

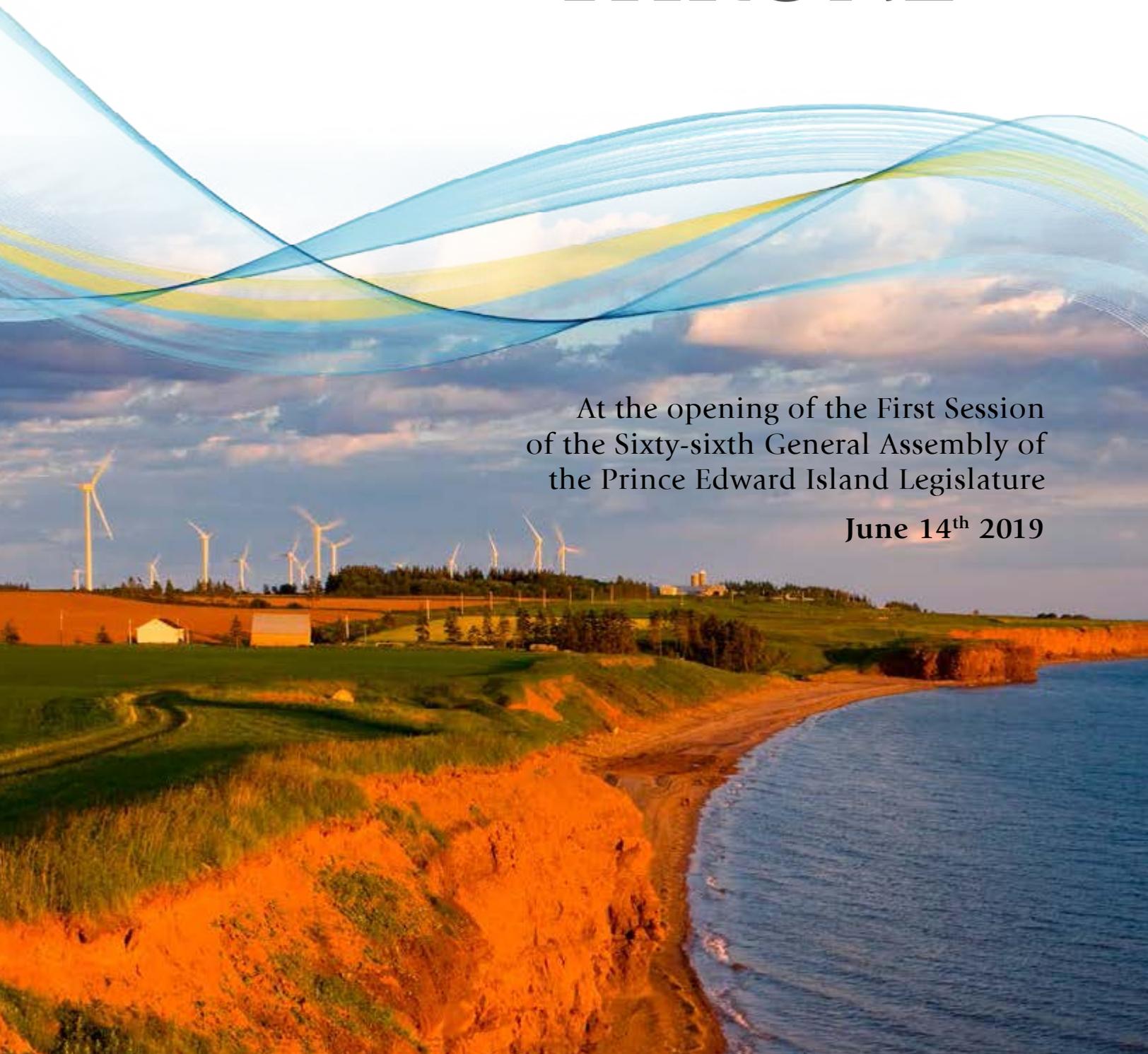
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

At the opening of the First Session
of the Sixty-sixth General Assembly of
the Prince Edward Island Legislature

June 14th 2019



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

SPEECH FROM
THE **THRONE**



Delivered by
The Honourable Antoinette Perry
Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island

At the Opening of the Sixty-sixth
General Assembly of Prince Edward Island

June 14, 2019
at 11:00 a.m.

