



*(I acted as Speaker as students attended a model parliament at the Legislature in March. One of the most enjoyable parts of my job is talking with students about what MLAs do – and I've talked to classes from grade 2 to university.)*

*Dear Friend:*

*This email is part of the commitment I made during the election to update you on a regular basis. In addition to communicating with you via email, I sent out a printed newsletter in March, and will hold a town hall meeting in the fall. As always, I can be contacted via email at [kelly@kellyregan.ca](mailto:kelly@kellyregan.ca) and by phone at 407-3777.*

## **State of the Province**

*The Nova Scotia Legislature rose on May 12, having left much work undone.*

*Today, our province is the only one in Canada not to cover the drug **Lucentis** to combat **age-related macular degeneration**. Despite valiant attempts by the Official Opposition, the CNIB and the Canadian Council of the Blind to change the government's position, the government refused to budge – even though the NDP championed Lucentis while in opposition. The government claims it does not have money to fund Lucentis, but it has found money to stage expensive photo ops, buy land, and pay for the premier's extensive travel. This decision is about priorities, and it's clear that elderly citizens who are going blind are not the priority of the government.*

*If you are concerned about the government's failure to fund Lucentis, you can sign a **petition** urging them to do so. Please stop by my office: we're located at 1550 Bedford Highway – suite 555. (We're sometimes out at appointments, so you may want to call first – 407-3777.)*

*Our oldest citizens were also the target when the government decided to try to balance its books on the backs of retired civil servants by limiting their pension increases. Most of these civil servants are just scraping by – in fact, their average pension is only \$17,000 per annum – and I heard from many widowed pensioners who are devastated by the way the government and their union leadership worked together to take this money from them.*

*That's probably the way the folks in Yarmouth feel after the government unilaterally **cancelled ferry service** to Yarmouth -- a decision that will impact on tourism throughout the province. This precipitous decision exposed the government to a \$3 million dollar cancellation fee and was not accompanied by anything even remotely resembling a plan to ameliorate the effects of the CAT cancellation.*

*And I believe we are going to see the effects of the government's ill-conceived decision to **underfund education** in the coming year. The Deloitte review of finances the NDP government commissioned upon taking office pegged an appropriate spending increase on education at 5 percent. The Nova Scotia School Boards Association and other education stakeholders asked the government to increase spending by 3.6 percent. The government responded with an increase of only 2.9 percent. I'm already hearing about cancelled programs – like **grade 7 French immersion** at Bedford South next year – and **large class sizes** – like grade 6 classes of 31 children at the Eaglewood site of Sunnyside School. I suspect we are going to hear about similar situations across the province as boards try to pare costs. If education is the key to the future prosperity of the province – and I believe it is – this NDP government is making a big mistake. There are too many children who cannot read at grade level, and it is taking too long for us to help them. Instead of staging expensive photo ops, we should be helping children to reach their full potential. If we don't help them when they're in school, we will surely pay down the road.*

*I do want to give credit where it's due – the government did bring in some measures this spring to help those on limited incomes, like the Poverty Reduction Credit. But those same people will be impacted disproportionately by the 2 percent increase in the HST come July 1. And remember: **in less than a year, this government has increased the debt by more than three-quarters of a billion dollars.***

### **Pests in Bedford-Birch Cove**

*Over the past year, I've urged the government to deal with two pests in our riding: **coyotes** and black-legged ticks. I urged the Minister of Natural Resources to remove nuisance coyotes from our riding. While he went beyond that – to a bounty, which we had not asked for – he also moved to implement a plan to have nuisance animals trapped and removed. If you see a coyote in your neighbourhood (which becomes less likely in the summer as their food supply increases), please contact me at 407-3777 and we will contact the Department of Natural Resources to have it dealt with.*

*The government still has not moved to allow the use of a tickicide at a deer baiting station proposed by HRM to counteract **lyme disease-bearing black-legged ticks** in Admirals Cove Park. I have brought this issue up repeatedly in the House of Assembly (please see the end of this email to read excerpts from Hansard dealing with this issue). Now HRM, in desperation, is proposing a limited pesticide spray in the park. Health Promotion and Protection (HPP) are against the spray because they say it will give people a false sense of security. I think it's important to continue education efforts the province has begun, but I also believe the residents of Eaglewood have had to deal with this health hazard for three years, and it's time for HPP to act with more than just gardening and clothing tips. If you're a resident in the area affected by lyme disease, please let me know whether you're in favour of a deer-baiting station and/or a pesticide spray to limit black-legged-ticks.*

### **Update on building projects**

*The new **four-pad arena** being built by HRM with a contribution from the province is on budget and on time. All four pads at this Hammonds Plains road facility will be operational this fall. Demand for the ice time has been high; all non-adult prime-time ice is already spoken for, although there are still times available in the adult prime (Thursday night and Sunday night) and non-prime time periods. Two ice surfaces will begin their hours at the top of the hour, and two will begin at the half-hour. For more information on the arena, visit [www.hrm4pad.com](http://www.hrm4pad.com).*

