

Nova Scotia

The Fall sitting commenced on September 25 and lasted 34 days until November 20, 2014. During the sitting 68 Bills were introduced – 26 Government, 39 Private Member and 3 Private and Local. In addition to the Government and Private and Local Bills only one Private Member's Bill introduced by the sole Independent MLA was passed.

During the sitting there were 27 recorded votes, eight of which were held on the same day – November 7. In effect, the bells rang for 8 hours that day – one hour on each vote that being the maximum time available for bell ringing in accordance with our House of Assembly Rules.

Effective October 27, 2014, Statements by Members were added to the Daily Routine as a result of amendments to the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House.

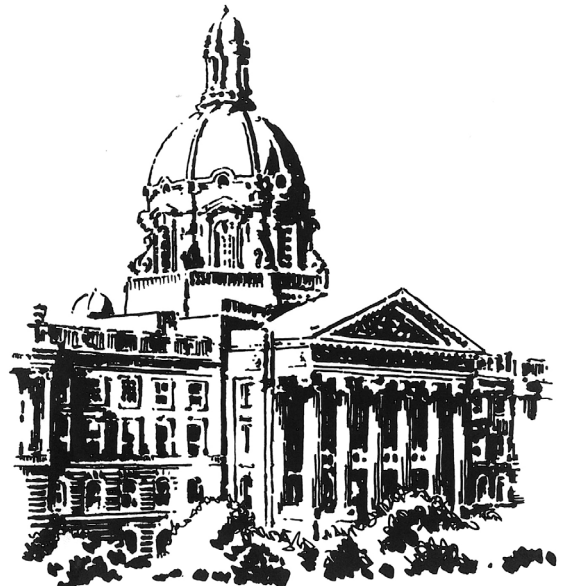
During the sitting, 18 points of order/privilege were raised by members. Some of these points were immediately ruled not out of order by the Speaker; however, nine were the subject of written Speaker's rulings. The subject matters of the written rulings were: unparliamentary language; misleading the House; improper use of Statements by Members and conduct of the Deputy Speaker. It is interesting to note that all of the rulings concluded that there had been no a valid point of order or point of privilege raised by the members.

Bills introduced during the sitting that sparked much debate and bell ringing were:

- 1) Bill # 6, *An Act to Amend Chapter 342 of the Revised Statutes 1989, the Petroleum Resources Act*
- 2) Bill # 51, *An Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes 1989, the Motor Vehicle Act*
- 3) Bill # 60, *An Act to Amend Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2002, the Smoke-free Places Act and Chapter 14 of the Acts of 1993, the Tobacco Access Act*
- 4) Bill # 64, *An Act Respecting Limitations of Actions*

Debate on Bill # 60 in the Committee of the Whole House on Bills lasted for 20 hours, that being the maximum time permitted under the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly. This was the first time in recent memory that the entire time allotted for debate at this stage was used by the opposition parties

Annette M. Boucher
Assistant Clerk



Alberta

The 3rd Session of the 28th Legislature

Ending the longest period of prorogation in Alberta since 1984, the 3rd Session of the 28th Legislature began on November 17, 2014, and adjourned on December 10, 2014. Four new MLAs, including Premier **Jim Prentice**, took their seats in the Chamber having successfully contested provincial by-elections

in October. The Assembly passed 10 Government Bills and Bill 201, *Electric Utilities (Transparency in Billing) Amendment Act, 2014*, the sole Private Members' Public Bill to be passed. Bill 201, sponsored by the only Independent Member of the Assembly, **Joe Anglin** (Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre), was passed on December 8, 2014.

Changes to Caucus Membership

On November 2, 2014, prior to session commencing, **Joe Anglin** announced he was leaving the Wildrose caucus to sit as an Independent Member of the Assembly.

On November 24, 2014, two other members of the Wildrose caucus left the caucus, this time to join the governing Progressive Conservatives. Although they crossed the floor at the same time, **Ian Donovan** (Little Bow) and **Kerry Towle** (Innisfail-Sylvan Lake) indicated they were unaware of the other's intentions.

Less than a month later, on December 17, 2014, it was announced that an additional nine MLAs were leaving the Wildrose caucus to join the Progressive Conservatives. This group included **Danielle Smith** (Highwood), Leader of the Official Opposition, and **Rob Anderson** (Airdrie), Official Opposition House Leader. Mr. Anderson previously crossed the floor in 2010 to leave the governing Progressive Conservatives and join the Wildrose Alliance opposition. Also amongst the nine Members who crossed the floor were **Gary Bikman** (Cardston-Taber-Warner), **Rod Fox** (Lacombe-Ponoka), **Jason Hale** (Strathmore-Brooks), **Bruce McAllister** (Chestermere-Rocky View), **Blake Pedersen** (Medicine Hat), **Bruce Rowe** (Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills), and **Jeff Wilson** (Calgary-Shaw).

The December 17 floor crossing left both the Wildrose caucus and the Alberta Liberal caucus with five Members each. Each caucus sent a letter to Speaker **Gene Zwozdesky** (Edmonton-Mill Creek) requesting Official Opposition status. On December 23, 2014, the Speaker ruled that the Wildrose caucus would remain the Official Opposition due, in large part, to their incumbent status.

Heather Forsyth (Calgary-Fish Creek) has been appointed interim leader of the Wildrose Party. Party rules require a new leader to be selected within three to nine months of Ms. Smith's resignation. It is anticipated that the process will be completed in March. The Party has also determined that leadership candidates must

have been Party members for at least six months prior to the beginning of the campaign period although exceptions may be made for individuals unable to hold a political party membership due to their occupation.

Duplication of Bills – Bill 202 and Bill 10

On November 20, 2014, Bill 202, *Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, 2014* sponsored by **Laurie Blakeman** (Edmonton-Centre) received First Reading. The Private Members' Public Bill proposed amendments to both the *Education Act* and the *Alberta Human Rights Act* with the goal of promoting inclusive school environments. Bill 202 proposed, among other things, to require schools to accommodate students wishing to establish gay-straight alliances.

Fewer than two weeks later, on December 1, 2014, Government Bill 10, *An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights to Protect our Children*, sponsored by **Sandra Jansen** (Calgary-North West), received First Reading. Bill 10 also proposed amendments to the *Education Act* and the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, with a focus on preventing bullying and discrimination in schools. With regard to diversity clubs, such as gay-straight alliances, Bill 10 left decisions on such matters to school boards but provided that school board decisions could be challenged on judicial review for "jurisdictional error or unreasonableness." On December 2, 2014, Bill 10 passed Second Reading on division.

While not identical, Bill 202 and Bill 10 were similar enough to require Speaker Zwozdesky to make a determination as to whether both Bills could be considered by the Assembly. On December 3, 2014, based on the principle that the Assembly should not debate the same issue twice in a session, and because Bill 10 had already received Second Reading, Speaker Zwozdesky ruled that Bill 202 would not proceed, and it was removed from the Order Paper. Later that day Bill 10 was reported by Committee of the Whole with amendments. However, on December 4, 2014, in response to concerns about Bill 10 raised by the public and on both sides of the Assembly, Premier Prentice announced that Bill 10 would be put on hold pending further consideration.

Reports from the Ethics Commissioner

In response to complaints from opposition leaders, Alberta's Ethics Commissioner **Marguerite Trussler** investigated potential breaches of the *Conflicts of Interest Act* by Progressive Conservative candidates during the October 2014 by-election campaigns. On

December 12, 2014, the Ethics Commissioner released a report concerning whether the participation of by-election candidates in well-publicized government announcements used public resources to further their private interests. The investigation focused on the premier, Health Minister **Stephen Mandel** and **Mike Ellis**. The Commissioner dismissed the complaint against Mr. Ellis noting that he was not a Member of the Assembly during the period in question and that there was no evidence he had breached the *Act*. The Ethics Commissioner went on to consider whether Mr. Prentice and Mr. Mandel, as members of Executive Council, had breached the *Act* to further their private interests by using government resources and making policy decisions while running in a by-election. Ultimately these complaints were dismissed as well.

On January 6, 2015, the Commissioner released a report in response to complaints about the conduct of Education Minister **Gordon Dirks** during his candidacy in the October 2014 by-elections. The complaints against Mr. Dirks were similar to those made against the other three Progressive Conservative by-election candidates. However, they also included concerns about Minister Dirks' role in the approval of government funding for modular classrooms to be located in the constituency in which he was contesting the by-election. Announcements regarding the new modular classrooms occurred during the campaign period and were posted on the Minister's campaign website. In her report, the Ethics Commissioner dismissed the complaints against the Minister, noting he "did not violate the letter of the *Act*" but stated that his actions with regard to the approval of modular classrooms in his own constituency "created an unfortunate perception." The Commissioner further indicated that if she had been asked for guidance she would have advised the Minister against acting on issues specific to his constituency during his by-election campaign.

Committee Activity

On November 18, 2014, the Standing Committee on Families and Communities tabled the report on its review of the draft *Publication Ban (Court Applications and Orders) Regulation*. Conducted in accordance with the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, the review focused on the process for requesting a publication ban on the identity of children who die while receiving provincial intervention services. At the direction of the Assembly the Committee is now conducting a review of amendments made to the *Mental Health Act*

pursuant to an amending *Act* passed in 2007, mainly related to the establishment of community treatment orders. The amendments made in 2007 must be reviewed by a committee of the Assembly every five years.