*Putting Islanders at
the heart of our decisions.*

Introduction

Good morning. Bonjour. Welî eksitpu'k.

Mister Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, invited guests and all Islanders – it is my great honor to welcome you to the First Session of the 66th General Assembly of Prince Edward Island.

In particular, I want to welcome the new members of this Assembly. Your communities have placed a great deal of trust in your leadership, judgement and vision for a better Prince Edward Island. I know that each of you takes that responsibility very seriously, and during times of both challenge and opportunity I know you will always be motivated by the deep sense of duty you are feeling today.

And remember this: While your presence in this Legislative Assembly is for a mandate, you are contributing to a respected institution that will last for centuries. Your actions and decisions will add to the richness of that legacy – and you will leave your mark on the evolution of Island democracy. It is a great responsibility, and I know you will treat it as such.

In reflecting on today's speech, I remain so deeply impressed by Prince Edward Island's commitment to democracy, our sense of collective purpose and our abiding interest in building a better future for our province and for all who do and will live in it. Taking the best traditions of our past, addressing the biggest challenges of the present, and building the brightest future possible for our province is your task as legislators.

Once again, Islanders fully participated in our election – in high numbers, with active engagement and with expectation of respectful representation. Prince Edward Islanders voted for an unprecedented minority result and with the full expectation that we would listen and find ways to work together to provide stable governance and effective public administration.

Voter participation on the Island remains an example to much of the democratic world. The level of engagement we have in our province is significant, and our collective responsibility as leaders is to respond to the expectations Islanders rightly have that we will address the matters we heard from them during the election: economic growth and jobs, better social inclusion, strong communities and environmental sustainability.

I want to pay tribute to the leaders of the four parties – each of whom articulated strong visions for our province's future, and helped to guide a mature, constructive discussion among the citizens of our Island.

The placement of one's name on a ballot is a courageous act. It reveals a willingness to test one's values and ideas in a vigorous, difficult process.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of all those women and men who allowed their names to stand in the provincial election. The placement of one's name on a ballot is a courageous act. It reveals a willingness to test one's values and ideas in a vigorous, difficult process. Our democracy, and our province, has been enriched by their participation. We all were deeply saddened by the tragic loss of candidate Josh Underhay and his son Oliver during our electoral process and we all will work hard to uphold the values that Josh exhibited in his life.

The 66th General Assembly

The recent election, historic in result, clearly proved that Prince Edward Island is home to a range of different voices, opinions and perspectives. The exercise of the election, and the weeks since, have shown that we as leaders and representatives can come together, even where our opinions may differ, to collaborate in the best interest of Islanders.

Soon after the election and its formation, my Government ensured that the three parties represented in this Assembly came together to work constructively on a shared agenda for Islanders. Through collaboration between leaders and the house leaders we remain committed to delivering stable government to the people of this province.

My Government is committed to leading through active collaboration with all sides of this Assembly. That commitment includes open and regular consultation in all key areas of our work, including on elements of this Speech, the upcoming 2019-20 operating budget and in the development and tabling of legislation. As we have engaged with our colleagues, we have heard of the priorities on which they would like to see progress. For the Official Opposition, these include housing, poverty elimination and climate change. Third Party priorities conveyed include health care and education. These priorities, shared by My Government, will be included in the immediate focus of our collective work. This level of practical collaboration is what Islanders have called us to and what we will work to provide them.

Indeed, the illuminating recent debate over our democratic future revealed a desire to approach our democracy with an open and judicious mind and, while the question of changing to a system of proportional representation may not have reached the required threshold, there remains a degree of public support for reforms in the way that work is done in this Legislative Assembly.

This level of practical collaboration is what Islanders have called us to and what we will work to provide them.