*As of yesterday, the province had not yet reached a deal to purchase land at its desired site for the new high school. If a deal is reached before the end of June, the finish date of December 2012 will still stand. If the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal cannot reach an agreement within a short time period, a new site will be selected and the process will continue. The NDP pledged in the 2009 election to build this school – which serves part of Bedford-Birch Cove as well as part of the NDP-held riding of Hammonds Plains – Upper Sackville – and I will be holding them to their commitment.*

### **Upcoming events**

*I'd like to remind you of a few events coming up soon that you may wish to attend. This weekend, both Ecole Grosvenor Wentworth School (from 11 until 2) and Bedford South School (11 to 3) are holding school fairs.*

*The **Fort Sackville Foundation's** annual Book Sale is on June 11 – 13 at Scott Manor House; you can buy a bag of books for only \$5 – it's a great way to stock up on books for the summer!*

*And the **Cobequid Community Health Foundation** is holding a canoe and kayak fundraiser on **Saturday June 26**. For more information on the Grand Day 2010, please check out [www.pledge.cobequidfoundation.ca](http://www.pledge.cobequidfoundation.ca).*

*Finally, I would like to thank the residents of Bedford-Birch Cove for their support over the past year, my first as your representative in the House of Assembly. You've contacted me on many issues – from concerns around the blasting on Highway 102 impacting the Kearney Lake area, to MLA expenses, from issues with the process for inoculations against H1N1 to problems with the Maintenance Enforcement Program – and you've been supportive of my work as your MLA.*

*As the school year draws to a close, I wish you a pleasant summer. My office will remain open over the summer, and we will be planning a town hall meeting for the riding in the fall.*

*Sincerely,*



*Kelly Regan, MLA*

### **Debate extracts from Hansard**

Tuesday, April 13 ([http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/han61-2/house\\_10apr13.htm](http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/han61-2/house_10apr13.htm)):

#### **HPP - LYME DISEASE: CONCERN - SERIOUSNESS**

**MS. KELLY REGAN:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health Promotion and Protection. My question to the minister is a simple one, does the minister agree that Lyme disease is a serious health concern?

**HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD:** Mr. Speaker, there have been 48 cases of Lyme disease identified in Nova Scotia since 2002. Certainly for people who contact Lyme disease, it is a serious matter.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, if the minister believes that Lyme disease is a serious health matter, why have they not approved the Y-TEX tickicide for the 4-Poster Deer Treatment Bait Station as a viable component of the tick management plan for Admiral's Cove in Bedford?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, we're very aware of the concern of residents in the Admiral's Cove area and the Capital District Health Authority are working with that community with respect to their concerns.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the people who are working on this issue for HRM are very frustrated with the lack of response they've had from this government. In that neighbourhood there are two people living on the same street - one is a young boy, he is going to have arthritis for the rest of his life. The other person is a man and he will have neurological complications for the rest of his life from Lyme disease.

Of the 48 confirmed cases since 2002 in this province, one-quarter of them were from last year alone. My question for the minister is, how many people have to become sick and suffer lifelong complications from Lyme disease before this minister takes action?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, there are, as well, two other areas of the province where this has been identified as a concern - Gunning Cove in Shelburne County, as well as in Lunenburg County. The Department of Health Promotion and Protection works very closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada, who are conducting a monitoring process, particularly in the Lunenburg County area.

***During Budget estimates for Health and Health Promotion on the evening of April 19<sup>th</sup>, I again urged the Minister to assist HRM in its quest to have the tickicide approved for a deer bait station in Admirals' Cove Park. These exchanges are not yet available on Hansard, but the Minister indicated she would assist. The next day, I thanked her for her offer to help:***

Tuesday April 20<sup>th</sup> - Committee of the Whole House on Supply:

Another issue in my riding is the existence of Lyme disease-bearing blacklegged ticks. Again, this is not an issue I ever thought I would ever have to speak on until I got into the election campaign and heard about it on the election campaign. Oddly enough, one of the same areas that's being affected by coyotes is being affected by these blacklegged ticks. Blacklegged ticks themselves aren't the problem; it's the Lyme disease that some of them are carrying. We've had 48 cases identified in the province, 13 in the last year. Two of those known cases are in the Eaglewood Subdivision in my riding. I should say two of the human cases because there have been a number of cases in pets.

These two people - one a middle-aged man and one a child - will have long-term effects. The man will have neurological effects for the rest of his life and the boy will have arthritis for the rest of his life. We did identify the Lyme disease in them, but it took a while. They did not present with the typical rashes that we associate with Lyme disease, or if they did have the rash, it was buried beneath their hair, so it took a while for us to identify that they had Lyme disease.