On November 25, 2014, the Assembly referred consideration of the 2012 and 2013 Annual Reports of the Alberta Property Rights Advocate Office to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship in accordance with the *Property Rights Advocate Act*. It is anticipated that the Committee will release its report shortly after the Assembly resumes in the spring.

The Standing Committee on Legislative Offices met four times in December to review the annual budget estimates, business plans, and annual reports of the province's legislative officers. With two exceptions, the Committee revised the budget estimates for each Office to the amount approved for the previous fiscal year minus two per cent. The budget calculations for the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate took into account the amount originally approved for the previous year, as well as a supplemental amount approved by the Committee in July 2014, minus two per cent. The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, which has a four-year budgeting cycle corresponding to the timing of general elections, received an increase.

Jody Rempel
Committee Clerk



Northwest Territories

Legislation

The Fifth Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly adjourned on November 6, 2014, with the House considering and adopting six pieces of legislation. The legislation included the 2015-2016 Capital Estimates as well as two supplementary appropriation bills.

Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, **George L. Tuccaro**, gave Assent to all six bills on November 6, 2014.

During the fall sitting, five additional bills were introduced by the Government, received First and Second Reading, and were referred to standing committees. Of note is a new *Financial Administration Act* referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations. This bill is intended to update the current legislation, which was originally drafted in 1987.

Two motions of interest were introduced and debated during the last days of the fall sitting. The first, introduced by **Robert Hawkins**, called for the Assembly to support the Premier of the Northwest Territories in working with Aboriginal organizations toward a national inquiry and national roundtable into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. The motion was adopted in a recorded vote, with 17 Members in favour and one abstention.

The second motion, moved by **Michael Nadli**, called for the establishment of an Ombudsman in the Northwest Territories. This motion was also adopted in a recorded vote with 11 Members voting in favour, six Members opposed (members of the Executive Council) and no abstentions. The Government is required to table a comprehensive response to the motion within 120 days.

Committees

The standing committees of the Assembly met in the capital during the first week of December, 2014. Committees took this opportunity to meet with Ministers and their department officials to receive updates on the Government's new and continuing initiatives.

Committees also met for two weeks in January, 2015, to consider the draft *Main Estimates 2015-2016 of the Government of the Northwest Territories*. These meetings were *in camera* sessions to allow committee input prior to the expected introduction of the 2015-2016 operations budget during the February/March sitting.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations, chaired by Mr. Nadli, conducted its review of the Public Accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the year ended March 31, 2014. A public hearing was held in Yellowknife on January 23, 2015, with the Comptroller General and Assistant Comptroller General for the Government of the Northwest Territories in attendance. The Committee was very pleased with the progress

made by the office of the Comptroller General on the timeliness of the tabling of the Public Accounts.

The Fifth Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly was scheduled to resume on February 4, 2015.

Gail Bennett

Principal Clerk, Corporate and Interparliamentary Affairs



Manitoba

The Fourth Session of the 40th Legislature began on November 20, 2014 with the presentation of the NDP government's Speech from the Throne. Delivered by Lieutenant Governor **Phillip Lee**, the address highlighted a range of government commitments and proposals, including:

Offering interest free student loans;

A ban from using tanning beds for persons under the age of 18;

Cutting government costs through the reduction of office space by 9,290 square metres;

Increasing the speed limit on the Trans-Canada Highway to 110 kilometres an hour from the Saskatchewan boundary to Winnipeg;

A new bridge to be built at Morris to reduce flooding on Highway 75;

New benefits for first responders suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder;

The creation of a new agency to promote energy efficiency;

A new law that will target invasive species such as zebra mussels; and

A new potash marketing strategy to be launched to solicit interest in potash mining in western Manitoba.

Official Opposition Leader **Brian Pallister's** non-confidence amendment to the Address in Reply motion made reference to the recent resignation of five ministers and the subsequent cabinet shuffle, noting that:

Some Government and all Official Opposition members agree that Manitobans are angry and believe that the Provincial Government has broken their trust;

Some Government members have concluded that serving this Provincial Government with integrity is no longer an option and that they do not regret speaking honestly as being truthful and holding on to integrity is something that Manitobans have been raised to do;

Some Government and all Official Opposition members are gravely concerned that priorities may move up the queue based on political interest and ahead of what Manitobans consider to be their priorities and needs;

There is a genuine concern amongst some Government and all Official Opposition members that the Provincial Government has become more preoccupied with remaining in power than necessarily doing things that are in the best interest of Manitobans.

Following the defeat of Mr. Pallister's amendment on December 1, 2014 by a vote of yeas 20, nays 34; on December 2 the main motion carried on a vote of yeas 35, nays 20.

The fall session saw the introduction of a number of bills, addressing various areas including:

Bill 2 – *The Public Schools Amendment Act (Small Classes for K to 3)*, which designates that 90 per cent

of the kindergarten and Grade 1 to 3 classes within a school division or school district have 20 or fewer pupils, with class size not to exceed 23 students.

Bill 5 – *The Police Services Amendment Act (First Nation Safety Officers)*, with the goal of amending *The Police Services Act* and enabling a First Nation safety officer program to be established by a First Nation or an entity that represents a group of First Nations.

Bill 11 – *The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments)*, which amends *The Public Health Act* to prohibit children from using ultraviolet tanning equipment in a commercial tanning operation, except when there is a prescription from a designated health professional.

Bill 12 – *The Water Protection Amendment Act (Aquatic Invasive Species)*, a bill that prohibits the possession, release and transportation of aquatic invasive species, except in specified circumstances. The bill's goal is to address aquatic invasive species that threaten Manitoba's aquatic ecosystems.

Bill 203 – *The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety at New Schools)*, which requires pedestrian safety to be taken into account when the site for a new school is being selected and during all stages of the design process of a new school.

Bill 204 – *The Cyberbullying Prevention Act*, which enables a protection order to be made when a judicial justice of the peace has determined that a person has engaged in cyberbullying. This Bill also creates the new tort of cyberbullying. The victim may sue the person engaging in cyberbullying.

All bills introduced, including three bills re-instated from the 3rd Session are carried over to the spring session in order to proceed through the rest of the legislative process.

The House sat until December 4, 2014 before recessing for the holidays. No specific date has been set for the resumption of the spring session as of the time of writing.

Cabinet Shuffle

On November 3, 2014, Premier **Greg Selinger** announced a re-organization of the current Cabinet following the resignation of five Ministers. On December 23, 2014, the Premier announced another

Cabinet change as a result of another Minister stepping down in order to be a candidate in the upcoming leadership election. The new Cabinet is set out as follows:

Dave Chomiak – remained as Minister of Mineral Resources and will now also serve as Government House Leader.

Eric Robison – remained as Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs and Deputy Premier.

Gordon Mackintosh – remained as Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship.

Drew Caldwell – newly appointed to Cabinet as Minister of Municipal Government.

Ron Lemieux – remained Minister of Tourism, Culture, Sport and Consumer Protection.

Peter Bjornson – new Minister of Education and Advanced Learning.

Kerri Irvin-Ross – remained Minister of Family Services, also became Minister of Housing and Community Development and is now responsible for Persons with Disabilities.

Florina Marcelino – remained Minister of Multiculturalism and Literacy.

Kevin Chief – became the new Minister of Jobs and the Economy, and is still Minister responsible for City of Winnipeg relations.

Ron Kostyshyn – remained Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and also became Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation and Minister responsible for Emergency Measures

Sharon Blady – became the new Minister of Health

Erna Braun – remained Minister of Labour and Immigration.

James Allum – became the new Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Greg Dewar – newly appointed to Cabinet as Minister of Finance.

Deanne Crothers – newly appointed to

Cabinet as Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors.

Melanie Wight – newly appointed to Cabinet as Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities.

NDP Leadership convention

On November 15th, the NDP party executive announced a leadership election to be held during the party's annual convention on March 6-8, 2015. Nominations were filed and the candidates are:

Greg Selinger, current party leader and Premier of Manitoba since October 2009, and formerly Minister of Finance, a position he held for ten years.

Steve Ashton, who resigned as Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, a position he held since 2009, prior to entering the election contest. Since 1999, he has served in several cabinet positions, including Minister of Highways and Government Services, Conservation, Water Stewardship, Labour and Immigration, and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Theresa Oswald, former Minister of Jobs and the Economy, from October 2013 until November 2014, and previously Minister of Health between 2006 and 2013.

Standing Committees

Manitoba Standing Committee activity this quarter included a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee – to consider reports from the Auditor General on the Operations of the Office and the Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations – as well as two meetings of the Legislative Affairs Committee – to consider the Annual Reports of the Children's Advocate and Elections Manitoba. Finally, the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development undertook consideration of the Annual Reports of the Manitoba Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy.

Current Party Standings

The current party standings in the Manitoba Legislature are: 36 NDP, 19 Progressive Conservatives, one Liberal, with one vacancy.