For that reason, Government will convene a panel made up of citizens and elected members to consider reforms to this Legislature. The goal will be to introduce constructive changes to the way public input is gathered by this Assembly – and new rules to govern the open transmission of information to Islanders. This exercise will begin within the next six months, and Government expects to table significant amendments to the Legislative Assembly Act within the next year. While respectful of the traditions of this institution, Government also understands that a rigid adherence to the past is no emblem of strength. To maintain public trust, we must evolve in a respectful, responsible manner. We also need, as a priority, to find ways that we can better engage our young people in the democratic process as what we do today should be in their interest.

Prince Edward Island – A Special Place

Most Islanders will tell you how proud they are of the place they call home. While we are not boastful, we do recognize that this province is a special place, filled with great people living in many great communities across this province. We can, as a province, draw on the deep knowledge of the Mi'kmaq, on whose traditional homeland we sit today. We can look to our Acadian ancestry, on this year that we - for the first time - host the Congrès mondial acadien. We can see strong symbols of Irish, Scottish, English, German, Lebanese and Dutch roots in our communities. And we can see so many people from across Canada and around the world who have chosen Prince Edward Island as their home. Together, we have and will continue to build a province that is diverse in nature and unified in purpose.

Even in the face of challenge, and often in the face of adversity, we witness how the people of this province strive, overcome and succeed. The challenges are greater for some of our neighbours and friends and as an Island community we are at our best when we work together to tackle hard issues. This has to be our objective: to come together to address the most pressing issues we all face, to support those who require additional help, and to celebrate together when we do well.

We heard through the recent election that Islanders want us to address climate change so that our province remains as environmentally sustainable as it can be for generations to come. They want us to build resilient communities throughout PEI and an ability to succeed whether your immediate population is 500 or 15,000. They want us to continue to build

To maintain public trust, we must evolve in a respectful, responsible manner.

Together, we have and will continue to build a province that is diverse in nature and unified in purpose.

They have pressed us to build real housing solutions in rural and small communities as well as in our cities and towns.

innovative health and education services. They have pressed us to build real housing solutions in rural and small communities as well as in our cities and towns. They have underlined that our pursuits against poverty and social exclusion should be persistent and real.

In sum, they have asked us as leaders to work together and with them to ensure PEI remains a special place for many generations to come. We have said that our focus needs to be on the people of this province and it is with that principle by which my Government commits to lead.

Our Vision

The vision I will outline today is ambitious. It draws on the priorities that have been shared by all parties of this Assembly. In the first six months, my new Government will put in place the building blocks which will create a solid foundation to achieve the goals to make this vision a reality.

Multi-partisanship involving all parties is a necessity as our long-term vision and strategy for Prince Edward Island is grounded in a long-term perspective, not shorter-term cycles of politics and economics.

As we tackle the many challenges before us, we are blessed to be able to draw on a professional public service with deep knowledge and expertise to help develop sustained solutions. We also can draw on many engaged community-based organizations and their leadership.

My Government is committed to major investments in the people of this province, in many areas including poverty elimination, housing, health, education and infrastructure. My Government will address climate change and protect our environment, working hand-in-hand with local, regional, national and international partners.

My Government believes in building upon the economic success that the province is currently experiencing, while planning for economic stability in the long-term. Increasing the competitiveness of our local economy will attract capital and skilled labour, fostering an economic climate where innovative good jobs are regularly being created. We will invest in the future through strategic infrastructure, such as proper high-speed internet, to help raise household opportunities and income.

PEI has changed a great deal in the last twelve years. We have done well, but we can do even better. Indeed, we must always strive to do better for our province. In our Island society, no one should have to live in a car or on the street. No one should have to choose between food or medica-

PEI has changed a great deal in the last twelve years. We have done well, but we can do even better.

tion. No child should be experiencing poverty. These kinds of inequality are disturbing to us all. They compel us to look within and act without delay.

Making Life Better for All People

My Government is committed to making life better for all people.

This will be a Government of inclusion. All residents of PEI are deserving of respect and dignity; all deserving of care and compassion. Islanders care about each other and regularly come together to support one another. It is together that we can do great things for this province.

Our province has a reputation for being kind and welcoming to visitors. We have to practice that same acceptance to our own friends and neighbours: hate speech and intolerance have no place in society. It's not enough to simply acknowledge our diversity; we must embrace it.