I have to say that HRM is prepared to take action, but they can't do it all by themselves. They would like to see the Y-TEX tickicide approved for a deer bait station to be located in Admirals Cove Park, which abuts the Eaglewood Subdivision. This is not a spray - there's not going to be planes going over with a spray or anything like that. This is a topical application that actually gets applied to the deer when they go to the deer bait station. It's akin to putting a flea collar on a cat.

HRM has requested - and I'm just going to read from a document that I got off the HRM Web site, "Write a letter to the Nova Scotia Minister of Health Promotion and Protection requesting that approval be given to the

testing and approval process as proposed in this report as required to access the Y Tex Tickicide for the 4 Poster Deer Bait Station as a viable component of the Tick Management Plan for Admirals Cove and require Departmental staff to expedite the completion of the process."

Also, HRM has written a letter to the federal Minister of Health, ". . . requesting that The Pest Management Regulatory Agency offer responsive assistance in helping Halifax Regional Municipality, the Province of Nova Scotia, Public Health Agency of Canada and Y Tex Corporation advance the efficacy testing and approval of the Y Tex Tickicide for the 4 Poster Deer Bait Station."

Just to give you a little background on this issue - in 2007, an infestation of blacklegged ticks was identified in the Admirals Cove Park in Bedford. This park is abutted by the Department of National Defence property, CFB Halifax-Bedford - most of us know it as the Magazine property. Jointly the parkland is approximately 150 acres - about 50 acres owned by HRM and 100 acres owned by DND. The park is in a relatively urban area between a long-established residential neighbourhood developed over 50 years ago and the DND base. The park has long been used by the public for walking and hiking. There are approximately 20 deer in the park.

Following identification of the infestation, HRM and DND and community residents have been working with the provincial Department of Health Promotion and Protection and the local Medical Officer of Public Health Agency of Canada to investigate possible measures to manage this risk. I just wanted to give you a little update on that.

One of the possible ways we can control the Lyme disease blacklegged tick infestation is by pesticides. It's by no means the only possibility that's being looked at or acted upon. In terms of pesticide controls, "The HRM Pesticide ByLaw only addresses cosmetic pesticides for landscaping purposes . . ." They do not deal with the kind of thing that we're talking about here, so, "The HRM by-law has no applicability here."

"There is no Pest Management Regulatory Agency . . . approved pesticide for Blacklegged Ticks in Canada. Collaboratively, the Federal Public Health Agency of Canada and the Provincial Department of Health Promotion and Protection have been investigating suitable pesticide control solutions." The solution that seems most promising is the one I have mentioned, "The 4-Poster Deer Treatment Bait Station . . . and Y-TeX Tickicide." The big reason that, ". . . staff favour inclusion of this control solution at Admirals Cove is that instead of broadcast sprays, which have impact on other elements of the environment. . . the Deer Bait Station is a targeted topical treatment directly to the deer.

"In order to get a pesticide approved in Canada, among other requirements, there must be an efficacy study." The Public Health Agency of Canada has initiated a study, "in Nova Scotia by collecting before samples with a Deer Station, without the tickicide" and that's in Lunenburg. "The next step is to test the station with the tickicide to determine the efficacy and impact. Upon request, PHAC has agreed that with the efficacy test initiated in Lunenburg, Admirals Cove will not need to do a before sampling." So when the product is available for testing, HRM will be happy to place it on, ". . . HRM property for study at the same time it's introduced at the DND property."

What I want to say today is I really do appreciate the assistance I have received, again, from the Minister of Natural Resources on this issue. I know his isn't the lead on it and I do appreciate the indication that the Minister of Health Promotion and Protection gave to me last night in Estimates indicating that she will help give assistance to move this along. The Minister of Natural Resources had a personal conversation with me last night moving this along as well.

In this House, we spend so much of the time arguing or pointing out flaws with things and I do think it's important, when ministers respond to the concerns of constituents and to the concerns of members, that we give credit where it's due. I do appreciate the help that they have offered thus far and I'd like to let them know I'm counting on them to continue it in the future, thank you.

*And finally, on May 11<sup>th</sup>, I again urged the government to act on this issue, when it became clear the offer of help had not produced any results. To be passed, resolutions must have unanimous consent. The no votes came from the government side of the House:*

Tuesday May 11 ([http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/han61-2/house\\_10may11.htm](http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/han61-2/house_10may11.htm)):

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1252**

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas several residents and pets from the Bedford area have been diagnosed with Lyme disease; and

Whereas the source of this dangerous infection is from black-legged ticks in neighbouring Admirals Cove Park; and

Whereas earlier this session, the Minister of Health Promotion and Protection offered to help with the advancement of the approval of the Y-TeX tickicide for a deer-baiting station;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House urge the Minister of Health Promotion and Protection to assist Halifax Regional Municipality to approve this effective and useful aid to combat Lyme disease.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.