

Nunavut

House Proceedings

The spring 2015 sitting of the 2nd Session of the 4th Legislative Assembly convened on May 26, 2015. The 2nd Session was prorogued on June 1, 2015. The 3rd Session was opened on June 2, 2015. The Opening Address was delivered by Deputy Commissioner **Nellie Kusugak**.

Three substantive motions were adopted on the first sitting day of the 3rd Session. Quttiktuq MLA **Isaac Shooyook** moved a motion to modify the terms of reference for the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts to "explicitly address the integration of Inuit Societal Values and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* into the laws, policies, programs and services of the Government of Nunavut, including the holding of public hearings on the annual reports of the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajiit* and the annual reports on the status of Inuit culture and society that are prepared under Article 32.3.4 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*."

Iqaluit-Niaqunnguun MLA **Pat Angnakak** moved a motion to refer the first annual report tabled in the Legislative Assembly under the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act* to the Committee of the Whole for detailed consideration during the upcoming fall 2015 sitting of the House. Minister of Family Services **Jeannie Ugyuk** will appear before the Committee of the Whole to respond to Members' questions and interventions.

Tununiq MLA **Joe Enook** moved a motion to refer the Nunavut Housing Corporation's *Agreement for the Management and Administration of Local Housing Organization Programs* to the Committee of the Whole for detailed consideration during the upcoming fall 2015 sitting of the House. Minister Responsible for the

Nunavut Housing Corporation **George Kuksuk** will appear before the Committee of the Whole to respond to Members' questions and interventions.

The fall 2015 sitting will convene on October 21, 2015.

Committee activities

A number of televised hearings have been held in recent months by standing and special committees of the Legislative Assembly.

On May 5, 2015, Auditor General of Canada **Michael Ferguson** appeared before the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts, which is chaired by Iqaluit-Tasiluk MLA **George Hickes**, on the occasion of its consideration of the Auditor General's 2015 *Report on Corrections in Nunavut*. The Standing Committee's hearing concluded on May 7, 2015. Chairperson Hickes presented the standing committee's report on the hearing to the House at its sitting of June 1, 2015.

From June 4 to 5, 2015, following the adjournment of the spring sitting, senior representatives from Nunavut Tourism appeared before the Standing Committee on the occasion of its consideration of the association's most recent annual report and strategic plan. Nunavut Tourism receives annual contribution funding from the Government of Nunavut's Department of Economic Development and Transportation.

On June 9, 2015, the Standing Committee publicly announced its plans for televised hearings to be held in fall 2015. From September 21 to 29, 2015, the Nunavut Development Corporation, the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajiit* and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut will appear before the standing committee to present their most current annual reports and business plans. The Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut and the *Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit* will appear before the Standing Committee from November 23 to 27, 2015.

From May 13 to 14, 2015, the Legislative Assembly's Special Committee to Review the *Education Act*, which is chaired by Mr. Hickes heard testimony from a number of individuals and organizations, including Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Nunavut Teachers' Association, the Department of Education and the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities.

Appointment of the new Commissioner

On June 23, 2015, the Prime Minister of Canada announced the appointment of **Nellie Kusugak** to serve as Nunavut's fifth Commissioner for a five-year term of office. At the time of her appointment, Ms. Kusugak had been serving as Deputy Commissioner since January 14, 2010.

Alex Baldwin

Office of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut



Alberta

Election – Spring 2015

A general election was held in Alberta on May 5, 2015. Following a judicial recount in Calgary-Glenmore it was determined that the New Democrats (ND), under the leadership of **Rachel Notley** (Edmonton-Strathcona), had won 54 of the 87 seats in the Assembly. The Wildrose (WR) remained the Official Opposition after winning 21 seats, and, after almost 44 years in government, the Progressive Conservatives (PC) became the third-party opposition with nine Members. The only Alberta Liberal (AL) Member returned to the Assembly was **David Swann** (Calgary-Mountain View) and **Greg Clark** (Calgary-Elbow) was the first Member of the Alberta Party elected to the Assembly. Voter turnout for the election was 53.7 per cent.

On election night former premier **Jim Prentice**, who had been re-elected in Calgary-Foothills, announced he was stepping down as leader of the provincial PCs and would not continue to serve as an MLA. The Party has selected **Rick McIver** (Calgary-Hays) as interim leader. A by-election will be held to fill the vacancy in the Calgary-Foothills constituency within six months.

On May 22, 2015, the size of the ND caucus was reduced when **Deborah Drever** (Calgary-Bow) was suspended from caucus for controversial social media posts. Ms. Drever is now sitting as an independent Member, leaving the ND caucus with 53 Members.

New Cabinet

On May 24, 2015, Premier Notley and 11 other Members were sworn into Cabinet on the steps of the Legislature Building. With an even gender balance of six women and six men, this new Cabinet is significantly smaller than other recent Cabinets. Instead of reorganizing government departments many of the new Cabinet Ministers are responsible for overseeing multiple departments. In addition to her role as Premier and President of Executive Council, Ms. Notley is the Minister responsible for International and Intergovernmental Relations. The other 11 Ministers have been assigned the following portfolios:

Brian Mason (Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood) Transportation; Infrastructure; and Government House Leader

David Eggen (Edmonton-Calder) Education; Culture and Tourism

Deron Bilous (Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview) Municipal Affairs; Service Alberta; Deputy Government House Leader

Joe Ceci (Calgary-Fort) Treasury Board; Finance

Marg McCuaig-Boyd (Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley) Energy

Sarah Hoffman (Edmonton-Glenora) Health; Seniors

Kathleen Ganley (Calgary-Buffalo) Justice and Solicitor General; Aboriginal Relations

Lori Sigurdson (Edmonton-Riverview) Innovation and Advanced Education; Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour

Oneil Carlier (Whitecourt-St. Anne) Agriculture and Forestry

Shannon Phillips (Lethbridge-West) Environment and Parks; the new portfolio of Minister Responsible for the Status of Women; Deputy Government House Leader

Irfan Sabir (Calgary-McCall) Human Services

1st Session of the 29th Legislature

On June 11, 2015, the Members of the 29th Legislature elected first-time MLA **Robert E. Wanner** (Medicine Hat) as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Speaker Wanner brings his professional experience as a mediator, public servant and business owner to the role. **Debbie Jabbour** (Peace River) was elected as Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees, and **Richard Feehan** (Edmonton-Rutherford) was named the Deputy Chair of Committees.

The following day **Lois Mitchell** was installed as Alberta's 18th Lieutenant Governor. She is a respected business leader and community volunteer from Calgary who is known for her involvement in promoting sports, music and the arts.

The following week Speaker Wanner presided over the Assembly while the new Lieutenant Governor presented the first Speech from the Throne under Alberta's new government. The Speech outlined plans for a brief spring sitting that would see the introduction of three government bills including an interim supply bill. It referred to a need for stable, long-term planning for education and health care and to provincial leadership on climate change and environmental stewardship.

Bill 1, *An Act to Renew Democracy in Alberta*, introduced amendments to the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* to provide that only persons ordinarily resident in Alberta may make contributions to political parties, constituency associations, candidates and party leadership contestants. It passed third reading with the unanimous support of the House on June 22, 2015.

The following day Bill 3, *Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No.2)* passed on division. A full budget for the current fiscal year is expected to be considered during the fall sitting.

The final Government bill of the session was passed on division on June 24, 2015. Bill 2, *An Act to Restore Fairness to Public Revenue*, brought an end to Alberta's 10 per cent flat income tax. The personal income tax rate remains at 10 per cent for those earning less than \$125,000. Those making \$125,000 or more will have an increased progressive tax rate for income above that amount beginning at 12 per cent for income between \$125,000 and \$150,000 with gradual increases up to 15 per cent for incomes of \$300,000 and higher. Corporate taxes will also see a two per cent increase to 12 per cent.

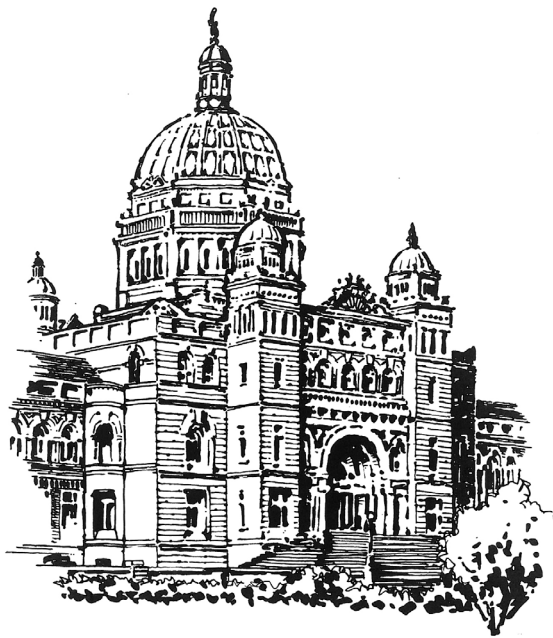
Committee Activity

The Standing Committee on Families and Communities has been charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the changes brought about by the *Mental Health Amendment Act, 2007*. A review of this legislation is required by law and was started in December 2014 by the previous Families and Communities Committee; however, this review was still in the early stages of the process when the provincial election was called. The new committee met on July 16, 2015, and now has one year from this date to complete the new review.

Section 63 of the *Personal Information Protection Act* requires a comprehensive review of the *Act* every five years and provides for an 18-month review period. In compliance with this legislation the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future has been deemed a special committee by the Assembly for the purposes of conducting this review. The Committee began its review on July 14, 2015.

The Assembly has also appointed a 17-member Select Special Ethics and Accountability Committee comprising nine Government Members and eight Opposition Members. The Committee has been given a year to report back to the Assembly with recommendations regarding four pieces of legislation: the *Election Act*, the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act*, the *Conflicts of Interest Act*, and the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act (PIDA)*. A comprehensive review of *PIDA* is required by legislation while the scope of review for the remaining three acts is at the discretion of the Committee.

Jody Rempel
Committee Clerk



British Columbia

The fourth session of the 40th Parliament of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia adjourned for the summer on May 28, 2015. While summer legislative sittings are not common in B.C., the House was recalled for July 13, 2015 and sat for an additional six days in order to consider legislation to enable project development agreements between the Province and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project proponents.

Legislation

Before adjourning on May 28, a total of 28 government bills received Royal Assent. In addition to bills summarized in the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Volume 38, Number 2, legislation this session included:

Information Management Act (Bill 5) modernizes information management practices across government with a legislative framework to specifically enable and facilitate electronic information storage. The *Act* also establishes a digital archive to provide greater online public access to government's archival information. The *Act* replaces the *Document Disposal Act*; although that act had been amended over time, it was still largely premised on maintaining paper records.