This will be a Government focused on improving how we undertake our business. All residents of PEI are deserving of hope and opportunity, and all deserve to be remembered and cared for. It is time to do politics differently here on PEI.

This will be a Government looking to the future. My Government aspires to achieve their goals and make this shared long-term vision of a better PEI a reality. A PEI which is a regional, national and global leader; where our people and communities are healthy and prospering; where our economy and culture are vibrant; where knowledge and good ideas are sought out and cherished; and where children are empowered and encouraged to reach their full potential.

To accomplish this vision, we must focus on what is most important to us and what unites and connects us.

Making Life More Affordable

My Government is committed to making life more affordable for Islanders.

This goal will be reached through fiscally responsible stewardship of our province's finances. We are committed to lowering taxes, especially for low-income Islanders, and allowing families to keep more of their own hard-earned money. My Government will work with our private sector to deliver shared prosperity for all Islanders. We will support regional economic development across the province that creates meaningful jobs in communities throughout PEI. When our enterprises and communities

All residents of PEI are deserving of respect and dignity; all deserving of care and compassion.

My Government is committed to making life more affordable for Islanders.

When our enterprises and communities do well, Islanders do well. And when Islanders succeed, our businesses and communities flourish.

My Government's long-term vision is one where Islanders can afford home ownership and access programs and supports to make this a reality.

This focus will ensure more Islanders are participating in our local economy to their full potential.

do well, Islanders do well. And when Islanders succeed, our businesses and communities flourish.

My Government is committed to building upon the excellent work done over the last few years by many Islanders in the development of the PEI Poverty Reduction Strategy. In the first six months of our mandate we will act upon key recommendations and step up efforts to eliminate poverty in our province. We will initiate a PEI-specific secure income program pilot as a means of finding workable solutions to abiding poverty challenges that some of our residents face.

Ensuring Home Ownership and Housing Affordability

Housing will be a priority of my Government. Our province is facing a province-wide vacancy rate of 0.3%: this is a historic challenge and one which we must face head-on. We will accelerate the development of affordable housing supply, provide more rental supports, address short-term rental questions, and provide more regular and reasonable support for all tenants.

My Government's long-term vision is one where Islanders can afford home ownership and access programs and supports to make this a reality. It includes allowing home owners to protect and enhance their investment in their home communities. It extends equally to affordable housing options for renters and prospective home owners that are plentiful and lead to our overall housing vacancy rate being healthier.

Strengthening our Economy and Increasing Job Opportunities

Prince Edward Island's economy must not be complacent in the fast-paced and changing new economic age. Our most valuable resource is our people; in fact, it is people – as entrepreneurs and business and organizational leaders, as employees and workforce, as educators and trainers – who are at the heart of any economic success.

My Government is focused on investing in people. Our long-term vision is to grow our province's intellectual capital through a direct focus on education, skills training and lifelong learning. This focus will ensure more Islanders are participating in our local economy to their full potential. Our economic climate will develop and retain skilled innovators from all sectors, and proactively seek more people and talent through our opportunities and competitiveness.

Opportunities will be created through strategic investments in programs and services to enhance our skill sets and our economy. For example, to support opportunities in the bioscience sector, we will support a new Bioscience Skills and Training Initiative involving partnership between bioscience business, Holland College, University of Prince Edward Island and Government.

The new economy is being driven by people and ideas. Data and knowledge being generated through research and development are avenues of opportunity. Our Government will help drive the development of more ideas and more innovation here in PEI, creating an economic climate which supports greater homegrown economic activity here in our province.

My Government also knows and appreciates the importance of our traditional industries. We know that the contributions of our farming and fishing families and our tourism operators are central to growing our provincial economy. We will work with these industries to innovate and prosper in our changing global economy.

PEI must work smarter with new technologies and innovation to add value to existing Island products and discover and develop new ones. My Government is committed to ensuring the benefits of economic prosperity are fairly shared across the province. This will include investments in strategic regional infrastructure, working directly with the PEI Partnership for Growth which represents private sector leaders from across the province. My Government is also committed to increasing consumer protection and consumer choice for all Islanders.

