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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 25 April 2000

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mardi 25 avril 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 25 April 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 25 avril 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

WEARING OF GREEN RIBBONS

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: As you know, this is National Organ Donor Week and we were all given green ribbons to wear during this week. I know without consent it's not proper, so I'm asking for unanimous consent to wear the green organ and tissue donation ribbon for the remainder of the week.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I'm not sure if we can do it by the week. I guess we can. Is there unanimous consent? It is agreed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

POVERTY IN CAMBRIDGE

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): People in Cambridge want to know why the member for Cambridge isn't fighting for seniors and families in his community.

The Canadian Council on Social Development has released a new report on poverty in Canadian cities. Nearly one fifth of Cambridge households live below the poverty line, with a household poverty rate of 18.3%. The poverty rate for individuals, as opposed to households, was 13.7% in Cambridge. Certain groups in that community tend to be more susceptible to living in poverty. Forty-two percent of women aged 75 and over, 54% of lone-parent families, 28% of recent immigrants, 18% of children five years and younger and 15% of children aged six to 17 lived in poverty in 1995. This should be of no surprise to the Harris government, as these figures confirm earlier findings that the faces of Ontario's poor are the elderly and families—especially families with children.

The report also shows that not only people on social assistance are living below the poverty line. In Cambridge, 14% of those living in poverty worked at least part-time.

Cambridge has not been untouched by the affordable housing crisis. Gloria DeSantis, executive director of the Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries, points out that, "We know there's a huge waiting

list in Cambridge, something like 1,100 people for subsidized housing."

This House hears from the member for Cambridge infrequently. Why is he silent? Why doesn't he care? When will the member stand up and fight for families and seniors in Cambridge?

VOLUNTEERS

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): As the member of the provincial Legislature for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford, it has been my pleasure to work with hundreds of dedicated volunteers in my riding over the years. These individuals from many walks of life give so generously of their time, skills and energy, and it's fitting that we take time to thank them and to let them know how much we appreciate what they do.

Serving constituents on a day-to-day basis, as we all do, I see many people who are helped by volunteers in their daily lives. As I travel around the riding, geographically the largest in Ontario, I attend many community events and functions that just wouldn't be possible without the help of volunteers.

Recently I walked with thousands of people from Barrie, Bradford and area in the Super Cities Walk for Multiple Sclerosis, I participated in the Score One for the Environment campaign, attended a volunteer appreciation night for our local St John Ambulance organization and went to a fundraising event organized by Ducks Unlimited to preserve wetlands and the natural environment. These are just a few of the events in my riding that rely on volunteers for success year after year.

The volunteer sector helps make our communities work. Our volunteers are the underpinning for many of the services and agencies we take for granted, and I'm aware of that and very appreciative. So I was extremely proud to see 70 outstanding citizens from my riding honoured recently by the government of Ontario at the Ontario volunteer service awards and the Outstanding Achievement Awards for Excellence in Volunteerism in Ontario, among them Kim Pinkas from the Barrie and District Association for People with Special Needs, John Speers from the Barrie Horticultural Society and Phyllis Roach from the Grove Park Home.

I'm extremely proud of the great and caring and compassionate volunteers we have in my riding.

RCAF MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I rise today to speak with great pride of the RCAF Memorial Museum at CFB Trenton in Quinte West. This is the official national museum of the Canadian air force and presents an overview of all air force contributions to our country. The primary focus, however, is on the people who served.

The RCAF Memorial Museum is completely self-sufficient and volunteer-driven. They cannot begin to display all of their artifacts, and are currently expanding their facility.

The centrepiece of the new museum will be a restored Halifax bomber. This plane was rescued from the depths of a Norwegian lake and is currently being restored by over 120 volunteers. I should note that of the 39,000 operations flown by Halifax bombers, 70% were by Canadian aircrews, 10,000 of whom gave their lives. When restored, this will be the only fully functional Halifax bomber in the world.

This museum is a national treasure, of importance to all Canadians. Completion of this project requires financial support totalling \$3 million. I urge all members to join me in any way possible to ensure success in their fundraising endeavour. They truly are fulfilling their motto of "Honouring the past by supporting the future."

LABATT BREWERIES

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): It's a great pleasure to rise today to inform the House that now there are more good things brewing in the great city of London.

Last Thursday I was fortunate enough to be able to celebrate the official launch of a new \$28.5-million bottling line with the good people of Labatt's at their London brewery. The line opening marks the completion of the \$50-million brewery expansion that started last March to meet the growing demand for Labatt Blue and Blue Light in the United States.

At the ceremony were the Honourable Bob Runciman, Bruce Elliot, Labatt Breweries Ontario president, and Don Kitchen, president of Labatt Brewing of North America, who officially opened the line. This line, in full capacity, will put out 900 bottles per minute—that's 40,000 cases per day—making it the most productive refillable bottle packaging line in the world.

The relationship between London and Labatt Breweries goes back over 150 years. It has not only been a major contributor to our city's economy, but has also been a most distinguished, responsible and dedicated corporate citizen of our great city.

Nearly half of the \$50 million invested has been spent on London area contractors. Don Kitchen, president of Labatt Breweries, expects more jobs will be created, approximately 275. Labatt's currently employs 650 Londoners and 1,650 Ontarians.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): It's not an exaggeration to say that we are in the midst of a health care crisis in Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario. The lack of family physicians means that thousands of people are presently without their own doctor, but it is the severe shortage of specialists and staff that is truly undermining health care delivery in our region.

This shortage is so severe that vital CT scans and MRIs are simply not taking place when they should. The lack of anaesthetists has meant that desperately important surgeries are being cancelled. People cannot even get X-rays done because of the shortage of radiologists in Thunder Bay.

While all this is going on, the Ministry of Health makes funding announcements, as they did last week related to genetic screening programs for hereditary cancers, and leaves northwestern Ontario out of the funding loop.

This government needs to understand the gravity of the situation and to recognize that it has reached crisis proportions. With that in mind, I'm calling on the Premier to make time during his trip to Thunder Bay tomorrow to sit down with area physicians so that they can explain to him, face to face, the grim reality of health care in Thunder Bay. It is not often that the Premier visits our region. It is therefore crucial that he use this time in my community to deal with the most pressing issue we are facing in our region. Peoples' lives are increasingly being put at risk as this crisis deepens, and we need the Premier's direct involvement and support.

Fundraising dinners are part of the political process, and I respect that, but quality health care is vital to our survival. Premier, make time tomorrow to deal with this crisis and meet with our area physicians.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I have to tell you that I have been hardened with the position Albertans have taken against Klein. In the last couple of weeks you will have heard that 6,000 or so people protested the public funding of private hospitals, and I'll tell you, to have 6,000 people in Alberta protesting something like that speaks to the general activism of the public.

In Nova Scotia, when 858 teachers were about to be fired, thousands and thousands of students and parents and the general public went out to protest those cuts that clearly would have affected the quality of education in Nova Scotia.

1340

Here in Ontario, where \$1 billion has been taken out of the education system, where parents are fundraising until they drop, where teachers have been demoralized unlike ever before, where there is constant government interference, constant instability in the system, cuts by

stealth, government by stealth, fewer teachers teaching more students than ever before, we don't have a similar uprising. I just don't get it.

I am urging the people of Ontario to do what Albertans and Nova Scotians have done and take a bold stand in defence of public education in Ontario. That's what I'm expecting of Ontarians.

CRIME PREVENTION

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): I am pleased to inform the Legislature that tomorrow Niagara Falls will host the first day of a three-day conference addressing crime prevention and tourism safety. The focus of the conference is to develop a proactive, comprehensive crime prevention master plan for tourism in Niagara Falls.

Detective Ray Wood, director of the Orange county sheriff's office in Orlando, Florida, will attend as keynote speaker. Also, our very own Solicitor General will be attending the conference and making a luncheon address.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, crime prevention and safety issues are priority issues for both myself and the Ontario government. In March 1999, I sponsored a Crime Control Commission public meeting in Niagara Falls. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for my constituents to voice their concerns and offer suggestions regarding safety in their community.

I will be participating at the Niagara Falls Crime Prevention and Tourism Safety Conference and encourage all members to get involved in conferences like this in the future.

I would like to thank Niagara Falls city councillor Carolyn Ioannoni for inviting and allowing myself and Minister Tsubouchi the opportunity to participate at the conference. I commend Mrs Ioannoni and the other organizers involved on the great effort that has been put forward into this event. I am confident that this will be a very constructive and successful conference.

ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES LEGISLATION

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I rise today to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts made by Scott Bremner, a grade 8 student at C.E. Broughton Public School in Whitby. Scott has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. He has been working tirelessly to raise awareness of the barriers that disabled persons face on a daily basis. Scott has gone as far as challenging the Premier to gain a first-hand perspective of life in a wheelchair and join him to see first hand what it's like.

Scott is a shining example of the potential that persons with disabilities have in this province. Scott is a member of the student council, participates in numerous school activities and is a member of the youth shadow committee for Toronto's 2008 Olympic bid.

Unfortunately, he faces barriers that prevent him from reaching his full potential, barriers that can be removed

with a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act. More than ever, the time has come for the government to provide persons with disabilities a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The problem is that the government just refuses to act. The minister responsible refuses to meet with the ODA Committee and continues to work on her ever elusive action plan. Why is this government dragging its feet when the time is right to introduce this long-awaited legislation?

There are 1.5 million persons in this province who face similar barriers that Scott Bremner faces. They face a daily uphill battle trying to contribute in a meaningful way to society. The government owes them an ODA. I challenge you, Mr Premier, today to take up Scott Bremner's offer and join him for 24 hours in a wheelchair.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): At the end of an Easter weekend, I believe it is a time for reflection, so I rise today to express my thanks and gratitude for having the opportunity to live in a wonderful province and country.

When I read the newspapers, I read about terrible things happening globally: pictures of animal and human hunger and starvation in Ethiopia are flashed on the TV screen or seen in the newspapers; in Zimbabwe, farmers are being beaten and murdered for their beliefs to bring about democratic change; south of the border, protesters are being arrested in civil disobedience.

As in most provinces in Canada, governments still have much more work to do, to hopefully eliminate poverty, crime and social ailments. Ontario is no exception, but working together, void of biases, we can do it if all Ontarians are prepared to make the personal effort. Ontarians are very fortunate to have the expectations we have for our quality lifestyle. We don't have the suffering that is seen elsewhere.

I just want to say today that when I look to other countries, I know I am blessed to live here and I believe we should all take the time to look around us and appreciate what we have and be thankful.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BRIAN'S LAW (MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATIVE REFORM), 2000

LOI BRIAN DE 2000 SUR LA RÉFORME LÉGISLATIVE CONCERNANT LA SANTÉ MENTALE

Mrs Witmer moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 68, An Act, in memory of Brian Smith, to amend the Mental Health Act and the Health Care Consent Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 68, Loi à la mémoire de Brian Smith

modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale et la Loi de 1996 sur le consentement aux soins de santé.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Introduction of bills? The Minister of Labour.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): I want to just mention that today in the gallery is Park Lawn school, grades 7 and 8. More importantly, my son is part of Park Lawn school: Kale Stockwell, in the members' gallery. Welcome.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT (CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY), 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL (INDUSTRIE DE LA CONSTRUCTION)

Mr Stockwell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 69, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 in relation to the construction industry / Projet de loi 69, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail en ce qui a trait à l'industrie de la construction.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Tuesday, April 25, 2000, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it. Carried.

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STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ORGAN DONATION

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I rise in the House today to speak about an issue that affects every member of this Legislature and every person in our province. This is National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week, a week to remind people across Ontario to talk with their families about organ donation, to talk about their wishes, to encourage their friends and their neighbours to do the same thing.

Today I'd like to speak about why organ donation is so important. Each year, hundreds of people in our province are given a chance at a better and a longer life thanks to organ and tissue transplants. Here in Ontario, we have the technology and we have the resources to save even more lives; however, we need more donors.

Our population is aging and our population is growing, and the need for organ and tissue donors is rising. Yet the number of donors in Ontario is still about the same as it was 10 years ago. We can do a lot better and I believe we must do a lot better.

In this year's throne speech, we announced a millennium challenge to everyone in the province. We challenge the people of Ontario to work with us to double Ontario's organ and tissue donation rate by 2005. I've said on a number of occasions that I hope we can do it quicker and we can do even better than that, but we must set a goal. Reaching our goal is lot more though than about numbers; it is about saving lives.

The Premier's Advisory Board on Organ and Tissue Donation was established to help us reach that goal. We asked hockey legend Don Cherry to chair the advisory board. Don knows at first hand how important organ donation is. His son Tim was given a new lease on life when Don's daughter Cindy donated one of her kidneys to her brother. Cindy's selfless act saved her brother's life. It is a lesson and an inspiration to us all.

Yet while this example serves as an inspiration, as a society we must do much better, because for every person in Ontario who receives a donated organ there are five more people who still need transplants—transplants that would mean happier, healthier, better lives, and of course in some cases life itself. We've got a long way to go. But I know that with the help of the people of Ontario and the hard-working members of the advisory board, we will meet our targets and save even more lives. The members of the advisory board are sure we can improve the organ donation rate here in Ontario and so am I.

At this very moment across Ontario there are more than 1,620 people waiting for organ and tissue transplants. For them and for their families this is about getting a second chance—a second chance at life.

I want to recognize the members of the advisory committee, some of whom are with us today. Don Cherry, chair, is not able to be with us. Paul Godfrey, Diane Hebert and Graham Scott are members not with us. Members here in the gallery with us today—and I would ask them to stand up—are Brian Flood, vice-chair; Diane Craig; Marie Kjerulf; Sandra Petzel; and Robert Nesbit.

I am asking all members of this Legislature to lend this life-saving initiative their full support. We know it will take strong leadership to reach our goal, strong leadership in every riding, in every corner, in every jurisdiction of this province. By working together and with the people of our province I know we can do it.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I rise in the House to introduce a very important piece of legislation that will mean better treatment for people with serious mental illness and safer communities across our province.

Brian's Law is named for Brian Smith, the Ottawa sportscaster killed in 1995 by a person suffering from severe mental illness. At the inquest into Brian's death, the jury recommended a comprehensive review of Ontario's mental health legislation and the introduction of community-based treatment programs to ensure that people with serious mental illness who pose a danger to themselves or others get the treatment they need. Today we are introducing legislation to fulfill those recommendations, recommendations that have been echoed too many times in too many inquests since 1995.

Brian's widow, Alana Kainz, has been a strong advocate for these changes to Ontario's mental health legislation, changes that will save lives and prevent other tragedies. I am honoured today to have Alana and members of Brian's family with us in the visitors' gallery. I would like to thank Alana for her efforts on behalf of all the people of this province, and I would like to express to her my profound respect and sympathy.

With the introduction of Brian's Law, our government is responding to the strong recommendations of coroners and juries, the expert advice of mental health care professionals, and the voices of many families who have felt helpless in the face of their loved ones' suffering.

Our government is committed to balancing the rights of patients with the safety of our communities, and Brian's Law will help us to fulfill that commitment by making sure that families and health care professionals are able to provide care and treatment to their loved ones and patients. The changes included in this bill enable community treatment orders for people with serious mental illness, and expanded grounds for committal to psychiatric facilities. They facilitate access to treatment by streamlining hearing and appeal rules and removing barriers to mental health care and treatment.

This legislation is critical to the reform of the mental health system. This bill is the culmination of 18 months

of listening to the people of Ontario and experts from around the world, and there will be further discussion during debate and committee hearings.

I would like to acknowledge the work of my parliamentary assistant, Brad Clark, who consulted with people across the province on these changes. His work was informed by Dan Newman's June 1998 report *2000 and Beyond: Strengthening Ontario's Mental Health System*, which called for review of Ontario's mental health legislation to support our reform efforts.

I would also like to thank my staff, particularly Lori Turik, and the Ministry of Health staff.

We have received important advice and guidance from many individuals and organizations and we are very honoured to have some of those people here with us today in the visitors' gallery: Mr Ted Fielding and Ms Janice Wiggins, of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario; Dr Stephen Connell, of the Coalition of Ontario Psychiatrists; Barb LeBlanc, of the Ontario Medical Association; the Honourable Justice Douglas Carruthers; and Ontario's chief coroner, Dr Jim Young. I would also like to recognize at this time the efforts of Mr Richard Patten, the MPP for Ottawa Centre, who has been a strong advocate for these changes to the Mental Health Act.

Today we are responding to all of these voices and to the needs of those individuals who are caught in the storm of serious mental illness. I would also like to acknowledge a family that has suffered a tragic loss and is here with us today to witness the introduction of this important legislation. Lori and Tony Antidormi lost their son, Zachary, in 1997. Again, Zachary was killed by a person who was suffering from serious mental illness. On behalf of all the members of this House, I offer our profound sympathy to the family and assure them that Zachary is in the hearts and minds of all of us today.

For Zachary and for Brian and for all the families and the individuals who have experienced the terrible effects of serious mental illness, we are introducing Brian's Law. Enormous strides have been made in the last century in mental health. Today I can confidently say that we are lighting the way for the new century with this landmark legislation.

1400

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY LABOUR RELATIONS

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): I am pleased to have introduced legislation to improve competitiveness, promote stability and encourage economic growth and job creation in Ontario's construction industry. As members know, a healthy and stable construction industry is vital to the Ontario economy. It generates jobs and creates investment. In fact, in Ontario this year we expect to see more than \$26 billion in new industrial, commercial, institutional and residential construction alone. When we add the investments in renovation construction, the figure is sure to double. The measures in

this legislation will help our construction industry continue to grow and thrive beyond these figures.

The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Construction Industry), 2000, is the result of extensive discussion and hard work by both employers and trade unions from the construction industry.

With us today in the House are people who worked very hard and diligently on this piece of legislation. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce them: Eric Wegler, president of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association, and Jim Murphy, Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association; Tony Dionisio, Universal Workers' Union, LIUNA local 183; David Mason, Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario; Alex Lolua, Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario. Welcome. Working together, these key industry representatives have come up with solutions that have been broadly accepted by those in the industry. I want to thank all those who worked with us to make today's legislation a reality.

Our ultimate goal is to have in place fair, balanced and flexible labour relations that facilitate industry-based solutions that will benefit all of the people of Ontario.

The legislation proposes changes that will modernize and improve collective bargaining for construction in both the residential sector and the industrial, commercial and institutional, or ICI, sector.

For ICI the legislation will, if passed, improve the ability of unionized contractors and unionized sub-contractors to compete with non-union firms in all areas of the province. The result would be more competition in bidding for major construction contracts in the industrial, commercial and institutional sector. More competition will lead to greater efficiencies and productivity, and a competitive advantage for Ontario companies.

In residential construction the legislation will, if passed, minimize the risk of consecutive strikes similar to the ones that shut down the new-home-building industry in the Toronto area between May and September of 1998. These consecutive strikes by various trades prevented builders from finishing homes on time. This caused undue hardship and expense for homebuyers, construction workers, employers, manufacturers and suppliers.

The reforms we are proposing have been developed with the broad support of union and management in the residential construction industry and would be in effect for the next round of bargaining which is scheduled to begin in spring 2001. Following that round of bargaining, the new system will be evaluated to see if it would be appropriate for use in succeeding rounds of bargaining. The reforms in this legislation are in the best interests of both unionized workers and unionized employers. The processes will provide employers with the flexibility they need to be competitive.