Andrea Signorelli
Clerk Assistant/Clerk of Committees



New Brunswick

Throne Speech

Lieutenant-Governor **Jocelyne Roy Vienneau** opened the First Session of the Fifty-eighth Legislature on December 3, delivering the first Speech from the Throne of Premier Brian Gallant's Liberal government. The major theme of the speech was moving New Brunswick forward with a plan to create the right conditions for job growth, a plan to achieve fiscal balance, and a plan that will put families and communities back to work.

Highlights included the establishment of a New Brunswick Jobs Board; the establishment of a new Crown corporation called Opportunities New Brunswick to lead the way in job creation and economic growth; the creation of infrastructure investment, economic development, and youth employment funds; the development of a 10-year plan for education; an innovation agenda; responsible development of energy and natural resource opportunities; centralization of common government functions and a comprehensive review of all government programmes; home energy retrofit programmes; and changes to various taxes and fees.

Reply to Throne Speech

On December 5, Official Opposition Leader **Bruce Fitch** gave his reply to the Speech from the Throne. Fitch spoke about the potential of the shale gas industry to increase employment and economic activity in New Brunswick, stating the Opposition's disagreement with the Government's proposed moratorium on hydraulic fracturing. He expressed the concern that the Government may seek to reverse the previous government's gains in such areas as programme review, job creation, the promotion of energy efficiency, the forest industry, and shale gas exploration.

Mr. Fitch noted various economic sectors that had not been discussed in the Speech from the Throne, including fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, agriculture, health, and social programmes. He conveyed the Opposition's concern about the combination of various departments under single ministers, and the financial implications of the Government's proposed infrastructure programme.

Capital Budget

On December 17, Minister of Finance **Roger Melanson** introduced the *2015-16 Capital Budget*. Of the \$597.1-million capital budget, \$409.5 million was allocated to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, mainly for the maintenance and repair of transportation infrastructure through full implementation of the province's asset management system. The Government will also invest \$95.9 million in schools, \$60.2 million in health-care facilities, \$5.6 million in universities and community colleges, and \$11.8 million in energy retrofits and renewable energy projects for public buildings.

A new Strategic Infrastructure Initiative will include investments of almost \$600 million over the next four years, creating up to 1,750 jobs per year and contributing \$120 million annually to the provincial economy. The investment from this fund will total \$114.6 million for 2015-16, with a possibility for further investment if funds can be leveraged from other sources.

Following the capital budget speech, Finance Critic **Blaine Higgs** spoke on behalf of the Opposition. The main theme of his speech was the use of defined and transparent standards and performance measures to inform decision-making. Mr. Higgs discussed decisions to repair or replace infrastructure and

cautioned against investing in infrastructure and equipment that would become redundant over time. He suggested that there is a history of building infrastructure in excess of needs, and emphasized the importance of determining the right level of infrastructure to provide on the basis of engineering and service requirements. Mr. Higgs also discussed the role of the civil service in delivering results, and encouraged the Government to engage with the leaders within the civil service, seek their opinions, and obtain the facts behind their advice.

Legislation

Ten bills were introduced during the fall session. Legislation introduced by the Government included:

– Bill 6, *Opportunities New Brunswick Act*, introduced by Premier Gallant, establishes Opportunities New Brunswick, a Crown corporation intended to lead the way in job creation and economic growth in the province.

– Bill 9, *An Act to Amend the Oil and Natural Gas Act*, introduced by Minister of Energy and Mines **Donald Arseneault**, enables the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to make regulations prohibiting hydraulic fracturing of a well, regulating the materials and techniques used in hydraulic fracturing, and respecting activities to be undertaken before, during, and after a hydraulic fracturing programme. Additional provisions of the Bill relate to licensing and leases. Bill 9 enables the Government to introduce its proposed moratorium on hydraulic fracturing.

The Green Party introduced its first bill: Bill 10, *An Act to Amend the Elections Act*. The Bill, introduced by Green Party leader **David Coon**, proposes to change the voting age for provincial elections from 18 to 16 years.

Proposed Rule Changes

The Standing Committee on Procedure, chaired by Government House Leader **Hédard Albert**, presented a report to the House on December 10. The report recommended several revisions to the Standing Rules, which included allowing a private Member to undertake the responsibilities of the Government House Leader; revising the order of consideration of routine proceedings to allow Oral Question Period to occur earlier in the day; requiring Statements by Members to relate to matters within the constituency of a Member; placing time limits on other items of

routine proceedings or delaying their consideration until the end of the day; providing the government with the option to defer recorded votes; changing the structure and mandate of certain standing committees to facilitate the referral of legislation and estimates; and allowing Ministers of the Crown to sit as participating members of the standing committees that consider their legislation or departmental estimates.

A motion to adopt the recommendations in the report is expected to be debated in the House when the Legislature resumes sitting.

Committees

On January 20, the Standing Committees on Public Accounts and Crown Corporations met in a joint orientation session, held by Auditor General **Kim MacPherson**. Topics included the role of the Auditor General, the role of the Public Accounts and Crown Corporations Committees, and approaching accountability through effective questioning.

On January 22, the Standing Committees on Public Accounts and Crown Corporations held a second joint session for the release of the *2014 Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick, Volumes I and II*. The report included the following topics: observations on pension plans; Point Lepreau generating station refurbishment - phase II; and the data centre power interruption.

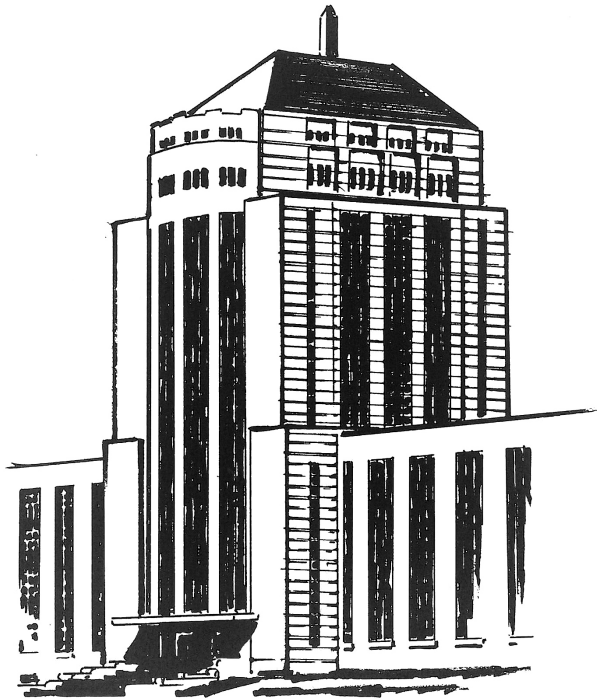
By-election

Following the resignation of a newly elected Liberal MLA on October 14, less than a month after the September 22 provincial election, a by-election was held on November 17. **Glen Savoie**, the Progressive Conservative candidate who had been elected as the Member for Saint John-Fundy in 2010, was re-elected in the by-election to represent the new riding of Saint John East. Mr. Savoie had initially lost in the September 22 election by a margin of less than 10 votes.

Standings

The Legislature adjourned on December 19 and was expected to resume sitting on February 10. The standings in the House are 26 Liberals, 22 Progressive Conservatives, and 1 Green.

Neill McKay
Research Officer



Newfoundland and Labrador

Resignations

On January 6 the Leader of the Third Party, **Lorraine Michael** announced that she would step down as NDP leader but will contest the District of Signal Hill - Quidi Vidi at the next general election. The party has announced that it will hold a leadership convention on March 7, 2015.

By-elections

On November 25, 2014 **Stelman Flynn** was elected in the District of Humber East succeeding former Premier **Tom Marshall**. **Steve Crocker** was elected in the District of Trinity – Bay de Verde succeeding former Minister of Finance **Charlene Johnson**. Both Members, who ran as Liberals, were sworn and took their seats in the House on December 11, 2014.

Member named

On December 9, 2014 the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair was named by Speaker **Wade Verge** for disregarding the authority of the Chair in refusing to withdraw an unparliamentary remark. The Member

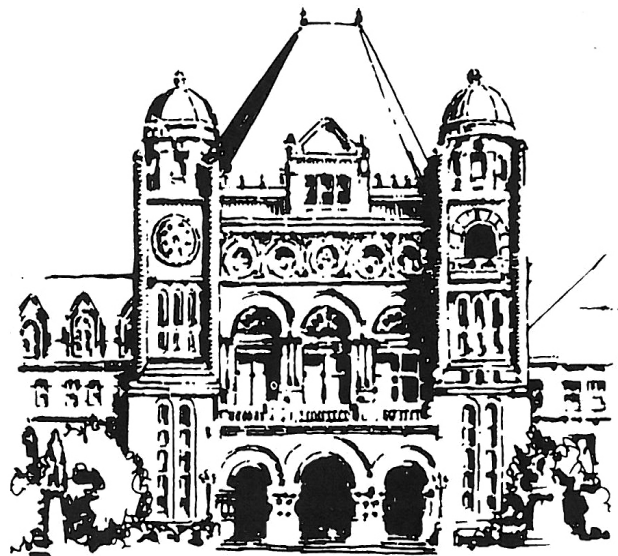
was ordered to withdraw from the House for the remainder of the sitting day.

House reconvenes

On January 19, 2015 the House reconvened to debate Bill 42, *An Act To Amend The Electoral Boundaries Act*. Under the current legislation, the next provincial electoral boundaries review is scheduled for 2016.