Education Statutes Amendment Act, 2015 (Bill 11) amends several acts. The *Teachers Act* is amended to enable the Minister to establish a

more detailed framework and standards for teachers' ongoing professional development. Amendments to the *School Act* provide B.C.'s 60 school boards with clear authority to enter into shared service or alternative service delivery agreements with other boards or public sector entities, as well as granting the Minister power to require school district participation in such arrangements. The amendments also establish powers for the Minister to issue administrative directives to boards on issues such as meeting boards' *School Act* obligations. Amendments also bring the *School Act* into closer alignment with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to allow the Ministry of Education to disclose and use student data to improve the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system (for example, by monitoring outcomes resulting from recent curriculum changes) while also protecting personal privacy.

Election Amendment Act, 2015 (Bill 20) changes certain deadlines for voter registration and candidate nomination, and it increases the number of advance voting opportunities. Additionally, following an election, the *Act* requires the Chief Electoral Officer to provide upon request by registered political parties a list of all individuals who voted provincially, and upon request by individual candidates, a list of those who voted in the electoral district in which the person is or was a candidate. The *Act* removes the pre-campaign spending limits for political parties and constituency associations. The *Act* also exempts messages transmitted to the public for the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote in the election from being defined as "election advertising," which is otherwise prohibited from being conducted on general voting day.

Special Wine Store Licence Auction Act (Bill 22) provides the government with the authority to conduct an auction under which prospective licence-holders bid on licences needed to sell B.C. wine on grocery store shelves. The opportunity to sell B.C. wine in grocery stores is part of B.C.'s liquor control modernization project. This *Act* was needed to enable the auction because revenues from the auction of licences would be considered a direct tax, requiring Legislative Assembly approval for the government to implement.

In the July sitting, two Government bills were introduced and received Royal Assent.

Liquefied Natural Gas Projects Agreements Act (Bill 30) - Following the July 9 public announcement that the Province and Pacific NorthWest LNG signed a project agreement to develop an LNG facility, the government introduced Bill 30 to provide authority for Cabinet to ratify LNG project agreements entered into by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Province. The *Act* specifies four matters in relation to which the Province grants project proponents an indemnity, essentially establishing that the key conditions in existence at the initiation of the project agreement continue to apply for the term of the project agreement. The key matters relate to the *Liquefied Natural Gas Income Tax Act*, the natural gas tax credit under the *B.C. Income Tax Act*, provisions of the *Carbon Tax Act* specific to LNG, and the greenhouse gas regulatory framework that will be set out under the *Greenhouse Gas Industrial Reporting and Control Act*.

Ombudsperson Amendment Act, 2015 (Bill 31) makes two specific changes to the *Act* to provide that non-disclosure provisions in another enactment do not apply in respect of an Ombudsperson investigation if the investigation is undertaken as a result of a referral from the Legislative Assembly or one of its committees. These amendments were introduced on July 20, only a few days after the government received correspondence from the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services outlining the Committee's concerns with the *Act*. The amendments were adopted and given Royal Assent on July 21, and they would be brought into force by proclamation. See "Parliamentary Committees Activity" for additional context.

Twenty-five Private Members' Bills and one Private Bill were introduced during the Spring sitting ending on May 28, with an additional four Private Members' Bills introduced in the July sitting.

Speaker's Ruling

On July 13, 2015, MLA **Andrew Weaver**, the independent Member for Oak Bay-Gordon Head, sought leave to make a motion under Standing Order 35, which provides for moving adjournment of the House for the purpose of debating a "definite matter

of urgent public importance." Mr. Weaver sought to debate whether MLAs, as legislators, are acting with sufficient urgency to provide leadership in mitigating and adapting to climate change. He argued that it is matter of urgent public importance given the severity of the problem of climate change and given that it is not yet known whether the Legislature will sit in the Fall to provide an opportunity for debate on the question prior to Premier **Christy Clark** representing B.C. at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change meetings in Paris, France in late 2015.

On July 13, 2015, Speaker **Linda Reid** ruled that the matter fails to qualify under Standing Order 35, noting that because a successful application of Standing Order 35 overtakes all other business of the House, there must be no other reasonable opportunity for debate. Further, there must be compelling reasons for suspending all other business for emergency debate and the words "urgent public importance" suggest a sudden or unexpected occurrence.

Parliamentary Committees Activity

Eight parliamentary committees and the Legislative Assembly Management Committee were active between May and July of 2015.

On May 26, 2015, the Special Committee to Appoint an Ombudsperson unanimously recommended to the House the appointment of **Jay Chalke** as Ombudsperson to replace incumbent **Kim Carter**, who had indicated she would not seek re-appointment. Mr. Chalke commenced his six-year term on July 1, 2015.

In July, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services considered a request dated July 3, 2015 from Minister of Health, **Terry Lake**, to make an unprecedented use of a committee's statutory power under the *Ombudsperson Act* to refer a matter to the Ombudsperson for investigation. The Committee held four meetings in July to establish a process and conditions under which the Committee members might agree to refer to the Ombudsperson an investigation into the 2012 termination of a number of Ministry of Health employees.

A central objective of the Committee's decision-making process was to address the Ombudsperson's concerns about his office's legal authority to conduct an effective investigation, and to mitigate other concerns regarding the referral process such that any investigation resulting from a referral on this matter engenders public trust. *Ombudsperson Act*

section 19(2) was raised as a concern since it exempts persons subject to confidentiality or nondisclosure agreements from providing information covered by such agreements to the Ombudsperson, and many or all of the affected employees are bound by various confidentiality agreements relating to their time of employment and possibly in respect of agreements made upon their termination. The government's *Ombudsperson Amendment Act, 2015* (Bill 31) addresses such circumstances under the limited condition that the investigation is being conducted upon referral by the Legislative Assembly or one of its committees. At the time of writing, the Committee's deliberations on the issue are still underway.

The Special Committee on Local Elections Expense Limits completed its second phase of work on June 26, 2015, by making recommendations to the Legislative Assembly for setting limits on what candidates and third-party advertisers can spend in local election campaigns in B.C. An analysis of spending data for more than 3,500 candidates, elector organizations and third-party advertisers was used to inform the Committee's recommendations. As an open data initiative, the Committee posted the spending data on its webpage in the form of a spreadsheet that can be downloaded and manipulated by users.

The Special Committee to Appoint a Merit Commissioner was appointed on May 27, 2015. The Committee must unanimously recommend a person to hold the position of Merit Commissioner under the *Public Service Act* for a three-year term.

The Special Committee to Review the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* was appointed on May 27, 2015 to undertake a comprehensive review of the *Act*, as statutorily required every six years.

Both the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth and the Select Standing Committee on Health continued their work. In recent months, the committees focused on seeking evidence from expert witnesses on the issues of child and youth mental health services and a sustainable health care system (including improving end-of-life care and dying with dignity) respectively.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Canadian Regional Conference

The Legislative Assembly of British Columbia hosted the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Canadian Regional Conference and Commonwealth

Women Parliamentarians Conference from July 19 to 24, 2015. The conference theme was *Safe Passage – Secure and Accessible Parliaments*. Approximately 100 delegates attended business sessions with topics such as accessibility within Canadian parliaments, security within parliamentary precincts, and ethics and accountability of Members.

Resignation of a Member of the Legislative Assembly

MLA **Jenny Wai Ching Kwan** resigned her seat as the Member for Vancouver-Mount Pleasant effective July 8, 2015. Ms. Kwan won the nomination to represent the New Democratic Party of Canada in the federal riding of Vancouver East on March 22, 2015. A by-election in the constituency of Vancouver-Mount Pleasant is expected in the next six months.

Alayna van Leeuwen
Committee Research Analyst



House of Commons

The Second Session of the Forty-First Parliament continued through the months of May and June 2015, with the House adjourning on June 19, 2015. This report covers the months of May, June and July 2015.

Legislation

Bill C-51, best known by its short title, the *Anti-terrorism Act, 2015*, was concurred in at report stage on May 4, 2015 and read the third time and passed on May 6, 2015, after defeat of a reasoned amendment proposed by **Randall Garrison** (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca). Passed by the Senate on June 9, 2015, it received Royal Assent on June 18, 2015. The Bill was vigorously opposed by the NDP, filibustering in committee to increase the time allocated to expert witness testimony

on the Bill, and by the Green Party. Opposition to the Bill reflected concerns that the powers granted by it were excessive and the mechanisms for oversight were insufficient.

In response to the use of time allocation by the Government, the opposition parties (in particular, the Official Opposition) made use of delaying tactics such as dilatory motions and reasoned amendments. Examples of the latter are those proposed in connection with third reading of Bill C-51, the *Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015*, on May 6, 2015, with third reading of Bill S-6, *An Act to amend the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act and the Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act*, on June 5, 2015, with third reading of Bill C-59, *An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015, and other measures*, on June 15, 2015, and with third reading of Bill S-4, *An Act to amend the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act and to make a consequential amendment to another Act*, on June 17, 2015.

Financial Procedures

On June 8, 2015, the House debated a motion, — That Vote 1, in the amount of \$57,031,359, under THE SENATE — The Senate — Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, be concurred in. As references to the Senate are ordinarily excluded from debate in the House of Commons, the debate was punctuated by no fewer than 12 points of order and statements by the Acting Speaker, **Barry Devolin**, on the issues of relevance and the propriety of comments about the Senate.

On June 8, 2015, the Main Estimates and Supplementary Estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, were concurred in.

Bill C-59, *An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 21, 2015 and other measures*, contained provisions for the establishment of a “Parliamentary Protective Service” with a view to streamlining and enhancing security arrangements in the parliamentary precinct. The Bill received Royal Assent on June 23, 2015.

Points of Order, Questions of Privilege and Procedure

Points of Order

On May 5, 2015, **Peter Julian** (House Leader of the Official Opposition) rose to challenge the legitimacy of

the interruption by the Speaker of two NDP Members who had attempted to ask questions. As this appeared to amount to questioning rulings by the Chair, the Speaker reiterated that the Chair did not permit questions on matters not relevant to the administration of government.

The Thursday Statement is traditionally an opportunity for the opposition to learn of the Government’s intentions regarding the agenda of the House for the coming week. In recent practice, the customary question and response have tended to stray into the expression of opinions on various political and procedural matters. On May 7, 2015, Mr. Julian interrupted **Peter Van Loan** (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) in order to object to the length of his statement. The Acting Speaker, **Bruce Stanton**, expressed the view that Mr. Van Loan had been wrapping up his comments and was pretty much in proportion, time-wise, to Mr. Julian’s question. Mr. Van Loan pointed out that the past practice of the House had been that the Thursday Question had always been much shorter than the response which was required to list items of business for the coming week.