Given that this legislation was developed in consultation and co-operation with key members of the construction industry, both employers and unions, I urge all members of the Legislature to support this legislation so

that residents of this province can continue to enjoy the benefits of a healthy, competitive construction industry.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): On a point of order, Speaker: On behalf of our caucus, I would just like to request unanimous consent, given that there were three major ministerial announcements and we would like to adequately respond, that we move to 10 minutes instead of the usual five minutes for responses to the statements.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

Statements? Responses?

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I will be responding to Minister Stockwell's announcement.

Liberals on this side of the House believe that labour laws should be like collective agreements: Both sides should leave the table feeling that they've won a balanced settlement. This sense of balance provides for greater competitiveness in the workplace and good labour-management relations. I would hope that as we proceed with the discussion of this bill, that in fact is the end result of your consultation.

Certainly in the quick briefing I had, and I thank the minister for it, there are some concerns that I want to address first during the general debate here at second reading. The government has already committed to one week of public hearings so that we can involve the stakeholders with regard to amendments they may wish to put forward. Then I look for honest and open debate and the acceptance of amendments that we feel, on this side, make sense and are in the best interests of the industry.

I would suggest to you that there are some concerns with the mobility issue, there are some concerns with the naming issue, there are some concerns with the key-person provision that I think need addressing. I'm sure that with the input of the people from both sides of the industry, from the union as well as from the contractors, we can try to establish a greater fairness and a greater balance.

The issue I am so concerned about and always have been is safety. I would like assurances from the minister that he require that there be some types of provisions in there whereby the training and safety process that unions have for so many years been involved in remains intact. The training component and safety component of the construction industry is essential; it is essential that it remain. I look forward to an open, honest debate over the course of the next month and a half.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I'd like to respond to the Minister of Health's introduction of Brian's Law. I likewise am very pleased to hear that that's the name of the new bill which amends the Mental Health Act. I would also like to acknowledge, on behalf of the official opposition, Alana Kainz, who is a constituent of my riding; also the family of Brian Smith, who are here

today; and also the parents of Zachary Antidormi, who suffered long through that particular experience.

I believe, based on what I've seen—and I'm anxious to read further the legislation—that this will go a long way to perhaps being able to avoid the sorts of situations the families that are present today have experienced. My experience in having introduced the private member's bill for amendments to the Mental Health Act certainly has helped me to gain a great deal of sensitivity to the difficulties and barriers for people who are seriously mentally ill and their ability to get treatment, people, particularly in the revolving-door syndrome, who have had difficulty, have been in and out of hospitals, in some cases over 100 times, and have never been able to adequately get the support they need.

I look forward to reading this bill. I look forward to maintaining my position, as I always have, that this is a non-partisan issue, that this is something we should all be concerned about. I expect that we will have good debate; I expect we will have hearings. I will be anxious to participate in those particular hearings, as will others, and I will be anxious to share some suggestions of others who have various points of view.

Minister, thank you very much for allowing me to accept some of the credit in furthering this along. I hope we will do the very best we can collectively in the interests of people in this province who suffer degrees of mental illness.

ORGAN DONATION

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I too would like to join with, I'm sure, all members of the Legislative Assembly in urging the people of Ontario to participate in the organ transplant program in this province. The Premier left us with two interesting pieces of information: The first is that there are five people who need transplants for every one person who receives a donated organ and, second, at this moment across Ontario there are more than 1,620 people waiting for organ and tissue transplants. All of us know at least one person who has had a transplant. It is a wonderful gift one family can give to another.

Certainly I urge all the people of Ontario to take whatever steps are necessary—and the information will be available—to allow their organs to be transplanted so that others may live and have a better quality of life.

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): First of all to the Premier's announcement, let me assure you that I look forward to co-operating and working with you to help advance this very important issue. You know it is an issue of particular concern to me. I appreciate your words of support and will of course be coming to you when I introduce my private member's bill, looking for that support to be concrete.

It's unfortunate that today the announcement was made along with other important legislative initiatives and that there isn't an opportunity to address it in a fuller manner.

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MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): With respect to the amendments to the Mental Health Act, of course I would like to extend our thoughts and cares to the Smith, Kainz and Antidormi families, who are here today. I also want to say that our hearts go out to all the families of individual family members who have suffered from or are suffering now from mental illness. There are many people who are currently in our communities unable to access the supports and the treatment they need and they want, because of lack of resources. They need to be remembered throughout the course of debate on this as well.

Minister, as you know, many people are extraordinarily interested in participating in discussion on this. The points of view range from those psychiatric survivors who see community treatment orders as, in a sense, forced chemical imprisonment in the community, who believe that if that were to happen, there need to be standards to ensure that the best medication with the least side effects is what is ordered.

We'll be looking to see if there are amendments that can be put in the act that guarantee standards of care and that the treatment orders and the nature of community treatment outside of forced medication—that at the other levels of support, there are standards that are enforceable by the patient as well, that their rights are also brought into the balance here.

You did talk about striking that balance, and I think you will hear from families particularly of patients with schizophrenia how important it is that the family members' problems in accessing support for their loved ones be understood and the ability not just to see the law written correctly but to use the law.

There are those in the community mental health field who would argue that the law as it is written now doesn't constitute a barrier, but family after family will tell you as they try to implement and seek help for their family members that there are barriers in the system. So I appreciate your words in your statement of trying to strike a balance. We will be looking very carefully to see that that balance is there. I believe this will require those kinds of extensive hearings in which we all work together to listen carefully to the people of Ontario and to strike the right balance in terms of rights but also in terms of getting to people the very real services that they require.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Further responses?

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Let me also add my condolences and those of all Hamiltonians to the Antidormis, given the tragedy of their loss in 1997. Hamilton is still in shock and recoiling, and I can assure the family that those of us who are from Hamilton, if we don't already have personal reasons to understand this issue, will be paying very particular attention and giving this our very best.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Let me say to the Minister of Labour that if you didn't know the circumstances of what's happening, you'd think this was some kind of a good-news announcement, that he was responding to something that workers in the labour movement and the construction industry had been asking for and that this was their agreement and acquiescence to benefiting these workers. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The reality is that this government loaded up their political gun with the bullet of removing section 1.4 of the Ontario Labour Relations Act, which if that was done would have the effect of all but eliminating organized labour within the industrial and construction side of our economy. That would take some time, but just take a look at Alberta and what has happened there to the labour movement and their ability to represent their members in terms of wages and benefits, and you will see what would happen here.

I don't for a moment think that this is anything that anybody ought to be rejoicing about when you take that political gun and point it to those labour leaders and say, "Now, either negotiate lower wages and negotiate other changes, or we're going to fire this bullet that will have the effect of eliminating the labour movement."

I see the minister sitting there doing this, but the fact of the matter is that's exactly what took place. It's a question of what's the lesser of the evils here, given that they're dealing with a government like you that would remove 1.4. You wouldn't have any compunction doing it. These labour leaders are doing the best they can, like everyone else, to just survive during the tyranny of the Harris government, and we'll continue to fight the government on labour issues every step of the way.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just ask for unanimous consent of the House to allow the member for Ottawa, Mr Baird, to live up to the bet he made, considering the Leafs thumped the Senators, that he'd have to wear the jersey for one day in the House. I would ask unanimous consent to allow him to do such a thing.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes, unfortunately.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The Speaker may have to confiscate that and wear it this evening at the game.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. Late last week, Ontario Justice James Farley made a finding regarding activities

at the Ontario Realty Corp. He said, in looking at the evidence, that "there emerges a pattern of fraud."

Premier, you have stood by and done absolutely nothing in the face of concerns that we have raised with you for the past six months. Will you now, in the face of this judicial finding, finally admit that this is a very serious issue and that you have completely failed to protect the interests of Ontario taxpayers?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think certainly everybody knows that this government takes any allegation of wrongdoing very seriously. In fact, the justice's comments confirm that fact and the wisdom of the minister and the new CEO for the Ontario Realty Corp in bringing these allegations some sunshine and calling in an independent audit team to take a look at these allegations. Indeed, the minister, the CEO and the board of the Ontario Realty Corp have done 100% of exactly all the things you would want of a top-notch administration team. I know you'd be proud of that, just as I am.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, you continue to give credit to the minister and the CEO in a way that you'd want to give credit to a night watchman for being a sound sleeper. These people have failed to live up to their responsibilities.

Let's listen to exactly what the court documents say. The known frauds—and then they list six—can be identified as follows: In one case, the proposals tendered by three bidders were generated by the same person or persons "such that there was no legitimate competition." In another case, it says, "The six bids for this contract were prepared by the same person or persons, such that there was no legitimate competition for this contract."

Taxpayers are getting ripped off, and you are saying, for all intents and purposes, "I don't care." The buck stops with you, Premier, and with nobody else. We have a judicial finding, we have some court documents that have been filed that contain some very serious statements. Your responsibility today is to stand up, do the right thing and fire this minister. Will you do that?

Hon Mr Harris: There are ongoing investigations. Certainly this minister, the CEO and the board have done exactly what shareholders would want their top management team to do if there was any allegation—not yet proven, by the way—of inappropriate action or behaviour. That's why you have a minister or a management team to do that. As you know, the investigation is going back 15 years. Thank God this minister is finally there to take a look at the kinds of practices that have been going on under your administration and the NDP administration.

Mr McGuinty: It's so obvious that you just don't get it. I highly recommend to you that you review the court documents that have been filed. It talks about six known frauds at the ORC. It talks about fraudulent bidding. It makes reference to fraudulent invoicing. It talks about kickbacks. It concludes with the following: "There is an extremely strong case for conspiracy and fraud at the ORC."

Premier, what else is it going to take for you to stand up and, for the first time in connection with this matter, protect the interests of Ontario taxpayers? They are being ripped off to the tune of millions and millions of dollars, and they are asking, through me to you today, that you begin to take that responsibility by firing this minister. All of this activity took place under his nose and he failed to protect their interests, as you have done as well.

1420

Hon Mr Harris: Let's be clear, this is not like Patti Starr or allegations of paint jobs or refrigerators. This is in fact an allegation of some wrongdoing that does not involve the minister, that does not involve the CEO of the corporation. It is something that we take very seriously. All your innuendo is absolute garbage and nonsense, and it's not fitting a party so corrupt when they were in government that it was embarrassing to the whole country.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): New question.

Mr McGuinty: The next question is for the Premier. It's always fun, though, when Uncle Mike tells a story about the 1980s. It's the 21st century now, Mike, and I'd ask you to carefully take into account the documentation that has been filed in the Ontario High Court of Justice. This is not innuendo, Premier; these are statements filed in this.

The Speaker: Order. Was that the second question? If it is, I apologize for interrupting. I'm sorry, I didn't realize you were into it. Leader of the official opposition.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, the matter gets worse. Two of the people being sued in this matter, two of the defendants, are highly trusted employees of your ORC. These were people who were working for you. There are allegations in here that this was an inside job. They went to court because they were concerned about the loss of insider documentation. There's a very real fear that these documents will be destroyed. But apparently in Mike Harris's ORC it is business as usual.

Premier, given all of the evidence placed before the court, all of the matters that we've brought to your attention in this Legislature, why don't you stand up today and, at minimum, order that a padlock be placed on the ORC until the mess over there is cleaned up?

Hon Mr Harris: I think the member is well aware of the procedures that have been followed, and thank goodness the new CEO and this minister and the board that all of you approved of were in there to bring light to this. They had the audit team called in, and at that point in time you would understand that you don't want me or the minister making any decision there. The protocol for the audit team and then the OPP is that the assistant Deputy Attorney General should review any of those findings and recommend any appropriate action. To date, as you know, new procedures have been put in place to prevent any of these allegations that are being investigated back over the last 15 years—and thank goodness somebody is now standing up, being accountable and trying to fix the problem.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, at first there was a lot of smoke, I'll admit that, when it came to the matter at the

ORC, but now we have a real fire. We have documents filed with an Ontario court. We have a judge making a finding that there is a matter of fraud taking place over at the ORC. What we're asking you today now is to stop going over into a corner and curling up and trying to think of a happy place. We want you to take responsibility for what is happening at the ORC. Your job is to stand up and protect the interests of Ontario taxpayers. To date you have failed to do that and they've been ripped off to the tune of millions and millions of dollars.

Premier, stand up here and now and do two things: First, tell us that you're going to put a padlock on the door at the ORC so that investigation can be completed and we don't lose any more documents, and second, tell us you're going to fire this minister for incompetence.

Hon Mr Harris: If ever there was a party irresponsible with taxpayer dollars, contributing far more than the NDP to an \$11-billion annual deficit, it was the Liberal Party of Ontario. For the Liberal Party of Ontario now to stand up and talk about accountability of taxpayer dollars is really, really stretching the credibility of any of those who remember the disastrous administration of 1985 to 1990. I have to tell you that.

We have taken all the appropriate action. Thank goodness the minister, the chairman of the board and the board are trying to get to the bottom of this. Thank goodness they had the courage to call in an audit team instead of five years of the type of cover-up government that you Liberals provided.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, you have been in charge for five years. Taxpayers have been ripped off on your watch. The ORC is presently, as we speak, getting prepared to sell off another \$200 million worth of lands on your watch.

Let's sum up here. We've got a police investigation under way. We've got an internal audit being conducted. We've got court documents which talk about fraud, kickbacks, a conspiracy and an inside job. We have a judge who has already ruled that there is a pattern of fraud here. So you tell me, Premier, why is it in the interests of Ontario taxpayers that you continue to do absolutely nothing while they continue to be ripped off?

Hon Mr Harris: Let me first of all assure the member and the public that not one single person under any suspicion or investigation is involved in any process of the ORC today. That is the first thing that was taken care of and dealt with. Second, new procedures have been put in place. Too bad it didn't happen in 1985 to 1990, when the cover-up Liberals were in office, or in 1990 to 1995, when the cover-up NDP were in office. When we are in office, are things perfect? Of course not. If they were perfect you wouldn't need us. But I'll tell you, this province sure as heck needed a government that was open, transparent, accountable, willing to bring sunshine to the affairs of the province, willing to deal with the messes that we inherited, willing to bring us to a position where next Tuesday the Minister of Finance can finally bring to the taxpayers of this province the first truly balanced budget in over 30 years.

The Speaker: New question. The leader of the third party.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is to the Premier. You keep telling us that your Minister Hodgson and your guy at the ORC, Mr Miele, are cleaning up the operation, but the evidence shows that your minister and your guy at the ORC okayed a mega-ripoff deal with a certain Frank Gabriele in March 1999, and in September of 1999 your guy at the ORC and your Minister Hodgson okayed another deal with Mr Frank Gabriele, this time in Brampton. And court documents now tell us that the ORC was involved in yet other deals with Mr Gabriele concerning alleged price-fixing of environmental cleanups.

Premier, how can your Minister Hodgson and your guy Mr Miele be cleaning up the ORC when they are busy constantly doing deals with the person who is alleged to be corrupting the ORC?

Hon Mr Harris: As we've indicated on a number of occasions, if anything inappropriate has taken place, there is certainly no allegation on the minister, the board, the chair of the ORC or the CEO of the ORC. In fact, they're the ones who brought it to light. Thank goodness we've had an enlightened, new kind of government in Ontario over the last five years.

Mr Hampton: Premier, I think the accurate description is that your minister and your people at the ORC got caught. But it gets better.

Just three months ago, in January of this year, your Minister Hodgson and your guy at the ORC, Tony Miele, had the ORC appealing to the Ontario Municipal Board to get concessions on a property in Aurora for—guess who? Frank Gabriele. And as of March of this year, just a month ago, the partnership between your people at the ORC and Frank Gabriele was described as “very much alive.”

Premier, it comes down to this: Your minister and your guy at the ORC simply can't be cleaning up the Ontario Realty Corp and at the same time be doing deals with the person who is alleged to have corrupted the Ontario Realty Corp. It just doesn't work. If you're truly interested in getting to the bottom of this, then your minister and your guy at the ORC, Tony Miele, have to resign. Will you get to the bottom of this? Will you do the right thing for taxpayers? Have them resign.

Hon Mr Harris: Yes, yes and no.

1430

Mr Hampton: Somehow I don't think people would find the Premier's answer surprising, despite all the evidence. But there are some fundamental differences here, Premier. You now have court documents. Despite all your minister's denials, despite all your government's denials, you now have court documents that admit that fraud took place. What your minister tried to dismiss as innuendo has been shown to be reality now.

Why did your people at the ORC—your minister, your Mr Miele—keep doing deals with Mr Gabriele after other people brought it to the public's attention that there was something wrong? That's the question that has to be

answered. Why did you keep doing these deals when it was obvious there was something wrong? And the people who continue to supervise these deals can't honestly stay in place if the police are doing an investigation. They've got to step aside. If you want to get to the bottom of it, they've got to step aside. Will you do the right thing, insist that they step aside?

Hon Mr Harris: I'll take whatever action the police or the Deputy Attorney General think is appropriate. But to suggest that once there is an allegation or anybody is under investigation, we're still doing business with them, or the ORC is, is just factually incorrect. To suggest by any stretch of the imagination—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Harris: It is correct. It really is not becoming a politician, let alone the leader of a party or a lawyer. And when you look at the lack of accountability, the disgraceful lack of accountability in decision-making, the knee-jerk decisions that led to a loss of 10,000 jobs, that led to massive deficits instead of taking care, making sure you get the facts before you do the right thing—the public and the people of Ontario wanted a government to take the time, get the facts, make the right decision, be open and honest and upfront with the public. Thank God they got a government that does that now, after 10 years of disgraceful government in this province.

The Speaker: New question. The leader of the third party.

Mr Hampton: My question is for the Premier. Premier, I would simply say to you that the same people who have been doing deals with Mr Gabriele can't stay there now while the police are investigating. I think that's a matter of common sense.

POVERTY AMONG SENIORS

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): Premier, I want to ask you about the Easter weekend. A study, released on Easter weekend, on food bank use in the greater Toronto area shows that since you became Premier in 1995, the percentage of seniors forced to use food banks has doubled, the number of people who need to use food banks went up, and after food bank users pay their rent, the amount of money they have left plunged by 33%; they're now living on a paltry \$4.95 a day.

Premier, you can do something about this. You could bring back rent controls and you could raise the minimum wage so that people have some money to pay for food. Would you do that, Premier?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I don't know who did the study. I do recall somebody indicating—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Harris: I'm sorry. Who did the study?

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): The Canadian Council on Social Development.

Hon Mr Harris: Oh, the Canadian Council on Social Development. I think the little article I read indicated that they attributed taking away rent controls, when of course

you know rent controls have not been taken for any person, any senior, any welfare recipient—any individual in this province has not lost rent controls. In fact, the increase for rent this year under the rent control legislation that you brought in is the lowest in the history of the province.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary.

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): Premier, I was shocked to read that there are twice as many seniors now relying on food banks, and I actually hope you were too when you read that, despite your little tirade there.

I want to tell you about one senior who called us, Kenneth Hardy. He had only \$1.50 left in his bank account by Good Friday. His Easter dinner consisted of a small meat pie, a small dented can of potatoes which he bought from the damaged goods bin and a small dented can of peas which he had been saving since Christmas for a special occasion. He is a senior living on a meagre income in the GTA, and he had to wait until this week to receive his pension cheque that your government could have delivered to all seniors before the holiday weekend. He didn't call on his own behalf. He actually called because he was worried about some of his friends who didn't have enough money left to buy a small chocolate bunny for their grandchildren.

You obviously aren't going to agree with us on rent controls. You obviously aren't going to agree with us on the minimum wage. Here is a small thing you could do that would help some seniors a little bit in these dire circumstances: Will you guarantee that all seniors will receive their Ontario government pension cheques before holiday weekends, when they can spend the time with their family, when they have access to their own resources, and not have to spend a lonely weekend like Kenneth Hardy did this weekend?