Preserving and Protecting our Natural Environment

My Government's long-term vision is anchored in preserving and protecting our natural environment. The connections between land, water, environment, communities, and our Island economy are intimate. A comprehensive approach to finding solutions is thus necessary.

My Government will work with all parties and all Islanders to ensure the spirit and intent of the *Lands Protection Act* is championed and upheld, balancing the interest that everyone shares in the appropriate use of our lands. The Department of Agriculture and Land is developing comprehensive educational aids on this Act, and will offer training for all Members of this Assembly in the first six months of our mandate.

Our land is a finite resource and its use must remain focused in the ways that are of greatest benefit to the long-term interests of the Island and

We know that the contributions of our farming and fishing families and our tourism operators are central to growing our provincial economy.

The connections between land, water, environment, communities, and our Island economy are intimate.

Our vision for the province is one where land ownership and stewardship is secured in the hands of our future generations of Islanders.

Working collaboratively and uniting our province, we will build upon the successes of the current five-year Climate Change Action Plan to develop a more forward looking, longer-term strategy with realistic, achievable goals.

Islanders. Our vision for the province is one where land ownership and stewardship is secured in the hands of our future generations of Islanders. To that end, over the next six months we will consult on the establishment of a Land Bank that helps keep land in appropriate use across the province.

My Government is committed to the protection of our groundwater. Our province is solely reliant on groundwater for our drinking water. In the first six months of the mandate, complete *Water Act* regulations will undergo public engagement toward full implementation.

Additional independent local science will be undertaken, free of government or industry pressure, to build up our knowledge and understanding of our current water situation. Further policy decisions will be science based upon the results of local research, and strike a reasonable balance between human needs and ecological considerations.

Addressing Climate Change

Climate change threatens our coastlines, our crops, and the lives of future generations of Islanders. My Government's long-term vision for PEI is to achieve a carbon-neutral society.

We continue to have an enviable track record in reducing climate impacts, including through renewable energy and in our collective efforts to reduce and recycle waste. We have made good strides to encourage fuel switching in homes and buildings. However, we have much more work to do.

Younger generations are extolling us now to take climate change more seriously than we have been. They have become our teachers, and we must listen to their voices. Working collaboratively and uniting our province, we will build upon the successes of the current five-year Climate Change Action Plan to develop a more forward looking, longer-term strategy with realistic, achievable goals. We will set more aggressive targets in cleaner transportation and work with key industries such as agriculture and trucking to accelerate innovations that lower emissions. We will undertake more engagement with Islanders to seek ideas and solutions that can work for everyone.

Deepening Reconciliation with our First Nations

My Government values its relationship with the Mi'kmaq of PEI and recognizes the contribution of Mi'kmaq citizens to the Island's economy,

society, heritage and identity. We take seriously the moral and legal imperative to balance the interests between Aboriginal and treaty rights and broader society. Earlier this year, as an expression of our commitment to the reconciliation process, we entered into a Framework Agreement with the Mi'kmaq of Prince Edward Island and the Government of Canada. This Agreement sets out a process by which we will continue to work collaboratively with Canada and the Mi'kmaq on issues of importance to the Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nations. At the same time we are devoting our attention to broader societal issues such as housing, education, justice, skills and training, employment, children and families, and economic development, whether on or off reserve. We look forward to working with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, the Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nations and Indigenous organizations to make progress in areas such as these. This year, as a clear indication of our commitment to the reconciliation process, we will recognize and celebrate Mi'kmaq Treaty Day on October 1st.

Championing our Culture and Heritage

There is no shortage of talent on PEI. Our artists, storytellers, musicians, writers and craftspeople contribute to our tapestry of tradition, community and culture. They are as vibrant and varied as the colours of this beautiful province from which they often draw their inspiration. Their creativity is an important component of our tourism and community appeal and generates a meaningful contribution to our economy. It's imperative we support these talents to ensure our culture is enhanced and appreciated for generations to come. Indeed, we should all be encouraging creative pursuits among our young people, and my Government will take an active interest in developing cultural and historical interests of our youth.

