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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**OF**  
**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

**TRANSCRIPT OF**  
**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**  
**AND THE**  
**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**  
**FOR**

**Tuesday 5 December 2006**



**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD 5 DECEMBER 2006 PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS**

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Souris-Elmira.

**INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY**

**Mr. Mooney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On Prince Edward Island, we have a strong tradition of helping others. It's a legacy that's been passed on generation to generation and something we first learn as children. We watch our parents and other family members respond during times of crises and we saw firsthand how their support eased the burdens of others.

Well Mr. Speaker, today, December 5<sup>th</sup> is International Volunteer day. It is a unique opportunity for government agencies, non-profit organizations, community groups, and the private sector to work together to attain common goals.

Volunteers come from all walks of life and impact virtually every aspect of our society including health, education, religious organizations, social services, youth, sport, culture, and the environment.

A recent Canada survey of giving, volunteering and participating reports that in Canada alone almost 12 million of us from aged 15 and older volunteered during a one-year period. This totals almost two billion hours and equivalent to one million full-time jobs that are volunteered across this country. Almost all volunteers agreed that making a contribution to their community was the most important reason for their volunteering.

It's hard to imagine what my district would be

like if it weren't for the achievements of the many non-profit and volunteer groups. It is because of the efforts of such groups like the Souris Lions Club, Friends of Elmira, Knights of Columbus, Board of Directors of the Eastern Kings Sportsplex, Friends of Elmira - there's many groups in my area - that it just makes our district a great place to live and we've been coming ahead steadily because of it.

Souris-Elmira is home to a diverse group of volunteer organizations that have one thing in common. Everyone is dedicated to making our community a better place to live.

So with this, I want to give a heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who are working to establish a better lifestyle, better opportunities in communities throughout our province and across this world.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from St. Eleanors-Summerside.

**HEATHER MOYSE'S CONTRIBUTION TO SPORTS**

**Ms. MacDonald:** Mr. Speaker, with all of the accomplishments Summerside native Heather Moyse has completed so far in her life, her biggest accomplishment did not come on the sports field.

Although she is among the world's best

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brakewomen in bobsledding, a speedy game breaker for Canada's national rugby team, and a Prince Edward Island track star, none of these compares to her biggest accomplishment: the two years she spent in Trinidad and Tobago teaching and developing sport for the disabled. This Islanders has her own set of priorities.

For Heather, all her medals and sports achievements rank far behind her time spent in these Caribbean Islands. Giving of her personal time and skills enriched not only her life but the lives of others and it was a great opportunity to help individuals with special needs to empower themselves. For Heather, it put things in a whole different perspective on life.

After taking some time off to compete in the women's Rugby World Cup Championship held in Edmonton this past fall, Heather is now back at her studies in occupational therapy at the University of Toronto.

I congratulate Heather on all her athletic achievements to date. I also take this time to thank her for her dedication and efforts on behalf of the disabled.

She continues to prove to be an excellent ambassador for Canada and for Prince Edward Island .

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Kings Square.

**WHEAT BOARD**

**Mr. R. Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My statement is a two-part one. While I was on my way home from Montreal the other day, I met up with a great group of people at the airport, the NFU members who were coming from a board meeting. I had a great chat with them and one of their main concerns was the federal government's attempt to dismantle the wheat board. They're very concerned about this move by the federal government and what it would do to other marketing boards, especially the milk board on Prince Edward Island.

**CBC EMPLOYEES RECEIVE 25 YR. PINS**

But Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a minute here to congratulate Steve Stapleton, Rob MacLean, Ian Petrie, and John Jeffery. I understand they got their 25 year pins today out at CBC and maybe you'll get a chance some day, (indistinct). Well, Mr. Speaker, I understand that they did 6,699 stories, John Jeffery and Ian Petrie, so whoever gets on tonight will be their 6700<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** Questions by Members starting with Responses to Questions Taken as Notice.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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**GOLFING WITH NICKLAUS  
AND WATSON(FURTHER)**

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

My first question today is for the hon. Minister of Tourism. And last week I asked the Premier about his once in a lifetime golf junket with Jack Nicklaus. At first he said he got the \$17,000 spot because the province was a sponsor. Then he changed his mind and said he was the guest of a multi-national drug company.

