



ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

First Session, 37th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 26 April 2000

Mercredi 26 avril 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 26 April 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 26 avril 2000

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

Mr Monte Kwinter (York Centre): Tomorrow during private members' hour we will be debating Bill 2, my private member's bill, which provides that a licensed medical doctor shall not be found guilty of professional misconduct or incompetence solely on the basis that the said doctor practises a therapy that is non-traditional or that departs from prevailing medical practice, unless there is evidence that proves that the therapy poses a greater risk to a patient's health than the traditional or prevailing practice.

This will be the third time this bill is debated at second reading. On two previous occasions, the bill was given unanimous consent but, unfortunately, on both occasions the bill died on the order paper.

Many positive things have happened since I first debated second reading of the bill on May 8, 1997. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario established an ad hoc committee on alternative medicine which made 14 recommendations in its report. One of the key conclusions is: "In essence, we believe that physicians be allowed a reasonable degree of latitude in the kinds of therapies they offer to their patients. We also believe that patients have every right to seek whatever kind of therapy they want." The Ontario Medical Association has also decided that the probationary section on complementary medicine should be granted OMA sectional status.

In the United States, more people seek alternative treatment than conventional treatment. That trend is also occurring in Canada. The time has come to ensure freedom of choice for the doctor and freedom of choice for the patient.

QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Created on April 26, 1860, when we were the province of Canada, six companies of citizen soldiers were joined by the Militia Act of 1855 to form the 2nd Battalion Volunteer Militia Rifles. In 1863, it became the Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto, and as that regiment it was mobilized in 1866 to thwart the invasion of Canada by the Fenians.

After that success, it distinguished itself in every military conflict in which Canada has been involved, including the Canadian 3rd Division in the Normandy assault on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

The Queen's Own Rifles motto is "In Pace Paratus," "In Peace, Prepared." They have demonstrated their readiness more than adequately over the past 140 years. In the mid-1870s it was called out twice to aid the civil power. It has been involved in peacekeeping duties from Cyprus to Bosnia. Today, as a reserve regiment, it has been assigned an airborne tasking, the only reserve regiment in Canada to receive this responsibility. It was out to assist with natural disasters such as Hurricane Hazel, it manned the armoury for the homeless during the cold winter of 1997, it assisted in the ice storm of 1998 and was on alert for the Y2K emergency.

Their officers have provided great leadership and have included such men as Colonel Gillmor, the first Clerk of this Legislative Assembly. The soldiers of this outstanding regiment are part-time, yet they give of their time and resources to be ready to serve our needs and emergencies at a moment's notice. They deserve our respect and support. We congratulate Lieutenant Colonel Bruce McEachern and his selfless men on this, their 140th year of service to Canadians from coast to coast.

I ask the members to join me in showing our appreciation for their impressive past and commitment to the future of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

WATER EXTRACTION

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Last week we heard that 74 water-taking permits are pending on the Trent River. Another 60 permit applications are pending for the York River in Bancroft. Of course, we are all aware of the permit in Centre Hastings that our leader, Dalton McGuinty, highlighted a couple of weeks ago.

At a time when farmers are not sure there will be enough water for their crops, it seems as though the Ministry of the Environment is issuing permits like water. Yet the process does not require municipalities or conservation authorities to be notified directly, or that there is open public discussion about the impact of these permits.

The Tory government has sacrificed the effective management of the environment to provide tax cuts. Cut-backs to regional offices have left capable and committed staff struggling to manage workloads that are impossible.

Ministry of the Environment offices do not track how many water-taking permits are pending in any given area, because they do not have the support staff to effectively monitor this important information. The government has cut this ministry to the bone, and no one is considering the long-range impact.

Water is most certainly one of our most precious resources, and I am absolutely appalled that the Tory government has no priority to track how much of it we are giving away.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):

As a member who represents a rural riding, I would like to publicly commend the Premier for his concern for rural communities and the fact that they are not enjoying the benefits of the current economic boom to the same extent as other areas across our province.

The problems presently being experienced in rural communities are unique from those of their urban neighbours. Further, I would suggest that while we often think of rural communities and the business of agriculture as one and the same, they are in fact mutually exclusive. I believe that if we make a distinction between the two, it will help us better understand the plight of rural communities and, as a consequence, devise strategies to help them.

Nowhere is that plight more typical than in the community of Wallaceburg, located in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Heavily dependent on the manufacturing industry, this town of 11,000 has been devastated by the loss of more than 2,000 manufacturing jobs over the past several years, the most significant of which was the closing of the 100-year-old glass factory that gave the community its identity as the Glasstown of Canada. As a result, numerous families have been forced to leave the community to find work.

There is something about the rural way of life that we need not only to hang on to, but embrace, a lifestyle in which the pace is a little slower, a lot less stressful and, most important, where people know one another by name. This way of life is vitally important to maintaining the heritage and traditions of our province and our nation.

Protecting rural Ontario will have a price, but I submit to the members of this House that it is a price worth paying.

P.J. AND M.J. FARRELL

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): How many people in Ontario can say they have delivered over 30,000 babies during their careers? Not many, to say the least. But such is not the case for two brothers from Sudbury.

Drs Patrick and Maurice Farrell can proudly stand in their places and say they have delivered three generations of babies in the Sudbury region over the last 40-plus years. In fact, Dr P.J. Farrell delivered his first baby in 1948 at the old Copper Cliff hospital and his last in 1999 at the St Joseph's Health Centre.

Both P.J. and M.J., as they are fondly referred to in Sudbury, were more than doctors to their patients. They were family, mentors, role models, a shoulder to cry on and people to confide in. They are two people who by every measure truly cared for and about the people they came in contact with.

Tomorrow night, these two pillars of our community will be honoured with the prestigious Paul Harris Rotarian Award. The many hundreds of people who will attend this affair in their honour will reminisce about times that were and how these two individuals affected the lives of so many people.

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Our community of Sudbury and the northeast wish these two men much health and happiness in their retirement. We hope that their happiness in part will be in knowing that the 30,000 people they brought into the world and their families love and appreciate them for not only who they are but what they are. Good luck, M.J. and good health, P.J. We will always be indebted to you for your love of and dedication to your fellow human being.

CANCER TREATMENT

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): One year ago, Cancer Care Ontario began sending southern Ontario cancer patients to the United States and northern Ontario for radiation treatment. On recommendation from Cancer Care Ontario, the Ministry of Health is providing special additional funding to cover 100% of the travel accommodation and food costs for those patients to access treatment elsewhere. This results in blatant discrimination of northern cancer patients. Northern patients must regularly travel far from home to be treated in Sudbury or Thunder Bay, yet the only help they get from the Ministry of Health is coverage of a small portion of travel costs, no money for accommodation or food.

In the face of this inequity, northern Cancer Care Ontario officials decided to lobby this government for a northern program, like the one in place for southern Ontario cancer patients. They want 100% of travel accommodation and food costs covered too. In December 1999, Gerry Loughheed Jr, chair of Cancer Care Ontario's northeast advisory committee, met in Sudbury with northern Ministry of Health staff and was clearly told that such a proposal would be developed. He was promised he would have it by Christmas.

It's four months later, and nothing has come from the Ministry of Health. It's as if the meeting and the commitment made in December never occurred, and so this government continues with its blatant discrimination of northern cancer patients. Not only do northern patients suffer the emotional trauma of cancer treatment, but they face additional trauma wondering if they can afford to stay in Sudbury or Thunder Bay to be treated. There's no excuse in Ontario, in 2000, for northern cancer patients to suffer a financial burden in trying to access cancer care. To the government: Pay these costs now.

YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr David Young (Willowdale): Too often our newspapers inform us that a child has stolen or vandalized property, threatened or assaulted someone or, worst of all, that one child has deprived another of life. Though these crimes are serious in and of themselves, the fact that they're being committed by children—children who are not old enough to drive, children who are not old enough to vote—makes them all the more disturbing.

This government has led the fight against the increase in youth crime. We have introduced the Safe Streets Act and the Parental Responsibility Act. We've created strict discipline facilities to help youth who have made mistakes get back on track. We have urged the federal government to eliminate conditional sentences and to make the Young Offenders Act a meaningful deterrent to crime. In our schools, the new code of conduct will help reinforce the values of respect for oneself and for others. But at the end of the day, the solution to youth crime lies largely within our own families and our communities.

In May, Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino will be holding a series of meetings across Toronto in an effort to hear from parents and other members of the community on how best to tackle the problem of youth crime and other crimes in our community. I invite everyone who shares my concerns to attend the meeting with Chief Fantino being held in my riding, Willowdale, on Monday, May 29, from 7 pm to 9 pm at the North York council chambers. Our children have the right to grow up without fear of violence, and we as a community owe it to them to work toward this goal.

ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): As part of Organ Donor Awareness Week, tonight the Kidney Foundation of Windsor and District will be offering a Celebration of Courage, which is a candlelight celebration to pay tribute to donors and their families on their courageous gift of life. Yesterday, all of us had the opportunity to speak about organ donors and the importance of organ donation in Ontario, and I especially wanted to pay tribute to those in our community who have done so much for this important cause.

The multi-faith service is being held today at 7 pm at the Salvation Army South Windsor Citadel on Grand Marais Road West. I invite my constituents and people throughout our city to join in that.

I also want to pay special tribute to Anne Brinkman, who was the peer support and patient services supervisor with the local chapter of the Kidney Foundation, for all her great efforts on behalf of this important issue.

Finally, to my colleagues in the Legislature: In our constituency office we've been able now to obtain organ donor cards which can be made available in your offices. I would urge all of you to avail yourselves of that service. You need to call Organ Donation Ontario, 1-800-263-2833, to participate in this very important program.