On May 28, 2015, during debate on the motion for third reading of Bill S-3, *An Act to amend the Coastal Fisheries Protection Act*, Mr. Van Loan proposed a motion for time allocation at report stage and second reading of Bill S-4, *An Act to amend the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act and to make a consequential amendment to another Act*. **Elizabeth May** (Saanich—Gulf Islands) rose on a point of order to object to the interruption of debate on Bill S-3, charging that the time allocation motion was not relevant to the matter under debate. The Acting Speaker, Mr. Devolin, replied that it was within the Standing Orders and he allowed the question and answer period in respect of the time allocation motion to proceed. It is worthy of note that this was the first occasion on which time allocation was moved for a bill other than the bill being debated.

On June 3, 2015, the Speaker drew attention to the presence in the gallery of His Eminence Cardinal **Raymond Burke**, Cardinal Patron of the Sovereign Order of Malta. Later in the day, **Pierre Dionne Labelle** (Rivière-du-Nord) claimed that his privileges as a parliamentarian had been breached by that recognition as he claimed that Cardinal Burke was “known for spreading homophobia and for his anti-gay campaigns.” The Acting Speaker expressed doubts as to whether this was a point of order; committing to

return to the House with a response if necessary; the Speaker did not do so.

On June 9, 2015, Ms. May rose on a point of order to ask that the Speaker find admissible two of her report stage amendments (Nos. 49 and 116) for Bill C-59. She argued that they concerned matters that had been raised in committee only after the brief opportunity afforded to her to submit amendments there. Ruling that day, the Deputy Speaker stated that, as the rationale for selection of report stage motions cannot be rooted so exclusively in anyone's particular testimony, the two report stage amendments in question should not be selected on the basis of exceptional significance.

Privilege

During the reporting period, the Chair considered two questions of privilege arising from the alleged obstruction by RCMP officers of Members attempting to enter the parliamentary precinct. The first, raised by **Nathan Cullen** (Skeena—Bulkley Valley) on April 30, 2015, was opposed by the Government. A very similar question of privilege was raised by **Craig Scott** (Toronto—Danforth) on May 8, 2015. The Speaker ruled on both simultaneously on May 12, 2015, cautioning the House not to assess such matters on the sole basis of the duration of a delay or impediment as one could easily imagine a situation in which even a very brief obstruction, depending on its severity or nature, could lead a Speaker to arrive at a *prima facie* finding of privilege. Concluding that the broader subject matter of the rights of access of Members merited immediate consideration, Mr. Scott moved a motion referring the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. The question being put, the motion was negatived. It is worthy of note that the Committee had recently considered similar questions of privilege.

On May 11, 2015, **Charlie Angus** (Timmins—James Bay) rose on a question of privilege with regard to the alleged inadequacy of the government response to written question Q-1129. The Government had responded that it could not answer the question because it was *sub judice* as it concerned matters which were before the courts. In his ruling, delivered on May 26, 2015, the Speaker concluded that the invocation of the *sub judice* convention in this instance did nothing to alter the very limited role of the Speaker with regard to the answers to written questions. Accordingly, he declined to find that the matter constituted a *prima facie* case of privilege.

Committees

Although it occurred before the reporting period, it is worthy of note that the 33rd Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs concerning electronic petitions was concurred in by the House on March 11, 2015. The result of this was changes to Standing Orders 36, 131. (6) and 133. (4), making detailed provision for the preparation, certification, submission and presentation of electronic petitions.

On June 9, 2015, by unanimous consent, the House concurred in the 38th Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Commons: Sexual Harassment). The Report was the fruit of a study arising from an order of reference to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. A Subcommittee on a Code of Conduct for Members (SCCC) was struck which recommended numerous changes to the Standing Orders with a view to appending to them a Code of Conduct for Members of the House with respect to sexual Harassment.

The 21st Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which had been presented to the House on October 3, 2014, was concurred in on June 17, 2015. The Report recommended changes to Standing Order 4 with a view to using preferential ballots in the election of Speakers and its adoption will modify the manner in which the Speaker will be elected in the 42nd Parliament.

The 39th Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, concurred in by the House on June 18, 2015, summarized the Committee's review of the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of Parliament and recommended that in the 42nd Parliament, the Committee recommence a comprehensive review of the Code at its earliest opportunity. The Report also proposed a number of specific changes to the Code (e.g. with regard to reporting thresholds) which, pursuant to its adoption, have been made.

Private Members' Business

Among the private Members' bills which received Royal Assent during the reporting period was Bill C-586, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Parliament of Canada Act (candidacy and caucus reforms)*, sponsored by Michael Chong. This enactment amends the *Canada Elections Act* to provide that the chief agent of every party is to report, in writing, to

the Chief Electoral Officer the names of the person or persons authorized by the party to endorse prospective candidates. It also amends the *Parliament of Canada Act* to establish processes for the expulsion and readmission of a caucus member, the election and removal of a caucus chair, leadership reviews, and the election of an interim leader, and to provide that these processes apply to party caucuses that vote to adopt them.

A private Member's motion (M-489) sponsored by **Scott Reid** (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington) was adopted by the House on April 7, 2014, referring proposed changes to the Standing Orders to allow the election of Speakers by preferential ballot to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. The concurrence of the House in the Committee's subsequent report (see above) effected these changes.

Other Matters

Members

On May 6, 2015, **Barry Devolin** (Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole) announced his intention to resign when the House rises in June.

Patrick Brown (Barrie) resigned as an MP on May 13, 2015, after winning the leadership of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party.

Statements, Resolutions, Special Debates

On May 5, 2015, a take note debate was held on "Iran Accountability Week" (Government Business No. 20).

On May 15, 2015, during the time allocated under Standing Order 31 for Statements by Members, **Romeo Saganash** (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou) spoke entirely in Cree (a translation was provided).

A take-note debate on the subject of Members not seeking re-election to the 42nd Parliament was held on June 9 and June 10, 2015.

Gary Sokolyk
Table Research Branch



Manitoba

The Fourth session of the 40th Legislature resumed on April 30, 2015, with the delivery of the first budget from new Finance Minister **Greg Dewar**.

In the fiscal year 2015-2016, the total operating expenditure of the Manitoba Government is estimated to be \$12.8 billion, which represents an increase of 2.3 per cent from the 2013-2014 expenditure forecast. Highlights of the government's budget included:

- a new Youth Jobs Strategy and new post-secondary strategy to link advanced learning and jobs
- tax credits to cover costs for firms training young people and 200 more apprenticeship seats in Manitoba's colleges
- the opening of two new QuickCare clinics and the development of health facilities in rural Manitoba.
- investments of more than \$1 billion in projects all over Manitoba and more than \$440 million for municipal priorities
- the removal of an additional 2,000 small businesses from the tax rolls, the expansion the green energy equipment tax credit, and cooperation with the Winnipeg Airport Authority for more direct international flights
- an increase the minimum wage to \$11.00 per hour
- initiatives for families and in communities including an increase to the caregiver tax credit

by 10 per cent, a new child and youth mental health strategy, new supports for foster parents, new resources for Aboriginal-led community organizations, and the creation of 900 new childcare spaces

- the doubling of the Seniors Tax Rebate to \$470

During his contribution to the budget debate on May 1, 2015, Official Opposition Leader **Brian Pallister** moved a motion expressing non-confidence in the government, which stated that the budget neglected the priorities of Manitobans by

- failing to recognize that Manitobans are tired of broken promises such as balancing the budget by 2014 and not raising taxes, not respecting the right to vote on tax increases, and not recognizing that Manitobans want a change for the better;
- failing to recognize that Manitobans are paying more and getting less due to front-line services like health care and education being ranked last, and also due to an average family in Winnipeg having to pay \$3,200 more in provincial taxes than a comparable average family living in Regina; and
- failing to acknowledge that government waste has caused the provincial debt to double since 2008, requiring Manitobans to pay more than \$800 million in debt interest charges, which threatens Manitoba's future as that money cannot be invested to protect essential front-line services, reduce health-care wait times or improve education results for our children.

On May 12, 2015, Mr. Pallister's amendment was defeated on a recorded vote of yeas 19, nays 35, while the main budget motion carried on a recorded vote of yeas 34, nays 20.

In addition to bills introduced last fall, the spring session saw the introduction of 30 government bills addressing a variety of governance areas. Before the adjournment of the House on June 30, 17 bills received Royal Assent, including

- Bill 9 – *The Chartered Professional Accountants Act*, which amalgamated the four existing regulatory bodies for accountants as the "Chartered Professional Accountants of Manitoba"
- Bill 17 – *The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act*, which permits transferring the weekly indemnity received by a person providing care for a child or an infirm adult, if such a person dies because of an accident
- Bill 22 – *The Red River College Act*, which makes

changes to the Red River College's Board of Governors

- Bill 26 – *The Adult Abuse Registry Amendment Act*, which extends the reporting requirements of the Adult Abuse Registry Committee by demanding that the Committee must report its opinion to the person whose name should be entered in the Adult Abuse Registry, to the official who referred the matter to the committee, and to the former's current or former employer and to his or her governing professional body
- Bill 35 – *The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Presumption re Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Other Amendments)*, which extends applicability of the *Workers Compensation Act* to workers who are exposed to events that trigger post-traumatic stress disorder

Two other noteworthy bills also passed this past spring:

- Bill 43 – *The Independent Officers of the Assembly Appointment Act (Various Acts Amended)* expands the duties of the Manitoba Commissioner for MLA Pay, Allowances and Retirements Benefits appointed under the *Legislative Assembly Act*. The role of the Commissioner is to decide on the pay and benefits for Members of the Assembly and to make regulations to implement those decisions. The bill gives the Commissioner the power to decide on an additional allowance for Members who have a disability, and to determine funding and resources to accommodate those disabilities, as well as the circumstances in which the allowance will be paid
- Bill 42 – *The Independent Officers of the Assembly Appointment Act (Various Acts Amended)* sets time frames for the process used to appoint the independent officers of the Assembly

These two bills form part of a larger agreement between the Government, Opposition, and the independent Member that includes changes to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, discussed later in this article.

Finally, six private Members' bills also received Royal Assent on June 30, 2015.

Opposition Day Motion

On June 9, 2015 **Heather Stefanson** moved an opposition day motion urging that "Provincial

Government to request the Auditor General conduct a comprehensive audit of the Investors Group Field construction project.” Following an afternoon of debate the motion was defeated on a vote of yeas 18, nays 30.

Committee of Supply

The Committee of Supply began consideration of the Estimates of the Departmental Expenditures in May and June. During this period, resolutions to approve departmental spending for certain departments were passed, and in some departments motions to reduce ministers’ salaries were moved and defeated. After June 10, the House set aside consideration of the Estimates to deal with other business and will resume these activities after October 20.

The Committee of Supply also considered and passed supply resolutions dealing with temporary funding for operating and capital expenditures until the Assembly deals with the main supply bills later this session. As a result, Bill 44 – *The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015* received Royal Assent on June 30, 2015.

Standing committees

The Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs met in early June to consider the report of its sub-committee regarding the Auditor General hiring process and to make a recommendation. This committee also met to begin consideration of the Report and Recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee.