The minister was there golfing in a group too where someone donated a large sum of money to golf with Tom Watson. I'm wondering: What entitled him to golf in that foursome?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** (indistinct) Mr. Speaker, and the main corporate sponsor, Pfizer International, a large manufacturer of pharmaceutical drugs, was entitled to four teams in the Pro Am golfing event. Two of the pros were Mr. Nicklaus and Mr. Watson. By way of that corporate sponsorship, it entitled them to 16 players in the Pro Am event. It is true that they invited the Premier and I to be part of that. We were invited to participate in the event and they also, they gave two positions of those 16 to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. And the Heart and Stroke Foundation auctioned those positions in the Pro Am and raised over \$30,000.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm just wondering. It's a great point that some of those spots were auctioned off for charity. And I know perhaps that the minister thinks it's great that his department can sponsor an event like that with Tom Watson and Jack Nicklaus and then he can be entitled to go out there and golf with them. But I'm wondering: Wouldn't he think it would have been better if he perhaps had auctioned off his position to raise money for charity?

**Mr. R. Brown:** Good idea.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to be clear. I think I was clear in the beginning. It wasn't my decision. It wasn't the Premier's position. These positions belonged to the major corporate sponsor that invested a huge amount of money for that right. The corporation offered those positions to us and I commend the Premier of the province for participating in the event and being part of the event. The corporation was very gracious to offer two of those positions to the Heart and Stroke Foundation and I talked with representatives of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and they were very appreciative of that. They didn't say: You didn't give me four positions. You didn't give me six positions. No, Mr. Speaker, the Heart and Stroke Foundation were indebted to the corporate sponsor for the two positions they received.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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**NET PROFITS FROM GOLF EVENT**

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And that was an interesting answer. He commends his Premier for really taking the top decision in deciding to golf with Jack Nicklaus. That must have been one tough decision to make. I'm wondering.

Last week I asked the minister for the calculation of the net profit from the organization, promotion, and staging of the Legends of Golf event. Your contract with IMG says you were to receive your payment and full accounting report of the event by December 1<sup>st</sup>. I'm wondering: What were the net profits and do you have the report with you today?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

No, I don't have the report. The report was a contractual obligation between our department and IMG, the event manager. The overall budget for the event was \$1.4 million. We recovered close to a million dollars in corporate sponsorship on that event. Ticket sales were \$150,000 and through the marketing initiatives and exposure that it created for the province, the province invested \$250,000.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And you're supposed to receive a full

accounting by December 1<sup>st</sup>. We asked the question last week. We were hoping you would take the report back here and table it in the House but also under the contract, it says that any net profit from the event would be split 50/50 between IMG and the province and that on December 1<sup>st</sup> they would be forwarding that cheque to you. How much of a cheque did you receive?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Just before December 1<sup>st</sup> we received as some of the expenses attributed to the event that the province put in, we received a \$25,000 cheque for the use of the golf courses. We also received \$18,000 as part of the 50/50 revenue sharing around the TV revenues. I do want to stress to the hon. member and to the House and to the Island public that the revenues from this event continue to accumulate. There are other television networks that are interested in broadcasting this particular event and that will continue. But up until December 1<sup>st</sup> where we're closing the books on the 2006 event and now we're beginning planning for the 2007 event, the figures are as I presented them.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And, obviously, the minister is trying to spin his way around from an answer here and we're just looking for a straight answer from the minister. How much from IMG did you receive for a cheque for the net profits from the event? Was there any net profit or wasn't

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there? Did you receive a cheque from IMG for the net profit as was stated in the agreement with IMG? I'm wondering: How much did you receive or was it just your golf game and Premier's golf game?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And no, it was not just my golf game or the Premier's golf game. This was a major event for supporting an industry that is extremely important to this province. \$80 million is the spinoff revenue of the golf industry on Prince Edward Island. That's a major event. Prince Edward Island has achieved the position. It wasn't given the position. It has achieved the position of Canada's number one travel destination for golf. Those things just don't happen and our government took the lead on that. And we're continuing to maintain our position because if we do nothing, others will pass us but these things are important. And so we are maintaining our position by hosting events like the Legends of Golf. And it's not just by consequence that Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson happened to be playing golf in Brudenell in June. This is a major accomplishment and instead of taking shots at the Premier by his support of these events, the hon. member should be praising the government for investing in Island tourism.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm glad to see his members are applauding for him considering I'm asking a question here with regards to the net profit from the event. You're supposed to receive a cheque from IMG by December 1<sup>st</sup>. We don't know if there's any cheque or not. The minister is still spinning his way around and he talks about no coincidence that Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson were here for this great event. I'm sure that they probably have it in their calendar. Let's go golf with the The hon. Minister of Tourism and the Premier from PEI. That's the highlight of our year. Yeah, right!