Hon Mr Harris: It's not a bad suggestion. It's something we will take under advisement. If it's feasible to do, we would be happy to look at it.

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. I want to ask you a question on behalf of Ontario parents in the wake of the tragedy that occurred in my community late last week. Parents in particular want to know what we are doing here in Ontario to prevent violence in our schools.

Premier, you may know that after the tragic incident in Alberta last year, the government there set up a task force. Its report, entitled Start Young—Start Now!, made several recommendations on how to prevent these kinds of incidents from taking place. Those recommendations included expanded mental health services for children and youth, crisis response plans for all the schools and a province-wide emergency line for families who find themselves in crisis.

Why doesn't Ontario draft a plan to prevent violence in Ontario schools?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): No government has taken more action and sought unanimous support, and been opposed by the Liberal Party at every turn, for actions to bring respect, to bring responsibility, to bring accountability into our schools, than ours. At every step of the way, when either I or the Minister of Education has proposed areas that we believe can be strengthened, you ridicule it, you ignore it, you seem to be opposed to it. We've talked ad infinitum about measures on weapons and guns with the federal government, on tightening up the Young Offenders Act. You opposed changes to the Young Offenders Act.

If this is the new change, if you now believe that individuals have to be accountable, that there needs to be responsibility, if this is a 100% reversal on the part of the leader of this Liberal Party, I want to tell you, I welcome it and I would be happy to work with you—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Premier take his seat, please. Member from Hamilton East. Order. Supplementary.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, I have four children in Ottawa schools today: three in high school, one in grade 8. As far as I'm concerned, I spend far too much time away from them. If some harm should come to any of my children, I would expect that the person responsible would be punished. But what Terri and I really want to know, and I think what Ontario parents want to know, is: Are we doing everything we can today in Ontario to prevent violence from occurring in the first place? Why could we not draw on the experience in other jurisdictions to put in place a plan, not to punish offenders after they've committed the offences, but to prevent the offences from occurring in the first place? So I ask you, Premier, to set aside the rhetoric, and I ask you, on behalf of Ontario parents, to consider a plan to prevent violence from occurring in the first place in Ontario schools.

Hon Mr Harris: With the greatest of respect, this is a very serious issue. Many of us are parents. Like you, I have two young children in the school system. But it is very difficult for me, when you have opposed every initiative by this minister, every initiative by the Attorney General, every initiative by the Solicitor General, every initiative by the Minister of Education, to bring respect and responsibility into the schools. You have opposed all the initiatives we have proposed. I assume the only reason you have changed your mind is that the polls have told you to change your mind, because you never act out of principle, you never act out of—

Interjections.

1440

The Speaker: Order. Premier take his seat, please. I couldn't hear the Premier. Is the Premier finished now? There is 30 seconds left.

Hon Mr Harris: I just wanted to conclude by saying that if this was a 180-degree change of opposition to every initiative that we have tried to take with school boards, that we've tried to take with teachers, that we've

tried to take in response, that you have fought and you have opposed every step of the way, we welcome—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Please take your seat. Member for Windsor West, come to order, please. We can't have it when you shout.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Because I was calling people to order, that's why, member for Hamilton East, and it was you I was calling to order. It's hard to keep track when I'm trying to call people to order as well, with all due respect.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr Brian Coburn (Carleton-Gloucester): My question is for the Minister of Correctional Services. Although I wasn't a member of this government in 1997, I am aware that your predecessor announced sites for new correctional facilities. In fact, on October 9, 1997, the then Ontario Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services, Mr Bob Runciman, announced that the province's two new adult correctional facilities would be located near the town of Penetanguishene and the town of Lindsay. Lately, local media and politicians have stated on several occasions that the town of Penetanguishene was promised that the prison would be publicly run. In fact, some residents of Penetanguishene have accused you and this government of lying to them about who would operate the facility in Penetanguishene. The residents have told you that your predecessor told them it would be a publicly operated facility.

Minister, did your predecessor commit to who would operate the facility at Penetanguishene?

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): I'm very happy to answer the honourable member's question to clarify the misinformation that has been bandied about not only in this House but outside of this House. I have talked at length with the previous minister of corrections, and he has assured me that he did not commit that the Penetanguishene jail would be publicly or privately run. In fact, the town of Penetanguishene was fully aware in December 1997 that it could be operated by a private operator. They wrote the then Honourable Robert Runciman in December 1997 and said, "In conclusion, Mr Minister, council and I don't envy the decision you have to make to determine which facility will be privately run or if either will be privately run." This is their letter. "All we ask is that you take into consideration all the available information before making a decision, and thank you for your consideration." That was their letter to the minister.

I should say as well that there was a newspaper article in February 1998 where the minister said that it was part of his obligation to Ontario taxpayers to explore—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr Coburn: The correspondence you're referring to was not a public announcement, and the media continues to attack you and this government that your predecessor

confirmed to them that this government decided against letting the private sector run a new superjail. I have a clipping dated October 27, 1998, and the headline reads, "New Superjail Won't Be in Private Hands—Runciman."

Minister, again I ask: Did your predecessor commit to the town of Penetanguishene who would operate the facility in their municipality?

Hon Mr Sampson: I thank the honourable member, who I know has a very keen interest in the reform we're bringing to Ontario corrections because he of course was one of our larger institutions in his neighbourhood. I understand his concern. Of course, in that very same article the minister says that it's part of the obligation to Ontario taxpayers to explore and establish cost-reduction strategies at all levels of the organization and that the ministry is exploring the possibility of private sector involvement in one of its new facilities.

I say to the member who raised the question and to the members opposite who are heckling, it is quite clear that our obligation to our taxpayers is to run an effective and efficient correctional system, one that delivers results at a fair dollar to the taxpayer. I know from the heckling opposite from the Liberal benches that both of those are terribly difficult issues for you to grasp, but they're ones that I'm grappling with now and trying to deliver on.

GOVERNMENT PLANES

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is to the Premier. I want to ask you about your purchase of two luxury jets for over \$11 million last weekend. You claimed that the two other planes were useless when you traded them in for over \$ 2 million. Clearly, we have a province where you believe in economy class education, economy class health care, but only the best of luxury for you and your ministers.

Premier, not only did you spend over \$11 million of taxpayers' dollars on two new jets, you also used and purchased from an American company. Of course, there are no companies in Canada that are available to do that type of work and to provide those purchases here. Can you explain? In view of the situation we have in health care in this province, in view of the fact that we're sending pregnant moms from Toronto to Ottawa to give birth because we don't have any space, in view of the fact that police cannot get helicopters, in view of all this, how can you justify spending over \$11 million of taxpayers' money to purchase two new jets so you and your cabinet can travel in first class?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think the member knows that the aircraft are very similar to the aircraft that were 20 and 21 or 21 and 22 years old, that were down for close to a third of the time, aircraft that are used, yes, for myself and cabinet, senior government officials and for a number of staff during the firefighting season and other activities of the Minister of Natural Resources as well as the Lieutenant Governor. I think the member knows they're not jet aircraft. I guess that like everything else, they think if they say the misinformation

often enough somebody might believe the crap that they put out. The fact of the matter is that these are very similar aircraft to the old ones that we are replacing. They had been recommended for replacement under your administration, but you decided to fritter away billions of dollars on other things—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. The Premier's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr Agostino: The reality is that the Ministry of Natural Resources has plenty of jets that can be used by the Premier and by his cabinet on a daily basis.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Member for Brampton Centre, come to order. Order. If we could put 10 seconds back on the clock, please.

Mr Agostino: Again, clearly, the Ministry of Natural Resources has plenty of jets and helicopters and other equipment that can be used to jet the cabinet and the Premier and senior civil servants around the province. The reality is that in the press release it talks about using the—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Member, take a seat. Stop the clock. The member for Brampton Centre, this is his last warning. We can't have you shouting across. It's his last warning, the member for Brampton Centre. Start the clock.

Mr Agostino: The Premier talks about firefighting and using it for other purposes outside of travel by ministers in his cabinet. The reality is that this is not a plane for fighting fires; this is a plane that is white, leather interior, comfortably seats nine, has a hot food preparation area, has a bar service inside and has plenty of storage room. This is a luxury government jet. Call it as it is, Premier. This is not to fight fires in northern Ontario; this is to get you and your cabinet comfortably around this province.

Again, Premier, you have not explained how you can justify over \$11 million in taxpayers' expense and how you can justify purchasing these from an American—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Member, take a seat. We won't continue. I can't hear. His own members are shouting. I can't even hear past them. I'll give the member 10 seconds to wrap up, please.

Mr Agostino: Premier, can you explain how this jet with white leather interior, hot food preparation area, bar service, that seats nine is going to be used to fight fires across Ontario?

Hon Mr Harris: The new aircraft, which have been called the safest turboprop aircraft in the air today, the King Air 350s, replaced the two King Airs that my predecessor, Bill Davis, going back over a period of time, and the Liberals and the NDP flew around in. In 1983, they were recommended for replacement, because they were getting too old and inefficient. In 1987, they were recommended for replacement. In 1989, they were recommended for replacement. Unfortunately, the

governments of the day frittered away so much money they couldn't even provide safe aircraft for the Lieutenant Governor and those officials who need them. In 1998, they were recommended again. So, thank goodness, now we have the kind of government that's brought accountability and responsibility that we can afford safe aircraft—

The Speaker: The Premier's time is up.

1450

NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): In my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, we're more interested in health care than airplanes right now, so my question is directed to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

As you are well aware, our government has been instrumental in promoting and developing primary health care services provided by nurse practitioners for a number of years. Recently I had the opportunity to read the Registered Nurse Journal, March-April 2000 issue. There's an article entitled "Nurse Practitioner Graduates: Where Are They Now?" If I may quote from article, it says, "The percentage of graduates working as nurse practitioners one year and three years following graduation was 58% and 60%."

Minister, in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, many people have difficulty accessing quality primary health care. Can you tell my constituents why, after three years, only 60% of these highly trained nurse practitioners are working?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Yes. The survey to which the member refers was actually done prior to the announcement that the Premier and I made in February of this year. At that time, we were pleased to announce that an additional 106 new nurse practitioners would be serving people in Ontario. I'm very pleased to say that, for the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, this now means that in his community there will be six additional nurse practitioners.

Mr Beaubien: Minister, on behalf of the constituents of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, we certainly thank the ministry for the nurse practitioners that we received in the last round of allocations. However, what are the ministry's future plans with regard to dealing with these highly trained individuals so that, instead of having 60% of them working, we would have 100% of them working?

Hon Mrs Witmer: As I indicated, the survey showing the 60% was done prior to the most recent announcement with the addition of 106 nurse practitioners. I'm very pleased to say that in Ontario we presently are supporting approximately 226 nurse practitioners. Those nurse practitioners are working in primary care reform pilot projects, they are working in the long-term-care facilities, they are working in the aboriginal health centres and they are working in underserved areas.

Just as we originally supported about 120 nurse practitioners, more recently 106, I can assure you that we will be making future announcements that will increase the number of nurse practitioners. We look forward to them working co-operatively with physicians throughout Ontario.

FIREARMS CONTROL

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): To the Premier: Holiday weekends should be a time of peace, catching up with our friends and families, enjoying the outdoors, taking it easy. But at least for four families in the city of Toronto, the weekend brought sorrow and pain and fear. That fear has seeped out to touch the lives of everyone living in this city, from Scarborough to North York to Etobicoke: Hani Othman, 16 years old, shot dead; Sheldon Bailey, 18 years old, shot dead; a 13-year-old boy shot and nearly killed; a 26-year-old man shot and in hospital. Since April 15, there have been eight other shootings in the Toronto area. Premier, will you tell the concerned people of this city why you refuse to take a stand in favour of gun control? Who are you listening to, an American gun lobby or the people of Ontario?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Mr Speaker, I have to tell you the member is sadly misinformed or mistaken or intentionally saying some things that just aren't true.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I'd ask the Premier to withdraw that. You can't say that somebody is intentionally—if you would withdraw that, please.

Hon Mr Harris: I withdraw.

Mr Speaker, let me say that no government has taken a stronger stand on violence with guns, on crime, on guns and on trying to control illegal guns and even legal guns that are used illegally. If you are referring to the over \$200 million wasted by the federal government on legal hunting guns and sporting guns, which is obviously not doing the job—

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Windsor West, this is her last warning. We can't have you shouting across.

Premier, continue.

Hon Mr Harris: If you are referring to our opposition to that boondoggle of a disaster that has wasted hundreds of millions of dollars, that the Liberals support and apparently you support—I don't know why—dollars that could have been used to fight the illegal use of guns, to fight legal guns that are used illegally, to have tougher penalties for crime, which you always oppose when we bring it up—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the Premier's time is up. Supplementary.

Ms Churley: Premier, as you well know, your candidate in the upcoming by-election disagrees with you on that, as do many other people who are concerned about the proliferation of guns. Let's set the record straight

here, Premier: You have spent hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars to fight these laws that restrict guns. There hasn't been a provincial gun amnesty in Ontario since 1994. Members of your own caucus are appearing on US National Rifle Association television ads. You allow the NRA information on how to load and handle handguns into our schools. You are still 118 police officers short of the policing level that existed under the NDP government. Your idea of safe streets legislation is to ban squeegee kids.

Premier, this is ludicrous. You've got to take this seriously. The people of Toronto, indeed of all of Ontario, want answers. You're taking us in the wrong direction, as I've just outlined. When are you going to do something positive to stop the proliferation of guns in the city of Toronto to save these young people's lives?

Hon Mr Harris: I think the first thing that's important is that the public have the facts, something they're not getting from your question. Second, you talk about the number of police officers, where there are more police officers on the street today and going on the street today than there were under your administration. You know we invested \$150 million to put another 1,000 net new front-line police officers on to our streets. If you ask the police this, if you ask any police officer, "Would you rather have the \$350 million the federal Liberals are wasting on a boondoggle of a large bureaucracy, ostensibly for gun control, or would you rather have 2,300 new front-line police officers, as we're advocating?" every single police officer would say, "Give us that \$350 million for more front-line police officers like the Ontario government is giving us."

SALE OF SCHOOLS

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I have a question for the Minister of Education. I want to ask you about the connection between the sale of schools in this province and the Ontario Realty Corp and the policies, or the lack of policies, of your ministry. You may be aware that Torrance school in Guelph was put up for an RFP in March; 13 days later the RFP ended and it was sold at an emergency board meeting called immediately afterwards. You may be aware that it sold for \$175,000, and hopefully you're aware, Minister, that at the same time in December the year before the city of Guelph had assessed this property at \$500,000. That's three times as much as what the property sold for.

I want to ask you today the circumstances at Torrance school released by the Ontario Realty Corp to the Upper Grand board: Are you in a position today to assure us that that has been investigated, that there was no wrongdoing in this kind of process that saw that property released for one third its value, that there are policies in place that are protecting the public interest in what apparently is a terrible deal for the people of Guelph, for the people of Ontario? Minister, can you stand in your place and tell us today that that's the case?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): As the member well knows, the decision about selling surplus properties that school boards may own—they make the decision about how they want to sell them. If he says that this particular school board messed up in this and that they can't be trusted and they need to be investigated, I'll let them know that is the honourable member's view. As I understand it, there are several trustees who are going to call for an investigation of this, they will debate that in a public meeting, and I would suggest that he await the decision of those duly elected trustees. It is their responsibility to make that decision. I would be quite surprised if the school board would share the view of their handling of this that the honourable member has just characterized.

1500

Mr Kennedy: As my leader amply indicated earlier, the Ontario Realty Corp is under investigation. You should by now be aware of whatever the Ontario Realty Corp is doing with the dozens of properties that have been given to it by the school boards. In this case, the Ontario Realty Corp had to release Torrance school in order for it to be sold, and it ended up being sold under these circumstances.

Minister, there's 133 schools all around the province. Have you set policy to make sure that the public interest is observed here? Right now there are 133 other schools that could potentially be sold and end up in the same situation as the Torrance school in Guelph. What people want to hear from you is that you're not just passing the buck, that you're going to take some responsibility for making sure the community interest is going to be served. You've insulted the people of Guelph by making them close their school. Will you at least make sure that there's fair value obtained for it and for all of the schools that are up for sale?

Hon Mrs Ecker: Elected trustees in this community have made a decision, or potentially are making a decision, about what they want to do with the surplus school space. If the honourable member is questioning their integrity on how well they've done this, that is one thing, but these trustees have the responsibility for doing this. They are debating whether they want to have further work or investigation or whatever in this deal. If they wish the assistance of the ministry, they can certainly have the assistance of the ministry.

If the honourable member has evidence that school boards and school board trustees are doing something unethical in the disposal of surplus schools that they may have that are excess to their need, he should put that forward, and if that evidence exists we will certainly be prepared to issue new directives to school boards to fix the problem. At the moment, this particular school board is looking at this issue and we will await the decision of those trustees.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Despite the valuable efforts over the years of groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving and the Ontario Provincial Police, to name just a few, drinking and driving persists as a dangerous problem in this province. In fact, statistics suggest that approximately 25% of all those killed in Ontario roads die in drinking-and-driving collisions. Minister, can you tell me what the government is doing to address the problem of drinking and driving in Ontario?

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): Since we became the government we have taken very tough action on this very serious issue to reduce the problem of drinking and driving in Ontario. Administrative driver's licence suspensions, which were introduced in November 1996, to date have resulted in 63,000 people who've lost their licence for 90 days. Remedial measures require assessment plus education or treatment as a pre-condition to licence reinstatement. Increased suspension periods are now three years for the second offence and lifetime for the third offence. The vehicle impoundment program for those drivers who are suspended due to Criminal Code convictions is working very well. We have dedicated a multi-year fund to the RIDE program of \$1.2 million annually.

Mr Tascona: It is certainly gratifying to hear that this government recognizes the problem that drinking and driving continues to pose in Ontario. I also know that the residents of my riding will find it reassuring to learn of the tough action your ministry has taken to combat it. Can you tell me, Minister, what effect these measures have had in helping to reducing the problem of drinking and driving in Ontario?

Hon Mr Turnbull: We know that our tough action against drinking drivers is working. The 1997 statistics show that drinking fatalities have decreased by one third from three years earlier. We will continue to crack down. Although we have made progress, there is much more work to do on this very important issue. We've proven our commitment to safety: We now have the fourth-safest roads in North America with the lowest fatalities since 1950, but we must all work together to stop this scourge of drinking and driving.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, you will know that the amalgamation in the Ottawa-Carleton area of both the separate boards and the public boards has created a very, very unusual situation in that both boards now span the rural areas, the suburban area, the city and the city core. What this means is that when you take your formula of space, before a board can ask for space for its growth area it has to close down and have 100% usage in

the rest of its area, which means you pit the suburbs against the core part of the city and some of those very fragile neighbourhoods.

In my riding alone we're potentially facing closure of about 20 schools. That means what you're going to see is what I call "demographic cleansing," because families with children will not want to move there when the schools are gone and those families with children will want to move out to where the schools will be. This is causing incredible tension and social disruption in the Ottawa area.

Minister, will you commit yourself to a moratorium or a freeze until you've had a chance to consult on the impact of school closures in the Ottawa-Carleton area and take some action today?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I've met with both boards. I've also met and discussed this with our Ottawa MPPs in this caucus. We have made some changes in the rules to make their resources a little more flexible to assist. We also, as you know, topped up money for boards on the accommodation. We've asked school boards to submit long-range capital plans to the ministry. As you know, we are asking them to take a look at their enrolment and their needs, and to do capital plans based on that. We are going to be taking those plans and seeing if we need to make changes in how we fund boards for this or the rules around how that money flows to boards for new pupil places.