I think all of us in this House and indeed throughout the province know of someone who has a need for or has benefited from this program. It's incumbent on all of us to join in a non-partisan fashion in promoting organ donation especially this week, but throughout the year.

PROVINCIAL DEBT

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): Last week I had the opportunity to meet with Wellesley township council in my riding about the next budget and Ontario's future fiscal priorities. One of the issues raised at my meeting was the need to deal with the \$120-billion provincial debt the previous government had left to our children and grandchildren. My constituents in Waterloo-Wellington believe that the provincial debt is among the most pressing problems in Ontario today.

Back in 1997, they supported my private member's resolution which called upon the government to commit itself to a long-term debt repayment plan with interim targets to begin paying down our massive debt. My resolution passed in the House. For the past three years, I've continued to raise this issue with the Minister of Finance and the government.

In my recent survey of my constituents in Waterloo-Wellington, a whopping 64% said paying down the debt should be the most important fiscal priority for Ontario once the budget is balanced. Doug Robson, president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, shares this view, saying recently, "We are in good times and the rule in good times is that you pay down your debts."

I want to congratulate the Premier and the Minister of Finance for their recent statements suggesting that a debt repayment plan will likely be included in the next provincial budget. Let us begin to secure the future of our children and grandchildren and guarantee their prosperity by beginning to pay down our provincial debt.

SPECIAL REPORT, INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that today I've laid upon the table a special report of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario submitted by Ann Cavoukian, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario.

On a point of order, the member for Hamilton West.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Mr Speaker, my point of order is with regard to the report that you've just tabled. Given the fact that it's a stunning report that speaks of the government actually violating the law, we in the NDP request unanimous consent to have an emergency debate about this most important, crucial issue that affects Ontarians in terms of their rights to privacy.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I heard some noes.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I also beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the seventh report of the standing committee on government agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 106(e), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

E-COMMERCE ACT, 2000 LOI DE 2000 SUR LE COMMERCE ÉLECTRONIQUE

Mr Hastings moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 70, An Act with respect to Electronic Information, Documents and Payments / Projet de loi 70, Loi concernant les renseignements, les documents et les paiements électroniques.

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. The motion is carried. The member for a short statement.

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): The E-Commerce Act, 2000, has the legal effect and enforceability that information or documents may not be denied just because the information is in an electronic form. Subject to specified limits, where a law requires that information or a document be in writing or that a document be signed, the information or document may be provided electronically and the document signed electronically.

Furthermore, the bill recognizes contracts formed as the result of specified electronic exchanges and allows for errors arising from transactions with electronic agents to be corrected.

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MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): I believe I have unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

Hon Mr Stockwell: I move that notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following changes be made to

the ballot list for private members' public business: Mrs Pupatello and Mr Kennedy exchange places in order of precedence such that Mrs Pupatello assumes ballot item number 25 and Mr Kennedy assumes ballot item number 38; Mrs Boyer and Mr Bartolucci exchange places in order of precedence such that Mrs Boyer assumes ballot item number 55 and Mr Bartolucci assumes ballot item number 24.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

It's now time for oral questions.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We were given to understand the Chair of Management Board would be here. Oh, here he is now.

The Speaker: We'll give him a moment to find his seat.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Chair of Management Board. In January 1998, the ORC advertised for sale some cemetery land located in Etobicoke. It wasn't worth that much because there was no way for vehicles to get to the vacant part of the lot at the back, so most bidders lost interest. But one bidder worked behind the scenes and struck a secret deal with the government. A strip of land was added to this original piece of land that would allow construction of a roadway extending to the back of the land, a roadway that makes the construction of a \$25-million crematorium now possible.

Can you tell us today, Minister, what role you and your office played in secretly turning a cemetery into a gold mine for one bidder and one bidder alone?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I'm not aware of the details on that.

Mr McGuinty: I'm going to have a page who's conveniently right here take this over to the minister. Thank you, Marc.

I'm providing you, Minister, with a copy of a document we obtained through a freedom of information act request. One of these documents, the one I provided you with just now, you might want to call a smoking gun because it implicates you directly. It's a handwritten note from an ORC official which says, and I quote, "There has been ministerial involvement." Ministerial involvement—that's you, Minister—in a secret deal to turn a cemetery into a gold mine.

You've been telling us for weeks that you have nothing whatsoever to do with the day-to-day affairs of the ORC, that you do not get involved in the bids, that that is not your responsibility, that you're there to protect taxpayers. Can you tell us then, please, Minister, what

does this ministerial involvement mean in this particular deal?

Hon Mr Hodgson: I'm not sure of the details around this, but from this note it could possibly mean that one of your caucus members has phoned and asked for information and that we've requested the ORC. It says here in your own note that they want to have a briefing, that John Bell, who was the president of the ORC at the time, has been asked to get some information to the minister's office. That must mean that somebody has made an MPP inquiry, or somebody has inquired about the status of the project. That's quite common. I get calls from your caucus members all the time asking about the status of a piece of property or a lease or a building. But I don't know the particulars on this, and I'd be pleased to look into it.

Mr McGuinty: There is no reference here to some kind of request or ministerial request. It says "ministerial involvement." It specifically says there has been ministerial involvement. What we're talking about here—and let's go back to the issue at hand—are two things. First of all, you said you don't get involved in these things. Secondly, we have a piece of property that was put out for public tender and, secretly, behind closed doors, the person who got the deal suddenly has added to it a strip of land, which increases the value of the property close to a hundredfold. We get some information from the freedom of information office, and they provide us with a note that says there has been ministerial involvement. This stench, Minister, is not going to go away. It's like a stink on an elevator that you just can't get rid of. It's there again and again.

Minister, when only one developer is given access to key information, when only one developer is told he can bid on additional land, as was the case here, and when a minister gets personally involved in a secret land deal, can you tell us how this is not bid-rigging?

Hon Mr Hodgson: The leader of the opposition, who is a lawyer, knows better than this. He's just trying to throw all the allegations and all the crap he can in the hope that some of it will stick.

I'm pleased you have sent over some information that can be investigated. We will have this turned over to the internal and external auditors, and if there's evidence they'll refer it to the police. That's what we've done in past cases, and that's what we will continue to do. I expect that you and other members of this House would agree that that is the proper course of action. You have to find the evidence and, when you do, refer it to the police. That's what I expect any member in this Legislature would do, and that's what we've been doing on behalf of the taxpayers.

Your briefing note talks about how they're going to brief the president of the ORC, John Bell, because somebody got a request for information from my office. I'll look into that, and we'll turn this information over to the auditor.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, we're talking about a matter that is very straightforward. You have said countless

times in the past that you don't get involved in these deals. Here is a specific deal where somebody succeeded in secretly having a strip of land added to the original piece of property. The original strip of land was not put out for public tender, and suddenly this individual gets a piece of property that has now increased a hundredfold in value.

We obtained a piece of paper, a handwritten note by an ORC official, which says there has been ministerial involvement. That's you. You involved yourself in this deal, Minister. You told us that you never get involved in these deals. You significantly changed the value of this property and, by so doing, abdicated your responsibility to the taxpayers of Ontario. Minister, why were you even involved in this deal in the first place?

Hon Mr Hodgson: I'm not aware of the details of this particular transaction. I can assure this House that I'm not involved in the day-to-day operations. However, our office is involved in referring requests from MPPs and other people who have questions on the status of a process involved in a transaction. For example, if one of your caucus members phoned our office and said, "Can you tell us the details," we would ask the ORC to prepare a briefing note to do that. That's what this note says. They have to brief the president of the ORC, who has to prepare a briefing for the minister's office.

Mr McGuinty: If the minister has some kind of reasonable explanation, I'm sure he will be quite prepared to turn over those documents and make it perfectly clear. But from my perspective, Minister, you should know that I'm turning over this evidence to the police. They're the people—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister of Education, this is your last warning. If you yell again, I'm going to ask you to leave. Leader of the official opposition.

1400

Mr McGuinty: Let me read the note to you again, Minister. It says: "Brian said there's been ministerial involvement. I had to brief John Bell," who's with the ORC, "on this today, and the minister's EA." You were involved in the sale of this land, Minister. I'm blowing the whistle and I'm blowing it on you. You've been telling us that the Pope should be declaring you a saint in this matter because you're the one who's acted in the most saintly way possible when it comes to these land flips in Ontario. Now there is solid, concrete, hard evidence of your involvement in the sale of a specific piece of land. Minister, why don't you do the right thing in all of this and resign?

Hon Mr Hodgson: The Leader of the Opposition has stooped to a new low today. He's trying to make up evidence. He's trying to take credit for calling in the police when he knows full well it's this government, this ministry and this minister that have called in the police, that has led to the investigation to try to see if there's evidence of any wrongdoing or criminal behaviour in the ORC. I told him in my previous answer that we would

refer this issue to the auditor and to the police. So he's standing up trying to take credit for something that we have already done or undertaken to do. If that's not the epitome of hypocrisy, I have no idea where he gets off with his principles.

Mr McGuinty: You're the one who's been trying to take credit for guarding the interests of Ontario taxpayers and everything points to the exact opposite of that. The fact of the matter is that you have completely failed to live up to your responsibility to protect the interests of Ontario taxpayers.

We knew that government land was being sold at rock-bottom prices. We knew that taxpayers in this province were getting ripped off to the tune of millions and millions of dollars. We knew that there were special deals and secret deals. But today we discovered for the very first time that this minister is involved in the centre of it all.