I'm wondering: Was there a cheque with regards to the net profit of the event, yes or no?

**Mr. R. Brown:** That's a good one.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And I would appreciate if the hon. member would listen to the answers before he starts into the next question because I did talk about the net revenues of the event, the expenditures and the cost to government. The net revenue - and I know he's referring to the TV revenue and to the benefit after the event. What we received was \$18,000, which is a revenue distribution agreement on the broadcasts to date. We continued to sell this event. The overall income and expense on the event did not realize a net profit to the province on the event from an expense point of view.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Ten or 15 minutes later and 10 questions later I think we got an answer there that there was no net profit from that event. But I'm just agreeing here from final accounting and it says here: IMG agrees that promptly after the conclusion of each annual event, IMG shall calculate the net profits from the organization and promotion. It says here that IMG agrees that the final accounting will be sent to Tourism PEI no later than that of the First of December of each year. I'm wondering: Will the minister please table what he received from IMG?

**Mr. R. Brown:** Good question.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Within the information that is tabled is the agreement. I prepared to table the event information. I'm not exactly sure what the hon. member is asking exactly. The contractual agreements between the participants, it was an agreement between IMG and those people so we don't have those amounts. But if the hon. member is looking for a statement from IMG as relative to revenue and to the expenditures, it was a budget that was worked out between officials in our department and IMG. He has to be more specific.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

On page 3, clause no. 8, final annual accounting, the last line reads: IMG agrees that the final accounting will be sent to Tourism PEI no later than the First day of December of each year. Last Friday you indicated you hadn't received it yet. It would probably be arriving later that day at your office. That is what we would like tabled, the final annual accounting for last year's golf event. Will you table that in the House, yes or no?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And I did indicate on last Friday that I wasn't sure if we had received that final annual accounting. I did inquire with my staff and indeed we did receive the final annual accounting but as I tried to point out, because within the agreement there are third parties that are included: professional fees to professional athletes that I'm not sure if that is information for public consumption. Those were agreements that were made between IMG and those professional athletes and their appearance fees are part of negotiations that take place. So I do have to caution the hon. member that if there's private personal information that belongs to those people as part of their negotiated agreement with IMG. We agreed to a global appearance fee to the, for the athletes and the broadcaster and commentators and we received the value for that. The specifics of that I'm not prepared to table because that was a contractual agreement between the individuals and IMG.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.



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**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately, the minister likes to release information that he thinks makes himself and his government look good but when we ask for just a plain document, he's not sure if he can release it. He claims he's worried about what third parties might think or what's in the contract over third parties. He talks about appearance fees, I guess for some of the golfers, but I thought that he said that they were showing up here just to golf with you and the Premier. So I'm not really sure what the minister is trying to get here at but we would like every piece of information tabled in this House that is possible and would he please bring that back tomorrow.

**Mr. R. Brown:** Good question.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And as I already indicated, some of this information is the personal contracts between the professional athletes and the marketing group. I mean it's - we're prepared to table the information relative to the expenses but there's also, there's a large number of corporations that contributed money to this event and they also received the benefit of participation in the Pro Am. I'm not sure that all of those individuals that were involved need to have and it's appropriate that they have their names tabled in this Assembly. I think we can do a really justifiable accounting of this endeavour and it goes back to what I said earlier. It seems like the group over there want the advancement of nothing. They

certainly didn't support us when we promoted airlines to come in this province. They certainly didn't promote us on this Legends of Golf event and they're against our initiative on Sunday shopping so they're simply against everything.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

### GOLFING PARTNERS

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Another quick question here for the minister. Last Friday when I was asking the Premier about who he was golfing with on his dream vacation or his dream golf match with Jack Nicklaus, the Premier somehow seemed to have some selective amnesia on who he was golfing with. He wasn't sure if he was golfing with Peter McQuaid or if he wasn't golfing with Peter McQuaid. I'm wondering: Does the Minister of Tourism know who was golfing with the Premier that day or does he have selective amnesia as well?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And if the hon. Leader would listen to the answers that I gave earlier in Question Period, he would have heard me say that the major corporate sponsor received as part of that corporate package, which cost a half a million dollars, four teams in the Pro Am event. Now they invited myself and the Premier to participate in the Pro Am event. They gave two more positions in the Pro Am event to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. It's not my