Mr Patten: So I take it that you do have somewhat of an open mind, which is a good sign.

Your government likes to follow Alberta and many of its initiatives. Alberta has an 85% factor, not a 100% factor, for utilization by students, and I just point that out to you.

When I raised this problem with your predecessor, Mr Johnson, he acknowledged that there was indeed a special, unique situation in the Ottawa-Carleton area, and he sent in an ADM to investigate and to see what happened. We never heard what the report was because an election changed the ballgame, and then there was a change of ministers and we're somewhat back to square one.

Minister, I'm inviting you to do three possible things: (1) Visit yourself, (2) send someone in to investigate what I am suggesting, or (3) receive a delegation from the Ottawa-Carleton area, not just from the school boards but also from the city or from the region as well, to lay this before you so that you can see the discrimination that is there by virtue of the amalgamation in that area and the demographic cleansing that is taking place. Will you take one of those three actions?

Hon Mrs Ecker: As I said to the honourable member, I have indeed met with the school boards, I believe actually on more than one occasion. Staff have met with them. I have also met with my MPP caucus colleagues, who have carried forward the concerns from the board. As I said, we have made improvements in funding. We have given the boards in Ottawa a little more flexibility in terms of some of the moneys that they had through development charges etc. But I'd also like to say to the

honourable member that surely he would like us to be able to make decisions based on the capital needs for schools, based on their long-range plans, and not do a knee-jerk reaction, a short-term reaction, because the boards have asked us for better longer-term decisions.

The other thing I would also like to say is that the way we fund boards on capital is allowing one of the biggest school building booms in this province we've seen in decades, so that many of those communities that have lagged far behind under the funding that the two previous governments had are now finally beginning to catch up.

TRILLIUM BOOK AWARD

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation. Historically, books have been the most powerful factor in the dissemination of knowledge and the most effective means of preserving it. Promoting books develops a fuller collective awareness of the cultural traditions throughout the world, and they exercise intellectual and spiritual freedom. Minister, can you inform the House about your ministry's celebration of literature, the Trillium Book Award?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women): I'd like to thank the member for Peterborough for the question. The Trillium Book Award recognizes literary excellence in Ontario. What we try to do with the Trillium Book Award is to support marketing and public awareness and the quality and diversity of books in Ontario.

Tomorrow night, the awards will be presented at the Royal Ontario Museum. The award winner will receive \$12,000 for the authors of both the French and the English books that are awarded this prestigious title. Also, the publishers will receive approximately \$2,500. The minister responsible for anglophone affairs and I will be there. We will be giving awards. There were 252 English books submitted for this award and 36 French books. We're very excited about the evening because we'll be recognizing great Ontario talent.

1510

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I invite members to join me in welcoming, in the Speaker's gallery, Louis-Philippe McGraw, who is an MPP from New Brunswick.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just before we begin petitions, we also have a new group of pages coming this time. We have Dylan Abreu-Coburn from Cambridge. We have Amber Beattie from London-Fanshawe. We have Melissa Brown from Mississauga West; Karen Cartier from Chatham-Kent-Essex; Rubina Cherian from Scarborough-Agincourt; Konrad Droske from Trinity-

Spadina; Brian Frost from Thunder Bay-Atikokan; Philip Grandine from Brant; Mark Gupta from Thornhill; Erica Hamel from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Katherine Job from Oakville; Megan Kirkey from Timiskaming-Cochrane. We have Jamie Newman from Haliburton-Victoria-Brock; Karyn Raymond from Parkdale-High Park; Reade Richard from Windsor West; Sean Robertson from Parry Sound-Muskoka; Marc Rodrigue from Nepean-Carleton; Greg Ryerson from Bruce-Grey; Sarah Shirk from Burlington and Shihani Thillaivasan from Scarborough Centre. Would all members please join me in welcoming our new pages.

PETITIONS

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): I have a petition to the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians with a developmental disability are in growing danger of inadequate support because compensation to staff in not-for-profit agencies is, based on a recent survey, on average, 20% to 25% less than compensation for others doing the same work in provincial institutions or similar work in other settings;

“Whereas there are hundreds of senior parents in Ontario who saved the Ontario government millions of dollars by keeping their children with developmental disabilities at home, and who are still caring for their adult children;

“Whereas there is no place for most of these adults with a developmental disability to go when the parents are no longer able to provide care;

“Whereas these parents live with constant anxiety and despair;

“Whereas these adult children will end up in Ontario nursing homes and hospitals if there is no appropriate place to provide care;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“To significantly increase compensation for workers in not-for-profit agencies so it is comparable to the compensation of government-funded workers in identical or similar occupations; and

“To provide the resources necessary to give appropriate support to Ontarians with developmental disability who at present have no place to go when their parents are no longer able to care for them.”

ABORTION

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by over 900 good citizens of Cambridge.

“Whereas the Ontario health system is overburdened and unnecessary spending must be cut; and

“Whereas pregnancy is not a disease, injury or illness and abortions are not therapeutic procedures; and

“Whereas the vast majority of abortions are done for reasons of convenience or finance;

“Whereas the province has exclusive authority to determine what services will be insured;

“Whereas the Canada Health Act does not require funding for elective procedures; and

“Whereas there is mounting evidence that abortion is in fact hazardous to women’s health; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers funded over 46,000 abortions in 1995 at an estimated cost of \$25 million;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to cease from providing any taxpayers’ dollars for the performance of abortions.”

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have literally hundreds of petitions to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. This particular one comes from—I know the Speaker will be interested—the Group Health Centre in Sault Ste Marie.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the northern health travel grant was introduced in 1987 in recognition of the fact that northern Ontario residents are often forced to receive treatment outside their own communities because of the lack of available services; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged that the costs associated with that travel should not be fully borne by those residents and therefore that financial support should be provided by the Ontario government through the travel grant program; and

“Whereas travel, accommodation and other costs have escalated sharply since the program was first put in place, particularly in the area of air travel; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has provided funds so that southern Ontario patients needing care at the Northwestern Ontario Cancer Centre have all their expenses paid while receiving treatment in the north which creates a double standard for health care delivery in the province; and

“Whereas northern Ontario residents should not receive a different level of health care nor be discriminated against because of their geographical locations;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge the unfairness and inadequacy of the northern health travel grant program and commit to a review of the program with a goal of providing 100% funding of the travel costs for residents needing care outside their communities until such time as that care is available in our communities.”

I am pleased to sign this petition.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from my community of Hamilton.

“Whereas the Harris government has cut \$40 million from the budget of the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp, which has resulted in a health care crisis in Hamilton-Wentworth and left the HHSC with a \$40-million deficit; and

“Whereas the HHSC is now planning to downsize and cut back services at the Henderson General Hospital by converting the hospital to a daycare hospital with urgent care, rather than an emergency department; and

“Whereas this will have a serious impact on emergency services for the 200,000 residents of Hamilton Mountain, upper Stoney Creek, Glanbrook, Ancaster and other communities above the escarpment; and

“Whereas the mountain population is a rapidly growing community and deserves and needs a full-service hospital; and

“Whereas an ambulatory care centre is not an acceptable replacement for a 24-hour emergency ward; and

“Whereas it does not make sense to spend \$100 million for a new cancer centre rather than half that amount to expand existing facilities at the Henderson General Hospital; and

“Whereas Mike Harris said in February the Henderson would remain open for acute and cancer care;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario direct the Harris government to restore the funding cuts to the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp and develop long-term solutions for the maintenance of appropriate acute care services at the Henderson hospital to serve the needs of the growing population of Hamilton-Wentworth and central south Ontario.”

Our caucus continues to support the petitioners and I do so by adding my name.

OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“We, the undersigned members of the Wilmot Horticultural Society, strongly urge the preservation of the Oak Ridges moraine. The moraine is an environmentally sensitive area, home to many species of birds and other wildlife. The moraine acts as a purification system for a large watershed and should remain as such.

“As always, human habitation will bring about destruction and contamination. Please halt the decimation of yet another area.”

It’s signed by quite a number of my constituents in Wilmot township.

STUDED TIRES

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it deals with the law banning the use of studded tires.

“Whereas personal safety on winter roadways would be greatly increased; and

“Whereas improved technology on studded tires has proven in other countries and provinces they will not damage the roadways; and

“Whereas studded tires are used in many northern countries and all other provinces in Canada; and

“Whereas studies have proven that studded tires outperform all-seasonal and winter tires; and

“Whereas studded tires can save lives;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To rescind the law banning the use of studded tires in Ontario.”

This petition has been collected by Allan Cloutier and Pat Cormier.

1520

ABORTION

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): I have been waiting to present a petition on behalf of constituents in Durham who represent Mother Theresa’s Catholic Women’s League in Courtice—Mrs Pat Wilson. I might mention there is Mary and David Feldstein and Penny Manion and others. I’ve read this petition before and will continue to read it.

“To the Parliament of Ontario:

“Whereas we have recently learned that our tax money is being used to pay the rent on the Morgentaler abortuary; and

“Whereas by the end of this lease this amount will be \$5 million;

“Whereas we strongly object to the use of our tax dollars for this purpose;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately cease these payments.”

I am pleased to sign this petition.

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads like this:

“Whereas Ontarians with a developmental disability are in growing danger of inadequate support because compensation to staff of not-for-profit agencies is, based on a recent survey, on average, 20% to 25% less than compensation for others doing the same work in provincial institutions or similar work in other settings; and

“Whereas there are hundreds of senior parents in Ontario who saved the Ontario government millions of dollars by keeping their child with a developmental dis-

ability at home, and who are still caring for their adult child; and

“Whereas there is no place for most of these adults with a developmental disability to go when the parents are no longer able to provide care; and

“Whereas these parents live with constant anxiety and despair; and

“Whereas these adult children will end up in Ontario nursing homes and hospitals if there is no appropriate place to provide care;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“To significantly increase compensation for workers in not-for-profit agencies so that it is comparable to the compensation of government-funded workers in identical or similar occupations; and

“To provide the resources necessary to give appropriate support to Ontarians with a developmental disability who at present have no place to go when their parents are no longer able to care for them.”

I have put my signature to this in agreement.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I have a petition that affects thousands of people regarding housing that the government is planning to divest itself of.

“Whereas the Harris government’s plan to force the sale of subsidized housing in Hamilton-Wentworth will create a crisis for 700 local families; and

“Whereas in addition to these 700 families there are 3,700 other families on waiting lists who will be left without affordable accommodation; and

“Whereas, where are these families supposed to go when we know there is not enough decent, affordable housing to meet their needs? and

“Whereas the Harris government’s housing sell-off is mean-spirited and targets the poorest families who are now threatened with possible eviction;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario direct the Harris government to save these affordable housing units for low-income families, and support new affordable housing to help the 3,700 families on waiting lists in our community.”

I proudly add my name to those of these petitioners.

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Mike Harris’s misnamed Tenant Protection Act has removed the rights of Ontario’s tenants and created a huge legal imbalance in favour of landlords; and

“Whereas the Harris government’s policies have led directly to the affordable housing crisis and resulting homelessness in Ontario today; and

“Whereas a recent study by the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation has proven that there are some

systemic flaws in the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal process that have led to large-scale loss of housing without due process; and

“Whereas the provision of so-called maximum rent increases, coupled with vacancy decontrol and low vacancy rates, has placed tenants in a very vulnerable position; and

“Whereas full disclosure of the disposition of cases brought to the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal are not given to credit-reporting agencies; and

“Whereas Don Valley East MPP David Caplan has introduced Bill 36 with the support of Parkdale-High Park MPP Gerard Kennedy”—and that of others in the House—“to address the imbalance and unfairness in the TPA;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support and protect tenants by immediately calling Bill 36 for debate and passage.”

This is signed by hundreds of people in my riding. I am very proud to affix my signature to it.

AGRICULTURAL DIPLOMA COURSES

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): “Whereas recent announcements by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) reduced their educational budget grant to the University of Guelph by \$3.5 million; and

“Whereas this funding reduction will adversely affect the agricultural diploma courses which the University of Guelph oversees at Ridgetown, Kemptonville, Alfred and agricultural diploma courses at the University of Guelph; and

“Whereas it is vital for the agricultural industry to have a practical, trained talent pool for business and leadership; and

“Whereas diploma courses at agricultural colleges account for only a small portion of OMAFRA’s budget; and

“Whereas Ontario’s agri-food industry contributes \$25 billion annually to the provincial economy and generates \$6.2 billion in agri-food exports and employs more than 640,000 people; and

“Whereas, if agriculture is to compete on its own and be competitive in world markets, it must have and maintain a source of well-trained personnel; and

“Whereas OMAFRA has recently announced several new programs which will cost millions of dollars and not benefit agriculture directly, in the same way that diploma courses would;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we the undersigned petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

“That OMAFRA provide the financial support to maintain the colleges and ensure the present agriculture college diploma courses are continued and that funding for research facilities of the colleges also be maintained. This petition began as a resolution of the township of West Perth and it has been circulated to ROMA/Good

Roads, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Premier and the local MPP.”

I'm in total agreement with it.

ROAD MAINTENANCE

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Black Sturgeon Road in the district of Thunder Bay is an important access road for fishing and hunting to area lakes and forests;

“Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources is attempting to block access to this road by refusing to implement upgrades;

“Whereas a vast area will be rendered inaccessible unless the government maintains responsibility for this road;

“Whereas the government has recently increased fees for hunting and fishing and has considerable funds in its special purpose account;

“Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to use funds from the Ministry of Natural Resources special purpose account to maintain the Black Sturgeon Road as an important access road to protect the rights and freedoms of fishers and hunters in the district of Thunder Bay.”

I'm pleased to sign my name to this petition.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas essential health care services have been deprived of government funding because the Conservative government of Mike Harris has diverted these funds to self-serving propaganda in the form of pamphlets delivered to homes, newspaper advertisements and radio and TV commercials;

“Whereas the Harris government advertising blitz is a blatant abuse of public office and a shameful waste of taxpayers' dollars;

“Whereas the Harris Conservatives ran on a platform of eliminating what it referred to as ‘government waste and unnecessary expenditures,’ while it squanders well over \$100 million on clearly partisan advertising;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Conservative government and Mike Harris to immediately end their abuse of public office and terminate any further expenditure on political advertising.”

I affix my name to this petition as I'm in complete agreement.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation):

I move that pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 55, An Act to make parents responsible for wrongful acts intentionally committed by their children, when Bill 55 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered for third reading;

That no deferral of the second reading vote pursuant to standing order 28(h) shall be permitted; and

That the order for third reading of the bill may then immediately be called. When the order for third reading is called, the remainder of the sessional day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill. At 5:55 pm or 9:25 pm, as the case may be on such day, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment;

That, pursuant to standing order 28(h), the vote on third reading may be deferred until the next sessional day during the routine proceedings “Deferred Votes”; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

1530

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I ask your indulgence for just one brief moment to suggest to you that in terms of the traditions and spirit of this place, this motion is entirely not only unwarranted but out of order. The fact of the matter is that it's a blackmail motion that was earlier tried on our caucus to force us to accept only two days of hearings on a bill this government says they're so proud of, which would have amounted to just a few hours.

We know through our critic, the member for Niagara Centre, that from here on in the government's just going to ram this issue right through and not give all those individuals and groups who want an opportunity—and, I'm reminded by my colleague, families also—to address this. The government says they care so much about what the public thinks, and we're not being given an opportunity. We countered with five days, which we think is the bare minimum that this bill needs, and the government just said no, with a wave of their hand.

We didn't know what they were going to do. This is what they're going to do. They're going to ram it through yet again. No public hearings whatsoever. We need you, Speaker, through your office, to provide us with that fair level of democracy so that our voice, and therefore the voices out there that have concerns about this, will be heard. Speaker, we implore you to please rule this out of order and force the government to return to negotiations

with the three House leaders so that we can find a compromise that we can all live with, rather than this all-or-nothing, “my way or the highway” approach to governance.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Further to this point of order, Mr Speaker: Just very quickly, I want to point out as well that the two days that the government House leader offered would mean the hearings would be here in Toronto. There are people all across the province who have concerns about this, who want answers to their questions. We implore you to ask that we all go back and negotiate this so that people all across the province will have an opportunity to come with their views on this.

Hon Mr Turnbull: There are many precedents for this and there is nothing unusual or out of the ordinary in doing this. The Speaker will recognize that such action has been taken on other occasions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): I have not been privy to the negotiations that have gone on among House leaders where this motion is concerned, and in fact those negotiations can continue to happen while we debate the order that’s in front of us. There in fact is nothing out of order in the motion that has been made.

Mr Turnbull moves notice of motion number 39 and Mr Turnbull has the floor.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think my colleagues who want to make a presentation in regard to this would like a quorum in the House today. It seems to me there’s no quorum here.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: OK. The member for St Paul’s.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul’s): My first response to this motion is, why? Why are we ramming through this flagship of the government’s law-and-order agenda? This legislation was hyped up before the House began in session as one of the premier bills that were coming before this House. I can read, but I don’t have the time to read because of this time allocation motion, the media reports and all the attempts by this government, both in the House and outside the House, to spin this piece of legislation as part of its flagship—I use the word they’ve used—along with the squeegee bill, but for this session the flagship of their law-and-order agenda was going to be the Parental Responsibility Act. In the fullness of time we discovered that the act was a sham. In fact it was, like the squeegee bill, all talk and no action. It was an act that said it was going to promote parental responsibility, but in fact at the end of the day it is going to have no effect whatsoever in terms of a positive contribution with respect to parental responsibility in Ontario and, if anything, it is going to limit the rights of victims to collect against parents in the courts.

We were going to have a real debate on this, I thought, and that would have provided the opportunity to table amendments. I have amendments and I suppose I’ll need

to get them on the record, since there will be no other opportunity for Ontarians to consider what the alternatives were. The reality is that this government is not willing to listen to changes or amendments when it comes to any issue. On the issue of safe streets, they would like to think that they hold a trademark over the topic, when in fact Ontarians are beginning to know and learn very well that their unsafe streets are in part the product of the failure of their provincial government to do anything about crime. They talk a great talk about crime, but they don’t do anything about crime. Soon after the act was introduced, everybody noticed—it was an insult to the intelligence of voters to think that people wouldn’t look to the comparable legislation in the province of Manitoba, where the act did nothing. It did nothing. In the years that the same act has been in place in Manitoba, it has been used just over a dozen times, with three orders against the parents. Because we have a time allocation motion, I’m not going to read those into the record. We had that opportunity, albeit short, during the previous debate, and now they’re ramming it through.

I detect a pattern here and the pattern is this: This government floats out an issue on law and order. They hope to invent the concept first with respect to safe streets via the squeegee bill and now with respect to the Parental Responsibility Act. Then they test the waters and they see what happens on the talk shows and they read the editorials and they see if it catches on. In fact, this act turned out to be the same blunder that the squeegee bill was: It’s going to have no effect whatsoever. So, what happens? Similar to the squeegee bill, the time allocation motion comes on and the bill is rammed through. “Let’s get rid of this; let’s not have hearings,” the government says, because the last thing they would want to do is hold this bill under the microscope; the last thing they would want is to have it held accountable to the people by having people who know about this issue, who are experts in this issue, and even those who are not experts but are affected by this act, come in and speak to the act. That’s democracy. Limited and imperfect as it may be, that’s the way a democracy works in our current parliamentary system, but not under this government. In the words of the Minister of Transportation, there’s “nothing unusual” about this time allocation motion. In fact, there is nothing unusual. There’s nothing unusual about this government ramming through legislation, whether they think it popular or unpopular. There’s nothing unusual about this government curtailing the very limited opportunity to hold people in this House accountable for the acts this government puts forward.