Once again, Minister, I'll be turning this information over to the police today, and I'm asking you to do the right thing: Resign and devote your time to doing something that you have failed to do to date, that is, assist the police in uncovering the truth in this matter.

Hon Mr Hodgson: The Leader of the Opposition talks about facts and assisting in the investigation to get to the bottom of it. He knows full well that we've done the right thing by calling in the auditors, by having the police come in and investigate. But we need to have real facts. We can't go on his scurrilous innuendo that the taxpayers have lost money. That hasn't been proven yet. That's why we got the police involved, to try to find out whether or not there's been any wrongdoing.

The only fact that is known for sure about real estate in this province is the mismanagement under your regime on the Ataratiri lands, which, for a fact, cost the taxpayers of this province \$340 million, which would have provided for a tremendous number of long-term-care beds, MRI beds, emergency ward visits. That's the disgraceful legacy that you squandered when you were in government. That's the only fact that's known for sure.

We are trying to get to the bottom of all the questions involved around the ORC and its past deals—

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

SPECIAL REPORT,
INFORMATION AND PRIVACY
COMMISSIONER

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): My question is to the Minister of Finance. You will know that the privacy commissioner has tabled a report with the House today entitled A Special Report to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario on the Disclosure of Personal Information by the Province of Ontario Savings Office, Ministry of Finance.

Minister, this is a shocking exposé of a government that has broken the law, misused personal information in pursuit of its privatization agenda and is now engaged in

a massive cover-up. The finance ministry in fact tried to smother this investigation before it even started. Nobody from the privatization secretariat, all the way up to the CEO, would answer a single question. Documents provided by the finance ministry were censored, blacked out to protect who knows what information from the privacy commissioner. Because of your stonewalling, we don't know who in government, or indeed who in cabinet, approved these violations of our laws and we don't know who was directing the cover-up or why. Minister, what is your response to this scathing indictment of your government's mistreatment of the private, personal information of the people of Ontario?

Hon Ernie L. Eves (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): First of all, I have had an opportunity this morning, obviously, to go over the report that came from the commissioner. We accept the commissioner's report entirely and we are acting upon her recommendations. We have already satisfied or fulfilled four of the seven recommendations, and I can assure the honourable member that the other three will be satisfied by July 31 of this year.

Mr Christopherson: Minister, that is not nearly enough, and I think you know that. The commissioner has stated in the report that her office cannot continue the investigation that she believes needs to be continued, and says so directly in the report, because she doesn't have the authority.

Minister, if you are so keen on meeting the questions and obligations that the privacy commissioner raises, then let me pose this to you: Will you agree to table legislation that empowers the commissioner in the way she asks so that she can get to the bottom of this cover-up, or will you call a public inquiry into why your government has taken the actions it has? Let me say to you, anything other than that means that your answer today is just one more step in this massive cover-up.

Hon Mr Eves: There is no cover-up, number one. Number two, though, I would like to say very directly to the honourable member that this government has no difficulty with referring the entire act to a committee of this Legislature for review. It has not been reviewed since 1991 despite the fact, I might add, that the commissioner's predecessor requested your government to do that and you refused. We, on the other hand, believe we are taking the commissioner's report to heart. We accept the recommendations of the commissioner and we have no problem with taking the entire act and sending it out to a legislative committee for the entire act to be reviewed so that we can act, not only upon the commissioner's recommendations but deal with other aspects of the act as well.

Mr Christopherson: With regard to the fact that these recommendations were made before and our government didn't act on them, you're right, we should have. Who would have imagined, though, that a government of any political stripe would do the things that you have done with regard to personal information in this modern era? Saying that we didn't do it is not enough; we agree with

you that we should have done it. Saying that it can go to a committee is a diversionary tactic that we have no interest in.

Let me quote from the report. "The ministry's efforts to limit our investigation and its failure, in our view, to use its best efforts to ensure that its current and former employees co-operated with us has hindered this investigation." Further, "Co-operation has been difficult to obtain on occasion, but we have never before faced the level of difficulty or the number of obstacles experienced in this investigation."

Further quotes: "Despite our inquiries, we have been offered no explanation for these dramatically different approaches. As a consequence, we do not feel that the public interest has been adequately served." Lastly: "All of the questions surrounding the 1997 disclosure of POSO account holder information have not been answered, nor have all of the relevant facts been determined. This is unacceptable to us. It should be unacceptable to the government." Let me say to you, it's certainly unacceptable to us in the NDP.

Minister, bring in the legislation immediately. We'll pass it with unanimous consent. Give the commissioner the power she needs to get to the bottom of this, and we'll ensure that the people of Ontario have their private information protected in a way you failed to do.

Hon Mr Eves: Let me say very directly to the honourable member that the officials in the privatization secretariat at the time operated with the best of intentions. They operated upon, first of all, a verbal opinion from the freedom of information official in the ministry, and secondly, they operated upon a written legal opinion. They had a different interpretation, I would concede, than the commissioner has now come to. But if there was a mistake made by those officials, it was certainly an honest mistake made by those officials, and we are accepting fully the commissioner's recommendations.

As I said to the honourable member in response to his previous supplementary, we have no problem with the entire act being reviewed. I have no doubt that some changes will have to be made to the legislation, and should be made to the legislation, in very direct response to what the commissioner is suggesting.

1410

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): My question is for the Chair of Management Board. Minister, you keep saying that you and Tony Miele are cleaning up the Ontario Realty Corp when in fact the reality is quite different. You're still doing deals with the companies that ripped you off before. You're doing this while an internal audit and a police investigation are underway.

This is a printout of properties currently listed for sale on the ORC Web site. There are three listed as under contract. The value of two of them totals over \$12 million. Minister, will you table here today the names of

the companies with which the ORC has land under contract?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): As I've stated on numerous occasions, the Ontario Realty Corp board of directors has put into place a new set of policies and procedures to guide them and to guide the corporation in its transactions around real estate sales. It's more open; it's more transparent. The fact that it's on the Internet with the policies is a huge improvement. Using outside professional brokers is a huge improvement which has allowed for competitive tendering, to make sure that properly qualified companies conduct the real estate transactions.

Your question is quite specific. I will find out if there's any legal reason why I can't release that and we'll try to get that to you.

Mr Martin: In the spirit of your answer, Minister, why won't you table it here today? You obviously seem to know everything about all of this, and your answer is simply unacceptable. You need to come clean with the people of Ontario. Yesterday the Premier denied that the ORC is still doing deals with Frank Gabriele even though the company's own lawyer and the ORC's own court documents say otherwise.

Alan Price, lawyer for Amberwood, the company that ripped off the ORC in 1998, told TVOntario on April 7 that he was doing another deal with the ORC for a property at McCowan and Ellesmere in Scarborough, and interestingly enough, one of the properties under contract is a \$6.5-million property at McCowan and Ellesmere in Scarborough. Minister, why are you still doing deals with Amberwood after they ripped you off in 1998?

Hon Mr Hodgson: Unfortunately, on the government side we don't have the luxury—we have to have evidence. We can't just falsely accuse people without the evidence. We've asked for a process that will get to the bottom of this and answer all the questions. That's why we've got the external auditors, the internal auditors, as well as the police doing a review. On top of that, for any pending transactions, the senior management team, along with the accountants and the auditors, will review all the data and make a determination whether this deal should close, which is under legal contract, at the time.

ORGAN DONATION

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): My question is to the Minister of Health. Yesterday, Premier Harris extolled the virtues of your record on organ donation. Indeed, I quote from his comments yesterday, "We need more donors."

Mrs Karen Adams is in the gallery today, and I would like to describe her struggle in trying to donate an organ. Karen is a potential match to donate a kidney to her sister-in-law. Because her husband is receiving a disability pension, your government claws back all she earns at her part-time job except for the first \$160 a month. If she donates, during her eight-week recovery every penny of her unemployment insurance will be deducted. Mrs

Adams cannot pay her bills without this extra income. ODSP suggested that the organ recipient should reimburse her for the money.

Minister, why did it take a fear of bad publicity for ODSP to make a one-time-only exemption? For \$320 your government was prepared to block an organ donation. Why is your government not making it easy for someone to donate?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I will refer that to the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): Obviously, our objective in setting up the Ontario disability support program is to provide a good income support program to people with disabilities. We're always concerned when we hear of cases like the one the member opposite described. I would certainly commit to look into the issue and to make a policy change if it is warranted. Obviously, the case of someone experiencing that kind of trouble is of great concern to anyone, and we would certainly be prepared to look into it.

Mr Parsons: That was somewhat of a wishy-washy answer. Not only has the surgery been delayed because of your government's policies, but now Karen is told that there will be no doctor available until at least the end of summer. Not only that, but the surgery may not happen at all, because the recipient family must first prove they can pay for the anti-rejection drugs for the rest of their life.

Minister, the recipient spends nine hours every night, plus lunch hour, hooked up to her dialysis machine. This operation would improve her life and that of her family. Your organ donor program appears to be tied directly to family income. Why is your government not supporting Karen's and similar families, and will you commit to meeting with Karen after question period to hear her story first-hand?

Hon Mr Baird: As I indicated to the member opposite, I would certainly be prepared to look into this issue. I regularly get suggestions from members on both sides of the House on how we can provide better programs for people with disabilities.

The member opposite read a scripted answer, saying he didn't like the answer to my question. It was obviously written before question period. The member opposite may have a difficult time taking yes for an answer, but we would be pleased to look into the issue and see what can be done.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Brian Coburn (Carleton-Gloucester): My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Much rumour and innuendo has been circulating on the other side of the House about the state of Ontario's colleges and universities. I know that you recently announced the largest expansion of our post-secondary

system in close to 30 years to accommodate the double cohort in 2003. You have also said on many occasions that when the new students arrive there will be adequate training and funding in place to support them.