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position to name the other 12 participants that a private corporation paid for. They were their business people. They were their guests and it would be inappropriate for me to let people know who they were. It was a very public event. There was TV coverage of it. There was massive media coverage of it. No one tried to hide their participation one little bit.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It's an easy question. Peter McQuaid is the Chief of Staff to the Premier. He is a clerk or a deputy minister in the Government of the Province of Prince Edward Island. He is the Premier's right hand man for the last 10 years. We're just wondering because the Premier doesn't seem to remember. He has selective amnesia. We know the minister already stated that he didn't golf with Peter McQuaid. Do you know if the Premier and Jack Nicklaus golfed with Peter McQuaid that day? It's a very simple question.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I said earlier, the people who participated in the Pro Am event with Mr. Nicklaus, Mr. Watson, and two other highly noted professional golfers were the guests of the major corporate sponsor.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** A government employee who is a paid political staffer of the people of the Province of Prince Edward

Island receives a golf round perhaps - we don't know yet - with Jack Nicklaus and this minister won't answer the question. Yes or no? Was the Chief of Staff to the Premier of Prince Edward Island golfing with Jack Nicklaus or Tom Watson?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, my guess is that the hon. member knows the answer to the question but I really do believe it's inappropriate for me to reveal the identity of the guests of the major corporate sponsor. You have to be - you have to respect these people. We are asking them to participate in an event that, obviously, the Leader of the Opposition doesn't believe in that they've condemned, that they said was costing the taxpayers \$1.5 million, that they said was a waste of money, and now he wants us to reveal those people's names. Well, they invested a lot of money. They asked many people to participate in the Pro Am event and you have to respect their confidentiality.

**Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Leader of the Opposition:** The people of Prince Edward Island invested a lot of money in this as well. They pay the salary of Peter McQuaid, if he did golf, and if I knew the answer, I would have asked you the other day. You had to correct me and say that, no, he wasn't playing in your foursome so, obviously, you knew he wasn't playing in your foursome. Obviously, I didn't know where he was playing. I don't know why the minister refuses to answer these questions but I'm going to move on now to the minister of health.

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### SENIORS' ASSETS FOR NURSING CARE(FURTHER)

As the minister knows, over the last 10 years this government has taken quite a bit of money from seniors in this province. He estimates that the cost of the new long-term care program will be about \$10 million a year. So over the last 10 years, we can estimate \$100 million worth of assets have been taken from Island seniors. I'm wondering: Will the minister please explain why it took 10 years and \$100 million taken from Island seniors and their families for your group to do anything about it?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health, Social Services and Seniors.

**Mr. Gillan:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has a characteristic way of making something good very negative. I think that if you would speak to those individuals over the last 10 years, 20 years, three months, whatever the time might be, is that they have received very, very good care in the manors in the homes where they are. It is loving care from the staff. It is a place where their families are appreciative of having them and the cost of providing that are primarily at the hands, in many instances, of the taxpayers but that is given willingly over to that. Yes, there is a portion of that that has to be supplied by those individuals.

But Mr. Speaker to get to his question after the preamble, other provinces deemed earlier than we did here in this province to separate the income. I take you back - and this is the response in many instances from Cabinet ministers here in this Assembly is that we are a small province. The resources that our

province have we do not glean from oil, from minerals, from a huge manufacturing sector but we have to be able to provide in the main those resources that government is going to use for our own tax purposes. We have to be very careful and if there are instances where individuals have to help pay that, this is the case in this particular instance that over the years we have asked where seniors have that ability to contribute.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

### LEVY ON ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A question today for the Minister of Tourism. As the minister knows, the issue of the marketing levy has generated a lot of concerns from operators and, specifically, smaller operators. Many of the operators feel that they've been left out of the process of consultation on this new tax. Will the minister and your government be legislating the 2% levy on room accommodations for visitors to pay for your failed efforts to support the tourism industry?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Leader of the Opposition:** Good question.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And certainly, I will not take a back seat when someone suggests that we have failed efforts in tourism. I've received from the - I just returned from a national meeting and Prince Edward Island is doing very well relative to

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the other jurisdictions in the country. But, no, our government will not be legislating a 2% tax.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I think we just have to look at the tabled bill, Bill No. 15 that was tabled last week by the minister and, in fact, there is going to be legislation put forward for municipalities. So I would like the minister to clarify this. Will visitors coming to Prince Edward Island have to be paying a room levy when they come to Prince Edward Island as of January, 2007?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism. The hon. Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs.