The Government is seeking to amend the legislation to enable the review to commence this year, and have the new boundaries in place for the upcoming provincial general election. The legislation as amended is intended to reduce the number of seats in the House from 48 to 38.

Elizabeth Murphy
Clerk Assistant



Ontario

On October 20, 2014, the fall sitting period of the 41st Parliament commenced. The Government largely devoted the sitting to dealing with a number of bills that had been introduced in the previous parliament, all of which died on the Order Paper when the Legislature was dissolved on May 2, 2014. Arguing that the bills had all received substantial debate only a few months earlier, the government committed itself

to ensuring these bills would see their way through the legislative process by the end of the fall sitting. In order to achieve this calendar, each of the bills was time-allocated. The time allocation motions sent each bill to a Standing Committee for public hearings and clause-by-clause consideration. All seven bills received Royal Assent before the conclusion of the fall sitting period on December 11.

The bills were:

- Bill 15, *Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act, 2014*.

The bill amended a number of statutes in order to, among other things, regulate consumer transactions involving tow and storage services; add administrative penalties in the area of regulation of commercial motor vehicles and tow trucks; and to change how disputes relating to statutory accident benefits will be resolved;

- Bill 18, *Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act, 2014*.

The bill amended five statutes relating to employment and labour relations. The Committee considered upwards of 400 amendments to the bill, before reporting it back to the House;

- Bill 10, *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014*.

The bill amended a number of statutes with the goal of strengthening oversight of the province's unlicensed child care sector while increasing access to licensed child care options for families;

- Bill 7, *Better Business Climate Act, 2014*.

The bill enacted two new statutes designed to reduce burdens of time, money or resources on businesses and to foster the development of business clusters;

- Bill 8, *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014*.

This bill introduced new legislation to grant the Lieutenant Governor in Council authority to establish compensation frameworks governing the compensation of certain executives in the broader public sector; and amended about a dozen existing acts. A previous version of the bill was introduced in the 40th Parliament but had not been referred to a Committee. The Committee held two days of public hearings on the bill, which attracted the attention

of several Officers of the Legislative Assembly, whose mandates were affected by the bill. **Bonnie Lysyk**, Auditor General of Ontario; **André Marin**, Ombudsman of Ontario; and **Irwin Elman**, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, all appeared before the Committee;

- Bill 21, *Safeguarding Health Care Integrity Act, 2014*.

The bill enacts the *Voluntary Blood Donations Act, 2014* to prohibit paid compensation for blood donations, and amends certain statutes with respect to the regulation of pharmacies and other matters concerning regulated health professions; and

- Bill 35, *Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2014*.

Among other things, the bill sets out powers that may be exercised by authorized persons relating to security for courts and for nuclear and electricity generating facilities. An earlier version of this bill was previously introduced but not yet referred to Committee. Bill 35 was reported to the House without amendment.

Moment of Silence

Like all Canadians, Members of the Ontario Legislature were shocked and saddened by the violent and deadly attack at the National War Memorial and on Parliament Hill on October 22. On that day, the House observed a minute of silence. On October 23, the House directed that a Book of Condolence be put out in the main lobby of the Legislative Building, and began that day's Question Period by singing "O Canada".

MPP Resignation

Joe Cimino, the Member for Sudbury, first elected in the general election of June, 2014, resigned suddenly on November 20. Mr. Cimino was a member of the NDP Caucus. Premier **Kathleen Wynne** has called a by-election for February 5, 2015.

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

A number of high-profile incidents and allegations shone a very bright light on the issue of sexual harassment during 2014. All parties expressed alarm at the growing number of reported incidents and agreed

to strike a Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, which was appointed on the final day of the fall sitting. The Committee's mandate asks for an Interim Report to be presented by June 4, 2015 and a Final Report with recommendations presented by December 10, 2015.

Standing Committees

The Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills

The Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills considered 12 private bills during this period. The Committee also began consideration of its draft report on regulations made in 2013.

The Standing Committee on Justice Policy

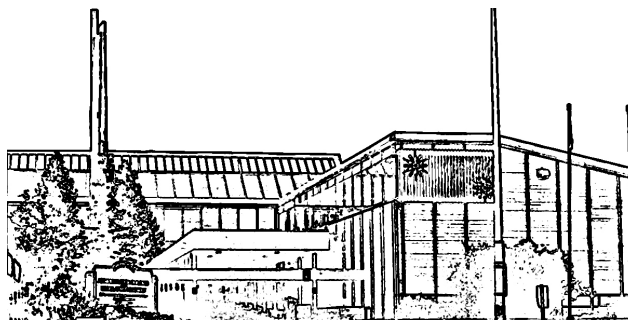
During the fall of 2014, the Standing Committee on Justice Policy spent the majority of its time report writing in closed session. The Committee established two self-directed studies under Standing Order 111 comprising of the following matters: a) to report its observations and recommendations on the record keeping practices of the Ontario Government; and b) to report its observations and recommendations concerning the tendering, planning, commissioning, cancellation and relocation of the Mississauga and Oakville gas plants. The Committee agreed to consider both studies concurrently and combine its findings into a single report to the House. The Committee also agreed to consider the applicable oral and written submissions made to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy in the 40th Parliament during the report writing phase. It was also decided that if a report was not approved by the Committee by December 11, 2014, the Committee would proceed to consider other matters before it.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts re-adopted the Committee's Report on Ornge Air Ambulance and Related Services, which had been prepared prior to the dissolution of the House on May 2, 2014. The Committee tabled the report in the House on October 30, 2014. The Committee considered the following sections of the *2013 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General*: Section 3.02 Health Human Resources, Section 3.05 Ontario Power Generation Human Resources, and Section 3.10 Violence Against Women. The Committee received the *2014 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General* and

will be considering the following sections when the House resumes in February: Section 3.03 Financial Services Commission of Ontario - Pension Plan and Financial Service Regulatory Oversight, Section 3.05 Infrastructure Ontario - Alternative Financing and Procurement, and Section 4.11 University Undergraduate Teaching Quality.

William Short
Committee Clerk



Yukon

2014 Fall Sitting

The 2014 Fall Sitting of the First Session of the 33rd Legislative Assembly, which commenced on October 23, adjourned on December 18, after 30 sitting days. All 10 government bills introduced in the House during the Sitting were passed by the Legislative Assembly and received Assent from Yukon Commissioner Doug Phillips. The government bills to receive Assent were:

Bill No. 15, *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, authorizes a government appropriation of \$37.535 million, bringing the total appropriation for the current fiscal year to over \$1.3 billion.

Bill No. 75, *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*, establishes whistle-blower protection legislation in Yukon.

Bill No. 76, *Act to Amend the Fuel Oil Tax Act*, extends the existing permit-based tax exemptions for fuel used in certain applications to all otherwise taxable fuels, rather than for gasoline and diesel fuel only; clarifies the process for obtaining authorizations (permits, licences and emblems) under the *Act*; gives the Minister the authority to suspend or cancel any authorization for cause; increases the maximum fine amount for offences under the *Act*; makes an administrative penalty under the *Act* applicable in any case of non-compliance, whether or not tax

is owing; and simplifies several of the *Act's* other provisions.

Bill No. 77, *Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act and Other Enactments*, is intended to improve the management of public-sector borrowing by increasing the limits on several revolving funds and updating and simplifying other aspects of Yukon's public financial administration.

Bill No. 78, *Act to Amend the Marriage Act*, allows the Minister to appoint marriage commissioners, rather than requiring the appointments to be made by Order-in-Council, clarifies the criteria that a person must meet in order to be appointed as a marriage commissioner, and provides for application fees.

Bill No. 79, *Pioneer Utility Grant Act*, replaces the current *Pioneer Utility Grant Act* in order to provide more flexibility and accountability in respect of payments of grants under the *Act*.

Bill No. 80, *Domestic Water Well Program Amendments Act*, amends the *Assessment and Taxation Act* and the *Municipal Act* to facilitate the expansion of the Government of Yukon's program for domestic water wells.

Bill No. 81, *Court Security Act*, provides legislative authority to make and enforce security measures in courthouses and other places where court proceedings take place.

Bill No. 82, *Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act*, regulates the use of snowmobiles and off-road vehicles, including licensing and registration, the use of helmets, etc.

Bill No. 83, *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, permits the investment of amounts appropriated for the MLA pension plan (for making severance payments and supplementary retirement benefit payments) in those investments allowed under the *Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985* (Canada).

No private members' bills were introduced or debated this fall.

Cabinet Shuffle

Premier **Darrell Pasloski** announced a cabinet shuffle on January 16, 2015. The shuffle changed the responsibilities of all cabinet ministers, except Mr.

Pasloski, who retains responsibility for the Executive Council Office and the Department of Finance. The Premier also added one more member to cabinet. Cabinet now consists of nine ministers, the largest cabinet in Yukon's history.