What we have with respect to law and order and crime in this province is a policy by podium, a policy by press release. It’s grandstanding; it’s talk; it’s big props; it’s great press conferences but no opportunity to actually debate the bill. Why? Because there’s nothing in these bills. There’s nothing in this bill. There’s nothing in the squeegee bill. There’s nothing that this bill will do. Don’t believe me. One of the most famous civil libertarians in our country, Clayton Ruby, was asked about this bill

because everybody wanted to know whether or not it violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In fact, the Attorney General suggested that it might be questionable under constitutional scrutiny. What a joke. There are no civil liberties being violated. There's nothing that this bill does. It's a civil bill. It's a civil remedy.

1540

How would the charter intervene? Of course it wouldn't. So they asked Clayton Ruby about it, thinking that he's going to come to the defence of parents of kids, come to the defence of the victims, because that's what he does. He's a defence lawyer. They thought he was going to, not be the foil, but the one you can point to and say, "This is exactly the kind of person who wouldn't support this bill, because it's actually going to have an effect on our society and he's on the wrong side of this issue."

In fact, this is what Clayton Ruby said, and I quote: "So when they talk about increasing parental responsibility under this act, that's"—I don't know if I can repeat it in this House.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): Say it anyway.

Mr Bryant: OK, I will. I'm encouraged by the member for Trinity-Spadina. "So when they talk about increasing parental responsibility ... that's bull," says Clayton Ruby. "There is no change to parental responsibility," he said, "None, zero." Let me say that again: "There is no change to parental responsibility. None, zero."

So Clayton Ruby, who everybody thought was going to pan this act because it violated civil liberties, said there is no problem with it under the Constitution. The problem is it's not going to do anything. It's going to do nothing, zero.

Slowly but surely, the chattering classes, the stakeholders, those who follow provincial politics, anybody tuning into this House, is starting to notice that this bill is yet another lemon. I don't know if it's as much of a lemon as the squeegee bill. I think it may be a worse lemon. We already knew before it was passed that it wasn't going to work, because we had a test case in Manitoba, where the act was a complete failure and did nothing for parental responsibility.

How could this bill have been improved? We could have had a debate over whether we ought to have helped victims by broadening the scope of the bill for victims so that they could go to any court to seek their remedy, not just Small Claims Court, as under this bill, and also for personal injury and death, not just for property crimes, as under this bill.

We could have had a discussion, as I would have proposed, to help victims by removing this bill's blueprint for defence counsel. It lists all the excuses that parents can make when they go before the courts, cut and pasted right out of the Manitoba legislation. How is that going to help victims of crime? I'd remove that blueprint which gives parents new excuses for getting out of their responsibilities. Let's leave it to the courts to work out the

common law defences. That's what we had in Ontario up until now in section 68 of the Family Law Act, under the unlitigated remedies that already exist, because victims do not have the time or resources to go and sue parents for something their kids did.

This government says they want to help victims, but how are they going to help them? They say, "Go sue the people whom you were victimized by." That's no help at all. I would have liked to have debated whether we should amend this bill to help victims by exempting them from having to cover court filing fees. That would have been of some minimal assistance. But this government didn't want to have that debate. This government didn't want to hear anything about doing something about parental responsibility. They wanted to just talk about it. Now they don't even want to talk about it anymore.

I think we should've had a discussion promoting parental responsibility by giving courts the discretion to order parents found liable by the court to complete, at the cost of the provincial government, the same parental training-counselling program that is undertaken in parental responsibility bills with far more teeth in the United States, such as in the state of California.

I would have liked to have a discussion about promoting individual responsibility for young offenders by giving the courts the discretion to order that the kids repay their parents for damages however the court sees fit, because the main principle behind this bill says that if you, young offender, break the window, you're now off the hook and your parents are on the hook. In the abstract, that's an important debate to have. The reality, the practicality of this bill, is that we would never have seen those parents get put on the hook, but the principle was that the kids were off the hook.

I thought this government was serious about individual responsibility, and if they were, we would have had a debate about whether it makes sense to take kids off the hook and put parents on the hook for what they do. What I would propose as an amendment is that we give courts the discretion to order that the kids have to repay their parents. That's the way it ought to work in the families of Ontario. But that's not the way it's going to work under this act, because we didn't even have the opportunity to debate the bill.

What's most concerning about this motion is exactly what the transportation minister said, that there's "nothing unusual" about this motion. This House has become a place where debate no longer is taking place. We yell and scream and shout past each other. The collegiality is completely non-existent. The opportunities to present amendments do not exist. Here's a bill that cried out for amendments, yet no opportunity for amendments was provided.

I know I'm not allowed to call myself a rookie MPP, based on what Speaker Carr said when this session first started, that, "There are no more rookies in this House," but I can tell you, as someone who may not be a rookie but at least is a sophomore, before I came here I never imagined that the debate was going to be so stifled, that

there were going to be no opportunities for motions or amendments or real debate. I had this naive thought that the business of the people is done here. Instead we get motions and we're told by this government that it's not unusual to ram through bills. What's the point of this legislative chamber but to debate these important matters, and if parental responsibility is important to this government why on earth wouldn't we debate it? Well, the answer is clear: The reason is that this bill has turned out to be a flop and a lemon and they want the story to go away. They don't want people to come in during hearings. They don't want people to make submissions to committees telling everybody who's willing and able to listen that this bill isn't going to do anything.

I want to, Ontario Liberals want to, I would have hoped that everybody in this House would want to do something about parental responsibility. This bill doesn't do it. This motion is a travesty. Unfortunately, it's nothing unusual in the dishonourable tyranny that is this government.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): This is an incredibly interesting scenario we find ourselves in, isn't it? I'm going to go through the history of what happened today. I think it's important that people understand exactly what kind of scam, what kind of sleazy, scummy little game the government tried to play. But I think the people are on to them, especially when it comes to this bill.

This is a motion, so it doesn't have a title. But were it a bill that the Tories had presented today it would probably be called the "Gutless wonder" bill, the "We screwed up big-time and we gotta run and hide now" bill, the "This doesn't have any spin, it didn't get any legs out there in the public so we'd better bury it" bill, the "We misread the public one more time and we'd better duck" bill.

I'll tell you what happened, interestingly, because I've never seen this before. It might have happened and maybe I wasn't paying attention; that's possible, I suppose. The Tories tabled two notices of motion. To understand this perfectly clearly, one was this motion, order paper number 39, which said no committee hearings, slammed the door on the public and their participation in this debate because we told these people last week that they've opened the Pandora's Box now. This isn't just about the black print on the paper, because as has already been noted by so many experts out there—scholars, legal professors, other observers—this bill doesn't create new law. It restates the laws that exist. When I and other members of the New Democratic Party and, quite frankly, the other opposition party spoke to this Legislature, we said the same sorts of things: There's nothing new about this—oh, an attempt on the part of the Tories to make it look as if they somehow reinvented the wheel. They've declined to give credit to the NDP-Liberal accord government of 1997—1987, rather; time flies—which implemented section 68 of the Family Law Act, which of course shifts the onus on to parents to prove that

they had appropriate supervision and control of their delinquent kids and enables victims of those delinquencies to sue those parents if they were negligent in the course of the supervision of those kids.

1550

I understand why Tory backbenchers didn't want to speak to the bill. I understand that. Quite frankly, Tory backbenchers, once they have their crib sheets, their scripts, are silent more often than not. Again, the Tories said this was big news—a big press conference, the Attorney General with his photographs. Of course, the press shot him down within minutes when they confronted him with section 68, because this was the hallmark piece of this bill. The press gallery said, "But, Mr Attorney General"—because, you see, I'd gone to the press conference. I'd made sure the press gallery had copies of section 68. It would have been unfair for them to have been there without copies of section 68 of the Family Law Act so they could question the Attorney General as to what's new about this legislation. So this was supposed to be a real spin piece for the government.

We have two notices of motion. One shuts this debate down with zero committee hearing, zero third reading debate, which means that the public—and I've received numerous e-mails, letters, telephone calls about this. Down in my riding this past weekend, people stopped me. What's interesting is that people who I know are, I acknowledge it, by their very nature somewhat conservative—I was over at Cox Home and Garden Centre in South Pelham, and a gentleman whom I know to be, yes, rather conservative, said, "Are these guys nuts?" He said: "What are they doing? What kind of games are they playing? Who do they think they're kidding?" The garbage that was coming out of him, somehow—because, you see, part of the game is to say, "Oh, the opposition are soft on crime." Horse feathers. We're just big on truth—big difference. We're just big on the facts and we're just big on exposing the phony and, more often than not, dangerous type of spin that this government tries to put on the real tragedy of youth crime.

Let me make it quite clear. Any Tory member who would suggest otherwise is either lying, if he or she were to say that, or is ignorant. They would either be lying or ignorant if they were to suggest that somehow our concern about this legislation has anything to do with being soft on crime. I know the scenario they're trying to paint. I heard the parliamentary assistant. It was so cute: They should have spoken to the motion first, but they're going to play it cute and they're going to have the final word today. God bless. Feel free, Tory backbenchers. Have the final word, but at the end of the day the public has already been able to scrutinize your tactics around this piece of legislation, has already seen enough analysis of it to understand that this stuff is as phony as a three-dollar bill. This is one that this government isn't going to get away with, not in the public's mind, not in their eyes.

There are two notices of motion, the one we're speaking to today, which is going to be voted on in two hours, and there was another one; it provided for—oh, we

should be so grateful—two afternoons of committee hearings. Two afternoons. Do you know what that means? Maximum two and a half hours in the afternoon. The Tories control the committee, so they'll stack it up with a half hour of address from the parliamentary assistant or a deputy minister or a gang of minions from the Ministry of the Attorney General, and then they'll trot through the handful of handpicked proponents of this legislation. The people with real concerns, the people with expertise out there, the people who would question whether or not this bill really has anything to do with the rights of victims at all would not be heard, and if they were heard it would be for the briefest time slots, about 10 and 15 minutes a shot. Hardly public hearings, is it? And but one afternoon for clause-by-clause consideration, two and a half hours? Get off it. Barely sufficient time to either present amendments or to properly debate them and/or to seek the advice of, among others, people like legislative counsel. It was a joke. But it was a sad, pathetic joke, because it was an insult to this Legislature, it was an insult to the public, it was an insult to victims of youth crime, and an insult to the families who have to cope and grapple with kids who have become delinquents and who have ended up in our young offender courts.

Others may have been prepared to go along with that, but there were no deals to be made from this caucus. No way were we going to buy into that pathetic, sad, miserable insult to democracy of but two afternoons of public hearings. I tell you quite frankly, I asked my House leader to go back to the government House leader and say: "It needs five days minimum. If you want concessions from us, at least five days, because we've got enough people to fill up five days at our caucus from contacts we've got alone, and Lord knows the other opposition party has as many, if not more."

You know the strategy. Of course, the parliamentary assistant is going to rise to his feet at some point this afternoon and he's going to say, "Oh, they could have had public hearings." That's what he's going to say; he's going to say that. "They could have had, but they blew it." If he says that, he's lying, and if he says that, he's a liar. If he says that we're soft on crime, he's a liar. If he says that we skewered public hearings, he's a liar.

The Acting Speaker: I would caution the member to not use that kind of language in the House.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Speaker.

If he stands up and suggests that it was anybody other than the government who chose to proceed with no public hearings, there has been a sad and less than accurate presentation of the facts.

This government never had any intention of public hearings around this bill. This bill has been floundering out there in the public eye. This government's history, its five years when it comes to victims, has been as serious an assault on victims as the assaults originally perpetrated by those criminals. I've talked to you, Speaker, about the cases of Linda Even and Karen Vanscoy, cases that Jim Bradley and I raised in this Legislature with the previous Attorney General of Mr Harris. Quite frankly,

he makes this Attorney General—well, which of the two would you rather have? It's a tough choice to make, isn't it? I've talked about litigation, as you are well aware, where the courts in this province indicted this government's so-called Victims' Bill of Rights. Judge Day—we've quoted him. You've heard us here, as we've spoken to this bill, quote Mr Justice Day when Linda Even and Karen Vanscoy went to the courts to seek remedies, yes, to seek remedies under the so-called Victims' Bill of Rights, and the judge said: "There are no rights here. This bill is worthless." If this government were serious about victims' rights, it would have presented remedial legislation, which I assure you would have gotten cooperative passage from members of the opposition parties. I can assure you of that. But, no, they want to play games around the incredibly serious problem of youth crime.

1600

We have indicated quite clearly that we believe all crime has to be dealt with promptly, effectively and sternly and has to be responded to meaningfully, so that you don't just lock somebody up and then release them 12 months later with no changes being made in their life—no two ways about that. But here's a government that's abandoning its responsibility for corrections in this province, be it at the young offender level or at the adult level, as it privatizes its correctional facilities, both young offender and adult, and turns them over to the private, for-profit corporate American sector, which is engaged in the mere business of prisons for profit, dungeons for dollars, rather than in the process of meaningful corrections so that you reduce levels of recidivism, so that you respond sternly and effectively to delinquent youth or adults.

I read a column by Eric Dowd, who all of us know here at Queen's Park. He has been around a long time. The recent column by Eric Dowd made reference to how the Harris government is starting to sound tacky in their naming of new laws. For instance, he writes:

"The Premier has a Safe Streets Act which implies it eliminates all robbers and rapists but whose main effect is to prohibit squeegee kids from offering their services. It could as aptly be called the Keep Windshields Dirty Act.

"He also has a grandiosely titled Victims' Bill of Rights law which a court has already ruled in a test case is mere rhetoric and gives no rights to anyone."

The Parental Responsibility Act? How about a little bit of governmental responsibility. How about a little bit of governmental responsibility for ensuring that our police forces are adequately staffed and have the resources they need to deal effectively with crime. How about a government that accepts its responsibility to properly staff its correctional facilities with trained professional correctional officers and public sector servants and staff them in an adequate way so that communities are safe and so that correction actually takes place.

Parent responsibility? How about some governmental responsibility for ensuring that those families in crisis

with delinquent kids have some access to children's mental health programs and children's mental health centres, and that the schools that these kids go to have the adequate and properly trained professional resource staff to help kids who are beginning to show signs of going very much off track before they start committing those youth crimes. How about some governmental responsibility over here.

But, no, it doesn't want to hear from families. I just got an e-mail from a gentleman here in Ontario. He says: "I am writing to explain my concern about this proposed legislation, Bill 55. As the parent of two adoptive boys, I have grave concerns about the problems this bill may cause." He writes that he had once been a strong believer in the nurture over nature argument of raising children, and I understand that; that is, that a child's environment is what ultimately shapes who they become. He writes, "This type of legislation may prevent people from adopting children with emotional problems or problems of poor impulse control and make victims of already stressed and disadvantaged parents."

The author of that brief note to me speaks volumes in that short paragraph about his own experience as a good parent, as a very caring parent, as a very responsible parent who clearly, one can assume, either has had some difficulties with his own young children or is aware, through his professional role, of problems other families have had. He would very much, I'm sure, have liked a chance to address this bill in committee, to raise the concerns he's got, to say, "When is this government going to accept some of its responsibility and help people like me?" like the author of this letter, who are trying to take care of kids who are seriously troubled, some of them very damaged, kids who can become very dangerous to our community.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting that every adopted kid runs that risk. Of course not. Anybody who suggests that is making a stupid comment. But this person authors on behalf of what I would suggest is a whole lot of parents of both adopted and biological children who say: "Look, we've gone the full gamut. We've put the second mortgage on the house to send the kid off to a residential school or to a military-style academy. We've paid for the private psychiatrists and the therapies."

I can bring families to committee who will talk about the family breakdowns that occur when you've got a delinquent kid in there, the divorces, the damage and harm it does to other kids, the siblings. But no, this government doesn't want to talk about that. This government doesn't want to talk about how families are trying to cope out there with their delinquent kids and are receiving less and less support from the institutions and agencies that, historically, government has a responsibility to provide. This government is slamming the door in their faces, and then it plays the stunt that it plays today, plays this cheap game, the saddest form of politics, trying to blackmail the opposition into accepting but two days of public hearing, two afternoons—they're not full days; make that very

clear—most of which will be occupied by introductory statements by any number of bureaucrats and, as I said, minions, when there are folks out there who want to discuss this. There are lawyers who want to discuss its implications and law professors who want to discuss its history in other jurisdictions and indeed its history to date in Ontario, which has provided net relief for victims.

There are a whole lot of questions to be answered about how this government would propose to make this bill work, even though it is a mere restatement of a law as it exists. There are a whole lot of questions from sociologists. I put to you people like Professor Ambert, whom I talked about when I talked about this bill last week, who has had decades now of working with families of delinquent children and has some very important things to say to the members of this Legislature, if only they would have permitted committee hearings.

It's only a motion; it has no title. I suppose if it did, in addition to all the others I've suggested, it might have been, "If you're going to lie, lie big; lie often." I suppose if you lie with dogs, you get fleas, just so you don't think that I'm somehow engaging in unparliamentary language, Speaker. Let me put this to you: Diogenes could spend not just a day but a week, but a month travelling back and forth across those Tory back benches, and he'd still walk out of here empty-handed.

I am opposed to this time allocation motion. I'm opposed to them in principle, but this particular instance exposes this government as being the bullies they indeed are so often, as having no real concern for victims but in fact only concern for getting their political message out there via either taxpayers' dollars and expensive radio and television ads or via legislation with cute but so often tacky sounding names that create, on first instance, the biggest misimpression that could ever be created. Misimpression—I'm being polite, aren't I, Speaker? I'm avoiding unparliamentary language like "lie," because people who lie are liars, and liars have no place in this Legislature.

1610

My colleagues will be joining me in speaking to this bill. I find today's action repugnant. I find it an assault on democracy. I find it an insult to victims and to the people of this province. If this government thinks it can play the game any more of blackmail with opposition members, persuading us to buy into its deals with no negotiation for fear of somehow painting us as being opposed to what it will present as Mom-and-apple-pie legislation, it's got another think coming. No more of those deals. You don't win a battle on your knees. Do you know that?

We've got to take on a government that has big numbers, and among those numbers very few members with sufficient guts or moral fortitude or the integrity to stand up—well, show them to me this afternoon. Show me the Tory backbenchers who will stand up and vote against this legislation, who will demonstrate some integrity, who will demonstrate some guts, who will demonstrate a little bit of concern for the parliamentary process. Where are the Tory members today who will stand up and vote

against this bill and show some respect for the public to ensure that they have access to public hearings? I'm looking forward to seeing them. A little bit of guts and a little bit of integrity, that's all I've asked for this afternoon. I'm afraid we're going to find precious little of either.

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): It's my pleasure to rise today in support of the motion of time allocation with regard to the bill. I was determining when the genesis for this bill arose, and I happen to have a copy of the Ontario Crime Control Commission report on youth crime issued in May 1998, almost two full years ago. I had the pleasure and privilege of serving on that commission and we travelled the province. As a matter of fact, we've had over 70 public forums and events around this province.

In this report, we made a number of recommendations. We made some recommendations to the federal government to toughen up the Young Offenders Act. We recommended that this government pass a Safe Schools Act. We suggested the establishment of what we called citizenship courts, and actually, as established as a pilot project, there are now community youth courts, and last, we recommended a parenting and parental responsibility act.