Caring for our People

More Proactive and Efficient Health Care

Healthy living and timely access to appropriate health care services affects each and every Islander and their families. The proper resourcing of and support for health care professionals and the investment of public dollars into our health care system is of utmost importance.

Health care is currently the largest area of public expenditure in our province, and my Government knows it is imperative to ensure these dollars are being invested in providing the right care, at the right time and the right place for all Islanders.

We take seriously the moral and legal imperative to balance the interests between Aboriginal and treaty rights and broader society.

Our artists, storytellers, musicians, writers and craftspeople contribute to our tapestry of tradition, community and culture.

The proper resourcing of and support for health care professionals and the investment of public dollars into our health care system is of utmost importance.

The more that skills and training of all our medical professionals are fully utilized, the more Islanders are able to access the health services they need in a timely manner.

My Government's long-term vision for our health care is a system which is more proactive, responsive and efficient. Health care services are best delivered and better accessible when they are available in communities across the province. Increasing collaborative care models at every level, and expanding scope of practice where feasible, will ensure that professional services are efficiently organized and services more easily accessible for Islanders.

The more that skills and training of all our medical professionals are fully utilized, the more Islanders are able to access the health services they need in a timely manner. This in turn will remove service bottlenecks in our emergency rooms, lessening stress on patients and providers alike.

My Government will engage the physician and nursing communities more directly on the recruitment and retention of health professionals. We will launch a new PEI Doctors Recruiting Doctors approach guided by a physician resource plan. We will proactively identify anticipated needs, engage our doctors to provide practical insights and mentorship for early-career physicians, and work with a broader team including engaged communities and departmental staff. This approach will be replicated in other areas, such as nursing, where our health professionals are so valued. We will make additional and sustained investments to primary care and specialized care to ensure the needs of Islanders are met – that every Islander has access to a doctor and that wait times in areas such as hip and knee replacements are lessened.

Accessible Mental Health Supports

My Government is greatly concerned with the growth of mental health challenges being battled by many Islanders. Our long-term vision for a healthy Island is rooted in the belief that we must better understand the pressures and causes of mental health challenges in order to have the best supports and treatment accessible and available.

Immediate action in the short-term is a priority of my Government. Mental health service delivery will be fast-tracked and expanded.

A provincial mental health campus which has been long discussed and projected in many capital budgets, is our top infrastructure priority. A modern, state-of-the-art facility will be constructed and operational as quickly as can be achieved. This facility will be integrated into the greater community, to better support and help avoid stigmatizing those facing their challenges. Additionally, more mental health services will be developed to be delivered at a community level.

Mental health service delivery will be fast-tracked and expanded.

Dignity and Respect for Aging Islanders

PEI's population is aging at a high rate, presenting unique opportunities and challenges for our province. Government must support aging Islanders who have contributed so much to the growth and development of this special place we call home.

We will provide more programs and investments to allow these older Islanders to continue to live independent, supported lives in their own surroundings and to continue to contribute to our communities. Our seniors should never feel alone or unsafe. More specialized housing supports will be provided for our seniors to ensure they are secure in their home communities.

Investing in our Future Generations

My Government knows that we must put child well-being at the very heart of what we do. Every Island child deserves a proper start in life. In early childhood, children's brains can form 1,000 neural connections every second. This is a once-in-a-lifetime pace that is never matched again. These connections are the building blocks of every child's future.

My Government's long-term vision is to maximize the potential of each and every child and encourage them to reach their full potential. What children experience in their earliest years of life shapes and defines their futures.

Investments in a coordinated approach for young Islanders will be undertaken including the establishment of universal, half-day, community-based pre-kindergarten for all Island four-year olds and expansion and the further development of a long-term provincial school food program.

Encouraging Lifelong Learning and Skills Development

Education is truly a lifelong endeavour. Formalized education and lifelong learning are investments in both the present and the future of our province. The ongoing pursuit of knowledge enhances social inclusion and self-sustainability as well as our collective spirit and competitiveness.