Some on the other side of the House, however, have claimed that Ontario universities are last in operating funding across Canada. Yet, according to Maclean's magazine, Ontario has three of the top five institutions in the country, and an international reputation for excellence.

Minister, can you clear up this confusion coming from the other side of the House and tell us the real story with regard to operating funds available to our colleges and universities?

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister? I think the minister may have missed it. What we will do, if we could, is stop the clock. If you could make it a bit shorter, the minister didn't hear the question.

Mr Coburn: Minister, in short, because of the misinterpretation and misunderstanding on the other side of the House, can you clear up some of the confusion with respect to appropriate funding and the real story with regard to operating funds available to our colleges and universities?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): My apologies to my colleagues. Yes, I would be happy to explain this to members on the other side of the House.

It is a fact that we have the most accessible post-secondary education system in Canada, and perhaps in North America. For the last several years—for the last 20 years, to be exact—it has been said that Ontario ranks between seventh and 10th in operating funds. The fact is, when you put in all the resources that go into operating funds, we rank fourth in Canada. That may not be good enough, but it isn't last. We're very much better than that. Not only that; we are spending \$301 per student above and beyond the national average. So our students are well funded in operating dollars.

I will say also that we have taken care of the fact that the members opposite, as part of two governments, let the—

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

Mr Coburn: It is kind of difficult to hear in here whenever they have raised the issue and we're trying to answer it.

Minister, one of the most important features of our colleges and universities system is how accessible it is for Ontario students. Indeed, you've often said, and our platform has promised, that every willing and qualified Ontario student will continue to be able to attend college or university.

We all know that as the demand for post-secondary education increases, ensuring access to our colleges and universities will become even more important. Minister, what are you doing to ensure access for students, and what evidence do we have that this government has been and will continue to be successful in ensuring that a

college or university education remains within reach for Ontario students?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: In response to my colleague, I think everyone in this House knows about the challenge of some 88,000 new students we are expecting in the next 14 years. Certainly, more immediately, in 2003 we'll have a number of students.

1420

First of all, we've built the buildings. This year alone, with the private sector's support we put \$1.4 billion into new construction. My colleague asks about operating dollars: We're fourth in Canada. We are above the national average in operating costs, and we have done more than any other government, to the tune of \$697 million, to support students on tuition, and I'll mention two ways. Over and above OSAP, we have an Ontario student opportunity trust fund, and that means the private sector in this province, university by university, college by college, have offered up more than \$300 million to support students, and we have matched those funds, one of the most successful programs in Canada.

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is again to the Chair of Management Board. Returning to the matter I raised with you just a few moments ago, I have in my hand a formal letter of complaint sent by Comwest Properties Inc on March 16 of this year to the Ontario Realty Corp. It turns out that this corporation also had a very real interest in this same piece of property. They write, among other things, the following, and they are talking about this 25-foot strip of land that was added to the property: "This 25-foot strip is critical to any decision to purchase the property because it provides the sole means of access into the site without disturbing existing burial plots. Ontario Realty Corp never advertised the 25-foot strip as being available for purchase." This man goes on to say that he would have put in a formal bid had he known this additional strip of land would have been available because it increases the economic potential of the same piece of property 100-fold.

We have a formal letter of complaint filed by an Ontario citizen who was interested in purchasing this land. We have another copy of a letter here signed by an ORC official, his handwritten note I raised earlier that talks about ministerial involvement in this matter. Do you still maintain, Minister, that you had nothing whatsoever to do with this land deal? Do you still maintain that you, in all of this—

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

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I've already undertaken to get the information that the Leader of the Opposition has requested. I can assure him, though, that we've begun a process of having the audit team review all past transactions, and if there are any irregularities, they'll refer it to the provincial police to do an investigation. We will

get to the bottom of these important questions that are being asked, and this is the proper process to do it through.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, I want to return to this letter and your refusal to take it for what it is, which is a very, very serious matter.

I quote again: "Had the Ontario Realty Corp disclosed to me that the 25-foot strip was available, there is no question in my mind that I would have made an offer for the purchase of the property. I also believe that other parties would have made offers had they known the true facts. Obviously, due to his connections, the circumstances unfairly favoured the buyer, a Mr Damiani. We cannot help but wonder what relationship Mr Damiani has with the Ontario Realty Corp."

Minister, we've got a letter here filed by an Ontario company saying they were shut out of the process. We have a note filed by a member of the ORC staff telling us that there has been, in this matter, ministerial involvement. There's no longer any smoke; we have a huge fire before us. Why don't you, given the real, hard evidence before this House today, do the right thing and resign?

Hon Mr Hodgson: I can only be thankful on behalf of the people of Ontario that you're not in a position like a judge if that's your real, hard evidence. What you have is a commitment from this minister that we will refer this matter to the audit team and that if there's anything irregular about it, it will be referred to the police. That's the proper course to go. We want to get to the bottom of it. These are important questions that you're raising, and that's what we will take a look at.

In terms of your briefing note, what it states is that the minister's office needs to be briefed on it. It could be because a caucus member or a member in this assembly, one of your caucus colleagues, asked for information on it back in 1998. I can assure this House, though, that this deal was conducted back two years ago, and with the new open and transparent procedures this should not happen. The property should be open and transparent when it's marketed, and marketed by professionals.

So I appreciate the question. I will refer it to the audit team. If there are irregularities—

The Speaker: New question.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. It's come to my attention that in southwestern Ontario there's a particular need for increased attention for children's mental health issues. I have read in newspaper articles dating back a couple of months now that the situation is of great concern to the providers of these services. In the Windsor area, for instance, Connie Martin of Maryvale Adolescent and Family Services referred to the situation as a serious crisis, saying, "It's never been worse than this." The issue has also been raised in this House before.

I understand you have been looking into the situation and have recently met with the providers of these ser-

vices. Minister, can you tell us what the outcome of the meeting was and anything you have done to deal with the pressing situation?

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): I want to thank my colleague from southwestern Ontario for the question on what is a very important issue.

Our government has worked hard to address the issues faced by families with children suffering from mental health problems and challenges. We're certainly very committed to providing them, both the families and the children themselves, with the supports they need.

I certainly have an understanding of the challenges and service pressures in the Windsor-Essex area. That's why I was committed to taking some swift action. I was able to have the opportunity to meet with key providers of children's mental health services in Windsor-Essex—representatives from the Hotel-Dieu, the Windsor Regional Children's Centre and Maryvale Adolescent and Family Services—some time ago. I asked for a proposal back from them with our regional office within 10 days and committed to turn it around within 72 hours. I'm happy to inform the House that this commitment was met and we've already begun to flow more than \$850,000 to help address the mental health service pressures for children in Windsor-Essex.

This funding was part—

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

Mr Beaubien: Minister, you mentioned \$850,000 for the Windsor-Essex area. Can you assure me that the amount you're investing in this area will be sufficient to address the issues raised by the providers of these services?

Hon Mr Baird: I recognize that the service pressures in Windsor-Essex weren't created overnight and they won't be solved overnight, but our government is committed to working with the region in the long term to help improve services for children with mental health problems. We'll be able to provide support for mobile crisis services, community stabilization beds, in-school supports and intensive family intervention.

Connie Martin, the executive director of the Maryvale centre, said: "We are extremely pleased with the ... quick response to the crisis in our community. The funding will help us respond quickly to suicidal children who arrive at Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital in crisis."

I want to particularly thank one member opposite for all the work she did in bringing this issue to my attention. She worked very hard in apprising us of the situation and we went to work. I want to thank the member for Beaches-Woodbine for bringing this issue to my attention.

HUNTING IN WILDERNESS PARKS

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question for the Deputy Premier. Your Minister of Natural Resources has consistently tried to deny that a backroom

deal was cut with a special interest group to open up Ontario's wilderness parks for hunting. On February 9, Minister Snobelen said he denied, and I quote, "absolutely, completely and without equivocation" that the government pledge to open up the parks to hunting was the result of a private deal with the federation.

But today a letter finally released under freedom of information contradicts your minister. In fact, on March 29, 1999, your minister wrote to Mr Rick Morgan, executive vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and confirmed and I quote: "On numerous occasions you have reviewed with me your position that hunting should be allowed in existing wilderness class parks. We agree to amend the individual park plans such that hunting can be allowed in wilderness parks where there is demonstrated local public support for it."

Deputy, will you admit today that your government did indeed reverse public policy with respect to Ontario's wilderness parks and that there was no consultation with the exception of one special interest group?

Hon Ernie L. Eves (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): No, I say to the honourable member, I will not. It has always been part of the publicly stated goals in Lands for Life to increase opportunities for hunting and fishing. It was one of the original goals stated very publicly, very up front in Lands for Life. However, the honourable member will be pleased to know that no hunting will be permitted in the 88 natural reserve class parks in Ontario. I understand that the Ontario Parks Board is meeting today, as a matter of fact, to discuss how much hunting and fishing should or should not be allowed in other parks in Ontario.

1430

Ms Martel: Deputy Premier, there was absolutely no reference to hunting in wilderness parks in Lands for Life or in Living Legacy. It's just not correct to say that.

It's very clear from the correspondence that was released today that a special deal was cut with a special interest group, without any kind of public consultation. But what is worse is that in the document released today it's clear that this special deal is even bigger than we thought. Specifically, under Living Legacy your government created 13 natural reserves where hunting is not permitted, and those reserves represent a mere 2% of the total park area you created where hunting is not allowed. But in the minister's letter released today, it is clear that even this dismal 2% of lands is now up for grabs for hunting. Your minister confirms that the nature reserves, supposedly protected under Living Legacy, will be considered for hunting too.

