. What is happening in terms of the development of the Lower Churchill does not have anything to do with transmission infrastructure. Transmission infrastructure has to be built and paid for by utilities here in this Province, Mr. Speaker. Currently, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro does so, as does Newfoundland Power. They, as a result of regulatory oversight by the PUB, are given a rate of return. For the \$600 million investment that

Emera will make in transmission infrastructure building transmission infrastructure to carry our electricity through this Province they will get an 8.38 per cent return on that investment. Do the math.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let's get back to the exemption for a minute now. Now that we have cleared up some of this and we know that Emera is going to make a fine chunk of change off the people of Newfoundland and Labrador – we are going to pay double the rates, Emera is going to walk away with a profit again – let's talk about the exemption.

On five occasions in the House of Assembly, Premier, you stood and said that this particular deal on Muskrat Falls would have to go through full scrutiny of the Public Utilities Board to determine if it was the most cost-effective energy to be provided to the people of the Province.

Can you tell me today that is still the case and that the Public Utilities Board will have full scrutiny of this deal to determine if it is the best cost of electricity for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, but let me also say to that, Mr. Speaker, it was their government that brought in the legislation that allowed for an exemption. It was their government that exempted the Lower Churchill proposed project of Premier Grimes and at least two of the people opposite to have an exemption from regulatory review.

**MS JONES:** Wrong again.

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Not wrong again.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** An Order in Council signed by –

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Mr. Speaker, an Order in Council exempted the Lower Churchill. You are wrong again on every account and we can produce it.

Mr. Speaker, not only did they exempt the Lower Churchill, they have exempted every hydro project that has occurred in this Province since regulation began in 1995; another case of not do what I do, do as I say.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are into all the 'Dundernomics' again today and all of the confusing statements, Mr. Speaker, and all of the non-answers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MS JONES:** Let me say it to you this way: It might have been another Administration that changed the legislation so that every project could get due consideration and you know that, Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MS JONES:** You also know that it is up to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and it is up to you to decide as to whether Muskrat Falls is exempt from the Public Utilities Board or not.

Now, you have said on five occasions in the House of Assembly, I have all of the transcripts here, that it would be required. It would go through a full Public Utilities Board review and that the information, Mr. Speaker, would be provided to the public.

I ask the Premier today: Will it go through a full review of the Public Utilities Board? When will it happen? Will there be public hearings held right throughout the Province?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, not only in 1999 did they bring in the legislation allowing for an exemption; in 2000, they produced an Order-in-Council that exempted the Lower Churchill from review by the PUB, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Mr. Speaker, their then minister –

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. KELVIN PARSONS:** (Inaudible).

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

I ask the hon. the Opposition House Leader for his co-operation. Continuing to interrupt there is clearly against the rules and the regulations of our Standing Orders.

For the last time today, I refer to the hon. member. It has happened in the past. It is not going to continue to happen.

The hon. the Premier.

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, their then Minister of Mines and Energy, and later their Leader and Premier, talked in the debate about the lowest-cost project not always being the best option for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, a different point of view again that you supported in 2000 and changed your tune today.

Yes, there will be a review by the PUB. We will have the PUB consider whether this is the lowest cost option.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The legislation, the Premier knows and she is being cute with words, is only there so that every project gets consideration. It has nothing to do with your Muskrat Falls Project. That is your decision. You cannot compare apples and oranges, I say to you, Premier, and that is exactly what you are doing today.

Now, will you tell the people of the Province how the Public Utilities Board review is going to be conducted? Will it be public hearings across the Province? Will intervener status be provided? What is the time frame for having it completed? Will it be done before the agreement you have signed runs out, or will the agreement be postponed until the Public Utility Board hearings are completed?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, not only did they not want the PUB to review the Lower Churchill Project, they did not tell even the Board of Directors of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro about the details of their deal.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have made information available to the people of this Province all over the Province, in Labrador and from coast to coast to coast to coast on the Island. We have given a number of briefings to the members of the Opposition. We are holding open houses. We put the information up on our Web sites. Mr. Speaker, we are going to a full arm's-length consultants review on whether this is the least cost project that will be made available to the people of the Province mid-summer and,

Mr. Speaker, we are asking the PUB the same question and the process that they will use to determine that, Mr. Speaker, is still under discussion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We all know that Nalcor has the doors nailed shut and you made sure it happened, Premier. They are not subject to the Auditor General. They are not subject to the Freedom of Information. They are not subject to the Public Tender Act. The only way the public can actually see what is happening with Muskrat Falls and whether it is the lowest cost provider of energy in the Province is through a public hearing process and through the Public Utilities Board or a full audit by the Auditor General.

I ask you today, Premier - it is your game, it is your authority to make the decision - are you prepared to launch public hearings, provide intervener's status on Muskrat Falls so that the Public Utilities Board can go out and do a full review of this project in the Province?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, do not do as we did, do as we say. Mr. Speaker, they did not want anybody to know about their project. They provided no information to anybody, Mr. Speaker. We have provided information to everybody, everybody who has asked. Mr. Speaker, we are going to third party arm's-length consultants to do a review on whether or not this is the least cost project for meeting energy needs here in Newfoundland and Labrador. We have engaged the PUB to review and to determine whether that is the case as well and make that information available to the people of the Province, Mr. Speaker. We have been open, we have been transparent, and we have been accountable. Something they knew nothing about when they were trying to develop the Lower Churchill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MS JONES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There is nothing open, there is nothing accountable, and there is nothing transparent, about having a deal that you do not want the Auditor General to touch, that you do not want to have subject to public tendering, that you do not want to have out there under freedom of information. There is nothing open and accountable to that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**MS JONES:** I say to you, Premier, open it up. Let the people of the Province see what this deal is really about. Let them see why you want them to pay twice as much for electricity in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I ask you today: Open it up, put it out there, and let the Public Utilities Board do its job.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**PREMIER DUNDERDALE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know from where she gets her information. Nalcor has just concluded a series of open houses right across this Province, that have been attended by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and all of their questions have been answered. When each of the people who came and participated in those open houses was leaving, they were asked to do an evaluation on the information they had received. Ninety-eight per cent of those evaluations say timely and good information was provided and all of their questions were answered.

Now, I do not know where you are getting your information, but the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are getting it from Nalcor, Mr. Speaker, and they are happy with the information that is being provided.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please!

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

**MR. KELVIN PARSONS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some years ago this government commissioned one Mr. Bill Marshall to complete a review of the inland fish and wildlife program; I believe that was in 2005. A draft copy of the report was submitted, supposedly, to government with a final report to be imminent; however, various ministers have stated in this House over the years that the report has not yet been completed. We have heard a lot of comments in the public and in this House in the past few weeks about what is happening with the inland fish and wildlife program.

I ask the minister - we have been waiting five years now for this report to be released - where is it and when can we see it?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. F. COLLINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, transferring the wildlife enforcement division out of the Department of Natural Resources to the Department of Justice was a natural fit because it is an enforcement component and