The new cabinet minister is **Stacey Hassard**, who assumes responsibility for the Department of Economic Development, the Yukon Housing Corporation, and the Yukon Liquor Corporation. The latter portfolio includes responsibility for the Yukon Lottery Commission. The remaining cabinet ministers and their responsibilities are:

- **Elaine Taylor:** Deputy Premier, Women's Directorate, French Language Services Directorate, Tourism and Culture;
- **Brad Cathers:** Justice, Yukon Development Corporation, Yukon Energy Corporation;
- **Doug Graham:** Education;
- **Scott Kent:** Energy Mines and Resources, Highways and Public Works;
- **Currie Dixon:** Community Services, Public Service Commission;
- **Wade Istchenko:** Environment; and
- **Mike Nixon:** Health and Social Services, Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

In addition to the cabinet changes, Premier Pasloski also announced that **Darius Elias** will be the new caucus chair and Government House Leader. This change marks the first time since 2000 that the Government House Leader is not a member of cabinet. Mr. Cathers will now be deputy Government House Leader.

Due to his appointment to cabinet, Mr. Hassard has resigned as Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole. The government has indicated that it will, once the House resumes sitting, nominate Mr. Elias to take on that role.

New Child and Youth Advocate

Also on January 16, 2015 an all-party subcommittee created by the Members' Services Board recommended the appointment of **Annette King** as Yukon's next Child and Youth Advocate. The subcommittee consisted of

Jan Stick, Sandy Silver and Doug Graham.

The Child and Youth Advocate is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who, in accordance with the provisions of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, promotes the rights and interests of children and youth accessing services from the Yukon government, and other designated services, through individual advocacy, review of systemic or specific issues, provision of advice, and assistance in resolving matters related to the provision of the designated services.

The *Child and Youth Advocate Act* requires that the Child and Youth Advocate be appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council on receipt of the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly will debate the required motion during the 2015 Spring Sitting. The Child and Youth Advocate is appointed to a five-year term. The previous (and first) Child and Youth Advocate, **Andrew Nieman**, was appointed in 2009.

Select Committee – Hydraulic Fracturing

On January 19, 2015 the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing presented its final report to **David Laxton**, Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. The presentation of the report to the Speaker ends a process that began when the committee was established by order of the House on May 6, 2013. The Speaker will table the report when the House next sits.

In its report the Committee said it “could not reach consensus to make recommendations on the following matters: whether or not hydraulic fracturing can be done safely; whether or not hydraulic fracturing should be allowed in Yukon; whether or not social license from the Yukon public is necessary before considering hydraulic fracturing in Yukon, and whether or not to proceed with specific regulatory development of hydraulic fracturing.”

The Committee did, however, reach consensus on 21 recommendations. These recommendations dealt with matters that, in the Committee’s view, need to be addressed prior to allowing hydraulic fracturing in Yukon. The recommendations touched on the following subjects: Public Dialogue, Economic Impacts, Water, Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) and Other Air Emissions, Land and Seismic Impacts, and Human Health and Social Impacts. Many of the recommendations address the need to acquire more information about hydraulic fracturing practices and

the effects they would have on Yukon’s water, land, people and animals. The Committee advised that its recommendations “should be addressed before hydraulic fracturing is considered.”

The Committee’s inquiry was the most extensive in the Legislative Assembly’s history. The Committee held 42 *in camera* meetings, 13 public hearings in 12 communities, four days of public proceedings in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, and a fact-finding mission to visit hydraulic fracturing operations in Alberta. During the *in camera* meetings, the Committee met with representatives of Yukon government departments, public and private non-governmental organizations and Yukon’s chief medical officer of health. During the public proceedings, the Committee took evidence from academics, industry representatives, industry regulators and others. The Committee received 435 written submissions from 383 individuals and organizations. Attendance at public hearings numbered 728 persons, though some persons attended more than one hearing. The Committee heard from 253 witnesses at the public hearings.

The Committee’s report, and other information about the Committee, can be found on the Legislative Assembly’s website at: <http://www.legassembly.gov.yk.ca/rbhf.html>

Floyd McCormick
Clerk



Saskatchewan

The fall sitting concluded on December 8, 2014. During this period, 36 government bills, four private members’ public bills and one private bill were introduced.

Lieutenant Governor **Vaughn Solomon Schofield** gave Royal Assent to three bills including an appropriation bill for supplementary estimates. The other two bills to receive Royal Assent were: Bill No. 171 - *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2014* and Bill No. 160 - *The Lloydminster Constituency By-election Act*. On December 8, 2014, with all-party cooperation, the Legislative Assembly passed Bill No. 171 - *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code Amendment Act*. This bill added gender identity as an express prohibited ground for discrimination under the code.

Lloydminster Constituency By-election

On November 13, 2014, **Colleen Young**, the Saskatchewan Party candidate, was elected in a by-election for the constituency of Lloydminster. Following the passage of Bill No. 160 - *The Lloydminster Constituency By-election Act*, Ms. Young was seated in the Assembly on November 17, 2014. The act allowed Ms. Young to be seated in the Assembly before the return of the writ.

Reappointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner

On December 2, 2014, the Assembly reappointed **Ronald L. Barclay** as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for one additional term of five years effective April 29, 2015.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner also serves as the Lobbyist Registrar in Saskatchewan. The creation of the lobbyist registry, a recommendation by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice, resulted from the adoption of *The Lobbyists Act* on May 14, 2014. This new office will focus on: designing, implementing, and operating the province's lobbyist registry; promoting and educating the general public, stakeholders, and the lobbyist community about *The Lobbyist Act*; and ensuring compliance and conformity of lobbyists to *The Lobbyist Act*.

Speaker's Outreach Milestone

Recently, Speaker **Dan D'Autremont** reached a significant milestone; he surpassed 100 outreach visits for his Educational Outreach Program on Parliamentary Democracy. For his commitment to education, Speaker D'Autremont has received numerous tributes from teachers and recognition in local media and by the Saskatchewan Teacher's Federation. The program, which was first introduced by Speaker **Glenn Hagel** in the mid-1990s, aims to promote awareness and understanding of the

Legislative Assembly and the democratic process through a non-partisan approach.

Stacey Ursulescu
Committee Clerk



National Assembly

Composition of the Assembly

On October 20, 2014, a by-election was held in the electoral division of Lévis. This riding became vacant on August 15 following the resignation of **Christian Dubé**, Member of the Coalition Avenir Québec. Coalition Avenir Québec candidate **François Paradis** won the by-election and officially took his seat in the National Assembly on October 28.

The composition of the Assembly is now as follows: Québec Liberal Party, 70 Members; Parti Québécois, 29 Members; Coalition Avenir Québec, 22 Members; 3 Independent Members, all of whom sit under the banner of Québec Solidaire; and one vacant seat (electoral division of Richelieu).

Bills Passed

Seventeen bills (13 public and 4 private) were passed during the fall sessional period that ended on

December 5, 2014. Of particular note among these bills are the following:

- Bill 3, *An Act to foster the financial health and sustainability of municipal defined benefit pension plans*;
- Bill 11, *An Act respecting the Société du Plan Nord*;
- Bill 15, *An Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises*.

These three bills were extensively studied in committee prior to completing the last stages of their consideration leading to final passage.

Rulings and Directives from the Chair

Two rulings given on December 2 during Motions Without Notice were among the noteworthy rulings and directives rendered by the Chair during the 2014 fall sessional period.

The first ruling follows the Official Opposition's refusal to give its consent to debate a motion moved by the Government House Leader. The latter argued before the Chair that an agreement had been struck between the parliamentary groups and the Independent Members in order to allow the debate on this motion to take place and asked that this agreement be enforced. The Chair ruled that during Motions Without Notice, when a motion is moved, the Chair's role is limited to verifying whether there is consent to debate it. Consent is verified after the Member has read his or her motion and, in this respect, the Chair cannot take into account agreements that were struck between the parties before the motion was moved. In the present case, the Chair observed that there was no consent to debate the motion.

The Government House Leader then raised a second point of order and asked the Chair to enforce the values set out in section 6 of the *Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Members of the National Assembly*, which, among other things, urge Members to seek the truth and keep their word when carrying out their duties of office. The Chair then recalled that it is not the role of the Chair of the Assembly to see to it that that provision of the *Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Members of the National Assembly* is complied with. That responsibility falls on the Ethics Commissioner.

Special Events

On November 3, the National Assembly welcomed **François Hollande**, President of the French Republic. Mr. Hollande addressed the parliamentarians

gathered in the National Assembly Chamber on the occasion of a formal ceremony during which the Premier and the Leaders of both opposition groups also took the floor. On this occasion, the President of the National Assembly, **Jacques Chagnon**, awarded the President of the French Republic with the Québec National Assembly's highest honour, the President's Medal.

On December 4, the Assembly marked the 25th anniversary of the Polytechnique tragedy by paying a moving tribute to the victims. After the Premier and opposition party leaders addressed the Assembly in the context of a motion without notice, the Assembly's women parliamentarians each read a section of a joint statement paying tribute to the memory of the Polytechnique victims and denouncing all forms of violence against women. This emotional tribute had been prepared on the initiative of the Circle of Women Parliamentarians of the National Assembly chaired by the Second Vice-President of the Assembly and Member for Hull, **Maryse Gaudreault**.

Standing Committee Proceedings

Some 15 bills were examined by the standing committees last fall, at the stage of both public consultations and clause-by-clause consideration. Among these, the following four bills accounted for a large part of the workload of some of the standing committees.