In addition, the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development met on four occasions to hear public presentations and consider a total of 19 bills.

The Public Accounts Committee met twice since our last submission to consider Auditor General’s reports covering a variety of topics, including: the North Portage Development Corporation; issues regarding rural municipalities; the Lake Manitoba Financial Assistance Program; and a follow-up of previously issued recommendations on special audits relating to: rural municipalities; contaminated sites and landfills; and food safety.

Finally, the Standing Committee on Rules of the House met on June 26 to consider proposed amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. Those amendments are described in a later section of this article.

Sessional agreement and government motion on sitting days for 2015-2016

On June 29, 2015, the House passed a government motion which stated that after the House rose on June 30, the session would reconvene during the following periods:

on October 20, 2015, to meet until November 5, 2015;

on November 16, 2015, to meet until December 3, 2015; and

on February 24, 2016, to meet until March 15, 2016.

Also on June 29, the Opposition House Leader tabled a sessional agreement outlining the following understandings reached by the House Leaders and the independent Member:

the business of supply, including the passage of *The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act (BITSA)* must be completed by November 5, 2015;

the independent Member will be able to bring a private Member’s bill forward without requiring a seconder;

intersessional committee meetings will be held in September on government bills that passed second reading by June 30, 2015; and

standing committee meetings will be held for all Crown corporations before November 5, 2015.

Rule changes

As noted above, this session the Legislative Assembly adopted a series of changes to its Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding. As a result of several weeks of negotiations between all parties, a document titled *Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Rule Change Proposals – June 2015* was prepared by Clerk **Patricia Chaychuk** and Deputy Clerk **Rick Yarish**, following the directions of Members. The document was presented to the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House on June 26, and during the meeting chaired by Speaker **Daryl Reid**, members considered and passed all proposed changes.

The Committee report was presented to the House the following Monday, June 29, and by leave the House agreed to amend the report itself. Following the passage of this amendment, the Government House Leader moved by leave to concur in the Rules Committee Report as amended. With the passage of the concurrence motion the House officially adopted these changes to its rules. Some of these changes will take effect in October 2015, while others will come into effect following the next provincial general election in April 2016.

Key changes include:

- a sessional calendar that creates three distinct House sittings periods: November, spring, and fall;
- the creation of two categories of bills – specified and designated – with defined deadlines for the completion of all stages of these bills by either the end of the spring sittings or the fall sittings;
- the requirement that the government to identify the reason for an emergency recall of the House and a limit of three weeks for an emergency recall session;
- the removal of the ability of MLAs to challenge Speaker's rulings on points of order, with the same provision to apply to Chairs of Committees of the Whole and Supply;
- a prohibition on raising points of order and matters of privilege during Oral Questions;
- the introduction of question periods during debate on bills and private Members' resolutions to allow MLAs to query the sponsor;
- a reduction in the number of days of debate and speaking times for the Throne Speech and Budget debates;
- modifications to the order of the items under Routine Proceedings;
- a provision to allow the selection of certain private Members' bills to come to a vote;
- a prohibition on Standing Committees meeting intersessionally to hear public presentations on legislation during the months of January, February, June, July and August; and
- a requirement for the Public Accounts Committee to meet nine times annually and for the Rules Committee to meet twice every year.

To see the complete description of these rule changes and the verbatim transcript of the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House, please visit:

http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/40th_4th/hansardpdf/rh1.pdf

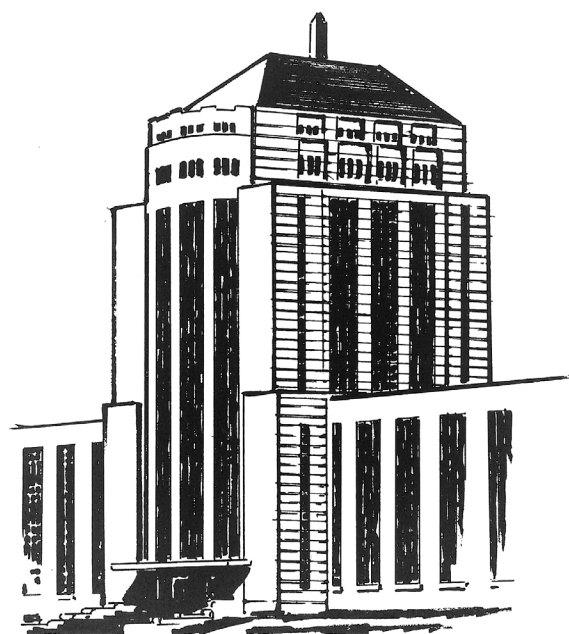
Additional discussions on further rule changes are scheduled for next September and October.

Current party standings

The current party standings in the Manitoba Legislature are NDP 37, Progressive Conservatives 19, and one Liberal member.

Andrea Signorelli

Clerk Assistant/Clerk of Committees



Newfoundland and Labrador

The Fourth Session of the Forty-Seventh General Assembly opened on April 21 with the Speech from the Throne. In the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly, Bill 1 which is sometimes referred to as the "Privilege Bill," is an actual bill. In this Session it was the bill entitled *An Act To Provide The Public With Access To Information And Protection Of Privacy*.

Pursuant to section 74 of the predecessor legislation the *Access To Information And Protection Of Privacy Act*, the Minister responsible referred the legislation for review to a committee headed by former Premier Clyde K. Wells.

The Committee reported on March 3, 2015. The report included 90 recommendations and a draft bill to replace the earlier legislation. One of the recommendations, which is of interest from a procedural point of view, provides that the Information and Privacy Commissioner, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council by Resolution of the House of Assembly, may be re-appointed by resolution of the House but re-appointment would require separate majorities of the Government and Opposition Members.

The new legislation received Royal Assent on June 1.

Electoral Boundaries Commission report

The Electoral Boundaries Commission, appointed on February 13 following the passage of an amendment to the *Electoral Boundaries Act* in January, reported on June 8. The amendment provided for the redistribution of the provincial electoral districts a year earlier than was mandated by the *Act*. The Commission recommended the reduction of the number of seats in the House from 48 to 40. The *House of Assembly Act* amendment introduced to give effect to the boundary changes was passed on June 18.

The amendment included provisions to set an alternative date for the fixed general election in 2015 as a result of an overlap with the federal election; to establish a mechanism for resolving future overlaps between federal and provincial elections; and to provide for an exception to the requirement to hold a by-election where a seat in the House of Assembly becomes vacant six months or less before the day a general election is required to be held.

On June 8 Premier **Paul Davis** announced that the provincial general election would take place on November 30.

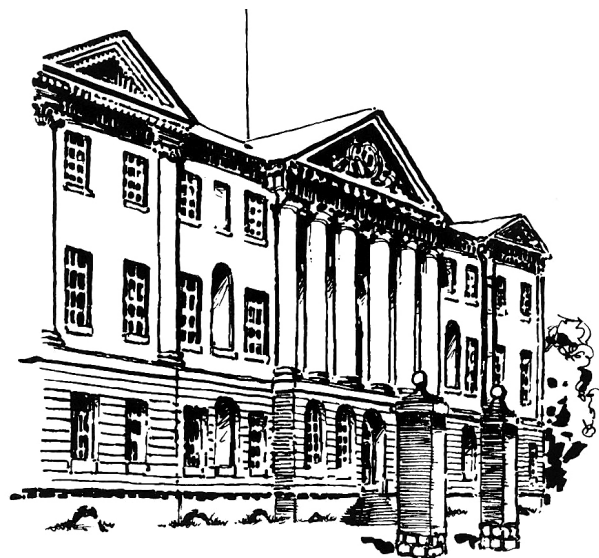
Resignation

Kevin O'Brien, MHA for Gander, resigned his seat on July 3 to contest the federal riding of Coast of Bays-Central-Notre Dame.

The House passed 13 bills during the spring sitting, including the main supply bill in the amount of \$4,757,760,300.

The House adjourned on June 23 *sine die*.

Elizabeth Murphy
Clerk Assistant



Nova Scotia

Spring sitting 2015

The spring sitting commenced on March 26, 2015 and ended on May 11, 2015.

During this sitting 29 government bills were introduced and 26 government bills received Royal Assent. The remaining three government bills were left on the Order Paper – two received second reading and one was introduced on the last day of the Spring sitting.

The *Financial Measures (2015) Act* was the subject of approximately 22 hours of debate in the House during the spring sitting. Five recorded votes were taken during the hours of debate. The debate centered on the film industry tax credit cut, a topic that the industry kept in the public eye through the media and by organized public protests during the debate.

Two private and local bills received Royal Assent during the sitting.

During the sitting, 19 private Members' bills were introduced, none was passed by the House, and they remain inscribed on the Order Paper.

By-elections

There were three vacant seats in the House of Assembly during much of the Spring sitting. On June 13

by-elections were called for July 14, 2015. The Sydney-Whitney Pier seat, previously held by **Gordie Gosse** for the NDP, was won by **Derek Mombourquette** for the Liberals. The Cape Breton Centre seat, previously held by **Frank Corbett** for the NDP, was won by **David Wilton** for the Liberals. The Dartmouth South seat, previously held by **Allan Rowe** for the Liberals, was won by **Marian Mancini** for the NDP.

The current party standings in the House are: Liberals 34, PC 10, NDP 6 and 1 Independent. There are 36 male MLAs and 15 female MLAs.

Cabinet Shuffle

On July 24, 2015, Premier **Stephen McNeil** announced changes to the Executive Council. This was the first Cabinet shuffle since the Liberal government was elected in October 2013.

The changes are as follows:

Diana Whalen is no longer Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. She became Attorney General and Minister of Justice and retains her position as Deputy Premier

Randy Delorey is no longer Minister of Environment. He became Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and retains his position as Minister of Gaelic Affairs

Karen Casey is no longer Minister responsible for Youth. She became Chair of Treasury and Policy Board and retains her position as Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Kelly Regan became Minister responsible for Youth and retains her position as Minister of Labour and Advanced Education

Andrew Younger returns to Cabinet as Minister of Environment

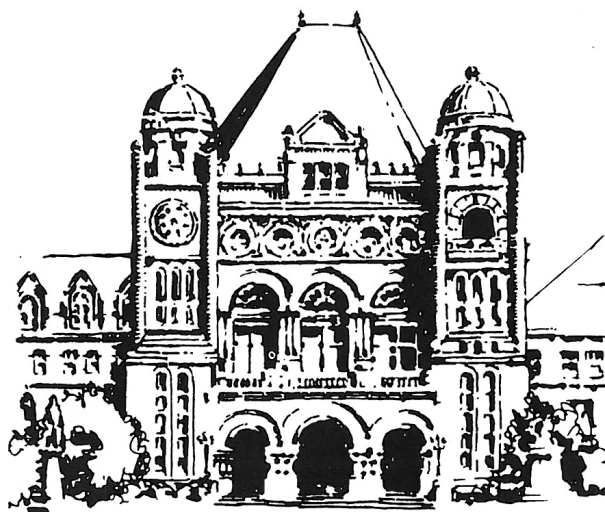
Michel P. Samson is no longer Minister of Communications Nova Scotia; he retains his positions as Minister of Energy and Minister of Acadian Affairs

Zach Churchill is no longer Minister of Natural Resources; he became Minister of Municipal Affairs and Minister of Communications Nova Scotia

Lena Metlege Diab is no longer Attorney General and Minister of Justice; she retains her position as Minister of Immigration

Lloyd Hines became a member of Cabinet as Minister of Natural Resources.