I was interested, as I went through the report, to notice the areas to which we travelled to discuss the concerns of ordinary citizens of Ontario, and this report embodies those concerns. This is not the report of myself or my co-commissioners at the time; these were meant to address the concerns of the ordinary citizens we met at various public forums.

On July 14, 1997, we were in Chatham; on August 28, 1997, in Barrie; September 8, 1997, in Etobicoke; September 23, 1997, in Peterborough; September 29, 1997, in Ottawa; September 30, 1997, in Whitby; January 15, 1998, in Port Colborne; January 29, 1998, in Oakville; on February 18, 1998, we visited the city of Hamilton; on March 10, 1998, I had the privilege of hosting a crime control forum in Cambridge, which was exceptionally well attended; on March 19, 1998, we were in Burlington; on March 26, 1998, in Bracebridge; on April 2, 1998, in Newmarket; on April 8, 1998, in York Mills in Toronto; on April 9, 1998, in Belmont; on April 14, 1998, back in Toronto in the High Park-Parkdale riding; on Wednesday, April 15, 1998, we were again in the city of Hamilton; on May 5, 1998, we were in the city of Toronto and Etobicoke-Rexdale; on Thursday, May 14, 1998, we visited the city of Bramalea; on Tuesday, May 19, 1998, we visited the city of Kitchener. We heard from hundreds, if not thousands, of ordinary citizens voicing their concerns, and one of those concerns was the lack of responsibility that a few isolated parents felt for the actions of their own children.

I'd like to emphasize that it was not the vast majority of parents that raised this concern, but a small, isolated group, and that is the reason for this legislation. Safe communities are about being free from the fear of violence against person, family and property; respect for

others and taking responsibility for actions; homes that are sanctuaries and people's property that is safe and secure; places where people go about their busy and productive lives without experiencing property damage.

Safe communities are about municipal parks and transit vehicles that aren't damaged, cars that aren't stolen and defaced, businesses that don't have graffiti scrawled on the storefronts and on the doors.

Statistics tell the story. In 1998, almost 20,000 cases of property crime were heard in youth court in Ontario. Those are the ones that had charges, not the ones that may not even have been reported. This represents 47% of all youth crime. I suggest that this is not fair to victims. I ask the question, why should victims bear the cost of property damage inflicted by someone else? Why should the taxpayers assume the cost of vandalism to public property?

Our government is committed to safe communities. The Parental Responsibility Act would help us to do more to achieve that goal. The act would help restore principles of respect for the law and taking responsibility for actions. Parental responsibility already exists in Manitoba, and at least one province in addition to Ontario is considering such a law.

I believe and this government believes that all victims of crime deserve justice. The Parental Responsibility Act would help victims of property crime get the justice they so justly deserve. Police, community leaders, safety organizations, business, seniors—all have indicated they felt an act of this kind was necessary. They want the Parental Responsibility Act to give victims of property crime the tools to get justice.

The Parental Responsibility Act would reduce the onus on the part of the victim to prove his or her case. It would be easier for victims to use evidence under the Young Offenders Act. Victims would be able to get compensation from parents more easily through Small Claims Court for damage deliberately caused by other people's children. Under the current law, parents have a duty to supervise their children and they may be liable if they are negligent in that duty. However, the burden of proof is on the victim, and this isn't fair to the victim.

Under the current law, victims must show that they suffered damage, that the damage was related to the conduct of the parents, that there is a duty recognized in law to control a child's activities and, lastly, that the damage was reasonably foreseeable. This puts a considerable burden on the victim. Our government wants to make it easier for victims to get justice by simplifying the approach.

1620

Under the proposed Parental Responsibility Act, a victim would only have to prove that a child caused the property damage and establish the amount of damages. The rest would be up to the offender's parents. They would have to then show—and I'm talking about the parents of the child responsible—that the youth acted unintentionally or that the parents exercised reasonable

supervision over the child and made reasonable efforts to prevent the child from causing the damage.

For property damages under \$6,000, we have improved upon Ontario's existing legislation and Manitoba's parental responsibility in three ways. First, victims do not need to prove that the young person acted intentionally. It would be presumed that the young person acted intentionally, unless a parent could show otherwise. Second, parents must prove that they took reasonable efforts to prevent the damage from occurring. This isn't now specified in the Family Law Act. Third, victims would be able to use a Young Offenders Act disposition to help prove their case. This provision makes it simpler for the victims of property crime to seek compensation in Small Claims Court.

As I previously said, most parents, in fact the vast majority of parents, in Ontario are responsible and do their best to supervise their children properly. While the world is changing, the role of parents in teaching their children standards of behaviour has not changed. The proposed act would reinforce those standards and expectations. It is commonly agreed that parents are responsible for their children.

This act is realistic about the challenges parents encounter. There may be parents with special challenges, and that's recognized in the act. Parents may have children with severe behavioural problems or who are too young to understand the consequences of their actions. They may have children who continue to misbehave after receiving counselling and/or treatment. The Parental Responsibility Act would take this into account.

Parents who can prove their children's actions are not intentional of course would not be held liable. The law already recognizes that certain people are not capable, because of age or capacity, of forming the intent to cause harm. The courts would decide each case on a case-by-case basis.

The proposed legislation would make parents responsible for proving that they exercised reasonable supervision and that they made reasonable efforts to discourage their children from engaging in the destructive activity.

Factors that would be considered by the judge when determining parental liability include: the youth's age; the youth's prior conduct; the potential danger of the activity; the youth's mental or physical capacity; any psychological disorders affecting the child; whether the youth was under the direct supervision of the parents at the time when the damage or loss was caused; whether the parent had made reasonable arrangements for supervision; whether the parent had sought to improve his or her parenting skills; and whether a parent had sought professional assistance for the child. Each case would be judged individually by the court, based on these practical considerations.

Concern has been expressed about other situations that might affect their liability under the proposed act. For instance, what would happen if a teenager had left home? The courts would look at the individual circumstances of

the situation and parents would not be held to an unfair standard.

Some have suggested that single parents and parents who have a low income would be disadvantaged by the act. Suggestions that parents in these circumstances are somehow lacking is, firstly, unfair. We don't believe there is a distinction between parenting skills based on income. Most parents are trying to do a good job in supervising their children. Teaching children right from wrong does not depend on income.

The courts would have the authority to order payments by instalment if a parent doesn't have the full means to pay the amount at one time.

There are also services available by the government to help parents. Some have said more community services are needed to help children with behavioural problems, but it is not so that only children with behavioural problems engage in property crime. For those parents who need help, the government provides access to a range of services designed to assist children and their families. Funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, these include community-based programs to assist children with mental health problems, developmental disabilities, children in need of protection and young offenders through counselling for children and youth and their parents, parenting skills teaching, prevention and early intervention programs, residential programs, clinical supports to children with mental problems, assessments and crisis intervention programs.

I reiterate: The purpose of this bill is to improve community safety, to reinforce the values of respect and responsibility, to make it easier for victims to get compensation for their property that was deliberately stolen, damaged or destroyed by other people's children. The Parental Responsibility Act would benefit children, who must learn the rights and responsibilities of living in our society. If parents make reasonable efforts to prevent their children from committing property crimes, communities would be safer.

Mr Curling: Here we go again. Here we go with this government that has now decided we are going to put closure on a bill. This government is in the habit of bringing the big stick out all the time and putting closure to bills without debate.

I recall that in the first election and the second election of this government they spoke about democracy and about the participation of all the people. They talked about common sense. The problem with this government and its common sense is that the only thing common about it is the dictatorial way in which it conducts itself. Since their re-election they have had 15 bills put through that have had royal assent. About 20 bills were put through and 15 of those have had royal assent. About 50% of those have had closure on them. I think I should explain to the public what all this means.

What we have before us today is a bill that is called "An Act to make parents responsible for wrongful acts intentionally committed by their children." Therefore, it calls for debate for those on whom this act will impact. It

will have an impact on parents, children, principals, teachers and everyone who will be overseeing some of the acts done by young people. It is said that for all of these acts committed by young people, parents must be responsible for them. That's rather interesting. I thought parents were always responsible for their child, and they have done so very well.

What came to mind just today—because sometimes the real story comes out better than these acts—about two or three hours ago a young lady came to see me. She has twins and she had reprimanded one of the twins for doing something wrong. She spanked the kid and a neighbour heard the cry and called the police. She was reprimanding her child for doing something wrong and they called the police. The twins are 9 years of age.

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Immediately the big parent, as we call the government, came in and took these children away from the home in October last year. As of today she has not got back her children because she reprimanded one of the children for stealing. You're telling me, when the big parent here has taken them away—and she's still waiting for them to judge whether or not she was a good parent. What is happening to the children? No one talks about that. In the meantime, the children have lived in about three or four homes. The psychological damage it's doing to those children no government can fix—none—not this government, which says they are the big daddy or the big parent of it all; they won't fix that.

We have a bill before us that needs debate. It needs public consultation. It needs people to have input, to tell them the story about how we can have better legislation. My feeling, and the feeling of people out there, is that in a democracy laws are made by the people and for the people, a democracy of participation. But here, today, this government is saying to us: "We shall not hear from the people. We will put closure on this. We know what is right." As far as they're concerned, democracy comes every four years or when they call an election.

Individuals like myself who represent people in a constituency should go away, should have no input, not even from this point of view of debating and putting amendments. Of course, my party is willing to put amendments, so let me be very frank with you: It's hogwash. No matter what amendments we put to this legislation, nothing will happen. They will not listen. They will ram this thing through accordingly. So we can always demonstrate, and be very articulate about, how great we are in this House. This government refuses to listen.

I don't know if you noticed, Mr Speaker, but I'll bring it to your attention: In the orders of the day there are two orders. One order talks about, "We will give a little bit, a couple of days of debate and discussion." The next order that follows says, "You shall have no time to debate." They have a right to call any order, so what did they do? They called the order with a big stick. They said: "I have two sticks in my hand here. There is a big stick and here is a bigger stick. If we can get away with it, we want to

use the bigger stick. The bigger stick is to say no debate, no consultation. We know what's right."

You heard the member just previous to me who stated, "We have been around the province and we have listened." I think he has it in reverse. This was introduced on April 4, and every consultation he had about legislation like this was before that. He has the cart before the horse, arrogance before consultation, because that's what they do. The fact is: "We know it's right. We know what's right. We don't need to come to the people to speak to them about this."

The people in our constituency call and wonder why they are not more involved and participating in the process. Why should they? This government doesn't listen. This government doesn't want to listen. They know what is right. The House of Parliament is a sham.

I get elected. I come in here and I feel very confident that I've listened to my people in the riding of Scarborough-Rouge River. I said: "Listen, I hear your concern. I'll bring it before the government." What will happen then?

Mr Marchese: Nothing.

Mr Curling: Nothing will happen, as my colleague says, nothing, because they have dead ears. They would just be deaf to the point of saying: "Why listen to them? We know exactly what we're doing." There is not one member in that government who will ever stand up and say, "While I agree with certain aspects of this legislation, I have some concerns here." They don't even have concerns about some aspects of it. All is perfect. Those on the backbenches are hoping and aspiring to be cabinet ministers, so they say yes to their leader; or they present themselves today to have a quorum so they can be counted and we can continue this debate, but of course not listening at all.

It concerns me very much why we are asking our people to participate in a democracy. Is it so they can bring out their big stick in a dictatorial manner, the bullying aspect of how they have conducted this government all the time and have conducted this province in that way?

I continue to be concerned, but I continue to have hope. I always believe that people are far ahead of the government of the day. The difficulty is that they don't listen, and I presume they know that. They know it very well. If they did listen, they would show off their ignorance and their arrogance, so "Let us not listen." What we present as the opposition is what we hear from the people out there. What's wrong with hearing from parents? I would love to have some young people come here and speak before Parliament and say, "We are concerned about some of the issues you have put forward here." But, oh no, we have no opportunity to speak. "We shut this down. We call it closure. We have this big stick. We have that power."

Do you know what has happened? I've got to mention this, because the fact is not only that the government is sort of bullying, but the procedures here, the regulations that govern how we conduct ourselves here, restrict us in how we speak because we have negotiated all of our

rights. All the House leaders will get together, and the government has the right of the day, and they put forward their agenda regardless of whatever. Therefore we are restricted, as the opposition, to put forward constructive criticism and amendments themselves. There are many amendments we would like to put forward, but I would also say that putting forward these amendments will get us nowhere. It will get us nowhere because the fact is that they have already made up their minds.

I want to say too that as a parent I would be concerned if I had reprimanded my child in a certain direction and went before a judge who then tells me that I have not done enough, when I wanted help, when this government should have given help to parents who needed it. When they needed financial support, they cut their welfare support and said, "You have too much money."

This is a government that also would like people to have private hospitals and private jails and privatize it all because they have a couple of their buddies lining up to buy out the jails and buy out the highways, and on and on like that. Where are those individuals in our society who would come forward?

Let me tell you one other story. I attended the funeral the other day of a young man who got shot and had been seen by about 300 people. When the police came forward to ask the people, "Have you seen anything?" they said no. Do you know what that tells us about our society? It tells us: "I don't even have any confidence in the police. I have no confidence in the system." What is happening now is that our society is decaying in that respect. Now the police who want to do a good job are unable to do so because they get no co-operation from individuals and citizens. They have no confidence in the way we run our country. It seems to me that when people are quiet—with that big stick they have, people are quiet—they over there say: "They're obeying because they like what we have done. We have spoken, therefore we don't need all of you to speak any more. We have consulted before we put the laws in place."

I'm very concerned about this legislation, about this closure. I could go on and on, and I know my colleagues would like to put their views forth, but I am also restricted by the same law that tells me I am to sit down now because they have restricted me in their regulation. No wonder I was moved, and many of our colleagues were moved, to say, "Listen, enough is enough."

I feel that we must continue to have a case for good democracy and bring the concerns—

Mr Kormos: You've got more to say.

Mr Curling: I've got lots to say, so much to say, but I will tell you that my colleagues would like to put their points of view, because they would like to have their constituents hear their points of view on this floor, although it may go for naught. But I tell you, I still do believe in the democratic process.

1640

Mr Marchese: I've only got 10 minutes. I've got to do this in only 10 minutes. I'm going to speak to the public directly, to the good people of Ontario. Because

there are only a couple of Tories on the other side skulking away like slithering serpents, I've got to talk to the people directly about this bill. Who else can I talk to?

There are some serious concerns. Every now and then I feel like Sisyphus. Some of you on that side of the House who are relatively well read might know the mythical character. I feel like Sisyphus. You will recall, those of you who know, that for all eternity he was rolling the rock up the mountain, and the only respite he got, the only moment where he felt he was doing something worthwhile, was when he got to the top, which Camus, a famous French writer, described as the moment of lucidity, where everything became clear and it made sense—

Mr Kormos: Until?

Mr Marchese: —until he has to roll the rock down again and toil right up once again.

I feel like that often in opposition, because that's the kind of work we do with this type of government. In relation to this bill, I'm fascinated by the way this government is handling it, because this is a law-and-order government, and this bill, about to be proclaimed very shortly, is a law-and-order bill. I assume they ought to be proud of this bill, yet another jewel in their crown.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Do they want this before the by-election?

Mr Marchese: The by-election doesn't matter. Yes, there's a by-election. Do they want this before the by-election? It's irrelevant. I will show you why in terms of their politics around this bill, because if this is a law-and-order government I would argue they ought to be proud and take this bill out, and not just for a day—

Mr Kormos: Or two.

Mr Marchese: —but for a couple of weeks, at least four, the way New Democrats used to do it. If I were proud of this bill, I would say to the members: "Boys, get ready. We've got to go out. We've got to work hard. We've got to show the public this is a bill that needs to be supported." And yet, two days. As the member for Welland Centre—

Mr Kormos: Two afternoons.

Mr Marchese: —pointed out, two days, but two afternoons—a couple of hours, because the government may decide that we need to have the minister come to speak to that bill. I'm assuming the person will have such great insights that perhaps we may have missed that he may occupy an entire hour just explaining the error of the opposition ways, because this minister was reported to have said the following, "In this bill we have provided that the onus will be on the parents to show that the act was not intentional," which is not the law as it is in Ontario today, argues this lawyer-minister, despite the misleading comments, attributable to the rest of us, that have been made to the contrary by some. This is our well-known lawyer Attorney General—

Mr Kormos: Who embarrassed himself at the Supreme Court a while ago?

Mr Marchese: Well, he embarrassed himself in many ways. Professor Larry Wilson points this out. He says—I've got to quote him, because I think it's important to

quote the experts. I remind you, I urge the members who are sleeping on the other side to bring forth to this House some modicum of evidence, just a tiny little bit of evidence, to persuade me that perhaps just the one expert opinion that we've provided here is not sufficient and you've got some experts on the other side. But no evidence has been brought forth by the other side, because there is none. We're not talking about evidence. They know that. The issue is not evidence; the issue is, "Have we cajoled, fooled the public of Ontario enough that we can get away with two days, a couple of hours, and then we move on?" That's what it's about. Please, don't confuse the whole issue with experts.

Mr Kormos: Or the facts.

Mr Marchese: Please. They don't want facts to be put out, because you see, if we did take this little show on the road, the experts would come and say to the Attorney General, a lawyer, "You're wrong, Mr Attorney General," and they would say to the members, "You're all fools if you should happen to follow suit, because he's wrong and you would all be wrong." They don't want that embarrassment on the road. That's why they want this little show to stay here in this little place, keep it to ourselves, and allow the public to be deceived by the illusion of law and order, "We, the Conservatives."

You remember the law-and-order squeegee bill? That's the bill that was going to clean the streets up from crime because the poor old ladies and the poor old men were so frightened when those little guys came to clean their windows that they needed protection from those little squeegee kids. So they introduced a law-and-order bill, the Safe Streets Act. Law-and-order guys, right?

The same law and order on the Victims' Bill of Rights, where Judge Day said, "There are no rights." It doesn't matter to these guys. "Have we deceived the public enough to convince them that they have rights? Yes, that's enough. We introduced Bill 55, that gives people an opportunity to take parents to court on the basis of some breaking of the law through property damage."

Professor Wilson says this: "We already have such a law in place. It's even stronger than the one you're proposing." He says, "Under the current law in Ontario, a negligent parent can be liable for both personal injury—that goes beyond your bill—"and property damage caused by children." Make note of the fact that he says "liable for personal injury." Liability can include both intentional and unintentional acts of children, and there is no cap of \$6,000. At the moment, people can seek redress beyond the cap that you're putting on this of \$6,000. The current law states this. It's stronger than the one you're proposing.

Boys, you've got to listen to this stuff.

Mr Bradley: Why are we passing this bill, anyway?

Mr Marchese: I'll tell you in a second. I've already said this, but I'll repeat it. He says: "Specifically, section 68"—of the other law—"of the current Family Law Act, the parent is required to show that they have exercised reasonable supervision and control of the child. What

then does this proposed legislation offer in terms of advancing or even altering the current state of law in Ontario?" He says, "Nothing," zip.

What have we done by the introduction of Bill 55, except to again deceive the good people of Ontario, that this is—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): I think the member would perhaps want to reconsider the word "deceive" and withdraw it.

Mr Marchese: Do you think so? Are you asking that I withdraw that word?

The Acting Speaker: Yes, I am.

Mr Marchese: Oh, my God. I withdraw that word and move on, because I've got two minutes to say to the people of Ontario, you are being offered placebo politics. You are being offered illusional politics, stuff that makes you feel good. That's the kind of politics they're into. Does it make you feel good, good people of Ontario, if I tell you I'm introducing a bill that's going to re-establish law and order, bring responsibility to families?