My Government's long-term vision is for our entire population to be reaching their full potential, individually and collectively, through personal and professional development throughout one's life. Government must show leadership in supporting lifelong learning and skills develop-

Government must support aging Islanders who have contributed so much to the growth and development of this special place we call home.

My Government knows that we must put child well-being at the very heart of what we do. Every Island child deserves a proper start in life.

Formalized education and lifelong learning are investments in both the present and the future of our province.

ment, anticipating and supporting opportunities in job sectors that are critical to our province as they will provide sustainable and well-paying employment for Islanders. We welcome the federal 2019 budget announcement of a new Canadian Training Benefit and look forward to further development of this initiative.

Connecting our Communities

My Government knows that high-speed internet is an absolute necessity for every Islander and Island business. It is a key to economic, social and community development. Today, high-speed internet is not just a convenience, but an absolute necessity. Fast and reliable internet in small communities will make them more appealing to small businesses, doctors, educators, immigrants, and remote workers.

High-speed internet is a fundamental requirement for sustaining our communities and economic growth. The recently announced internet solution for PEI is being reviewed and a 'Made in PEI' plan to further enhance internet availability involving all industry stakeholders, including local internet service providers, is being undertaken. Priority is being given to establishing high-speed service across PEI.

Islanders know that our many communities across the province provide a sense of connection and support. My Government will lead and champion the development of a viable and sustainable community hub program based on the Island success story in St. Peter's Bay led by Jimmy MacAulay.

My Government's goal of connecting communities includes investments and enhancements to our transportation infrastructure networks. We are committed to working together on a province-wide integrated active and public transportation strategy with a goal of a more self-sustainable system by 2050.

My Government's long-term vision is one of healthy and vibrant communities within strong interconnected networks including transportation, technology and most importantly, people. Local and regional development and economies are innovative and resilient, while opportunities and benefits are found from tip-to-tip, in communities big and small. We will work with community leaders to enhance opportunities for growth, knowing that stronger communities will lead to a stronger province.

My Government's long-term vision is one of healthy and vibrant communities within strong interconnected networks including transportation, technology and most importantly, people.

Respecting and Listening to Our People

Strengthening Trust and Integrity in our Political System

My Government is committed to restoring Islanders' trust and confidence in our political system.

In 1843, almost two hundred years ago, the cornerstone was laid for Province House. Designed by a self-trained architect and built by hand by Island craftsmen, Province House has become a national treasure, and the centerpiece of our freedom and democracy in PEI. It has been the scene of many important milestones: responsible government in 1851; the Charlottetown Conference in 1864; and, in 1993, the location of the only time in Canada where the most senior positions in an assembly were held entirely by women.

As we watch Province House being re-built next door, we also need to repair our democratic institutions. We need to build more open and collaborative work in the Assembly and in committees, engage more openly across our aisles and with Islanders, and govern with kindness and respect for others. We may not always agree, but when we disagree we should do so respectfully. We need to re-build our institutions and, in doing so, restore Islanders faith in our system of governing.

My Government encourages the Special Committee on Committees to listen to the will of Islanders who have stated their desire to see a new approach. One suggestion is to consider equal membership on the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges, across all parties represented in this House. It is my Government's long-term vision for the Legislative branch to be provided ample opportunity to be more proactively engaged in the legislative process. We all have utmost respect for this House, its traditions and customs, and its' privileges. It is not my intention nor the intention of my government to interfere with the establishment or operation of committees of the Legislature.

My Government recommends that the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges undertake a full discussion within a public and open setting around the structure and composition of Standing Committees.

My Government offers the suggestion to the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges that, owing to this

We need to build more open and collaborative work in the Assembly and in committees, engage more openly across our aisles and with Islanders, and govern with kindness and respect for others.

It is my Government's long-term vision for the Legislative branch to be provided ample opportunity to be more proactively engaged in the legislative process.

We will ensure that the business of Government, and those who conduct it, are held to the highest standards of behaviour.

historic moment in Prince Edward Island, multi-party collaboration and consensus be found in order to renew and re-align Standing Committee mandates towards compromise that works for all members.

My Government asks the Standing Committee on Rules, Regulations, Private Bills and Privileges to be prepared to report back to this House before the close of this month of June 2019, so that their report can be adopted by this House at the earliest opportunity.