Deputy Premier, you're now going to allow hunting in wilderness parks, and now your minister wants to change the designation for the natural reserves to allow hunting there too. There's been absolutely no public consultation about these changes in public policy. When is your government going to consult with all Ontarians, and not just one special interest group, about where and when hunting will be allowed in Ontario?

Hon Mr Eves: Let me respond to every one of her points. With respect to the Ontario Lands for Life land

use strategy on the MNR Web site, I quote: "...consider in future park management planning for existing provincial parks, the opportunity to provide additional hunting opportunities. Where there is demonstrated local public support for hunting in existing wilderness parks, this will be addressed as part of planning for individual parks." There it is, stated very clearly, very up front, as part of public policy.

I have told her that hunting will not be permitted in 88 natural reserve class parks in Ontario. Hunting in parks in Ontario is not new. As a matter of fact, in previous administrations, both Liberal and NDP, hunting was permitted in 67 of 272 parks in Ontario.

Furthermore, the last point, if there are any changes to current guidelines for wilderness class parks, they will be posted under the Environmental Bill of Rights and there will be full public hearings. So what is your problem?

CORRECTIONAL FACILITY EMPLOYEES

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): My question is to the Minister of Correctional Services. We're joined in the House today by 125 correctional officers who work for the province of Ontario, individuals who literally put their lives on the line every day, keeping Ontario citizens safe. The professional way in which they do their job can never be questioned. They deserve and have our respect, and we on this side say, thank you.

A few months ago, Minister, you stated in this House, "Safety and security for those who work inside and around the institution is our top priority." Minister, as you hurl the province towards the for-profit privatization of our public and accountable correctional facilities, these front-line professionals are telling you that their safety and the safety of the communities in which they work, live and play, will be jeopardized as a result of for-profit private institutions.

Minister, will you today commit to listening to the combined 1,800 years of experience in this House and stop your ideologically driven move towards for-profit privatization?

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): I welcome the men and women who work for the Ministry of Correctional Services to the House today to watch this question period. I say to them that I am equally concerned about not only their public safety and their safety within their institutions and the homes and communities where they live, but also the homes and communities that are around the various institutions in this province. That is why, just after I was appointed minister, I felt it was important for me to spend the time to go out to the various institutions in this province—and I think I've seen about a third of them—and speak to the men and women who are working on the front-line services and find out their concerns and their challenges. And there are many as they try to deal with their jobs and try to provide an effective and efficient system in this province.

What I heard was that we have, and I agree, very fine men and women working in this ministry, but it's a system, in many regards, that's keeping them from doing the best they can in their job. It's that system change that I'm trying to address in the reform in corrections, system change such as infrastructure changes where we are trying to get rid of institutions that were built before this country became a country and in which these men and women are forced to function. We need to change that infrastructure so we get—

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

Mr Levac: Thank you for the non-answer. Minister, on several occasions you have been asked to sit down with the province's correctional officers and talk to them about cost savings and efficiencies, cost savings and efficiencies that we believe can be achieved by replacing two professional correctional officers with one private \$9-an-hour security guard to conduct escorts in our community.

I ask you today, in front of those who deliver those services and put their lives on the line every day, will you commit to a real consultation and negotiation with the correctional officers in order to achieve those changes without jeopardizing safety before you move this province toward that iceberg I referred to earlier, a move that has proven to be a public safety threat in every single jurisdiction where privatization has been introduced?

Hon Mr Sampson: I want to make it quite clear that the only individual who has been talking in this House about replacing correctional officers with—what was it?—an \$8-an-hour single person has been you, sir. If that's what you support as changes for corrections, I'm afraid I don't accept that. What I accept—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Sampson: I clearly must have hit a sore spot, because they're quite agitated over there.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock for a moment, please.

Minister of Correctional Services, continue, please.

Hon Mr Sampson: What I will not accept in this province is a correctional system that handcuffs the men and women in this ministry from doing their job effectively and efficiently and functionally. What I will not accept is a system that is costing the taxpayers the second-highest costs in this province. That was by the auditor. What I will not accept is a system that is forcing the employees to produce results that I know can be much better. I know the employees who work for this ministry can deliver much better results. I am looking forward to working with them to deliver on those standards with full public accountability so we can stand up on our feet in this House and be fully proud and completely proud, all of us, of the job that we are doing in this province. I intend to do that, and I know the fine men and women who work—

Interjections.

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

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): My question is directed to the Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation. I have taken great interest in the livelihood of my local community, and in particular the future of the Barnum House Museum. While I'm committed to doing what I can to help improve the economic environment of my riding and historic sites such as the Barnum House, I'm concerned that not enough is being done to help preserve the history and the unique culture of rural and small-town Ontario. I believe we can protect our local culture and our local history by promoting rural museums and rural heritage centres.

What is your ministry doing to make sure these museums in rural and small-town Ontario don't close their doors? Do they have our government's support?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women): I'd like to thank my colleague the member for Northumberland. I'd also like to say what a terrific job I think he's doing as parliamentary assistant to rural affairs. I know therefore that he's very concerned about rural communities across the province. I'd like to make my commitment to rural communities also. I'd like to say that there are a number of initiatives that the government has been working on with respect to both heritage facilities and museums.

Let me once again remind him that in last year's budget the government announced the heritage challenge fund, a \$10-million program which is matching funds to ensure that our heritage sites all across the province have funds for long-term restoration.

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I'd also like to say that the community museum operating grants total \$3 million in this province. They've been allocated to 167 museums in the province, and this year 10 new museums were made eligible for first-time application.

Mr Galt: Thank you, Minister, for those very kind words. I'm pleased to see that there is indeed help on the way. However, many of these museums and heritage centres depend on volunteers, and thank heaven for volunteers in our communities. A full-time curator may be just fine for Toronto, for big cities, but it really doesn't fit in with rural Ontario. The needs of rural Ontario are indeed different. Museums and heritage centres in small-town Ontario need our help to survive. In order to ensure fair funding is coming from your ministry, can you ensure that rural museums and heritage centres don't have to abide by the same operating standards as those in the cities?

Hon Mrs Johns: In 1997 the Provincial Auditor said in one of his reports that we had to have provincial standards for museums, and I think we all agree that's important. What happened at the time was that we set a criterion which involved six different elements, and only four of those elements had to be met for museums to be able to obtain funding. One of those elements was a full-

time curator, so if a museum chooses not to have a full-time curator, they can still do that and receive funding from the ministry.

It's very important for us to recognize that in lots of communities we don't have full-time museums—we even have seasonable museums across the province—and we're trying to be flexible in that. That's why we chose that only four of the six criteria would have to be met to allow that to happen. On top of meeting only four of the six criteria, they had to have an overall grade of 50% to be able to obtain the funding.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
FUNDING

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Your government has repeatedly promised space in our colleges and universities for all qualified and motivated students. I have as my guests a number of qualified and motivated students in the members' gallery. The reality, however, is that the rising cost of a post-secondary education is forcing many students from low-income families to give up this dream or to start a new career with an unprecedented amount of debt.

Studies are piling up from universities all across the province that show that the percentage of students from low socio-economic backgrounds is steadily falling and declining, and this at a time of great economic prosperity in Ontario. A study from the University of Guelph—the author is in the gallery—indicates that in less than 10 years the percentage of students from low-income families has dropped from 40% to 16%. Similar studies from the University of Western Ontario and the University of Waterloo show the same trend.

Your 2% increase in tuition doesn't help these students, Minister—not after your government has increased tuition by over 50%. And we are not fourth out of 10 provinces; we are ninth out of 10 in provincial funding, and 59th out of 60 provinces and states. Please have your facts straight, Minister. In light of this evidence, will you commit today to an immediate freeze on all post-secondary tuition fees, and commit to providing the necessary reinvestment to our post-secondary institutions to at least match the Canadian average for post-secondary funding?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I think we should be proud here in Ontario that we have the largest accessibility ever for students to our post-secondary system: 35% of 18- to 24-year-olds, and that is growing, attend our universities. In favour of that remark, it was 25% for the NDP and 23% for the Liberals. At the same time, we have increased opportunities for our young people by making sure the student support is there for them, and 30% of the tuition that has been increased is set aside to help these students. We have a student opportunity grant. Over \$600 million in our post-secondary system is there to help our students; \$300 million of that has been provided by the—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Mrs Bountrogianni: Minister, part of those statistics are reflected in the demographics, not in increases to accessibility. It is not enough to claim that you will provide a space to every willing and motivated student if you're not willing to back up that claim with financial support. Let me put a real face on the issue of access to our colleges and universities.

On a recent trip to Loyalist College we met Chris Souci, who is in the gallery, an outstanding student, the former president of his students' council. In September he will be unable to return to college to finish his college degree. Why not? He simply can't afford to. He is qualified, he is motivated, he is studying computer programming, a field your government is interested in, but he is not eligible for OSAP, nor will the bank lend him any more money, so he is leaving school already \$25,000 in debt.