**Mr. MacFadyen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We did table a bill here in the House last week but it was enabling legislation to allow the communities under the *Charlottetown Area Municipality Act*, the Summerside area municipality act, and the municipality act itself to enable communities to tax a levy if they so desire.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'll go back to the hon. Minister of Tourism now because, yes, the Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs deals with municipalities but this is forcing municipalities to make this decision. And the reality is the failure of the

marketing campaign and the department and this minister. The Liberals have been pushing for adequate resources for product development and for marketing for tourism here on Prince Edward Island. And I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, why has it come to this that you are going to impose a levy on our visitors when, in fact, tourism - our numbers aren't where they should be? Why would you impose a 2% or would be supporting legislation enabling municipalities to put forward a 2% levy?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs.

**Mr. MacFadyen:** Mr. Speaker, this legislation is not being forced on the municipalities. This legislation was at the request of the business community in the Charlottetown area and rather than having the Charlottetown levy the tax and another municipality come to the government to ask can we do that as well, we want to work with the businesses in the community and allow them to implement what they figure they need in order to attract businesses to the province.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Charlottetown-Spring Park.

## DRIVING INSURANCE PREMIUMS

**Mr. MacAleer:** Mr. Speaker, my question is the Attorney General and it involves insurance premiums and it's caused by the fact that I overheard an interview by a spokesperson from the New Brunswick government who indicated that that province had dealt with the situation in which the differential between male and female had been overcome by a change in the manner in which premiums

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were being assessed. And my question then to the minister then: Is this particular application suitable for Prince Edward Island? In fact, has there been any notice given to your department concerning this issue and would you like to clarify what I think is really a question? Has there been achieved in New Brunswick something that we should be looking at Prince Edward Island with respect to male drivers?

**Mr. R. Brown:** Good (indistinct) New Brunswick.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education and Attorney General.

**Ms. Dover:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, I got information in relation to the proposition by the New Brunswick Premier and my understanding is that we shouldn't be jumping up too high about this proposal or the statement from the New Brunswick Premier and government because it's my understanding that the Consumer Association of Canada has slammed New Brunswick for this and said that the benefits to the consumer will be minimal but the possibility of profits remains very high.

Now here on PEI, as you might remember, hon. member, we passed the legislation in 2003 and decided that IRAC would be the regulator of insurance rates. In 2004, they reviewed the rates which have to be submitted every year and on an average, the rates went down 10%. In 2005 the rates went down 4% to 5% on an average and so what will happen is that IRAC will be asked by my department to review whether or not there are advantages that could be had for Islanders but it will be

IRAC who will be making that assessment.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from West Point-Bloomfield.

### GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING SYSTEM (FURTHER)

**Ms. Rodgeron:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Public Works. I'm getting quite a few questions around the graduated driver's license and I know it's still not clear on how this is going to unfold. So I was wondering if the minister could update the House on the changes that are proposed.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

**Ms. Shea:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We haven't yet brought this bill to the floor of the House but there will be a number of legislative changes coming forward along with changes to regulations and if passed, we hope that they will take effect early in the new year. There will be tightened restrictions around driver licensing which will include a zero tolerance for blood alcohol level. It will also include a license suspension for seatbelt violations for new drivers and restrictions on the use of cell phones, MP3 players and other potential distractions while behind the wheel of a car. The new legislation will also place, the age restrictions will also be changed. Currently, you can get a beginner license at 15 ½. That will be extended to 16 and the beginner period, which is now currently six months, will be extended to 12 months but there will also be some changes to the

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passenger, number of passenger restrictions in a vehicle that's allowed to be in a vehicle with an MP licensed driver.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from West Point-Bloomfield.