Annette M. Boucher
Assistant Clerk



Ontario

Budget

On April 23, 2015, Finance Minister **Charles Sousa** presented Ontario's 2015 Budget, which carried by a vote of 55 to 44 on May 12, 2015.

New Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party

Patrick Brown, federal Conservative MP from Barrie (2006-2015), was elected as the new Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario on May 9, 2015. The Party had appointed Interim Leader **Jim Wilson** (Simcoe-Grey) following former Leader **Tim Hudak's** (Niagara West-Glanbrook) resignation last summer. After winning his party's leadership, Mr. Brown resigned his seat in the House of Commons on May 13, 2015, and has said he will seek a seat in the Ontario Legislature at the earliest opportunity. Mr. Wilson continues to serve as Leader of the Official Opposition.

Address to the House by the Premier of Quebec

With unanimous consent of the House, on May 11, 2015, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario adjourned the House during pleasure for the purpose of permitting an address to the House. **Philippe Couillard**, Premier of Quebec, addressed the Members of the Ontario Legislature from the floor of the Chamber. His address focused on the importance of the Ontario-Quebec relationship and on the value of partnership. The last time a Quebec premier addressed the Assembly was in the 1960s: **Antonio Barrette** in April 1960, followed by **Jean Lesage** in February 1964.

Each leader with recognized party status was allotted a reply. All remarks were delivered from the lectern at the head of the Clerk's Table. Mr. Brown, the new leader of the Progressive Conservative Party and who did not hold a seat in the legislature, was given unanimous consent to enter the floor of the Chamber for his remarks in reply.

Ombudsman and Environmental Commissioner

With unanimous consent of the House, the term of Ontario's Ombudsman, **André Marin**, was extended to September 14, 2015, or until the effective date of appointment of a permanent Ombudsman on an address of the Assembly. Mr. Marin has been the Ombudsman of Ontario since 2005.

Also, with unanimous consent, the House appointed Deputy Environmental Commissioner **Ellen Schwartzel** as the Environmental Commissioner for the summer while two all-party panels consider the selection of an Ombudsman and an Environmental Commissioner for new five-year terms.

Timetable motion

On June 2, 2015, the House passed a motion to apply a timetable to certain business of the House. Under this timetable motion, four government bills will be reviewed in Committee and in the House this fall.

Royal Assent in the Chamber

During the spring session, a total of 30 bills received Royal Assent, including 11 government bills, 10 private Members' public bills and nine private bills.

On the last day of the spring sitting, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, **Elizabeth Dowdeswell**, entered the chamber for a traditional

ceremony of Royal Assent. This was the first time the newly appointed Lieutenant Governor approved the passage of bills in the Chamber.

Committee activities

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs considered a number of bills during this Spring session, including the Budget Bill (Bill 91, *An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts*) that enacted and/or amended 45 various acts. After four days of public hearings and one day of clause-by-clause consideration, the Committee reported this bill with certain amendments back to the House where it was given third reading and received Royal Assent on June 4, 2015.

Standing Committee on Justice Policy

The Standing Committee on Justice Policy reviewed Bill 49, *An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*. The bill supplements Ontario's Immigration Strategy with the intention of growing a stronger economy and also amends the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, to allow for the making of regulations to require a college of a health profession to make registration decisions within a reasonable time. The bill was reported back with amendments on May 4, 2015 and received Royal Assent on May 28, 2015.

On June 3, 2015, the House passed a time-allocation motion authorizing the Committee to hold both public hearings and clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 77, *An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity*. The bill, a private Members' public bill sponsored by **Cheri DiNovo**, MPP for Parkdale – High Park, was reported back to the House on June 4, 2015, with amendments including a change to the long title to reflect changes made to the bill by the Committee. With unanimous consent, it received third reading and Royal Assent the very same day and in time for Toronto's Gay Pride celebrations. As a result of the passing of this bill, it is now prohibited to provide services that seek to change the sexual orientation or gender identity of patients less than 18 years of age, and such treatments will no longer be an insured service under the *Health Insurance Act*.

Standing Committee on General Government

From May to July 2015, the Standing Committee on General Government considered Bill 6, *An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015*. The bill would, among other provisions, compel the government and every broader public sector entity to consider a specified list of infrastructure planning principles when making decisions respecting infrastructure. The Committee reported the bill as amended on June 2, and the bill received Royal Assent on June 4, 2015.

On June 3, the Committee considered its first private Member's public bill of the Session: Bill 30, *An Act to require the establishment of an advisory committee to make recommendations to the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services for the improvement of highway incident management*. The bill, introduced by **Gila Martow**, MPP for Thornhill, has undergone public hearings and clause-by-clause consideration is expected to take place in the fall.

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly

As a part of its permanent order of reference, the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly has the ability to review the Standing Orders without a referral from the Legislature. The Committee has been conducting a review of petition procedures at the Legislature, giving specific consideration to the possibility of implementing electronic petitions (e-petitions). To further its study, invitations to appear before the Committee were extended to several experts in the field, including **Nelson Wiseman** and representatives from Samara Canada. The Committee will be resuming consideration of petition procedures following the summer recess.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

During this period, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts tabled two reports on the following sections of the *2013 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General*: section 3.02 (Health Human Resources); and section 3.05 (Ontario Power Generation Human Resources).

The Committee also tabled three reports on the following sections of the *2014 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General*: 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). The Committee considered section 3.11 (Smart Metering Initiative) of the *2014 Annual Report*.

Standing Committee on Social Policy

During the months of May and June, the Standing Committee on Social Policy considered two government bills, both under time-allocation motions from the House. The Committee first considered Bill 57, *An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*. The bill provides a legal framework for the establishment and administration of a type of pension plan that is accessible to employees and self-employed persons and that pools the funds in Members' accounts to achieve lower costs in relation to investment management and plan administration. It was reported to the House with certain amendments, passed third reading, and received Royal Assent.

The Committee then considered Bill 80, *An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care*. Bill 80 amends the *Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* to prohibit the possession or breeding of orcas in Ontario. The bill provides two exceptions: persons who possess an orca on the day before the bill is introduced may continue to possess the orca; and persons who first possess an orca on or after the bill is introduced, and before it receives Royal Assent, may continue to possess the orca for six months after the bill receives Royal Assent. The bill was reported to the House without amendment, passed third reading, and received Royal Assent.

Under a timetable motion from the House, the Committee also considered Bill 27, *An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne and zoonotic diseases*. Bill 27 is a private Member's public bill introduced by **Toby Barrett**, MPP for Haldimand-Norfolk. The bill was reported to the House with certain amendments, including a title change to reflect changes made to the bill by the Committee. It requires the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to develop a provincial framework and action plan that establishes a provincial surveillance program, standardized educational materials and guidelines regarding the prevention, identification, treatment and management of emerging vector-borne diseases.

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment held public hearings in Toronto from March 4 to May 13, 2015 and travelled to Ottawa, Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo and Windsor during the week of May 18, 2015. During the summer adjournment, the Committee tabled its *Interim Report*, which summarizes major themes the Committee received through witness testimony and written submissions. When the House resumes this fall, the Committee intends to develop recommendations for its final report which is expected to be tabled by December 10, 2015.

Tamara Pomanski
Committee Clerk



Prince Edward Island

Provincial general election

The provincial general election was held on May 4, 2015. There were a total of 100,162 confirmed electors and 82,340 votes cast, which translates to a voter turnout of 82.2 per cent, an increase over the 2011 provincial election. In the three advance polls, a total of 28,897 people voted. Prince Edward Island typically enjoys high voter participation, ranging from a low of 76.2 per cent in the 2011 election to 87.6 per cent in the provincial general election of 1986. Several seats were won by 30 votes or fewer, and there were two judicial recounts undertaken.

The district of Charlottetown-Brighton, previously held by former Premier Robert Ghiz, was won by Jordan Brown, who held the seat for the Liberal Party. Following a recount, Provincial Court Judge **Nancy**

Orr determined that he received 22 votes more than Progressive Conservative Party Leader, **Rob Lantz**. Even closer was the result in District 5, Vernon River-Stratford, where just two votes separated the top two candidates. Following a judicial recount, the margin disappeared and Chief Provincial Court Judge **John Douglas** declared the number of ballots equal at 1,173 each for **Mary Ellen McInnis** and **Alan McIsaac**. As provided for in the *Elections Act*, the returning officer conducted a coin toss which was won by **Alan McIsaac**, who had held the seat at dissolution of the Sixty-fourth General Assembly.

Overall, Premier **H. Wade MacLauchlan** led the PEI Liberal Party to win a majority government with 18 seats. The Progressive Conservatives secured eight seats in the Legislative Assembly. Green Party Leader **Peter Bevan-Baker** made history by winning District 17, Kellys Cross-Cumberland.

New Speaker

Francis (Buck) Watts was elected Speaker in June 2015. There were four candidates for the Speakership. The secret ballot election required two ballots, as a clear majority was not achieved on the first ballot.

Mr. Watts has represented the constituency of Tracadie-Hillsborough Park since his election in May 2007. He was subsequently re-elected in the 2011 and 2015 provincial general elections. He has served as a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Environment, Energy and Forestry; Standing Committee on Fisheries, Transportation and Rural Development; and was Vice Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts from 2007 until dissolution of the Sixty-fourth General Assembly in April 2015.

Mr. Watts is a lifelong resident of Grand Tracadie. He was a successful fisherman and businessman and is well known as a community volunteer. He was the co-founder and Chair of the Grand Tracadie Community Council and played an integral part in building a baseball diamond and hockey rink in his community. He helped make the PEI Fisherman's Association a stronger organization assisting and supporting fishers in the industry. He is also an honorary member of the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters.

New Deputy Speaker

Sonny Gallant (Evangeline-Miscouche) was appointed, by motion of the Premier, seconded by the

Leader of the Opposition, to be Deputy Speaker of the House on June 3, 2015. Mr. Gallant was first elected to the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island in the provincial election held on May 28, 2007, and was re-elected in 2011 and 2015. He served as Government House Leader from January 2010 until the dissolution of the Sixty-fourth General Assembly in April 2015. He has extensive experience serving on the standing committees of the Legislative Assembly and is currently a member of the Standing Committee on Education and Economic Development; the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Energy; the Standing Committee on Public Accounts; and the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges.