The Committee on Health and Social Services (CHSS) held special consultations on Bill 10, *An Act to modify the organization and governance of the health and social services network, in particular by abolishing the regional agencies*. This reform involves, among other things, the organization and governance of the health and social services network through the regional integration of health services and social services, the creation of institutions with a broader mission, and the implementation of a two-tier management structure. The CHSS members heard 64 groups during the four weeks set aside for these consultations. More than 125 briefs were submitted to the Committee. The clause-by-clause consideration of the 165 sections of this bill began December 1.

For its part, the Committee on Planning and the Public Domain (CPP) had a very busy autumn with the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 3, *An Act to foster the financial health and sustainability of municipal defined benefit pension plans*. After having held consultations with 28 groups at the end of the summer, the CPP

began the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill's 58 sections at the beginning of October. This work was completed at the end of November, after more than 80 hours of proceedings spread over 23 sittings.

At the end of October, the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries, Energy and Natural Resources (CAFENR) was instructed to hear some 20 groups concerned by the provisions of Bill 11, *An Act respecting the Société du Plan Nord*. This bill, which establishes the Société du Plan Nord, whose mission is to contribute to the integrated and coherent development of the area covered by the Northern Plan, was given clause-by-clause consideration over a period of 13 sittings ending on December 2. It should be noted that the CAFENR also took the initiative, at the end of the fall sessional period, to analyze the farmland grabbing phenomenon in Québec. The Committee should be organizing this mandate in upcoming months.

Finally, the Committee on Public Finance (CPF) held special consultations on Bill 15, *An Act respecting workforce management and control within government departments, public sector bodies and networks and state-owned enterprises*, at the end of October. After having heard 14 groups, the CPF gave clause-by-clause consideration to this bill, which establishes rules to govern workforce management and control within public bodies, mainly to monitor and provide a framework for changes in the workforce. It took 13 sittings to examine this bill's 38 sections.

Regarding the composition of committees, on October 2, the members of the Committee on Public Administration (CPA) elected a new chair, following the resignation of **Élaine Zakaïb**, Member for Richelieu, who had filled this position since the beginning of this legislature. The Committee members elected the Member for Jonquière, **Sylvain Gaudreault**, as its new chair. In accepting the CPA chairmanship, Mr. Gaudreault left vacant the vice-chairmanship of the CHSS that he had been filling at the time. That Committee therefore held a second election a few days later, electing the Member for Joliette, **Véronique Hivon**, as its vice-chair.

Another noteworthy element concerning the composition of committees is the decision taken by the Independent Member of Québec Solidaire, **Amir Khadir**, to sit as a member of the CPP. No Independent Member had asked to be a member of a standing committee during this legislature. As stipulated in the agreement reached between the parliamentary

groups at the beginning of the legislature concerning the functioning of standing committees, Mr. Khadir's arrival at the CPP brought about the appointment of an additional Government member, which increased this Committee's membership to 15.

In December, the CPA tabled its 31st report on the accountability of deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies. This report highlights the five public hearings held between the months of September and November 2014, three of which followed up on the Québec Auditor General's reports. Fifteen recommendations emerged from this exercise. In addition to these hearings, the CPA report also covers the Committee's examination of the annual management reports of 13 departments and agencies as well as the follow-ups to the recommendations it issued in previous reports, in collaboration with the Auditor General.

Pierre-Luc Turgeon

Parliamentary Proceedings Directorate
Committee Service

Christina Turcot

Parliamentary Proceedings Directorate
Sittings Service



Prince Edward Island

Fifth Session, Sixty-fourth General Assembly

The Fifth Session of the Sixty-fourth General Assembly adjourned to the call of the Speaker on November 27, 2014, after 10 sitting days. According to Prince Edward Island's parliamentary calendar, the session will resume during the first week of April 2015. In the intervening months, the Legislative Chamber

will be relocated to the Hon. George Coles Building prior to major conservation work to be conducted on Province House over the next number of years.

Significant Legislation

During the fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly, several pieces of significant legislation received Royal Assent, among them:

The Chartered Professional Accountants and Public Accounting Act (Bill No. 15) establishes the Chartered Professional Accountants of Prince Edward Island as a professional association and regulatory body to regulate the practice of chartered professional accountants and public accounting.

The *Municipal Statutes Amendment Act* (Bill No. 27) gives municipalities specific bylaw-making power respecting the application of non-domestic pesticides for the control of landscape pests.

Capital Budget

On November 19, 2014, the province issued its capital budget for 2015-16, with \$74.5 million in infrastructure investments planned for the year. Highlights of the budget included a continuation of the Manor Replacement Program, funding for a Youth Recovery Centre, renovations to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and an investment in a new 12-bed youth mental health unit.

Resignation of Premier Robert Ghiz

On November 13, 2014, Premier **Robert Ghiz** announced his resignation as leader of the Liberal Party of Prince Edward Island and premier of the province. He indicated that he would remain in office until a leadership convention had taken place, which was subsequently scheduled for February 20-21, 2015. At the time of his announcement, Ghiz was the longest-serving premier in the country. He became leader of the Liberal Party of Prince Edward Island in 2003 and was first elected to the Legislative Assembly to represent the district of Charlottetown-Brighton later that same year. He served as leader of the opposition until June 2007, when he was sworn in as premier following the provincial general election of May 2007. Mr. Ghiz was re-elected in the provincial general election of 2011 and was again sworn in as premier in October 2011.

MLAs Not Re-offering

Independent Progressive Conservative member **Olive Crane** announced on January 22, 2015, that she will not re-offer in the next provincial election. Crane was elected to the Legislative Assembly in a by-election in March 2006; and was subsequently re-elected in the May 2007 and October 2011 provincial general elections. She was appointed interim leader of the Progressive Conservatives in September 2007, becoming permanent leader of the party in October 2010. In December of 2012 she resigned the leadership and in October 2013 left the Opposition caucus to sit as an independent Progressive Conservative member.

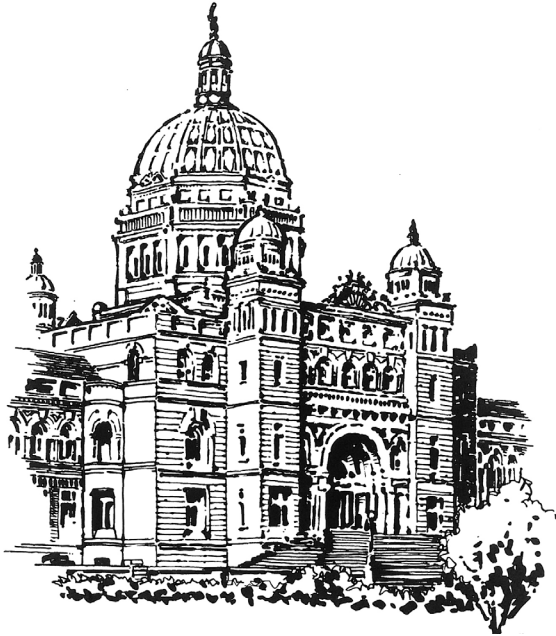
On January 23, 2015, four other MLAs announced they would not be re-offering in the next provincial election: Speaker **Carolyn Bertram**, Minister of Finance and Municipal Affairs, **Wes Sheridan**; Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture, **George Webster**; and private member of the governing party, **Gerard Greenan**. Bertram was first elected in 2003 as a Liberal, and sat as an opposition member of the Legislative Assembly. Following the 2007 provincial general election, she was appointed to cabinet in the government of Premier Ghiz, serving as minister of health and wellness; and minister of communities, cultural affairs and labour. She was also responsible for aboriginal affairs, and Acadian and Francophone affairs. Bertram was re-elected in 2011, and was elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on November 1, 2011. Sheridan, Webster and Greenan were all first elected as Liberals in the general election of 2007 and re-elected in 2011.

Samuel Holland 250 Commemorations

Throughout 2015, to mark the sesquicentennial of the completion of **Samuel Holland's** map of Prince Edward Island, a series of promotional and educational activities will pay tribute to the celebrated surveyor. In 1764-65, Holland, then Surveyor General for British North America, created the first truly modern, accurate map of Prince Edward Island which shaped settlement and patterns of land ownership which continue to define the province today. Lieutenant Governor **H. Frank Lewis** will serve as the Samuel Holland 250 Commemorations Committee honorary chairperson.

Marian Johnston

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees



British Columbia

The fall sitting of the third session of the Legislative Assembly of BC's 40th Parliament adjourned on November 27, 2014. The House is expected to reconvene for a spring session on February 10, 2015.

Legislation

Government introduced seven bills during the fall 2014 sitting, with all seven receiving Royal Assent on November 27, 2014. Notable legislation passed during the fall sitting addressed taxation and reporting requirements for British Columbia's emerging liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry.

Additional government legislation was introduced to facilitate participation by First Nations in LNG-related development. Bill 7, *Nisga'a Final Agreement Amendment Act, 2014*, formalizes Nisga'a Nation authority to levy property tax on non-Nisga'a citizens and businesses residing on Nisga'a Nation lands through implementation of property tax coordination between the Nisga'a Nation and the province. Bill 8, *Protected Areas of British Columbia Amendment Act (No. 2), 2014*, removes 63.5 hectares of land from the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park to allow for construction and operation of a natural gas transmission line, in keeping with an October 29 resolution by the Nisga'a Lisims Government. These two pieces of legislation reinforce Nisga'a sovereignty through formalizing Nisga'a control over taxation and land use/resource development in the First Nation's territory. Bills 7 and

8 passed with support from both Government and Opposition sides of the House.