**Ms. Rodgeron:** Yeah, just another question, supplementary.

In regards to a student that has driver ed, how will that work under the new legislation?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

**Ms. Shea:** Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that's been discussed by our Caucus a number of times and what we have in the end, I guess, decided that we would bring to the floor of the House was that the beginner period would go to 12 months as opposed to the six it is now and remain at 12 months for all drivers, which would mean that although a person does have driver education, that they wouldn't be able to get their license any earlier. And Mr. Speaker, that was not the main benefit of having formal driver education. There are many other benefits to receiving driver education.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

### LEVY ON ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS (FURTHER)

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just to get back on the issue to clarify, Tourism Charlottetown has approached and the hotel association has approached to impose a 2% levy on accommodations here in

the city with 11 rooms or more. With that they're hoping to generate \$500,000 to go towards marketing and festivals and events for this region in Charlottetown and the issue is they're needing money. The reasons are needing money but the Department of Tourism is failing to give them enough. If we look at the budget of \$6 to \$7 million being allocated for marketing here on Prince Edward Island for tourism, we are far less than other jurisdictions here in Canada for tourism marketing. And my question is by imposing this, visitors are consumers, Mr. Minister; they're consumers. So by then going to impose this levy by enabling legislation, by imposing this 2% levy or whatever it is, don't you feel that our competitiveness is going to be lacking here on Prince Edward Island?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to inform the House and certainly all Islanders that what we're doing is what we always do as a government. We respond to industry. When an industry asks for government to cooperate in advancing their position, it's the position of our government to work with industry to create opportunities, to grow the industry, to develop the partnerships and that's what we're doing here. In 37 other destinations in Canada, there is a hotel room levy and so the industry of Prince Edward Island has certainly been observing this and they've looked at the possibility of doing that here. They've asked us if we could put in the enabling legislation that the municipality could pass a by-law so that this levy could be collected and we, as a responsible government, has partnered with that and has

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allowed it to happen.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For the minister to state a responsible government, a responsible government would be funding further the marketing campaign by the department. My question to the minister - he stated that there's 37 other jurisdictions in Canada that are doing this but my question is this: Of those 37 other jurisdictions, which one of those has a higher consumer tax rate than Prince Edward Island, Mr. Minister?

**Mr. R. Brown:** Good question.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, I don't know the consumer tax rate in all of the jurisdictions. I know that many of the jurisdictions have a different municipal tax rate that they work under. In PEI we do benefit from the residents' portion of hotel units are not taxed at the same commercial rate so there is benefit from the property tax assessments that our operators have compared to the operators in the mainland, for example. So when you're talking about tax rate, you have to take the full basket of taxes that applies to a particular operation or business but the point here is clear. We are a government that works with industry, builds our partnerships, and when we can work together to advance an industry, we're committed to do so.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Advance in industry. The Tourism Advisory Council has been lobbying government for added resources for marketing for years and we in the Opposition believe that there needs to be adequate resources allotted to that but this decision is going to be imposing extra dollars spent on the visitor, a tax. And my question is this: Mr. Minister, what again - I want you to answer this question. Of those 37 jurisdictions, I think it's important to note, which has a higher tax rate than we have here on PEI? Answer that, Mr. Minister.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And as I already stated, I don't know all of the taxation within the jurisdictions and I certainly do not know of all of the taxes that apply to the business. For example, the Provincial Treasurer in his budget this year has pledged to reduce the small business tax for all business operators which applies to hoteliers. Over the next five years, that will be reduced to 1%, which will be the lowest in the country, so I'm not exactly aware of how the basket of taxes is applied in every jurisdiction but this is a levy that the tourism industry has asked for, that they will be collecting. Certainly, within their discussions and within the studies around this levy was the whole idea of whether this would be cost-prohibitive and consumer resistance would be caused by the imposition of the tax. They took those challenges into account and they decided to go ahead and ask us for it and we're partnering with them.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-

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Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting. Some of the backbenchers are making comments about this line of questioning when in fact members from your own community that own operations have written government opposing this who own accommodations and are opposing this. They are even addressing this in letters that they've written. But we have to look at we don't have the harmonized sales tax here on Prince Edward Island. Alberta, for instance, who does have a levy doesn't even have to have provincial sales tax so we can't use other jurisdictions saying: Oh, they do it so we should do it, because in fact we have the highest consumer tax rates here in the province. I'm asking the minister first of all. Will you consider another way, Mr. Minister, to allocate this \$500,000 necessary to Tourism Charlottetown for marketing? Mr. Minister, can you do this, look to another way so that money can be found so that we do not have to tax our tourists?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs.

**Mr. MacFadyen:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify for the Member from Charlottetown-Kings Square and to answer the question from the Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove. One, the city of Charlottetown, the Mayor, the hon. Clifford Lee, met with the hotel accommodations and convention centres and with Tourism Charlottetown and signed an agreement before they came to government asking government if they would support the

initiative. It hinged on whether government would support it or not. The request came from that group to government asking us to allow them to initiate a tax, accommodation levy. We agreed with it but at the same time we agreed that we would allow all municipalities to have the choice; therefore, we introduced enabling legislation.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Mr. R. Brown:** (indistinct) proper support.