He is a business person, community leader, and coach. He is Past Chair of the Miscouche Community Council; Past Director of the Acadian Purchase Trust; a member of the Board of Directors of the Miscouche Legion Senior Citizens Home and was a leader with the Scout Movement. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the Prince Edward Island Federation of Municipalities.

New Cabinet

Premier MacLauchlan was sworn in as Premier of Prince Edward Island on May 20, 2015. His nine-member cabinet is the smallest in number than in recent history and reflects a realignment of departments and responsibilities. Premier MacLauchlan said that “government departments will be better aligned to implement key policies in government’s new mandate with a focus on people, prosperity and engagement.”

The following Members were named to Executive Council:

- **H. Wade MacLauchlan**, Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General, Minister Responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, and Minister Responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs
- **Richard E. Brown**, Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning
- **Doug W. Currie**, Minister of Health and Wellness, and Minister of Family and Human Services
- **J. Alan McIsaac**, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries
- **Allen F. Roach**, Minister of Finance
- **Paula J. Biggar**, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy
- **Robert J. Mitchell**, Minister of Communities,

Land and Environment

- **J. Heath MacDonald**, Minister of Economic Development and Tourism
- **Tina M. Mundy**, Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture; and Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

The following day, May 21, 2015, Ms. Mundy resigned from Executive Council, citing a personal financial matter. **Hal Perry**, MLA for Tignish-Palmer Road, was named to Executive Council as Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture. Ms. Biggar has assumed responsibilities as Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

Opening of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly

The First Session of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly opened on June 3, 2015, with the Speech from the Throne delivered by **H. Frank Lewis**, Lieutenant-Governor of Prince Edward Island. Highlights of the Speech included the government’s intention to table a white paper on democratic renewal to engage Islanders in the democratic process; other plans included improving access to medications by capping the cost of generic drugs at \$20 for uninsured Islanders under the age of 65, investing \$1 million in a rural paramedicine pilot program whereby paramedics will visit seniors in their homes, launching a new youth mental health unit, and actively advancing Prince Edward Island as “Canada’s Food Island.” As well, the government indicated that it is aiming for a balanced budget in 2016-2017.

Recognition of the Third Party

On June 4, 2015, Speaker Watts advised the Members of the Legislative Assembly that he was in receipt of correspondence from Mr. Bevan-Baker requesting that he be recognized as Leader of the Third Party within the Legislative Assembly and that he was prepared to do so based on the clear precedent established in 1997, when New Democrat **Herb Dickieson** was accorded third party status, and the Rules of the Legislative Assembly. The Speaker also cited that the Member had been the leader of the Green Party, a registered political party in the province, since 2012; and that the Member offered, and was elected, in the May general election as the leader of his party. Additional funding for staff, as well as specific time allotments during the Ordinary Daily Routine, and membership on the Standing Committee on Legislative Management, are accorded to the Leader of the Third Party.

White Paper on Democratic Renewal

On July 9, 2015, Premier MacLauchlan tabled a White Paper on Democratic Renewal encouraging all Islanders to engage in a discussion on how to best strengthen the democratic institutions of the province, following up on a commitment made in the Speech from the Throne to “initiate and support a thorough and comprehensive examination of ways in which to strengthen our electoral system, our representation, and the role and functioning of the Legislative Assembly.”

The White Paper presents three sets of topics for discussion and decision: the method of how Islanders vote; the number and distribution of seats in the Legislative Assembly; and opportunities to enhance election laws and representation in the Legislative Assembly. Most recent discussions on electoral reform on Prince Edward Island and across Canada have focused on a choice between the status quo – First Past the Post – and Proportional Representation.

The white paper presents a third option: the preferential ballot. Following extensive public engagement, a plebiscite will be held in 2016 on the three options. A special committee of the Legislative Assembly was struck on July 9, 2015, to engage with Islanders on electoral reform and has been asked to present an interim report by November 30, 2015, to clarify the question to be posed in a plebiscite. It is expected that the committee will then continue to engage Islanders and present a final report during the spring 2016 sitting.

Additionally, the paper proposes a modified return to the dual-riding format that existed in Prince Edward Island prior to 1993. Specifically, the White Paper puts forward 24 seats in the Legislative Assembly that would be elected under the existing model, and an additional four seats that would follow the boundaries of the four federal ridings. It also identifies related issues of electoral reform that may be timely for consideration, notably election spending and financing, and the representativeness of the Legislative Assembly. The White Paper on Democratic Renewal can be found at www.gov.pe.ca/democraticrenewal.

Appointments of independent officers

Karen A. Rose was appointed Information and Privacy Commissioner for a five-year term effective June 22, 2015. Ms. Rose has previous experience in the role as she was appointed Prince Edward Island’s

first Information and Privacy Commissioner under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* on November 19, 2002, and Acting Information and Privacy Commissioner from May 2006 to May 2008. She also worked as Supernumerary Information and Privacy Commissioner in 2011. Ms. Rose was called to the Bar of Prince Edward Island in May 1994, and obtained a Master of Business Administration degree in 2010. She has practised law in the private sector in both Summerside and Charlottetown.

As previously reported, **John A. McQuaid**, retired Justice of the Prince Edward Island Court of Appeal, was appointed acting Conflict of Interest Commissioner on March 10, 2015. His appointment, for a five-year term, was made permanent on June 18, 2015. Mr. McQuaid practised law for 20 years prior to becoming justice of the Court of Appeal, a position he held from 1993 until his retirement in 2013.

Legislative highlights

A total of 19 bills received Royal Assent during the sitting, including amendments to the *Highway Traffic Act* that toughen penalties for those caught driving while using handheld communication devices. The penalty for operating a vehicle while using such a device is now \$500-\$1,200, and five demerit points, up from three. New drivers will have their license suspended (30 days for a first offence; and 90 days for a subsequent offence) if convicted.

Budget

The Minister of Finance brought down his first budget on June 19, 2015. “Islanders expect and deserve a fiscally responsible government, and we are leading by example and living within our means,” Mr. Roach said. “This budget focuses on programs and services Islanders depend on while encouraging economic growth that will raise additional revenue for these services.” Highlights included the launch of the PEI Generic Drug Program, an additional \$500,000 for enhanced home care for the elderly and an expansion of the seniors’ mental health resource team, a doubling of the funding for breakfast programs in schools, and a drop or elimination of provincial income tax for 12,000 residents by adjusting credit levels and increasing the threshold at which Islanders can keep full credits. Revenues are expended to grow in 2015-16 by 1.4 per cent while expenditures will be held to 0.5 per cent. The province’s consolidated deficit is projected to be \$20 million. Health continued to account for the largest share of provincial expenditure at just under \$600

million, followed by Education and Early Learning at almost \$236 million. Overall, the provincial budget anticipates expenditures of \$1.67 billion this fiscal year.

Annual Statistical Review

The 2014 Annual Statistical Review was released on June 24, 2015. It provides an important snapshot of the province's population and economy. The Island population is 146,283, an increase of 0.5 per cent; 2014 economic growth was 1.3 per cent; and employment averaged 74,000. Labour income increased by 1.7 per cent, while the consumer price index increased by 1.6 per cent. With regard to the primary industries, lobster landings reached an all-time high of 29.8 million pounds (valued at \$113.3 million) and farm cash receipts were valued at \$488 million.

Order of Prince Edward Island

This year's recipients of the Order of Prince Edward Island were announced on June 26, 2015, by the Chancellor of the Order, the Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island, and **Charles Curley**, Chair of the Order of Prince Edward Island Advisory Council. The three Islanders selected to receive the honour were **Bill Campbell**, **Gerald Dixon** and **Charles Trainer**. A total of 51 individuals were nominated to receive this award, which is the highest honour that can be accorded to a citizen of the province. Insignia of the Order will be presented at a special investiture ceremony in September.

Marian Johnston

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees



National Assembly

Extraordinary sitting

At the request of Premier **Philippe Couillard**, the Assembly held an extraordinary sitting on April 20, 2015, to complete the examination of Bill 28, *An Act mainly to implement certain provisions of the Budget Speech of June 4, 2014 and return to a balanced budget in 2015–2016*. This bill had reached the clause-by-clause consideration stage in committee and was passed on the following recorded division: Yeas 64, Nays 43, Abstentions 0.

Composition of the National Assembly

On April 7, 2015, **Gérard Deltell**, of the Coalition Avenir Québec party, handed in his resignation as Member for Chauveau.

On June 8, 2015, by-elections were held in the electoral divisions of Jean-Talon and Chauveau, which had become vacant following the resignations of

Yves Bolduc and of Mr. Deltell. Québec Liberal Party candidate **Sébastien Proulx** was elected in Jean-Talon, and another Liberal candidate, **Véronique Tremblay**, was elected in the electoral division of Chauveau. The new Members will make their official entry into the House when the Assembly resumes on Tuesday, September 15, 2015.

The composition of the National Assembly now stands as follows: 71 Members of the Québec Liberal Party, 30 Members of the Parti Québécois, 21 Members of the Coalition Avenir Québec, and 3 Members under the banner of Québec Solidaire.

Parti Québécois leadership election

On May 15, 2015, the results of the Parti Québécois leadership election were announced. The first ballot results confirmed the election of **Pierre Karl Péladeau**, Member for Saint-Jérôme, as leader of the Parti Québécois. He became Leader of the Official Opposition, thus replacing **Stéphane Bédard**, who had been interim Leader since April 23, 2014. Mr. Bédard is now the Official Opposition House Leader.

Estimates of expenditure and passage of Appropriation Act No. 2, 2015-2016

On April 21, 2015, the Assembly concluded the debate on the budget speech and held recorded divisions on the budgetary policy of the Government and on the motions stating a grievance. On May 6 2015, the Members examined the Assembly's estimates of expenditure in committee of the whole, and on the following day they adopted the estimates of expenditure for 2015-2016 and passed Bill 45, *Appropriation Act No. 2, 2015-2016*.

Bills passed

Sixteen bills were passed between April and June 2015. It should be noted that many hours were devoted to the passage in principle and clause-by-clause consideration in committee of Bill 37, *An Act to confirm that the cement plant and maritime terminal projects in the territory of Municipalité de Port-Daniel-Gascons are subject solely to the authorizations required under section 22 of the Environment Quality Act*.

Special events

On June 2, 2015, the National Assembly suspended its regular proceedings to pay tribute to **Jacques Parizeau**, former Premier of Québec, who had passed

away the previous day. On this occasion, a motion to honour Mr. Parizeau was moved by Mr. Péladeau. This motion also recommended that the building housing the Head Office of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec in Montréal henceforth be called Édifice Jacques-Parizeau to honour his memory. Several parliamentarians took the floor after the Premier and the opposition party leaders had addressed the National Assembly. The House then adjourned until the following day.