If the answer is yes, you've done your job. But when we answer in opposition as a way of suggesting to you that the current law is stronger than the one that you have redressed, what do government members say to that? You don't. You skulk away like the amphibians that many of you are.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey): We're not that bad.

Mr Marchese: Oh, you are—crustaceans to the core.

I say to you that I am not deceived by this bill. I am not deceived—Speaker, come on.

The Acting Speaker: Just withdraw the word.

Mr Marchese: I withdraw it. It is improper for me to say, "I am not deceived by it."

For all the members of this place who have concerns for victims, and there is not one member in this House who doesn't have concerns for victims, at least on our side, on the opposition side, and who doesn't decry and feel tremendous disdain for any criminal activity of any kind, what people need are supports, the supports that have been taken away. In Windsor-Essex there are 1,000 children on a waiting list for mental health care—unacceptable. In 1998, the Ontario child advocate estimated that 80% of youth in young offender facilities have mental health problems. In 1995, the Harris Conservatives eliminated funding for 64 community youth support programs serving young people between 15 and 20 years of age, all to pay for that tax cut.

Mr Kormos: How about support for victims under the Victims' Bill of Rights?

Mr Marchese: There are no supports for victims under the bill of rights.

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Mr Kormos: There are supposed to be.

Mr Marchese: The bill talks of rights of victims, any victim in Ontario, and there's the word "rights" in it and Judge Day said there are no rights.

Mr Kormos: There's no support for victims either.

Mr Marchese: There's no support for anybody in this province. Victims don't have support in this province. What we're playing here is placebo politics. I urge the public not to buy into this illusion that they're doing something. I urge you to urge this government for the hearings so that we can bring the proper evidence that is needed to undress, to exfoliate this smelly onion in the way that it should be.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today on the time allocation motion on Bill 55, the Parental Responsibility Act. As a parent who has raised two children who have become successful adults, I take a great deal of interest and a great deal of pride in parental responsibility. It's always a pleasure to rise in this House and talk about an issue that is important to me and to the people of Simcoe North, and that is the issue of community safety. I feel that everyone in our province has the right to be safe from crime. As a province, we should be able to walk in our neighbourhoods, use public transit, live in our homes and send our children to school free from the fear of criminals. That is what our government is determined to create: safe communities.

So far, we have introduced a number of initiatives to achieve this goal, including: a code of conduct for students which gives teachers more authority in the classroom and on school property to discipline more effectively students who are not following the rules; our community policing partnership program, which will put 1,000 new front-line police officers on the streets of Ontario; our Safe Streets Act, which gives police more authority and options in dealing with aggressive panhandling and other intimidating behaviours; and the creation of child-friendly courts which provide specialized services to make courtrooms less intimidating for young victims and witnesses.

The Parental Responsibility Act is part of this government's plan to address the concerns of the people of Ontario regarding safety in our streets, our homes and our schools. This bill is a positive step in the right direction for helping to curb violence among our youth. I want to add that a stronger and bolder step is needed from the federal government in the form of significant changes to the Young Offenders Act.

Over the past few years, I've had the chance to talk to a number of police, the men and women in blue—or black as it is soon to be in the city of Toronto—who work countless hours protecting our homes and families from crime. I was amazed at the stories they told of youths thumbing their noses at the law because they were too young to go to jail. Young criminals could run around, commit almost any crime and in most cases get no real punishment for what they have done. It is clear that the young people of today who engage in criminal activity have no qualms about letting authorities know that they, the authorities, are powerless to stop them and punish them in any meaningful way.

It is sad when I learn that almost 20,000 cases of property crime were heard in youth courts in our province. It is reported that nearly 40% of all youth crime is based on some form of property damage. Obviously something needs to be done to reduce or eliminate this statistic. This bill is one way the provincial government can help. I hope the federal government, which has more jurisdiction in this field, can also do something to reduce this statistic.

When a crime is committed against one of our family, friends or neighbours, that crime is committed against all of us. We need to support victims, and this bill is one measure where victims can get some form of restitution.

People have often said that property crimes are victimless, since no personal injury has occurred. I believe that all victims of crime deserve justice. If a crime is committed against someone, why should victims bear the cost of property damage inflicted by someone else? Why should taxpayers assume the cost of vandalism to public property?

The purpose of the Parental Responsibility Act is to direct the financial responsibility where it belongs, to the parents. Parents, under normal circumstances, must be responsible for their children's actions. That does not mean that we are here to punish parents for incidents that are far beyond their control. There are many situations in which parents have done everything they can for their children, situations where parents can show that they have taken steps to properly monitor their children's activities and sought outside help where necessary or when damage is caused unintentionally.

In previous debates on this bill, I've heard the members opposite say that the Parental Responsibility Act is just a rehash of current laws. I don't believe this is true. Current law dictates parents have a duty to supervise their children and may be liable if they're negligent in this duty. However, the burden of proof is on the victims. They must show they suffered damage and the damage was related to the conduct of the parents. Victims must also show that the damage was reasonably foreseeable. All of this puts considerable burden on the victim. This government wants to make it easier for victims to get justice by simplifying this process.

Under this legislation, a victim would only have to prove that the child caused the property damage and establish the amount of the damages. Parents would either prove that the youth acted unintentionally or that they exercised reasonable supervision over the child. Parents could prove that they made reasonable efforts to prevent the child from causing the damage.

For property damages under \$6,000, this legislation has improved upon existing laws and a similar piece of legislation made in Manitoba in three ways. First of all, the victims do not need to prove that the young person acted intentionally. It would be presumed that the young person acted intentionally unless a parent could show otherwise. Second, parents must prove that they took reasonable efforts to prevent the damage from occurring. This isn't now specified in the Family Law Act. Third,

victims would be able to use a Young Offenders Act disposition to help prove their case. This would make it easier for victims to use evidence to prove their case. All of these provisions make it simpler for victims of property crime to seek compensation in Small Claims Court.

It is sad, but some parents may have children with severe behavioural problems or who are too young to understand the consequences of their actions. They may have children who continue to misbehave after receiving counselling or treatment. This act would take all of this into account.

Parents who can prove that their children's actions were not intentional would not be held liable. The law already recognizes that certain people are not capable, because of age or capacity, of forming the intention to cause harm. Every case would be judged individually by the court based on a number of considerations, based on the youth's age as to whether a parent had sought professional assistance for their child.

Most parents in Ontario are responsible and do their best to supervise their children properly. While the world is changing, the role of parents in teaching their children standards of behaviour has not changed. If passed, this legislation would reinforce those standards and expectations. It is commonly agreed that parents are responsible for their children. This legislation will be realistic about the challenges parents encounter.

I want to close on a different note. I want to say something about a very responsible family. I want to close by paying tribute to the families of the five young people who were killed in a collision on Highway 11 early Saturday morning. Particularly, when we speak of responsible parents, I want to thank and pay respect to the parents of 19-year-old Mark Johnson. Bryan and Judy Johnson are his parents. They have done an excellent job of raising their two sons, Jason and Mark. As well, they have acted as friends and mentors to many other young people in the community, including my own son, Andy. On behalf of the community of Oro-Medonte, I want to say how sorry we all are for the loss of their son Mark.

Thank you very much for this opportunity tonight.

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): I cannot tell you how very disappointed I am to stand in the House today to speak yet again to another closure motion. I really had no idea when I was elected in June—the image in my mind was that this would provide me with an opportunity to, on a very regular basis, bring forward in a meaningful way the issues of the people who have elected me, and yet again today we are here entertaining a motion to close debate on an important piece of legislation. It's certainly important for consideration, because the name of the act, the Parental Responsibility Act, would suggest to the people of Ontario that Ontario parents perhaps may not be responsible. I have to say that in my riding that would not be my experience.

1700

My husband and I have four children, and I think we have some sense of how important it is for parents to be

responsible in the rearing of their children. In our roles, however, it has never been our practice to suggest to our children that if they act inappropriately, someone else would be held to account for their actions. I suggested—I believe it was last week—that there should be some consideration given to having young offenders held more accountable for their actions, possibly having their driver's licence withheld until such time as the young person was able to make restitution for the damage that he or she may have caused.

The member from Cambridge has indicated that there was significant provincial consultation on the issue at hand, but I would suggest that the consultation took place some years prior to the introduction of this legislation. So my question is really, what kind of meaningful input could any participant provide on legislation prior to the drafting of the legislation? The member from Cambridge went on to list a litany of agencies and programs that would support families, to assist them in directing youngsters who may have some difficulties. But I have to say that in my very short experience as an MPP, I've been overwhelmed with the number of people who come to my office who would suggest they do not have the resources or the supports within their community to provide them with the assistance they need to help their youngsters.

I have to say that what I see very clearly with a motion to close debate—and I believe the people of Ontario are beginning to see this as well—is that the government is simply not willing to listen. I believe that all of us in this Legislature bring very valid issues to the floor for consideration and when the government brings forward a motion to close debate, what you are saying is: "We don't want to hear from you any more. We have all the answers ourselves." I don't believe that's the case. It has always been my practice in life, and I think my conduct in this House would demonstrate that—it's important to listen to what others have to say and to earnestly look for valuable points that might make legislation better and stronger.

The discussions that have occurred on this particular topic to date have brought forward many issues worth consideration, but what have we here today? We have a motion to stop debate. My question is, why? What are you afraid of? Why can you not be more flexible and understand that if we want to work together to bring in strong laws for the people of Ontario, we should all be willing to give and take? It's unfortunate that that is not my experience in this House to date.

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I think most of us here bring the experience of our own lives to the debate. I just want to put on the record that as a married person, a father of five children, I know the role of a parent. It is sometimes daunting and sometimes overwhelming, but nonetheless we have the right and freedom to choose that role and we also have the responsibility to follow up on it and work with our children.

Far too much time has been spent here in a sort of negative vent, and I want to set the record straight. I think

young people are the greatest asset. It's often said here that they are our collective future. I know as a parent of five children I'd like to go through and recognize that it does take a community to raise a family, raise a child. I would say that we live in a great riding. Durham is a riding that most people here listening would love to live in. Certainly they would have a very capable member of Parliament working for them in that respect.

My oldest boy is serving his country in the Armed Forces; he's stationed in Halifax. His name is Erin. He's engaged, so he's getting on in life. He's a captain on the Sea King helicopter and will be getting married this summer. He's partway through and he'll have his own children to be responsible for. But as parents we're always responsible, forever. It never leaves us. They become part of your life and part of your responsibilities. But it's the joy of young people. Looking here at the pages who were introduced today, their parents must feel very proud. For you to have achieved this at your point in life—Lord knows, in 10 years you'll be standing here watching my grandchildren sitting there.

I think of the positive things. When I think of my daughter Rebecca, who's also married and lives in Australia—just a few short years ago she was a student at Carleton, working in a community situation as a volunteer. Their actions are very much encouraged by the role of the parents and other significant people in their community.

I have three children who are still at home, you might say, but the next daughter, the third one, Marnie, has just finished Western and she's actually practice-teaching right now in the Durham area. So she's just finishing teacher's college. She went to Lakehead University. The member, Mrs McLeod, would be proud to know that she has enjoyed her experience at Lakehead. She has been hired by the Durham separate board of education to teach high school next year. She's in her practice-teaching and she's working with young people. She, to me, is still my little daughter. I still think of her that way. But she's contributing in her community and I think it's that relationship that parents and their children—I'm proud of them and certainly there isn't one of them who hasn't had some challenge in life. They've had their bad days, as the parents certainly do as well.

The biggest challenge that remains with my five children is the two who are remaining at home. I might say that Andrew, the youngest boy, is writing his final exam today in his third year at Brock University. I know he's well represented by the member for St Catharines, Mr Bradley. I've told him, "If you ever have any problems provincially, call Mr Bradley," because I know he'd be there to help him through his challenges.

My other daughter, Rochelle, at the University of Windsor, just came home on the weekend. She's an excellent student and very involved in student government at the University of Windsor. She just completed her third year of commerce.

Mr Bradley: She joined the Liberal club.

Mr O'Toole: Actually, she's free to be a member of whichever club she chooses. I trust my children to have better judgment, though, and to be wise enough to pick the kind of responsibility imitating the role of their parents, which brings me right back full circle, looking at having rights, which young people today have and should have. But with that, I don't think anyone here disagrees that they also have responsibilities. It's that balance of rights and responsibilities that this is all about. As parents we cannot be exempted from this process.

I want to look at today's news. In preparation, I just took a couple of clippings from our daily clippings. These are today's headlines from the Toronto Star. In some ways it's quite startling. It's very disturbing in some respects to read about these incidents in the press, in the media, that get all the attention and spoil it for all the other children whom I've just spoken about. It's not just my family. There is a need to remind people that society has a responsibility collectively, but there are also requirements for the parents to step up to it and not blame the school.

For instance, I'm looking here at the situation in Ottawa last week. We cannot blame the school. I commend the principal there for stepping in, and the other people who intervened to make sure that this situation didn't become worse than it was. I'm sure the parents, as I would be, must be grieved. But there is evidence, in reading through that article, that someone should have stepped up to that much earlier, rather than waiting for the event to happen. I think our court system, in the juvenile courts as well as the Young Offenders Act, without being partisan here, also fails to demonstrate the appropriate amount of leadership that says to young people, "For your actions there is a reaction."

That is what's missing here. What the Young Offenders Act says to people is, "There's no consequence for your actions." That's absolutely wrong. I don't like to intimidate people, but there are consequences for all of your actions. In fact, I believe in rewarding positive performance. I think the Liberal view has been that there's no consequence to your action until you have reached some age in life. That's absolutely not the case.

1710

We all heard on the weekend of a number of tragic events. I don't want to put names and faces to these tragic events, but I thought it was very strange last week as I was listening to the debate, on the very anniversary of the Taber high school in Lethbridge, Alberta, the very anniversary that we're talking about in the American high school where they had the tragedy—

Interjection: Columbine.

Mr O'Toole: Columbine, yes—and to think that there isn't some necessity for whoever the government of the day is to step up to that is a mistake. I think this parental responsibility thing is just one small piece of saying parents have a role.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): It's in the family law. It was put there in 1988.

Mr O'Toole: The member on the other side from Windsor is speaking. I can tell you right now that clearly the law today has not been used, so therefore the law is not particularly appropriate for the actions required. When you are responding to my comments, I'm sure you will bring that up to my attention.

All it says to me is that this bill sets up a process and a framework by which young people, and failing that their parents, are responsible for the damage and whatever else they have inflicted on other people. It sets up due process where the victims have their rights looked after.

In my riding in the last few months there have been a number of positive things that have happened. I want to mention Andrew Murphy. I've spoken about him in the House. He's a young teenager from Newcastle. On the evening of his father's death he was actually involved in the rescue of a neighbour when he spotted their house on fire. There's an example of a young person who has a wonderfully bright future, who is willing to give back to the community.

I want to comment on the Venturers, the Boy Scouts of Canada from Port Perry, composed of 15- and 17-years-olds—Mr Speaker, you would be interested in this—a group started by Gary and Brenda Manns, who liaised with the Durham regional police and Chief Inspector Chuck Mercier and with Councillor Ken Gadsden from the Port Perry-Scugog council, working with these Venturers on a project. They are learning about community policing and about their role as young people, and they have been complimented by community leaders for their exemplary participation. This program, by the way, is also a national program involved with the RCMP and fire departments as well as the Durham regional police, and it's operating in Whitby and Uxbridge.

I also want to comment on the community working with young people and Ron Hooper and Ron Hope, who are both members of the business improvement areas in Bowmanville and Newcastle, as well as Garth Granger from the business improvement area in Port Perry. They have been working with their local councillors under Mayor Doug Moffatt as well as Mayor Diane Hamre to find ways of working with young people in youth drop-in centres, because children want to get out of the house and they need somewhere to go and things to do.

I could also comment on the Newcastle Ratepayers Association and their president Dave Rickard and past president Willie Woo and many others; Frank Hoare and others who have lobbied very hard with the Durham Regional Police dealing with youth and nuisance that was occurring in their community. Now they have a policeman walking on the beat. This is front-line community policing that's really working, and now the young people are actually stopping and talking to the police officer who is in the community. So these are success stories.

Last year I had a workshop at the Bowmanville Senior Public School which was coordinated by the principal, Fred Mandryk. We had a debate on the rights, respect and responsibility issue, the theme now running through some of the code-of-conduct issues in our schools. I can

tell you that we had excellent representation from the student body, Greg Koenderman, as well as the municipal police force, Staff Sergeant Ted Dion, as well as a parent adviser, Don Lucas Astley, and they were all calling for the same thing: clear direction so that the children knew what the rules were going into the game.

I also want to say in my last couple of minutes left here that last week, as this debate was going on, I had the privilege of attending the Blue Heron division of the Pathfinders of Clarington and Durham. There were some 37 young women who received their citizenship award, and I was so impressed with the decorum and the maturity of these young people that I know our future is in good hands. I was pleased, along with the federal member of Parliament, to present them with recognition certificates and pins to recognize this achievement in their guiding principles. I, just for the record, want to mention a few names. Erin Ashton, Jennifer Dugan, Elizabeth Salisbury, Rebecca Townsend, Sian Evans, Jennifer Feltham, Jenna Hossack, just to name a few, were all young people that I would be pleased to call my children. In this case, their parents were there watching them receive these awards, so it's that supportive role we're trying to say here.

In all cases, we should be very careful when we're critical of all young people and generalizing it. That's the danger of this debate. I'd like to leave on a positive note by saying most of the young people, if not all, that I've run up against are great young people looking for great leadership and vision, and with the right sense of direction and supports, which will include primarily the family, those young people will have a future in which I believe they can make a contribution, as each of us in this House tries to do.

With that, I'm pleased to save the rest of my time for the member from Oshawa.

Mr Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): I very much appreciate the opportunity to rise today. I'm going to start off by saying a few things that I've said in the past, but I'd like to say them again. I think one of the things that we have to do and we must emphasize is that we must look to the future through the eyes of the children of today, because it is their world that we're trying to make better.

The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke made a very enlightening speech and I wish he had had the opportunity to complete that; however, last week it went off in some areas that I wish we had the opportunity to discuss, but because of time limitations I won't be able to get into that.

I believe the intention of the legislation is necessary and good. However, I do have some concerns with the judiciary and the process, and in some aspects I have some concerns that the judiciary may interpret rather than administer the laws. What I'm referring to is that in life there's no such thing as a 10, you know? There's not the perfect parent, although we try, and believe me, there are not the perfect kids, although they can be very trying. There's not the perfect spouse—I'm not the perfect spouse—although we try. The reality is that people are

doing the best they can in the situations they're in. People just do the best they can.

The legislation is very effective and necessary; however, I have concerns about the due diligence that may be found in the legislation. What I'm referring to is that people may now be required to keep all those photo albums, all those bank books. My two sons—Josh is four and Garrett's three. We had them out to the ball game on Saturday. That's an attempt not only to enjoy and be with our kids but to bring them up in a fashion that we like to see them in society.

What happens is that some aspects in life—maybe something goes wrong; they're in with the wrong gang, wrong place, wrong time. There could be all kinds of situations. I'm sure many of the people in this Legislature today have stories they may not wish to be discussed; however, the reality is that sometimes you're in the wrong place at the wrong time. Well, due diligence would then have to be proven in those cases, and I have a bit of concern about which way they go with that, Mr Kormos.

1720

Interjection.

Mr Ouellette: Mr Kormos is very familiar with the judiciary.

Now, the member is asking, "Which direction?" If something happens and goes wrong, Mr Kormos, how do you prove that you've taken all the steps necessary to be where you're going? So—

Interjection.