**Speaker:** All right, hon. member.

**Ms. Bertram:** Mr. Speaker, this question was directed to the Minister of Tourism and he did not stand up to answer that question. Mr. Minister, will you look to other ways instead of having to impose a tax? Municipalities will have to make this decision. Will you not, Mr. Minister, Minister of Tourism, Tourism, allocated money from your budget to go towards extra marketing?

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs.

All right, hon. member.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs.

**Mr. MacFadyen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We introduced and tabled legislation to allow municipalities to act in the manner that they wish to act and we allowed other municipalities if they so desired, we gave



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them enabling legislation to do so.

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Interesting, Mr. Speaker, the strategy that this government takes. This is - we're bringing a voice for -

**Speaker:** All right, hon. member.

**Ms. Bertram:** - operators here on Prince Edward Island that are concerned with this imposition of taxes to our tourists. And here in the Opposition we will suggest and we would like to propose that the Minister of Tourism initiate something new in relation to the revenue of the \$325 million through tourism that 3% to 4% of the revenues taken be allocated to marketing which would see us have a marketing budget of about \$10 million a year. Will the minister support the Opposition's plea for this added resources and I think he should see where it's supporting industry and the economy in Prince Edward Island, Mr. Minister of Tourism?

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And what's becoming apparent in the whole discussion is that the Opposition does not support the tourism industry. They do not support the leaders of the tourism industry.

**Some Hon. Members:** Shame, shame!

**Speaker:** All right, hon. members. Let the minister -

**Mr. P. Brown:** They will not support the people that come together that spent countless volunteer hours developing policies, researching initiatives, finding out what's happening in the rest of the country, seeing how they can advance their own position but we do. When they come to government with ideas that they want to advance their own cause, we support it. We don't stand up against them. We don't say that your ideas aren't worthy of our support and our participation so we work with the industry. They think they have all the answers. They can go on their own but the question is clear. Do they support the industry and do they support (indistinct)?

**Speaker:** The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

**Ms. Bertram:** Mr. Speaker, don't let the minister talk about imposition. What did you do with the provincial park system here, Mr. Speaker, and imposing on communities and your failure as a department and a minister to put adequate resources to the provincial park system? So don't talk about imposing.

But Mr. Speaker, let's go back to the question that was asked. Will you support the Opposition's plea for the 3% portion of the revenues taken, the \$325-\$330 million from tourism revenue to tourism marketing for this upcoming year, Mr. Minister?

**Leader of the Opposition:** Good question.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Tourism.

**Mr. P. Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And this government has supported the

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tourism industry and continues to support the tourism industry. Last year I received three-quarters of a million additional dollars to market Prince Edward Island. The year before I received one million additional dollars to support tourism.

**Speaker:** All right, Leader.

**Mr. P. Brown:** We put forward the Legends of Golf event, which they did nothing but criticize. We supported airlines coming into this community and our province, which they did nothing but criticize. We're responding to the needs of the tourism industry by introducing Sunday shopping, which they did nothing but criticize. They don't have one idea. They have no support for the industry and our record is clear.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Speaker:** Final question. The hon. Member from Crapaud-Hazel Grove.

### QUALITY OF PAINT ON ROADS

**Ms. Bertram:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very clear that this government is going down with that statement by that minister today. This is tourism. I will leave the minister on my final question and go to the minister of transportation for my final question.

I have been approached by many motorists and those in the transport industry in regards to the reflective paint on the roads that's being used over this past season, Madam Minister. I would like you to come back to the House or perhaps you can answer this. Are we putting less reflective beads in the paint because people are very concerned about safety.

They're saying that the yellow paint, white paint is not as visible as it used to be. So I'm wondering: Are we sacrificing safety, the cost of the reflective beads, Madam Minister? And perhaps you can come back, table some information later on in the proceeding next couple of weeks.

**Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation and Public Works.

**Ms. Shea:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Actually, I do a lot of driving and I'm also concerned about that. If the paint seems it's not very fresh, it doesn't appear to be very reflective. We did try out a new brand of paint on one of our highways just over the last six months so we are working on the problem.

**Speaker:** End of Question Period.