Mr. Parizeau's body lay in state in the Parliament's Legislative Council Chamber on June 7, 2015. On June 9, 2015, the Assembly immediately adjourned its proceedings following an agreement to that effect since several parliamentarians had notified the Chair that they would be absent because they would be attending the state funeral in Montréal.

Rulings from the Chair

The Chair ruled on one point of privilege or contempt during this sessional period. On May 5, 2015, the President gave a ruling on the point raised by the Official Opposition House Leader in which she alleged that four school boards had acted in contempt of Parliament by invoking the provisions of a bill in order to increase their childcare fees before the bill was passed by the Assembly.

After analyzing the provisions of the bill and the documents submitted, and in light of the arguments submitted to the Chair, the President noted that the fees for childcare at school were not established by the *Act* that was amended by the bill, but rather by a separate *Act* and budgetary rules. Therefore, in keeping with jurisprudence, the President could not conclude that the school boards that had increased their childcare fees before passage of the bill did so under its provisions. The complaint was therefore non-receivable.

Among the other rulings from the Chair, we should also note the ruling handed down on April 20, 2015 concerning the motion to introduce an exceptional legislative procedure moved by the Government House Leader, the admissibility of which had been raised by the Official Opposition House Leader and the Second Opposition Group House Leader. They alleged that this procedure was inadmissible as it concerned a bill that contained several principles. After having recalled that the Standing Orders provide that each such motion may introduce an exceptional procedure with regard to but a single matter, the Chair explained that, in other

words, a motion to introduce an exceptional procedure may not be invoked to consider more than a single matter or, in legislative matters, more than a single draft bill at once. However, the fact that a bill contains more than one principle does not render a motion to introduce an exceptional procedure inadmissible, and this has nothing to do with the number of sections a bill contains. Furthermore, the Chair underlined that it is not rare for a bill to contain several principles. It then recalled that Members should use the motion to divide if they believe a bill should be divided in order to make it possible to consider two distinct principles separately.

Standing committee proceedings

Orders of initiative

Several committees undertook or continued orders of initiative this spring. The Members of the Committee on Public Finance (CPF) had agreed last February to take a closer look at the tax havens phenomenon. In May, two deliberative meetings were held during which the Members viewed the documentary entitled “Le prix à payer” and met the co-director of the movie, **Brigitte Alepin**. Special consultations and public hearings are scheduled to be held in fall 2015. For its part, the Committee on Citizen Relations (CCR) chose to examine the mechanisms related to the resale of permits granting childcare spaces to private subsidized day care centres. The Committee heard the Ministère de la Famille’s deputy minister and tabled a report on its findings in June 2015.

Furthermore, the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries, Energy and Natural Resources (CAFENR) continued to examine the accountability of the Commission de protection du territoire agricole du Québec (CPTAQ) by hearing 14 individuals and groups from the farming sector in May. These hearings were held after the CPTAQ appeared before the CAFENR in November 2014. The CAFENR Members are in the process of drafting a report on this mandate.

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2015-2016 and continuation of the debate on the budget speech

The examination of the estimates of expenditure was carried out between April 22 and May 5 this year. The nine sector-based committees studied the estimates of the departments and public agencies over a period of approximately 200 hours.

Moreover, it should be noted that, pursuant to the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, the debate on the budget speech continued for a period of 10 hours in the CPF. This portion of the debate was carried out from April 14-16 2015. This debate in committee follows a period of 13 hours and 30 minutes of exchanges in the Assembly and is followed by the reply from the Minister of Finance and the final remarks from the Finance critics of the parliamentary groups, again before the Assembly.

Legislative work

Regarding the consideration of bills, the Committee on Health and Social Services (CHSS) continued its work on Bill 20, *An Act to enact the Act to promote access to family medicine and specialized medicine services and to amend various legislative provisions relating to assisted procreation*. Following the public hearings held last March, the members began the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill in May. Twenty-five hours spread over seven sittings were devoted to this legislative work. The parliamentarians adopted 17 of the 24 sections contained in the bill and integrated a total of 19 amendments.

The two most extensive public consultations of the spring sessional period were held in the CPF and in the Committee on Labour and the Economy (CLE).

The CPF heard 18 groups during five days of hearings on Bill 38, *An Act to allow the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec to carry out infrastructure projects*. This bill was subsequently passed after having been given clause-by-clause consideration over a period of four sittings.

Within the framework of the examination of Bill 42, *An Act to group the Commission de l’équité salariale, the Commission des normes du travail and the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail and to establish the Administrative Labour Tribunal*, the CLE held public hearings during which it heard 16 groups and individuals. Following these hearings, the members entered upon the examination of the 263 sections of the bill, which they completed on June 4 after having held five sittings thereon.

Statutory order

The Committee on Institutions (CI) is continuing its examination of the report from the Ethics Commissioner on the implementation of the Code of ethics and conduct of the Members of the National Assembly,

which covers the 2011-2014 period. The examination of the report by the competent parliamentary committee is provided for in section 114 of the Code. The parliamentarians began the examination of the 23 recommendations contained in this report by hearing the Ethics Commissioner and the juriconsult of the National Assembly. The mandate is scheduled to continue in the fall.

Composition of committees

On April 15, 2015, the Committee on Public Administration (CPA) elected a new vice-chair. The committee members appointed the Member for Deux-Montagnes, **Benoît Charrette**, to this position, which had been left vacant following the resignation of Mr. Deltell, who formerly represented the electoral division of Chauveau.

Report from the Committee on Public Administration

On June 10, 2015, at the end of the spring sessional period, the Committee on Public Administration (CPA) tabled its report on the administrative management of deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies. The report contains 31 unanimous recommendations aiming to improve the governance of the public administration and the quality of services provided to citizens. These recommendations emerged at the conclusion of six public hearings. Furthermore, the CPA continued its analysis of the annual management reports by examining the reports from 17 departments and agencies and by making specific observations for each entity assessed.

Stéphanie Labbé

Parliamentary Proceedings Directorate Sitings Service

Pierre-Luc Turgeon

Parliamentary Proceedings Directorate Committees Service



The Senate

The period before the summer adjournment was a busy one in the Senate with a federal election scheduled for the fall. The legislative agenda was active with the passage of 20 bills prior to the June 30 summer adjournment, including 13 government bills, six Commons public bills and one Senate public bill. In addition to the *Budget Implementation Act* and the usual supply bills, there were also several other bills that were the subject of particularly vigorous debate, including Bill C-51 (*Anti-terrorism Act, 2015*) and Bill C-586 (*Reform Act, 2014*). An omnibus bill, C-51 amended several acts including the *Criminal Code*, the *Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act* and the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and enacted and amended other acts. Bill C-586 changed the process by which candidates for election to the House of Commons are endorsed by their political parties. It also added to the *Parliament of Canada Act* a leadership review process to endorse or replace the leader of a party.

At the end of the session, the Chamber was seized with the debate on Bill C-377, *An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations)*. The bill changed the *Income Tax Act* to require that labour organizations provide financial information to the responsible minister for public disclosure. Debate

led to a point of order arguing that the bill required a Royal Recommendation because it appropriates public money by expanding the Canada Revenue Agency's current functions. In his ruling on the matter, the Speaker allowed debate on the bill to continue stating that the Commons had not found that a Royal Recommendation was required and that there had been assurances made to the Chamber that the provisions of the bill align with some of the work currently performed by the Canada Revenue Agency. The government eventually moved a motion to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill, and a point of order was raised arguing that the government could not attempt to curtail debate on an item of non-government business. On June 26, the Speaker agreed with the point of order, citing a ruling of a previous Speaker in 2013 stating that such a motion before the Senate did not respect the fundamental distinction between Government Business and Other Business and as such, ruled that the motion was out of order and should be discharged. The Speaker's ruling was appealed, however, and overturned on a standing vote. The motion was ultimately adopted and debate came to an end with the passage of the bill at third reading, without amendment.

Senate committees

In addition to their examination of legislation, a number of committees issued reports on their special studies on a wide variety of topics, including parliamentary privilege, terrorism, bee health and bilingualism, amongst others. All committee reports can be viewed at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/SenCommitteeBusiness/AllReports.aspx?parl=41&ses=2&Language=E>.

Senators

There were two Senators who reached the mandatory age of retirement in June and July. Senator **Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis**, who represented the senatorial district of Rougement, Quebec, retired on June 30. Appointed in 2009 on the advice of Prime Minister Harper, Senator Fortin-Duplessis had also twice been elected to the House of Commons as the Member for Louis-Hébert in 1984 and again in 1988. In the Commons, she was a Parliamentary Secretary for several different portfolios between 1987 and 1993. As a Senator, she was an active member of several standing committees, most notably with the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, where she served as deputy chair during the most recent session, and the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

On July 4, Senator **Marjory LeBreton** retired after serving more than 22 years in the Senate, including seven years as Leader of the Government in the Senate. Appointed in 1993 on the advice of Prime Minister Mulroney and representing Ontario, Senator LeBreton was a member of Cabinet until 2013 and held the portfolio of Secretary of State and Minister of State for Seniors from 2007 to 2010. As a Minister, she sat on several Cabinet committees, most recently the Cabinet Committee on Operations and the Cabinet Committee on Priorities and Planning. She also chaired the Cabinet Committee on Social Affairs from 2007 to 2008. In the Senate, she was a Member of numerous standing and special committees and also served as Opposition Whip prior to the change in government in 2006, after which she became Leader. Prior to her appointment to the Senate, Senator LeBreton was an advisor to political leaders including **John Diefenbaker**, **Robert Stanfield**, **Joe Clark** and **Brian Mulroney**.

Vanessa Moss-Norbury

Procedural Clerk



Saskatchewan

End of session

The spring sitting, which focused on the review of bills and the passage of the budget, concluded on May 14, 2015. The Assembly and the Committees debated and scrutinized legislation and estimates for slightly more than 150 hours. Lieutenant Governor **Vaughn Solomon Schofield** gave Royal Assent to 38 bills including an appropriation bill to defray the expenses of the public service.

Two very significant bills, Bill No. 180 - *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2015* and Bill No. 181 - *The*

Officers of the Legislative Assembly Standardization Amendment Act, 2015 were passed into law during the spring sitting. For the first time ever, none of the offices and organizations of the legislative branch of government come under the administrative authority of executive government. The legislation also establishes the basis of an important accountability framework for the legislative arm of government including the Officers of the Legislative Assembly.