All these cards for the Premier are from Queen's University students, stating their debts. They range anywhere from \$3,000 to \$40,000, as well as one student saying: "I'm middle-class poor. I was rejected." Minister, this is the reality of access to post-secondary education in your government's Ontario. Will you take the necessary steps to make access to a college education a reality for Chris? Will you live up to your commitment of accessibility for all qualified and motivated students or—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the member's time is up. Minister.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: In response to the honourable member's question, I think it's extremely important that we let the students in the gallery know—I welcome them here and I know many of them myself. I've just heard the story of the young man from Loyalist College. I feel badly that he may have made that decision not having been given all of the opportunities that are there before him. I find the question surprising after the answer to the first question that I responded to. In fact, we have reduced tuition to an increase of just 2% this year, and that's after 10% every single year by the Liberal government and 10% by the NDP government. They in fact increased tuition over 50% during their tenure, and over 30% during their tenure.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Will the minister take her seat. Stop the clock for a second, please. Is the minister done? OK, start the clock. New question.

Interjection.

The Speaker: I'm sorry. Stop the clock. I thought you said you were done. I apologize.

Interjection.

The Speaker: OK, I'm sorry. If the member would take her seat, the minister has a little bit of time. I think we docked some time; if we could put 10 seconds back on the clock. We'll hold it for 10 seconds.

Minister, sorry to interrupt.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: The laughter from the other side of the House is not what students need to hear.

Those were two governments that increased tuition 10% every single year during their tenure, and because of the increase in tuition every single year we took a look—

The Speaker: I'm afraid the minister's time is up at this point. Thank you.

HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

With your permission, Mr Speaker, I'd also like to introduce Nick Shkordoff, my co-op student from St Stephen's Secondary School in Bowmanville.

Recently in my riding of Durham a number of my constituents had the privilege of listening to Minister Frank Klees speaking about his impressions of the historic turnaround in this province witnessed since we formed the government in 1995. Minister Klees identified a number of problems to which we found solutions. While our proven track record was certainly a hit with the audience that evening, the most overwhelming response came when he used the simple comment: "We did what we said. We kept our promises."

1450

Minister, our record of keeping promises has not only contributed to the revitalization of Ontario but I think it has also helped the public's perception of politicians themselves.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Stop the clock, please. The member take his seat, please. Member for Durham, come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Member, come to order. It is not funny. We are now waiting for the NDP, who will miss their question if the time runs down, and it's not funny. When I stand up and say the time is over, it is over. The member had a little over a minute and it is now the minister's time. I would appreciate it, when I stand up—it's not funny to stand up and continue on. The NDP will lose their question. It's very important. They are sitting waiting quietly and we can't have the clock run on.

Minister of Health for the answer.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): When it comes to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, I am very pleased to say that our initial investment into the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program was \$10 million. Based on—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Minister of Health, take her seat. Order. Stop the clock, please. I'm going to watch the clock. I thank all members on both sides for their support. I said we would have 10 seconds. Before, we said we were going to wait 10 seconds before it starts. If the member had heard that, had waited 10 seconds and then it starts, that's why the question was coming. Quite frankly, it's to give the opposition members more time, so I don't know what he is complaining about.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: My understanding is the clocks are

in here so we can all see the time. The clock was not running while the question was being answered and—

The Speaker: Member, take his seat. I explained to the members what happened. It is easier to wait 10 seconds when I put the time on the clock. The reason I am putting time on the clock is we are not going to miss a supplementary for 10 seconds because of foolishness going on on both sides with the official opposition and the government members.

The members of the third party don't get much of a chance under the new standing orders, and I'm determined to get down to that question. When games are played on both sides to run the clock down, quite frankly, it isn't going to go on.

I said there would be 10 seconds put back on the clock. It is easier to not start the clock than it is to add it, so we were doing it. That's the way it can be done, and in the future it will be done that way as well.

Minister of Health.

Hon Mrs Witmer: I am very pleased to say that our government has demonstrated its commitment to the welfare and well-being of all children in the province of Ontario. We announced our Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program with an investment of \$10 million; that was in 1997. I am very pleased to say that last week I made an announcement indicating that we were increasing the amount of funding to a total of \$67 million, which means that every child now born in Ontario will be screened to determine if they are at any risk and, if so, they will get support.

The Speaker: The minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr O'Toole: Thank you, Madam Minister, for that response. I know that to Durham this means in excess of \$925,000, which certainly will go a long way to helping our children get a good start in life.

Minister, these are real changes. Could you share some of the other reforms that you have made working with the federal Minister of Health for all citizens of Ontario?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Yes, we certainly have made some very significant reforms in the province of Ontario, not only to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, but we're also moving forward with primary care reform. We have expanded home care; in fact, our funding is the highest per capita in all of Canada. We continue to expand our drug programs to make sure they are accessible for those who don't have the funds to support them.

Unfortunately, despite the tremendous reforms that have been implemented by not only the Ontario government but governments throughout Canada, whether in the provinces or the territories, there has been absolutely no reaction and no response from the federal government. Of course, as you know, they continue to refuse to restore the federal transfer cuts.

The Speaker: The Minister of Health's time is up.

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to ask unani-

mous consent to allow the NDP to ask their principal and supplementary questions and extend the question period accordingly.

The Speaker: I've heard some noes, but we will attempt to get to it.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITY EMPLOYEES

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): My question is to the Minister of Correctional Services. Earlier, in answer to a previous question, you said that when you were first appointed you spent a lot of time visiting different facilities within your new ministry and that you talked to workers. It's nice that you went touring, it's nice that you were talking to the correctional officers, but it's clear that you weren't listening to them. The issues they care about, quite frankly, are the issues that Ontarians care about in our correctional services. First of all, they care about their jobs and their ability to provide for their families, which is a right that they and every other worker in this province have. Secondly, they care about the professional conduct they bring to Ontario corrections, which, I would remind the member, is respected around the world.

Minister, stand in your place today and tell the correctional workers what they really came here today to hear: first of all, that you're not going to privatize away their jobs; secondly that their wages and benefits will remain at the same levels they are now; and thirdly, assure these correctional workers and assure Ontarians that you're not going to privatize our public professional correctional system.

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): To the member opposite I will say what I've been saying a number a times, either inside this House or outside this House, that what I intend to do is have a correctional system here in this province that is producing results as far as correcting the behaviour of the people who go to those institutions is concerned, and at a cost the taxpayers can rightly afford—neither one of those, frankly, that under your leadership you were prepared to offer the people of this province.

I must say, though, that as I toured the institutions in this province one of the first comments that came to me was, "This is the first time any correctional minister has stepped foot in these institutions to speak to the front-line officers." I should say to you, sir, that it was rather interesting to hear coming from you the comment that this is particularly not a good practice on behalf of this minister. I find that a little discouraging.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Is it parliamentary to say that you have reduced tuition fees for university and college students when in fact the minister herself has admitted that she's increased them by—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): That's not a point of order to get that across.

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): On a

point of privilege, Mr Speaker: Today I found, interestingly, from Bill C-473 from the House of Commons of Canada that the federal Parliament has unilaterally changed the names of four ridings in the province of Ontario without any formal consultation or any consultation with either the members of this Legislative Assembly—

The Speaker: The government House leader knows that there needs to be notice of a point of privilege. Is it a point of order he's doing here or a point of privilege?

Hon Mr Sterling: A point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: OK, if the member could get to the point of order very quickly.

Hon Mr Sterling: There are four ridings which, I have found out today, and some of the other members—I was talking to the member for Broadview-Greenwood. For four ridings, the names have been changed at the federal level, without consultation. You may know, Mr Speaker, that our bill, which we passed when we changed to go from 130 ridings to 103 ridings, requires that the provincial names of the ridings be the same as they are at the federal level. We thought, as a government and as members of this Legislature, that there would have been some consultation between the federal Parliament and the provincial Parliament.

The Speaker: I'm sorry, I don't hear a point of order. If the member could get to it quickly. I've given him a little bit of leeway. If there is a point of order relating to our House, if he could get very quickly to a point of order.

Hon Mr Sterling: It's interesting that one of these ridings happens to be held by an NDP member and three by Progressive Conservative members.

The Speaker: That's not a point of order.

Hon Mr Sterling: Mr Speaker, it is a point of order, if I could just—

The Speaker: Very quickly, because I haven't heard anything that would lead me to believe there's anything totally related to points of order in this House. For the last time, and very quickly, if he could get to at least the point of order in the standing orders that he's talking about, I would appreciate it very much.

Hon Mr Sterling: Well, I was going to ask you, Mr Speaker, if you would consult with the Speaker of the House of Commons to try to gain some kind of co-operation between the two legislative bodies—

The Speaker: This is not a point of order. Will the government House leader take his seat.

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Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe I do have a legitimate point of order here, on the same subject. I'm affected by this change. I found out through the Internet that Dennis Mills, the MP for my riding—let me get to my point here—unilaterally changed the name without even consulting with me. I'm asking for your guidance because I was not consulted, nor were my constituents consulted, in any way on this. It means a cost to me. I'm going to have to change my signs which I just had changed when my riding was changed from Riverdale to

Broadview-Greenwood, and all my letterhead. I'm wondering if—

The Speaker: It's not a point of order. I appreciate the member's point, but it does not relate to any point of order which is the proceedings in this House. You may have a valid point, but it does not relate to any of the standing orders in here. There'll be plenty of opportunity for all members to discuss it. It doesn't affect the proceedings in here, so it's not a point of order.

Mr Gerretsen: Mr Speaker, on the same point of order: Even though the House leader admits that made a mistake in the bill that was passed in the last session—

The Speaker: We're not going to continue on with this silliness that goes on. When I make a ruling, I make a ruling. We're not going to continue on with this silliness and that's all it is.

Member for Sudbury on a point of order?

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): It's a petition.

The Speaker: We do have another point of order.

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): Mr Speaker, on a point of personal privilege: I'd just like to clarify in response to a question—

The Speaker: It's a point of personal privilege to correct the record?