Ten private members' bills were introduced during the fall session, on topics ranging from the proposal of a fall fixed election date, to addressing poverty and economic inclusion in the province. Bill M203, *Terry Fox Day Act*, introduced by **Linda Reimer**, was passed to establish the second Sunday after Labour Day as Terry Fox Day in BC. The *Terry Fox Day Act* met with broad support from Members on both sides of the House. Ms. Reimer's bill is the first private members' bill to receive Royal Assent in BC since Bill M204, *The Hunting and Fishing Heritage Act*, introduced in May 2002.

Legislative Assembly Management Committee

On November 6, 2014, the Legislative Assembly Management Committee released the Legislative Assembly's first annual *Accountability Report*, which includes the Assembly's first independently audited financial statements. Of significant note is the additional inclusion of an unqualified audit opinion based on a review of the statements by British Columbia's Office of the Auditor General, assuring British Columbians of the reliability and fairness of the financial statements.

The *Accountability Report* highlights departmental progress at the Assembly in priority areas including modernizing governance, transparency initiatives, enhancing financial management and administration, and ensuring accessibility and continuity preparedness. Fundamental changes have been made to governance and decision-making to support the Legislative Assembly Management Committee's work to strengthen accountability for the management of taxpayers' money. Reforms to promote openness in the Committee's decision-making include: regular public meetings to provide strategic direction over Assembly administration; deliberations on budgets to support enhanced accountability for the expenditure of public funds; and meetings structured in a manner similar to the Assembly's Select Standing Committees, with agendas, proceedings, and minutes publicly available on the Assembly's website. Openness and transparency have been strengthened to foster public trust and confidence in Assembly decisions and actions through quarterly public disclosure of Members' remuneration and expenses, the quarterly disclosure of senior Assembly executive travel expenses, and a publicly available Members' Guide to Policy and Resources .

Parliamentary Committees Activity

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services released its annual budget consultations report on November 13, containing 58 recommendations for the province's 2015 budget. On December 15, 2014, the Committee issued a report on its annual review of the budgets of BC's eight independent statutory officers. In this year's report, the Committee identified ways to enhance its oversight role through development of a more frequent and regular reporting relationship with statutory officers. Additional meetings with statutory officers throughout the year will provide a forum for broader discussion of annual reports and service plans, separate from the budget review process, enabling a better exchange of information. Further, the Committee agreed to authorize Committee staff to work with the statutory officers on development of a standardized template for financial reporting. Finally, in the interest of improving cost efficiencies, the Committee strongly urged statutory officers not currently making use of corporate shared services to re-examine joining the program and/or to move toward other service sharing options.

The Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth concluded the first phase of its special project to examine youth mental health in BC with the release of an interim report on November 27. The interim report summarizes the results of a public consultation, as well as findings from meetings with affected youth, family members, and expert witnesses on the effectiveness and availability of services through the province's youth mental health system. The Children and Youth Committee agreed to resume its work on the special project as soon as possible, with the next phase to focus on development of recommendations to address the issues and themes identified in the interim report.

In October 2014, the Legislative Assembly appointed a Special Committee on Local Elections Expense Limits with a two-part mandate: first, to examine and make recommendations on principles for local election expense limits; and second, to examine and make recommendations by June 12, 2015 on expense limit amounts for candidates and third party advertisers. On December 15, the Special Committee followed public hearings and an online submission period with the release of its first report on principles which could inform new legislation on local elections expense limits. Identified principles include fairness, neutrality, transparency, and accountability. The Committee also felt it important to emphasize that consideration of the role played by third-party advertisers should be

incorporated into any framework for local elections expense limits.

A Select Standing Committee on Health consultation on health care sustainability concluded on December 31, 2014, having received approximately 380 submissions from members of the public and stakeholder groups.

Cabinet Assignments

On December 18, Premier **Christy Clark** appointed **Andrew Wilkinson** Minister of Advanced Education, while former Advanced Education Minister **Amrik Virk** replaced Wilkinson as Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services.

Aaron Ellingsen
Committee Researcher



House of Commons

The Second Session of the Forty-First Parliament adjourned for the winter break on December 12, 2014. The House resumed sitting on January 26, 2015. The information below covers the period from November 1, 2014, to January 31, 2015.

Legislation

In a rare occurrence, on November 24, 2014, a petition for a Private Bill (S-1001 (*An Act to amend the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Act*)) was filed by **Laurie Hawn** (Edmonton Centre). The reports of the Clerk of Petitions and the Examiner of Petitions for Private Bills were presented to the House on November 25 and 26, respectively. On November 27, 2014, by unanimous consent, the Bill was deemed adopted at all stages, and it received Royal Assent on December 9, 2014.

Points of Order, Questions of Privilege and Procedure

Questions of Privilege

On November 3, 2014, **Peter Julian** (House Leader of the Official Opposition) rose on a question of privilege in connection with the rights of **Dean Del Mastro** (Peterborough) to sit and vote given his recent conviction by the Ontario Court of Justice of several offences under the *Canada Elections Act* in relation to the 2008 general election. Mr. Julian expressed the intention of proposing a motion immediately depriving Mr. Del Mastro of the rights to sit, vote, and receive salary and benefits. **Peter Van Loan** (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) rose, later that day, on a similar question of privilege. As had Mr. Julian, he emphasized that matters concerning its own Members were strictly for the House of Commons to decide and he expressed the intention of referring the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. The Speaker ruled, on November 4, 2014, that there was indeed a *prima facie* case of privilege; since Mr. Julian had been the first to raise the matter, the Speaker invited him to move his motion. The Government gave notice of its intention to invoke closure on debate on the motion. The next day, Mr. Del Mastro having made a statement and resigned his seat in the House of Commons, the Speaker announced that any further proceedings on the motion were now unnecessary and it was dropped from the Order Paper.

On November 17, 2014, **Nathan Cullen** (Skeena—Bulkley Valley) rose on a question of privilege alleging that the Minister of Finance's update on economic and fiscal projections delivered to a select audience of business people in Toronto on November 12, 2014, rather than in the House, was, in effect, a contempt of the House. Mr. Van Loan maintained that what the Minister had delivered in Toronto was not a Budget and, therefore not regulated by the Standing Orders. As such, the Minister was not required to deliver it in the House and, in fact, economic and fiscal updates have frequently been promulgated elsewhere. On December 4, 2014, the Speaker ruled that the Chair's authority is limited to matters related to parliamentary duties and, as there was no evidence that the Member had been impeded in fulfilling their parliamentary functions, it was not a *prima facie* case of privilege.

On November 26, 2014, the Speaker ruled on a question of privilege which had been raised by

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) on September 14, 2014. Ms. May had expressed concerns about the frequent use of time allocation by the Government and had alleged that this practice had deprived Members of their ability to hold the Government to account and that it had, accordingly, obstructed them, particularly those from smaller parties, in the performance of their duties. Citing rulings by Speakers Fraser and Milliken, the Speaker affirmed that the use of time allocation was a practice consistent with the rules of the House and that a procedurally acceptable motion to limit debate does not constitute a breach of privilege.

On January 26, 2015, **Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe** (Pierrefonds—Dollard) rose on a question of privilege related to the Government's response to her written question, Q-393. Ms. Blanchette-Lamothe alleged that the office of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration had interfered with the preparation of the answer to her question, such that departmental officials provided her with the same response as was provided to Q-359 in the name of the Member for Markham-Unionville, which was a non-response with a view to obfuscating its contents and that Department staff had, before this intervention, been preparing a full and adequate response to the question. Later in the day, **Chris Alexander** (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration) averred that, since the department would not have been able to provide an answer to the lengthy and complex question within the 45-day limit prescribed by the Standing Orders, he had decided to provide the answer that the Member received. He noted that "it is acceptable for the Government to respond that it cannot supply an answer, in response to a written question," and that there are no provisions in the Standing Orders for the Speaker to review government responses to questions. At the time of writing, the Speaker had not yet ruled on the matter.

On January 28, 2015, **Jack Harris** (St. John's East) rose on a question of privilege concerning what he alleged was misleading information that the Prime Minister had provided to the House regarding the Canadian military engagement in Iraq. The alleged misrepresentations on the part of the Prime Minister concerned the activities of the ground forces of the special operations forces in northern Iraq who are currently engaged in what was described as "an advise and assist" training mission. Mr. Harris charged that it had subsequently become apparent that the Canadian military ground troops had been involved in multiple firefights with Islamic State

of Iraq and the Levant forces, which he argued went beyond the information given to the House in September 2014. He concluded that the Prime Minister had misled the House and Canadians in a deliberate attempt to downplay Canada's level of engagement as well as the risk involved to ground troops. Mr. Van Loan maintained that the Government had been forthcoming with respect to the mission in Iraq and that the high threshold required to demonstrate that the House had been deliberately misled had not been met. He concluded that it was a question of debate and therefore not a breach of privilege. The Speaker took the matter under advisement.