My Government has committed to doing politics differently, and this first step reaffirms our commitment to our principles and our approach.

Bringing Accountability Back to Government

My Government will conduct legislative and political affairs with civility, courtesy and respect. We will empower our professional public service with the faith, confidence and resources to do their job, and we will ensure that our justice and regulatory systems are fair, balanced and beyond reproach in terms of bias or uneven application. We will ensure that the business of Government, and those who conduct it, are held to the highest standards of behaviour.

We are committed to making the Child Advocate Office an independent arm of the Legislative Assembly and will introduce legislation to that effect.

Engaging Islanders in our Collective Future

My Government strongly believes in meaningful engagement with our residents and communities. Our long-term vision is the fuller engagement and involvement of people and communities, and a commitment to listen and respond as we work together on the issues that affect Islanders.

My Government is closely examining existing provincial legislation and regulations. Modernization of our statutes and regulations to more accurately reflect our province today and into the future is needed. We are committed to optimizing and reducing the regulatory regime, to ensure Government is best serving the people.

Making the Island Ideal a Reality for All

The recent engagement during the election has told us that Islanders want to see an environment where every person in this province can succeed. Islanders want us to make sure that we are not overlooking any community, family or individual that may be struggling and that we are

pulling together to work for the benefit of everyone. They want us to make sure that we are thinking of both the present pressures as well as the future challenges.

My Government is committed to working with all sides of this House, to engage with Islanders regularly to ensure we are drawing on our best ideas and our best natures. Whether on more immediate pressures such as housing or long-term realities such as climate change, we will draw on the best ideas and solutions to build a better life for Islanders now and a better potential for Islands for many decades to come.

What is at the core of our mandate is providing Islanders with a Government that puts people at the heart of our decisions. We will act knowing that our debate is more than a line item on a budget, a clause in legislation, or a paragraph in a statement. Our decisions have an impact on mothers and fathers and children and grandchildren – our neighbours and fellow Islanders. We care about the impact of our discourse and our aspiration is to give all Islanders every possible opportunity to be healthy, happy and successful.

Conclusion

Over the coming weeks, Government has a clear and focused agenda.

In addition to debate and passage of the Speech from the Throne, the Legislative Assembly will be asked to consider the 2019-20 budget – which will begin the process of keeping Government’s commitments to Islanders.

Government will be proposing a number of bills, including:

- *Government Reorganization Act 2019*
- *An Act to Amend the Renewable Energy Act*
- *Supports for Persons With Disabilities Act*
- *An Act to Amend the Regulated Health Professions Act*
- *An Act to Amend the Drug Cost Assistance Act*
- *An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act*
- *An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act*
- *An Act to Amend the Summary Proceedings Act*

My Government is committed to working with all sides of this House, to engage with Islanders regularly to ensure we are drawing on our best ideas and our best natures.

What is at the core of our mandate is providing Islanders with a Government that puts people at the heart of our decisions.

*Working together,
focused on the people
of this province, we
will and must succeed.*

- *An Act to Amend the Trespass to Property Act*
- *Appropriations Act*
- *Supplementary Appropriations Act*
- *An Act to Repeal the Gulf Trust Corporation Act*
- *An Act to Repeal the Bailable Proceedings Act*

Additionally, opposition parties will be bringing forward a number of pieces of legislation, including Government Advertising Standards Act, An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act, An Act to Amend the Residential Rental Property Act, and An Act to Amend the Climate Leadership Act.

During the upcoming debate, I fully expect that Members of the Legislative Assembly will adopt a new spirit of collaboration.

During the recent election, Islanders clearly articulated a desire for a discussion built around the need to build consensus and respect for all voices.

Economically, we have progressed far.

Socially, we are progressing toward an Island that is able to meet the needs of an increasingly dynamic population.

Politically, I call upon each of you to reflect the changing needs of our Island – and embrace new solutions that will maintain our progress and find new ways to achieve even more for the people of this province.

Working together, focused on the people of this province, we will and must succeed.

Thank you. Merci. Wela'lin.