Mr Ouellette: Yes. But there are those extremes in society as well. Society also plays a very important role in the upbringing of a child, and certainly we've heard on many occasions that you don't bring up a child, society brings up a child. So what happens when a school, for example, may be occupying—in an average day a child may go to school for the majority of the day. Where's the time allocated in the amount of diligence required by the schools?

I have people coming into my office where the parents were trying to ensure that the child did his homework and were trying to set some pretty strict rules because they refused to do their homework; they didn't want to participate in school. What happened was that the child went to the school and the school informed them—of course, I'm only hearing one side of the story—"If you don't like the rules at home, then we can ensure that you receive benefits and be on welfare outside of the house." What does that say about society and who has a responsibility in that area? Quite possibly other sectors of society should have some influence or some responsibility then. We have to make sure that we give the parents the authority to do what is required in the upbringing of the child.

Granted—I've said it before and I'll say it again—the majority of parents out there are attempting and doing the best they can, but the reality is that there's no such thing as a 10 in life.

What about the cases where—and I've heard of individuals, I personally know individuals—parents were called and had reports done because the children were banned from watching TV for two weeks? Children's aid was called in. They had to fill out a report because the neighbours didn't think that was right. Where's the responsibility? We have to ensure that parents in these situations have the authority to do what is necessary.

As well—but don't get me wrong—the one thing I'd like to say is that there are those parents, and I've heard them, I've actually heard a parent say: "Well, it's not that bad. He only stole a car. It's not as if he murdered someone." I think it is extremely necessary for those individuals out there who have the mentality that, "He only stole a car. He didn't murder anyone. Why should we worry about it?" that some responsibility is allocated to those parents. In that sense I fully and completely agree that the law is necessary.

We all try and do the best we can. However, as I said before, there's no such thing as a 10 in life. We are not the perfect parents, although we're trying. They're not the perfect children, although they can be very trying. The reality is that the legislation is necessary for the mindsets of individuals out there who believe: "He only stole a car. He didn't murder anyone."

As well, I'd remember and I'd ask everyone to remember to look to the future through the eyes of the children of today, because those are where the decisions have to be made. We've had our world, we're working on our world now and we're making it better for the future.

Mr Bradley: I must say, just to comment on the previous speech, that I like the fact that the member for Oshawa was not reading from a script written by Guy Giorno in this particular case. It sounded as though these were genuinely his thoughts on it; that's refreshing to see. I was glad to see that he was prepared to express some concerns about the bill. My problem with the time allocation motion is that it doesn't allow enough time for individual members of the Legislature to express those concerns, or indeed to have others express them in a committee.

That's the problem. If the Premier had brought the House back, say, in March or February, we would have a situation where a bill like this—if he had brought it back in January, he could have had perhaps a six-week recess sometime where the bills could go out for public hearings. They could go to various communities in the province, get some input on the bills, try to make them even better pieces of legislation, because as the member for Oshawa pointed out, there are always going to be some concerns about certain aspects of the bill.

I am not a lawyer but I've listened as people in this House tell me that this bill is even weaker than that which exists on the books today. The member for Niagara Centre is a lawyer. The member for Trinity-Spadina, who listens to lawyers, and others—the member for St Paul's—I've heard all these people say, "Look, what we've got now is more powerful than this, and this

may actually provide defence lawyers with more ammunition to use in court.” That’s why I am concerned about this. When it comes to matters of law and order, some of my colleagues in the Liberal caucus refer to me as Attila, or something along that line. I do have some strong views on issues of law and order, but I want to know what is most effective.

Also, the component that’s missing is prevention. I’m not saying all the preventive measure in the world can make certain that we don’t have criminals out there or people who are at least on the wrong side of the law, but a lot of the preventive programs are very good. They are a good investment early on, and when the government cut several of those programs early in its first mandate, I think it made a drastic error.

It’s interesting to hear reverse onus mentioned. The member for Cambridge talked about reverse onus. It’s nice to see this government now believes in reverse onus in this particular bill, because it didn’t. The Conservative Party did not when we dealt with the spills bill, which was an amendment to the Environmental Protection Act. It passed in 1979, when Ted Arnott was the executive assistant to Mr Johnson, or was thinking about being the executive assistant in those days.

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): It was 1989.

Mr Bradley: It was 1979, so he was probably thinking about it as a child in those days. Here was a bill that put the onus on polluters to act first and squabble in the courts later, and that reverse onus was not good enough for the government because it never did proclaim the bill that passed in the Legislature in a minority Parliament. It took a Liberal government under David Peterson to proclaim that legislation, to put it into effect, because of course in that case it would have disturbed the huge polluters who contributed so much to the coffers of the Progressive Conservative Party. That determines, to a very significant extent, the kind of legislation that we see coming forward from this government.

No question, hearings would be beneficial. I think you can’t go wrong with hearings in the province. I mean genuine hearings where you’ve got members of all political parties sitting at the table listening to people—experts and people who may not be so expert—put forward their point of view and perhaps suggest some amendments to the legislation, or perhaps suggest the government might withdraw the bill if indeed it is, as some of the legal people in this House say, weaker than that which exists at the present time.

I know the government has a very light agenda; we’ve seen very little legislation. They brought in an extraneous and useless motion simply to hammer the federal government over the head and debated that for several days in this Legislature, when in fact the member from Wellington—I can never remember all the ridings so I always say Waterloo and Wellington and places like that—anyway, when everybody was prepared to accept and endorse Ted Arnott’s particular motion in the House, which didn’t have any of the particular rhetoric in it, which simply stated what he believed to be the facts and

what we would like to see for the province. Instead, we spent about six or seven or eight days on this motion, which was totally political. It showed that the government had no agenda. You could have spent that time on this bill and trying to strengthen it or, as I say, removing it if it’s indeed weaker than other bills.

I’m wondering how Charlton Heston would feel about this bill. Charlton Heston appears to be a hero of the Conservative Party. I have been here long enough to remember when the Conservatives used to invite Charlton Heston to their fundraisers. It wasn’t just the National Rifle Association branch in Canada that invited him; the Conservative Party used to invite him. I was watching Ben-Hur on the weekend. The movie was on television and I saw Charlton Heston there. I didn’t see any guns at that time; they got along without guns in that particular era. But I am concerned. I don’t know if you’ve checked with Charlton Heston on this to determine whether or not this is a strong enough bill for him.

1730

Do you know what I forgot to mention? Because we’re talking about a time allocation motion, I thought we might be spending some time instead in the House this afternoon with the Premier proudly announcing the purchase of two new turboprop jet engine planes; nicely appointed inside, I must say, all the luxuries. The members here who are not in the cabinet should know that these airplanes are for the comfort and convenience of members of the cabinet and the Premier himself. The Minister of Health has never been in one, but she knows some of her colleagues have. Once in a while, if you’re really good, they’ll let one of the backbenchers get in the plane with the Premier and chit-chat with him. This is \$11 million for new aircraft.

I’m awaiting a telephone call from the Taxpayers Coalition. I know my friend Frank Sheehan, who headed up the Taxpayers Coalition in the Niagara region, when he isn’t phoning me to complain about government advertising—he hasn’t yet—or the purchase of the new jet—the whole Taxpayers Coalition will be in full revolt. Because heaven forbid those people who believe that the National Citizens’ Coalition and the Taxpayers Coalition are simply a front for the provincial Conservative Party and the national Reform Party or whatever their new name is.

I’ve never believed that myself. I know that they will be complaining loudly and publicly about the squandering of millions of dollars on government advertising and, of course, the purchase of the new planes for the comfort and convenience of the Premier, members of the cabinet and senior members of staff. Who knows, Guy Giorno and the gang, the whiz kids, may get to go on the planes as well.

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: Most of them will not, you’re quite right.

Here is my surprise. There was a long weekend coming up. This was the Easter weekend, a four-day weekend for members of the Legislature: Good Friday, Saturday,

Sunday and Easter Monday. At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, I was in the press gallery lounge looking for what you people put out the last day before a long week-end.

Lo and behold, I found this little, wee announcement of the planes. They didn't put it in the boxes for the media. There wasn't a government flack going around putting it in each of the offices of the media. It was being hidden. It must've been there to cover the next press release I saw, which was on the Ontario Realty Corp. It had gotten worse. That came out at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

I expected that we were going to see the Premier get up in the House to proudly talk about his two new airplanes this afternoon. I was disappointed. If one of you asks for unanimous consent tomorrow, I'll be happy to try to persuade my colleagues to give unanimous consent for the Premier to get up and talk about all the luxuries contained in the new \$11-million airplanes that have been purchased by the government for the comfort and convenience of the cabinet. I wouldn't actually have remembered that had not a Conservative member reminded me to mention that this afternoon. I won't say who, because the person will either not get into the cabinet or no longer be in the cabinet, whoever she or he might be. I'm going to keep that very clear.

Now, this time allocation motion fits in with the whole government agenda of an assault on democracy in Ontario. How does that happen? First of all, just don't bring the House into session until very late. I hear lectures on when teachers should be in classrooms in school and so on. This House is always coming back late. It would be like saying to the teachers: "You're not coming back in September. We're going to come back in middle, late October." Then in May, "You don't come back in the holidays, you come back sometime in April."

This House never sits because the government does not want to be accountable to the vociferous opposition and the assiduous members of the press gallery who are always here every day up in the gallery watching what's happening from question period on till the House stops. All the cameras, as you can see, are all there right now. They're not just here for photo ops of members putting sweaters on; they are people who are interested in very significant issues.

How else does your government attack democracy? You changed the Election Finances Act. That means that the wealthiest people in this province, to whom you cater in your legislation and regulations and policies, can now give even more money to the Conservative Party and your Conservative Party can spend more money in campaigns. You will be the biggest fundraising machine there is. As I've said on many occasions in this House, there will be a building boom in Ontario because they'll be adding rooms to have the Tory fundraisers.

In St Catharines they had one—sold out, 200 bucks a plate, everybody was there. A lot of public money was there, and I object to that but I won't get into that. I

object to publicly funded institutions putting money into the Conservative coffers. But I'll get to that another day.

Then you changed the election rules. You made it 28 days. Whom does that favour? The government, or the party that has a lot of money—because we in the other parties run our campaigns on door-knocking, getting to the people individually—just blankets the ridings and the province with not only government advertising, but of course Tory advertising.

You have government advertising itself, which is first of all a squandering of taxpayers' dollars that will be denounced by the Taxpayers' Coalition, but also is very unfair because those who are in opposition to the government's position don't have the same money.

You notice that Ralph Klein right now in Alberta, although he's not imposing closure—because of the uproar in the province over his legislation designed to begin a system of private health care in Alberta, two-tiered health care, which you'd like to emulate here, no doubt—he is using government advertising to put forward the government's position.

I'm waiting to read the editorials in all the newspapers, including the National Post, denouncing the spending of millions of dollars on those editorials. Only TVO will probably talk about it. Others will not talk about it, the people who are getting the dough. The cranky talk-show hosts are silent on government advertising. The newspaper editorialists—nowhere to be found on this. The radio, television—everybody who gets the money tends to be quiet. I think it's because they're writing about so many other things. It can't be because they're getting the money.

The last thing that you've done of course, other than buy the new jet for the comfort and convenience of the Premier and members of the senior cabinet, is that you have also changed the procedural rules of this Legislature to silence members such as myself, who would like to speak for yet another hour on this motion or at least have time to canvass the various issues contained within the legislation in this House. I denounce the government for this and for its entire attack on the democratic system in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Christopherson: I just want to use the few minutes that I have available to set the record straight in terms of exactly how we got to this point, because I have a funny feeling that following this session this afternoon the spin doctors will begin their work.

First of all, as has been mentioned by earlier speakers, there's not a lot going on here. Every bill is important to one degree or another in terms of some constituency within the province or some community. But in terms of the length of time this government kept us out of the House, the time that they had to develop important legislation, when we look at the health care crisis that exists in all our communities, the education crisis, the social services crisis, the environmental abuse crisis that continues, all the things that quite frankly this government wants to avoid, because if they didn't create the problem certainly

their legislation and their policies have exacerbated those situations, none of that's in front of the House. Nothing of that kind of heft is in front of the House.

When the government House leader approached me, as the NDP House leader, with this notion of two days' hearings, which was their original offer, I said that wasn't enough, again in the context that there's not a terrific amount of crisis legislation in front of us here. I might say parenthetically that one of the reasons for this is probably that they want to keep everything quiet for the ramp up to their budget announcement where they can announce something that actually happened a year ago, which is the balancing of the budget, and then they're going to take all the credit for it and probably never acknowledge the fact that it's being driven by the US economy, specifically the auto industry. However, we'll save that debate for another day.

Also, they want to keep the waters nice and calm because there's a by-election going on. While the results of that won't tip the balance of power in any way, it's very symbolic for this government. Given how they stiffed Toni Skarica and left him out there twisting in the wind and the fact that they would love to have their chosen Tory candidate as a member of this caucus in a big way, one could believe that they want to keep things nice and quiet.

1740

The third thing that folds into all that is that just like today, where democracy is being denied, we will probably see a flurry of important legislation that will be rammed through this House in the final weeks of this session, going into the summer. Of course their game plan is, "Yes, people will be outraged and riled up for a couple of weeks, but once people get into the summer and start thinking about vacation and being with their family, it won't seem like a big deal and they'll let it go." I have to say, as disappointed as I am to admit it, it is relatively effective. It's a shame, it ought not to be, but it is. People do go on with their lives, and they're driven by issues that matter to them and their families, which, as I would remind the Speaker, are the very issues I just mentioned that this government doesn't want to deal with in terms of this place.

So a couple of weeks of explosion, opposition is upset, screaming, "Democracy is being denied," maybe a few interest groups—at least that's the way they'll be labeled by the government—off into the summer and there you go. So there are lots of reasons why it's by design that we don't have much going on here. So we felt perfectly in order and within our rights, but in a reasonable fashion, to say to the government, "No, two days isn't enough." My colleague our justice critic, the member from Niagara Centre, has spent hours and hours and hours on this issue, both in this House and out in the communities, speaking to an incredible range of people and groups who have an interest in this bill, and he wants to be their voice. That is, I would remind members of the government back benches, in large part why we're here: to give voice to

our specific communities and to give voice to opposing points of view from that of the government.

So, what outrageous position did the NDP take? Wow, we asked for a whole five days, which amounts to a few hours every day—four days actually, if you think about it as a week, but the number was five, so it would take us into a second parliamentary week—because we have people who want to come in and speak to this issue. Our critic has more than adequately laid out for this government why those issues are important to us and why there are other points of view and why we need to scratch beyond just some of the bumper-sticker sloganism that we've heard here today and at other times during the debate.

The government House leader responded to me and said, "No, it's two days or nothing." No backup, no rationale, no argument that we haven't made our case, just flat out, "No, it's two days or nothing." I responded to him that our position is that it's either five days or no, we're not going to agree to any other kind of package that might move this legislation through. We are not asking for anything unreasonable. The government, of course, having the majority control of this place, ultimately decides, whether based on pressure, their game plan, strategies, whatever ultimately moves them, decide by virtue of their unilateral power that they have with a majority.

So here we are, left with one afternoon, trying to make the case both why we think there are problems with this bill, why it doesn't do what it says, trying to give voice to those people who have a right to be heard on this issue, and arguing why it's so undemocratic to shut down debate, and all of that ends within probably the next seven or eight minutes. It is so outrageous, particularly when we look at your record that you like to trot out as being something you're so proud of. We've already addressed the fact that Justice Day came forward and said, "There are no rights in the Victims' Bill of Rights that you passed."

We actually had in this province Mike Harris's Attorney General directing the staff, the lawyers on behalf of the government, to go into court and argue that the people who were in front of the court didn't have any rights as victims, after the government stood up and said: "We're giving all these rights. We're making sure that victims have this protection and that voice and this service." None of it was true. You sent government lawyers in to argue that people didn't have the very rights your government stood up and said they have. Your own candidate in Wentworth-Burlington, Priscilla de Villiers, a well-respected individual in terms of victims' rights, has said you're wrong on that issue, that there aren't any real rights there. For that matter, she's also opposed to your position on gun control. Her position is consistent with ours and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, who have said that this is important public safety legislation.

So there is a story and a side to this argument that needs to be heard, and it's not going to happen. But you

know, the real losers in this are the public, because the public will be denied the opportunity to hear an opposing point of view in a parliamentary system with a sitting majority government. It's not that far from the power of a majority government to the tyranny of a majority government. You keep taking us not only to that line but over the line, and today represents another case. This is bad law-making, this is democracy denied, and at some point this government will be held accountable.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): Unfortunately, I only have a few seconds. Hopefully I can come back to this subject again. My friends on the opposite side, from Hamilton West and from St Catharines, have spoken. If I didn't keep a close eye on the agenda I would have forgotten by now what they are talking about, because the member for St Catharines was talking about airplanes that the government needed and bought. That is not what the subject is. The agenda is Bill 55, the Parental Responsibility Act. One of my friends from Stoney Creek said the other day, in a nutshell, "Do you know where your children are?"

The Acting Speaker: The time for debate has expired.

Mr Turnbull has moved government motion number 39. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Call in the members. It will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1748 to 1758.

The Acting Speaker: Will members please take their seats.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Runciman, Robert W.
Baird, John R.	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Barrett, Toby	Johns, Helen	Snobelen, John
Beaubien, Marcel	Kells, Morley	Spina, Joseph
Chudleigh, Ted	Klees, Frank	Sterling, Norman W.
Clark, Brad	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stewart, R. Gary
Clement, Tony	Maves, Bart	Stockwell, Chris
Coburn, Brian	Mazzilli, Frank	Tascona, Joseph N.
Cunningham, Dianne	Molinari, Tina R.	Tilson, David
DeFaria, Carl	Munro, Julia	Tsubouchi, David H.
Dunlop, Garfield	Murdoch, Bill	Turnbull, David
Ecker, Janet	Mushinski, Marilyn	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Elliott, Brenda	Newman, Dan	Wilson, Jim
Flaherty, Jim	O'Toole, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Galt, Doug	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Wood, Bob
Gill, Raminder	Palladini, Al	Young, David

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed will please rise one at a time until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter
Bartolucci, Rick	Cleary, John C.	Kwinter, Monte
Bisson, Gilles	Crozier, Bruce	Marchese, Rosario
Bountrogianni, Marie	Curling, Alvin	Martel, Shelley
Boyer, Claudette	Di Cocco, Caroline	Patten, Richard
Bradley, James J.	Dombrowsky, Leona	Peters, Steve
Caplan, David	Duncan, Dwight	Ramsay, David
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Smitherman, George

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 48; the nays are 24.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being past 6 of the clock, we will adjourn this House until 6:45 of the clock this evening.

The House adjourned at 1800.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon / L'hon Hilary M. Weston
Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers
Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller
Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Beaches-East York	Lankin, Frances (ND)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women / ministre des Affaires civiques, de la Culture et des Loisirs, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)		
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Broadview-Greenwood	Churley, Marilyn (ND)		
Bruce-Grey	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Carleton-Gloucester	Coburn, Brian (PC)		
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)		
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Com- mercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)		
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Brenda (PC)		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion		
Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)		
Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)		

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nepean-Carleton	Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nipissing	Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Northumberland	Galt, Doug (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stoney Creek	Clark, Brad (PC)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thornhill	Molinari, Tina R. (PC)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie L. (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Palladini, Hon / L'hon Al (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Wentworth-Burlington	Vacant
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Willowdale	Young, David (PC)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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