Committees

The 18th *Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs*, confirming the lists of Members of Standing and Standing Joint Committees, was presented to the House on September 30, 2014, as is done each autumn pursuant to the Standing Orders. Numerous attempts to obtain the unanimous consent of the House for concurrence in the *Report* having been denied, on November 19, 2014, the House concurred unanimously in the 24th *Report of the Committee*, proposing additional changes to the membership of the Standing and Joint Committees as set out in the 18th *Report*, in a motion which also ordered that there be no further proceedings in relation to the Committee's 18th *Report*.

The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs has been seized with the question of bringing electronic petitions to the House of Commons since the adoption of a private Member's motion (M-428) referring the matter to the Committee in January 2014. It considered the question at meetings held on November 6 and 18, 2014. At the latter meeting, **André Gagnon**, Acting Deputy Clerk, made a statement and, with **Soufiane Ben Moussa**, Chief Technology Officer, answered questions. Following their presentation, **Tim Mercer**, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, and **François Arsenault**, Director of Parliamentary Proceedings for the National Assembly of Quebec, appeared before the Committee, providing information regarding their assemblies' experiences with e-petitions. The Committee was given 12 months to report back to the House, which the House of Commons further extended by 30 sitting days. At the time of writing, the Committee had not yet completed its study.

The Board of Internal Economy met on November 18, 2014, to discuss the matter of harassment

complaints involving Members of the House of Commons. It requested that the Speaker write to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, inviting it to seek an order of reference in this regard. Following the receipt of letter by the Committee, on November 27, 2014, the House agreed by unanimous consent to formally refer the issue to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, including a request that the Committee report back to the House as soon as feasible. A sub-committee of the Standing Committee on Procedures and House Affairs was established to look at this issue within the context of parliamentary privilege and the impact on Members' conduct and disciplinary processes. At the time of writing, the Committee had not yet reported its findings to the House.

Other Matters

Members

Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough) resigned his seat in the House of Commons effective November 5, 2014. Also on November 5, 2014, **Massimo Pacetti** (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel) and **Scott Andrews** (Avalon) were no longer members of the Liberal Party caucus and commenced sitting as Independent Members.

In the by-elections held on November 17, 2014, **Jim Eglinski** was elected in the electoral district of Yellowhead and **Pat Perkins** was elected in the electoral district of Whitby—Oshawa. On December 9, 2014, both Members, having taken and subscribed the oath required by law, were introduced and took their seats in the House as Conservatives.

Effective January 5, 2015, **Glenn Thibeault** (Sudbury) changed political affiliation from the New Democratic Party to an Independent Member, and subsequently resigned his seat in the House of Commons.

Statements, Resolutions, Special Debates

On November 3, 2014, His Excellency, **François Hollande**, President of the French Republic, addressed both Houses of Parliament jointly assembled in the Chamber of the House of Commons. He was welcomed by the Prime Minister and by the Speakers of both Houses.

Six Members made statements on December 5 with regard to December 6, 2014, being Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against

Women. These statements were followed by the observance of a moment of silence in commemoration of the victims of the tragic event that took place 25 years ago at the École Polytechnique in Montreal.

On December 11, 2014, pursuant to an order made Tuesday, December 9, 2014, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to thank the Security personnel of the House of Commons for the professionalism demonstrated on October 22, 2014. While the Security personnel were in the Chamber, the Speaker made a statement acknowledging, on behalf of all Members, their courage, professionalism, and dedication.

Gary Sokolyk
Table Research Branch



Senate

Speaker of the Senate

The final months of 2014 were a time of change for the Senate of Canada. On November 26, Senator **Noël A. Kinsella**, Speaker of the Senate since February 2006, resigned his seat in the Chamber two days before his 75th birthday. Senator Kinsella, who is from New Brunswick, was appointed to the Senate on September 12, 1990 on the advice of Prime Minister **Brian Mulroney**. He served in several leadership

roles in addition to his tenure as Speaker, including Opposition Whip, Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Opposition. He also served on over 20 standing, special and joint committees, and Chaired the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology and the Special Committee on Bill C-110, *An Act respecting constitutional amendments*. Senator Kinsella, an advocate for human rights, has been a professor of psychology, philosophy and human rights at St. Thomas University for 41 years and served as Chairman of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission for 22 years.

With the departure of Senator Kinsella, the Prime Minister advised the Governor General to appoint Senator **Pierre-Claude Nolin** as the new Speaker, and this appointment took effect on November 26. Senator Nolin, a lawyer by trade who represents the senatorial designation of Salaberry, Quebec, had been the serving as Speaker *pro tempore* since November 2013. Senator Nolin was appointed to the Senate in June 1993 on the advice of Prime Minister Mulroney. He has been a member of numerous standing committees and currently chairs the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration. He also chaired the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, which was originally struck in 2000.

The position of Speaker *pro tempore* is now held by Senator **Leo Housakos**, who represents Wellington, Quebec. His nomination by the Committee of Selection was adopted by the Senate on December 4. Senator Housakos was appointed to the Senate in 2008 and has served as Deputy Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communication.

Senators

There were other departures from the Senate during this period with the retirements of Senators **Fernand Robichaud** on December 1 and **Asha Seth** on December 15. Senator Robichaud, like the former Speaker, was also from New Brunswick and served in the Senate since September 1997, when he was appointed on the advice of Prime Minister **Jean Chrétien**. He was appointed Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate in 2001 and served in that role for three years. He was an active member of numerous committees and was most recently the Deputy Chair of Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. A former Member of Parliament for the ridings of Westmorland—Kent

and Beauséjour, New Brunswick, Senator Robichaud was first elected in 1984 and was re-elected in 1988 and 1993. He was Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, and then for Agriculture and Forestry, Fisheries and Oceans from 1993 to 1997.

Senator Seth represented the province of Ontario and was appointed to the Senate on the advice of Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** in January 2012. Senator Seth, who was born in India, was the first female Indo-Canadian Senator. She is an obstetrician and gynecologist and is the National Board Director of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. She served on several Standing Committees, most recently the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology and the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance.

Clerk of the Senate

After 36 years in service to Parliament and five years as Clerk of the Senate, **Gary O'Brien** announced his retirement on December 16. O'Brien began his career in Parliament with the Library of Parliament after which he worked for the House of Commons before joining the Senate in 1980. At the Senate, he was the Chief of English Journals and Director of Committees before becoming the Deputy Clerk in 1999. He was appointed as Clerk in late 2009. On January 22, 2015, the Speaker of the Senate announced that there would be a reorganization of Senate Administration, with **Charles Robert**, the current Principal Clerk of Chamber Operations and Procedure, being named as the new Clerk of the Senate. Robert has been serving Parliament for over 35 years, starting with the Library of Parliament and serving in the House of Commons before joining the Senate in 1991. He has served in his role as Principal Clerk since 2006.

As part of this reorganization, **Michel Patrice**, the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel and **Nicole Proulx**, previously Director of Finance, will assume responsibility for certain aspects of the Senate Administration.

Committees

In addition to their usual scrutiny of legislation, several committees were also tasked with the pre-study of the *Budget Implementation Act* (Bill C-43). The Standing Senate Committee on National Finance and six other committees studied different provisions of

the *Act* according to their areas of study and reported to the Chamber during the month of December. The bill passed the Senate on December 16, and received Royal Assent on the same day.

The Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources tabled a report entitled *Digging Safely - One-call Notification Systems and the Prevention of Damage to Canada's Buried Infrastructure*. The committee made four recommendations to the government relating to the safety of Canada's networks of buried cables, wires, pipelines, water mains and sewer lines. The Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages also tabled a report relating to the impact of changes to the immigration system on official language minority communities. The report entitled *Seizing the Opportunity: The role of communities in a constantly changing immigration system*, made 9 recommendations for the Department of Citizenship and Immigration to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of Canada's two official language communities and to support and assist their development.

Some committees were conducting fact-finding missions relating to their special studies during the period under consideration. The Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry travelled to parts of Ontario for their study on the importance of bees and bee health in the production of honey, food and seeds in Canada. In preparing the report, senators met with apiculturists and farmers. The committee began its study in November 2013 and expects to table a report this spring.

The Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans travelled to New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec, meeting with industry and government representatives as well as other stakeholders concerned with aspects of aquaculture. The committee is expected to table a report on aquaculture in Canada before June 2015.

Legislation

In addition to Bill C-43, 9 other government bills were passed by the Senate in November and December. Amongst them was Bill C-36, legislation drafted in response to the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Attorney General of Canada v. Bedford*. The Bill altered the way in which the Criminal Code deals with voluntary sexwork activities involving consenting adults. Other government bills included Bill C-8, which contained amendments to the

Copyright Act and Trade-marks Act, enacting new border enforcement measures and new civil causes of action and criminal offences. In the area of foreign policy, Bill C-41 implemented a free trade agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea. There were also five Commons Public Bills adopted by the Senate and two Senate Public Bills. One of these Senate Public Bills, Bill S-213, *An Act respecting Lincoln*

Alexander Day, was subsequently adopted in the House of Commons and was given Royal Assent in a traditional ceremony with the Governor General on December 9, with members of Mr. Alexander's family present in the gallery.

Vanessa Moss-Norbury
Procedural Clerk