Hon Mr Hodgson: Yes. I wouldn't want anyone in this House or watching on television to be under the impression that—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Let him finish. Is it to correct your own record? It's to correct your record, OK.

Hon Mr Hodgson: Mr Speaker, in response to a memo from a staff member at the Ontario Realty Corp signed by Bob Budd, I've been able to check out, and he has verified this, that this was in response to an MPP—

The Speaker: That's not a point of privilege. Petitions? I recognize two different members. It's difficult; we'll go by seniority.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a fresh petition you'll be interested in:

"Whereas cancer patients in Ontario requiring radiation treatment face unacceptable delays and are often forced to travel to the United States to receive medical attention;

"Whereas many prescription drugs which would help patients with a variety of medical conditions such as multiple sclerosis, arthritis, diabetes and heart failure are not covered by OHIP;

"Whereas many assistive devices that could aid patients in Ontario are not eligible for funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health;

"Whereas community care access centres have inadequate funding to carry out their responsibilities for long-term and home care;

"Be it resolved that Premier Mike Harris be requested to sell the two new turboprop luxury aircraft just purchased by this government and quietly announced just before the Easter weekend and use the money derived from the sale to meet the aforementioned health care needs."

I affix my signature as I am in complete agreement.

KARLA HOMOLKA

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads:

"Whereas Karla Homolka and Paul Bernardo were responsible for terrorizing entire communities in southern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ontario government of the day made a deal with the devil with Karla Homolka resulting in a sentence that does not truly make her pay for her crimes; and

"Whereas our communities have not yet fully recovered from the trauma and sadness caused by Karla Homolka; and

"Whereas Karla Homolka believes that she should be entitled to pass to leave prison without an escort; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario believe that criminals should be forced to serve sentences that reflect the seriousness of their crimes;

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

"That the government of Ontario will:

"Do everything within its power to ensure that Karla Homolka serves her full sentence;

"Continue to reform parole and make it more difficult for serious offenders to return to our streets;

"Fight the federal government's plan to release up to 1,600 more convicted criminals on to Ontario streets;

"Ensure that the Ontario government's sex offender registry is functioning as quickly as possible."

I affix my signature to this petition.

STUDED TIRES

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario with regard to the law banning the use of studded tires in Ontario.

"Whereas personal safety on winter roadways would be greatly increased;

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

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

"Whereas studded tires can save lives;

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

"To rescind the law banning studded tires in Ontario."

I affix my signature to this petition and thank Allan Clouthier and Pat Cormier from Sault Ste Marie for garnering these names.

LORD'S PRAYER

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"Whereas the Lord's prayer, also called Our Father, has been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada in the 18th century; and

"Whereas such use of the Lord's Prayer is part of Ontario's long-standing heritage and tradition that continues to play a significant role in the contemporary Ontario life;

"Whereas the Lord's Prayer is a most meaningful expression of the religious convictions of many Ontario citizens;

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

"That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord's Prayer in its proceedings, in accordance with its long-standing established custom and do all in its power to maintain use of this in municipal chambers in Ontario."

I will gladly sign this petition.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): I have a petition 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;

"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.”

This is signed by yet another almost 100 concerned residents of my riding, and I affix my signature once again in full support of their concerns.

LORD'S PRAYER

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer, also called Our Father, has been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada in the 18th century;

“Whereas such use of the Lord’s Prayer is part of Ontario’s long-standing heritage and a tradition that continues to play a significant role in contemporary Ontario life;

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer is a most meaningful expression of the religious convictions of many Ontario citizens;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord’s Prayer in its proceedings, in accordance with its long-standing established custom and do all in its power to maintain use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I am pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): I have a petition with over 10,000 signatures from students across the province.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Ten thousand?

Mrs Bountrogianni: That’s right. I don’t do too many, but I get lots of signatures. To the Legislative Assembly:

“Whereas students of Ontario are currently faced with the second highest tuition fees in Canada; and

“Whereas approximately 50% of post-secondary students rely on Ontario student assistance program loans to supplement the cost of living and education; and

“Whereas the changes made to OSAP, effective September 1997, have reduced accessibility to post-secondary education in Ontario; and

“Whereas students attending Ontario’s post-secondary institutions understand their role in helping to achieve an efficient and balanced economy within our province; and

“Whereas Ontario ranks ninth among provinces in Canada for funding to post-secondary institutions per capita; and

“Whereas tuition fees have increased 60% over the past four years and 140% over the last decade in conjunction with an increase in the cost of living; and

“Whereas students have shown frustration and discontent with the recent direction taken by the government of Ontario in regards to post-secondary education;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase funding to post-secondary education,” which will bring per capita funding up to the national level; “restore the allowable earnings in an academic year to the previous value of \$1,700 (that is, changed from the current \$600 limit before effecting the OSAP eligibility); and restore the eligibility of part-time students for OSAP provided that they are enrolled in a minimum of 20% of a full course load (as opposed to the current minimum of 60% of a full course load).”

I attach my signature to these petitions.

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LORD'S PRAYER

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer, also called Our Father, has been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada in the 18th century;

“Whereas such use of the Lord’s Prayer is part of Ontario’s long-standing heritage and tradition that continues to play a significant role in contemporary Ontario life;

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer is a most meaningful expression of the religious conviction of many Ontario citizens;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord’s Prayer in its proceedings, in accordance with its long-standing established custom, and do all in its power to maintain use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I affix my signature to this petition.

HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES

M^{me} Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): J’ai ici une pétition d’un groupe de commettants et commettantes d’Ottawa-Vanier.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the province of Ontario, as part of proposed social reform, is downloading provincial housing co-operatives to the municipalities, the members of the Conservation Housing Co-operative Inc have serious concerns with this action.

“At no point were the needs and well-being of provincial housing co-ops considered. Housing co-ops were not represented on the social housing committee. Although housing co-ops are considered social housing, we are first and foremost a corporation. We believe that

our autonomy will be seriously eroded as a result of this action.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reconsider this action. We believe that we are entitled to the same consideration given to the federal housing co-operatives by the federal government.”

Je suis fière d'apposer ma signature à cette pétition.

LORD'S PRAYER

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I also continue to receive petitions concerning the Lord's Prayer in the Ontario Legislature. I appreciate the member for York North reading in petitions.

“Whereas the Lord's Prayer, also called Our Father, has been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada in the 18th century;

“Whereas such use of the Lord's Prayer is part of Ontario's long-standing heritage and tradition that continues to play a significant role in contemporary Ontario life;

“Whereas the Lord's Prayer is a most meaningful expression of the religious convictions of many Ontario citizens;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord's Prayer in its proceedings, in accordance with its long-standing established custom, and do all in its power to maintain use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I agree with the sentiment expressed and hereby affix my signature to these petitions.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): I have a petition which states:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas 13 people died during the first seven months of 1999 on Highway 401 between London and Windsor; and

“Whereas traffic levels on all sections of Highway 401 continue to increase; and

“Whereas Canada's number one trade and travel route was designed in the 1950s for fewer vehicles and lighter trucks; and

“Whereas road funding is almost completely paid through vehicle permit and driver licensing fees; and

“Whereas Ontario road users pay 28 cents per litre of tax on gasoline, adding up to over \$2.7 billion in provincial gas taxes and over \$2.3 billion in federal gas taxes;

“We, the undersigned members of the Canadian Automobile Association and other residents of Ontario, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately upgrade Highway 401 to at least a six-lane

highway with fully paved shoulders and rumble strips; and

“We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario place firm pressure on the federal government to invest its gasoline tax revenue in road safety improvements in this province.”

It's signed by a number of residents from Ridgetown, Wallaceburg, Blenheim and Chatham, and I affix my name to it.

ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES LEGISLATION

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member for London-Middlesex—sorry, Elgin-Middlesex-London.

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I don't think my riding is going to change, Speaker, but you never know.

I have a petition to the Legislature of Ontario.

“Whereas Mike Harris promised an ODA during the 1995 election and renewed that commitment in 1997 but has yet to make good on that promise; and

“Whereas the Harris government has not committed to holding open consultations with the various stakeholders and individuals on the ODA; and

“Whereas ... the minister responsible for persons with disabilities will not commit to the 11 principles outlined by the ODA committee; and ...

“Whereas a vast majority of Ontario citizens believe there should be an ODA to remove the barriers facing the 1.5 million persons with disabilities;

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

“To pass a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act that would remove the barriers facing the 1.5 million persons with disabilities in the province of Ontario.”

I agree with this petition and affix my signature hereto.

MILLENNIUM MEMENTO

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I have petitions from a number of high school students from Harley, Oakland, Scotland and the Burford area.

“Whereas quality education is one of the fundamental necessities of a healthy society; and

“Whereas the quality of education has decreased as millions of dollars in funding have been cut;

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

“That the spending of millions of dollars on the My Ontario booklet was a gross misuse of funds, taking into consideration that almost every classroom in Ontario is in dire need of supplies and updated resources.”

OPPOSITION DAY

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

FINANCEMENT DE L'ÉDUCATION POSTSECONDAIRE

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government should stop cutting and start investing in Ontario's colleges and universities now to ensure our students are prepared to meet the social and economic challenges of the future by:

Freezing tuition fees and re-regulating tuition on post-secondary programs it previously deregulated;

Increasing financial support to our post-secondary institutions to match the Canadian average level of funding;

Committing to extra funding specifically to assist universities and colleges prepare for the anticipated "double cohort" of students who will be seeking entry to these institutions in 2003-04; and

Resolving that any funding increases for science, information technology and commerce programs are not at the expense of liberal arts and humanities, as our students need a broad base of knowledge and skills to bring innovation to the province of Ontario.