The highlights include:

- a provision that all Officers of the Assembly, including the Clerk, are appointed by the Assembly and not by Cabinet, which was the case for some Officers;
- a uniform process for the appointment, re-appointment, suspension, and remuneration of the Officers of Assembly, including the Clerk;
- direct authority for the Clerk and Officers to employ staff to exercise the powers and duties of their respective offices;
- designation of the employees of the Officers as employees of the Legislative Assembly rather than executive government (i.e. the Public Service Commission), to be consistent with the status of the Officers themselves and the long-standing status of the employees of the Legislative Assembly Service and employees of the Provincial Auditor;
- direct authority for the Clerk and Officers to set policies and processes that are best suited to the operational necessities of their particular organization;
- a requirement that the Officers and the Legislative Assembly Service must have human resource and financial administration policies and that these policies must be tabled with the Board of Internal Economy (or Standing Committee on Public Accounts [PAC] in the case of the Provincial Auditor) to ensure accountability and transparency;
- a requirement that Officers and the Legislative Assembly Service table quarterly financial forecasts with the Board (or PAC);
- a uniform process for supplementary funding and special warrant for the legislative arm of government that is separate from the procedures of executive government; and
- formal legislative recognition of the Office of the Speaker along with policy and accountability standards for that office

Cabinet shuffle

Premier **Brad Wall** announced a small cabinet shuffle on May 21, 2015. **Ken Krawetz**, the Deputy Premier and Finance Minister, announced in 2014 that he would not be seeking re-election in the next provincial election. Replacing Mr. Krawetz as the deputy premier is **Don McMorris**. Replacing Mr. Krawetz as the finance minister is **Kevin Doherty**. **Scott Moe** takes over the Ministry of Advanced Education from Mr. Doherty. **Herb Cox** who entered cabinet for the first time, took over the Ministry of Environment from Mr. Moe.

Paul Merriman replaced Mr. Cox as the Government Whip, and **Larry Doke** replaced Mr. Merriman as the Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

New Officer of the Assembly

On Thursday, May 14, 2015, upon receiving a unanimous recommendation from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Assembly appointed **Judy Ferguson** as the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan.

The Provincial Auditor competition was an open competition that entailed a screening process, two interviews and a unanimous recommendation by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC). The screening panel included two external subject matter experts, the Senior Committee Clerk and the Director of Human Resources. The screening panel conducted initial interviews while the Chair and Deputy Chair observed. After considering the first interview and reference checks the short listed candidates were then interviewed by the full Committee. After careful deliberation, the Committee recommended that Ms. Ferguson be appointed to the position of Provincial Auditor.

Conferences

Saskatchewan will be hosting two upcoming conferences: the 37th Canadian Parliamentary Association (CPA) Canadian Region Parliamentary Seminar, and the Parliamentary Visitor Services Association Conference. The CPA Canadian Region Parliamentary Seminar will be held from November 12 to 15, 2015 and the Visitor Services conference will be held from September 1-5, 2015 in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Stacey Ursulescu
Committee Clerk



New Brunswick

Legislation

The First Session of the 58th Legislative Assembly opened on December 3, 2014, and adjourned on June 5, 2015, sitting a total of 63 days. During the session, 51 bills received Royal Assent. Several noteworthy bills were introduced. Of particular interest was Bill 44, *An Act to Amend the Smoke Free Places Act*, introduced by Minister of Health **Victor Boudreau**. Effective July 1, smoking is no longer permitted on public patios, playgrounds, outdoor walking trails, or within the boundaries of provincial parks. The legislation also bans the use of electronic cigarettes and water pipes anywhere that traditional smoking is not allowed. Minister of Government Services **Ed Doherty** introduced the *Service New Brunswick Act*, which merges four government organizations into a new Crown Corporation. The bill combines the existing Service New Brunswick, the Department of Government Services, FacilicorpNB and the New Brunswick Internal Services Agency into a single organization.

Minister of Energy and Mines **Donald Arseneault** introduced Bill 47, *An Act to Amend the Electoral*

Boundaries and Representation Act, which clarifies the factors necessary to achieve effective representation of both linguistic communities.

Leader of the Official Opposition **Bruce Fitch** introduced Bill 38, *An Act to Amend the Assessment Act*, which extends the period during which a property owner may apply for a review of the assessment for the real and true value of real property from 30 to 60 days.

Committees

Committees were active throughout the session. The adoption of the *Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure* on March 10, 2015, varied the Standing Rules of the House and modified the structure and mandate of certain committees. The revised rules allow certain bills to be considered in smaller committees rather than a committee comprised of all MLAs. The rule changes were designed to make debate on legislation more efficient. The Standing Committee on Estimates and Fiscal Policy, chaired by MLA **Bernard LeBlanc**, met 18 times throughout the session and considered the budgetary estimates. The Standing Committee on Economic Policy, chaired by MLA **Gilles LePage**, met nine times throughout the session and considered 36 bills.

A joint meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, chaired by MLA **Trevor Holder**, and the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations, chaired by Mr. LeBlanc, was held on June 23, 2015. The Committees considered Auditor General **Kim MacPherson's** report entitled *Report of the Auditor General of New Brunswick 2015 Volume 2, Performance Audit*. It detailed the Auditor General's findings on infection prevention and control in hospitals, government oversight of private wood supply, and the oversight and management of the provincial silviculture program in Crown forests.

Student parliament

The 26th annual Student Legislative Seminar was held from April 24 to 26, 2015. A total of 49 students from various high schools participated, representing all areas of the province. This non-partisan, bilingual program is open to Grade 11 and 12 students and is designed to educate students on the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. The students enjoyed various presentations and meeting with numerous guests including Speaker **Chris Collins**, Deputy Premier and Minister of Public Safety

Stephen Horsman, Deputy Speaker **Lisa Harris**, MLA **Brian Macdonald**, and Provincial Court Judge **Julian A.G. Dickson**.

Former Premier Resigns

On April 24, former premier and Member for Carleton **David Alward** was appointed Canada's Consul General in Boston, Massachusetts. Mr. Alward was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1999 as the Member for Woodstock and served for over 16 years as an MLA. He was the Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries from 2003 until 2006. Mr. Alward was elected leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in 2009 and led the party to a majority government at the general election held on September 27, 2010. Following the provincial election of September 22, 2014, which saw the election of a majority Liberal government, Mr. Alward stepped down as the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. He resigned his seat as Member for Carleton on May 22. A by-election must be called within six months of the seat becoming vacant.

Michaëlle Jean visit

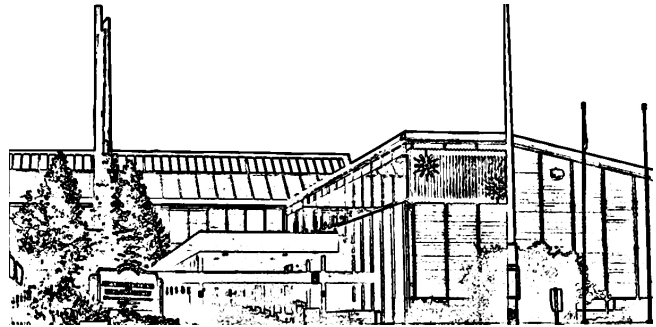
The New Brunswick Legislature was honoured to welcome **Michaëlle Jean**, Secretary General of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and former Governor General. Her Excellency began her first official Canadian visit with an address to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick on June 4, 2015. She was warmly welcomed to the Legislature by Premier **Brian Gallant**, Leader of the Official Opposition **Bruce Fitch** and Green Party Leader **David Coon**.

End of session standings

The session concluded on June 5, 2015. The current House standings are 26 Liberal Members, 21 Progressive Conservative Members, one Green Party Member and one vacant seat.

Rose Campbell

Clerk Assistant and Committee Clerk



Yukon

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The 2015 spring sitting of the First Session of the 33rd Legislative Assembly, which convened on April 2, adjourned on May 28 after 31 sitting days. On May 19, **Elizabeth Hanson** (Whitehorse Centre), Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC), rose in the House to present the Committee's first report. The document's subject matter was a report of the Auditor General of Canada – *Yukon Health Services and Programs – 2011* – that had been released on February 15, 2011 (during the preceding Legislature). The Committee's report reviewed steps that had been taken during the current Legislature with regard to the Auditor General's 2011 report, including the public hearing the Committee held on October 17, 2012, and a July 2013 progress report submitted by the Department of Health and Social Services to the Committee, in response to a request from the Committee. The PAC's first report "reiterate[d] that the Committee may follow up on the implementation of the recommendations the Auditor General's report on Health Services. This follow-up may include holding a further public hearing."

On June 9, PAC held a public hearing in the Legislative Chamber on a report the Auditor General of Canada had released on March 5, 2015, entitled *Report of the Auditor General to the Yukon Legislative Assembly – 2015: Corrections in Yukon – Department of Justice*. At the hearing, the Committee questioned witnesses from the Department of Justice with regard to the report's findings and recommendations, which focused on offender management and facility management.

Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner

Bill No. 75, *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*, which passed the House and was assented to in December, 2014, provides for whistle-blower protection relating to designated Yukon public entities. The *Act* came into force on June 15, 2015, thereby



Sgt Ronald Duchesne, Rideau Hall, OSGG (2015)

Commissioner Doug Phillips, Governor General David Johnston and Premier Darrell Pasloski took part in the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the dedication of Yukon's Government House.

establishing the Office of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner. As noted on the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner's website (www.yukonpidc.ca) the Commissioner has the authority to "investigate wrongdoing disclosures and reprisals [and] provide confidential advice to employees who are considering making a wrongdoing disclosure."

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* stipulates that Yukon's Ombudsman shall also serve as the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner unless the Legislative Assembly "by resolution supported by at least two-thirds of its members, recommend[s] the appointment of an individual, other than the Ombudsman, as the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner." At present, Yukon's Ombudsman, **Diane McLeod-McKay**, is serving as the territory's first Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner. Ms. McLeod-McKay is also Yukon's Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Governor General's visit

Governor General **David Johnston** was in Whitehorse from July 6 to 8 for the Annual Conference of the Governor General, Lieutenant Governors and Territorial Commissioners.

Also on July 6, Governor General Johnston, Yukon Commissioner **Doug Phillips** and Yukon Premier

Darrell Pasloski, dedicated Taylor House, a historic log house in downtown Whitehorse, as "Yukon's Government House", to serve as the Commissioner's new office. Constructed in 1937 for **Bill** and **Aline Taylor**, Taylor House is recognized for its architectural value and its association with the Taylor family who contributed to the early growth and economic development of Yukon. Taylor House is designated as a historic place by the City of Whitehorse.

Five previous Yukon Commissioners, Speaker **David Laxton** and many current and former members of the Legislative Assembly were among those who attended the ceremony. Members of the Taylor Family were also present to mark the occasion.

On July 8, the Governor General presided over the inaugural presentation ceremony of the newly created Polar Medal at the MacBride Museum of Yukon History. Ten individuals from the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec and Yukon received the medal, which "celebrates Canada's northern heritage and recognizes persons who render extraordinary services in the polar regions and in Canada's North." The Polar Medal replaces the Governor General's Northern Medal, which was created in 2005.

Linda Kolody
Deputy Clerk