This is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

It's my privilege to talk to you today about post-secondary education in Ontario. The fact that there is a link between the attainment of a college diploma or a university degree and the province's socio-economic vitality seems to be forgotten. The more educated the public, the more dynamic and productive the nation. It has been proven in fact that for every public dollar spent on post-secondary university education, \$4 is generated in the local economy.

This is heartening for us in my local region because we have two dynamic post-secondary institutions: Mohawk College and McMaster University. These schools work well together, as well as with the community, including the business community. There are far too many examples to cite, but one recent partnership is the applied health sciences institute, which will be housed on the McMaster campus to help meet the growing need in the health sector for occupational and physical therapists, radiation technologists, nurses and other skilled professionals. Once again we have proof that Hamilton is a vibrant and creative community and one of the province's best-kept secrets.

I will speak about the strides we have made in post-secondary education in Canada and the challenges we face and offer some ideas for solutions to these challenges.

Fifty per cent of all full-time workers in Ontario had post-secondary education in 1991, as opposed to 10% in 1971. Computer literacy is now essential in most work

environments. Fortunately, Canada leads the world this year in connecting its schools, post-secondary institutions and libraries to the Internet. As well, Industry Canada will spend more than \$20 million over the next three years to promote domestic learning software.

Nortel's now landmark paper on the need for more technically educated graduates for Ontario's fastest-growing industry sector, communications and information technology, sparked a number of provincial and federal initiatives to attempt to meet this need. The Canadian Foundation for Innovation operates as an independent, not-for-profit corporation and has committed funds over a five-year period for the development of research infrastructure in Canada. The federal minister, John Manley, is also about to announce the awarding of 21st-century chairs. McMaster University recently announced the use of CFI funds for a manufacturing research institute. The list of industrial contributors includes General Motors, Orlick Industries, Dofasco, Siemens-Westinghouse and Magna International.

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We do, however, need to ensure that we never compromise the integrity of our research or the public safety of our citizens for the sake of private donations. Jim Turk, the executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, cautions us that universities should not give away their autonomy, for their value in a democratic society will become very suspect.

Nortel's document and other industrial reports which specifically highlighted the shortage of skilled information technology workers led to the provincial ATOP, or access to opportunities, scholarships. Offering scholarships, however, without the necessary infrastructure funds puts a university or college into a Catch-22 position. Nobody wants to say no to funds, but the challenge is then to absorb the significant infrastructure expenses from an already stretched budget.

Notwithstanding the importance of science and technology, our liberal arts graduates are successful in attaining employment—a success rate of over 98%, in fact. The expectations of employers are obviously met. These are academic skills—thinking, learning, communicating; personal management skills—responsibility, adaptability; and team skills—group and leadership. We therefore need to challenge the propaganda that these programs are not worth funding. And contrary to the Premier's divisive comments recently, there aren't any academics who oppose the production of scientists and engineers. Real, true thinkers can and do come from different academic backgrounds.

A student of mine from Wilfrid Laurier received a psychology degree in 1987; he is now president of Netscape Canada. A February article in the National Post also adds evidence, citing a student from the University of Toronto who won a plum job with Sun Life in New York. Hundreds had applied, and the five finalists all had MBAs. He was successful and got the job because of his skill at analyzing model investment portfolios. He ascribed his achievement to his years of studying ancient Greek texts.

The challenges, however, facing our students and institutions are numerous and the time for action is now. In the last 10 years, tuition fees went up by 102%; 58% since 1995 for colleges and 52% for universities. In fact, Ontario's tuition fees are the second-highest in Canada and this fall had the largest increase in Canada, 9.6%. Deregulated programs such as law and medicine have risen exponentially in tuition costs. Therefore, average student debt has increased. OSAP expenditures are up 280% since 1995 as students are forced to carry a larger percentage of the operating costs of universities, and this is at a time of an economic boom in North America.

Our US neighbours are using this economic boom differently with respect to post-secondary education. They have increased support to universities and colleges, in some cases by 52%. Our sad record in Ontario is to decrease support, anywhere from 8% to 20%. We are second from last in Canada in provincial spending for post-secondary education. We are 59th out of 60 provinces and states with respect to provincial spending in post-secondary education. A leaked ministry document in November recommended further cuts.

Despite these obstacles, the demographics and the relationship between a post-secondary education and a better future have not eluded students and their families. Enrolment was up by 6% this fall. The double cohort will lead to a record number of applicants. In fact, 90,000 students will need spaces in the next 10 years. A recent Price Waterhouse study stated that with current funding levels only 12,400 students can be accommodated. And these 90,000 students are in addition to what we ordinarily expect every year.

Another challenge is the fact that a significant number of our professors are within a decade of retirement. A significant number of US professors are within five years of retirement, meaning the US universities will be recruiting the best in Canada. This has already begun, if not at a significant quantitative level yet, very definitely it is happening qualitatively. Our best young minds are lured to the States and to other provinces.

In recent years, McMaster's ability has been challenged—

Interjection.

Mrs Bountrogianni: You weren't listening. I said "qualitative." It is happening.

Interjection: No.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs Bountrogianni: In recent years, McMaster's ability has also been challenged by an aging physical plant, like other universities across the province, and by the call to its professors from better-funded jurisdictions, as well as government cutbacks. Despite these obstacles, McMaster is committed to the value of accessibility. Last year, it provided access to almost 9% more students than required through the enrolment corridor. This is at a cost of \$5 million a year at one university alone. It costs \$5 million, and they have to absorb this cost because they are funding more students than the province is funding.

Yet, when this government made funds available for equity adjustment in 1998, McMaster received nothing.

We need to applaud our university for its commitment and, at the same time, support it in its request for more funds. McMaster, the private sector, the students and their families are doing their part fiscally, and surprisingly little complaining is done. It is time for the government to appreciate these efforts and to invest appropriately.

The SuperBuild fund was welcome but did little to offset years of continued cuts with respect to deferred maintenance. As well, it was based on matching donations from the private sector, which is fine for universities that are able to access private matching donations but very unfair to those that can't.

The Ontario student loan plan needs an overhaul. According to some chartered accountants who deal with the fallout of default payments in student loans, there seems to be little real difference whether the government pays for education directly or lends the money and then pays for the loan losses. As we learned today, yet another private institution in my hometown of Hamilton was declined further OSAP administration, and appropriately so by the minister, because they weren't giving it back to the students when they left.

Clearly, students would borrow less if tuition was lower, particularly in the areas of law and medicine where fees of \$11,000 a year are not unusual. And this is only tuition, not room and board. As well, the economic fallout of this student debt is an unknown right now because it is unprecedented in Canadian history. Graduates are starting their careers with \$20,000, \$30,000 and \$60,000 mortgages on their futures. Student debt cannot be allowed to increase. How can the future economy of Ontario grow if our graduates are spending their earnings not on homes, cars or furniture, or on raising a family, but on repaying student loans to the banks?

The province needs to work with industry to identify future shortage areas and be proactive rather than reactive. For example, it is acknowledged that the current demographics—most of us—will mean an increased number of people who may require significant health care resources in the near future. McMaster and Mohawk, as I stated earlier, have foreseen this need and are working together. But I recommend to the ministry that perhaps a program similar to ATOP, but in the life sciences area, can be implemented for new trends in health care training, pharmaceuticals, medical procedures or alternative forms of care to hospital care. These should be planned well in advance. The business community understands this. Ninety-four percent of Ontario business leaders support increased funding for university research.

With respect to the overcrowding that will certainly take place as a result of the double cohort and other demographic variables, colleges and universities can take advantage of summer terms, perhaps with a financial incentive of lower tuition for these terms. Other solutions can be found in distance learning and using new technologies. These solutions do require funds, but these

funds need to be seen as an investment and not as an albatross on the taxpayer.

I recommend that the ratio of administration to teaching and research staff in each university should also be made public. Let's think about funding formulas that reflect true accountability, not the present KPIs, which are a farce. One president called it "intellectually vacant." For colleges and universities that received funding versus colleges and universities that didn't, the difference was basically less than the standard error of measurement. In other words, they were being funded by chance.

The Provincial Auditor's report correctly identified a problem in that universities do not have the tools to demonstrate whether the amount or type of resource available would affect the quality of the program. Usually there is simply a scaling up of current numbers to the next level and a consequent scaling up of resources. These tools need to be developed.

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Private universities are rumoured to be opening soon in Ontario. The Liberal Party cautions our citizens about privatization of universities. This will lead to a two-tier system and the further alienation and disenfranchisement of students without the means to gain a post-secondary education.

With respect to the argument that privatization and the parallel competition will increase accountability, universities by this definition are already privatizing when they compete for private donations and endowments, and with the deregulation of professional programs. At the same time, our public institutions have managed not to surrender any of the attributes of the universities' diversity, comprehensive programs, pure research and guarantees of academic freedom. A private university sector might not promote these attributes.

Again, last night on the news, another private college, Clarke, was closing three of its campuses in three Ontario cities. Students have paid anywhere from \$4,000 to \$9,000 in tuition and were told they can finish their education elsewhere. Last year, again in my region, a private college closed and, as I mentioned earlier, another private college in Hamilton has just had its OSAP privileges taken away.

Another fear is that governments will see or use the existence of private universities as an excuse to make further cutbacks in the funding of public universities. On a personal level, my children will probably be able to go to almost any post-secondary institution they want, because they have two parents with good financial backgrounds who can pay for their education. As a Liberal, however, my bias is for students of all economic backgrounds to have these opportunities, not only because of the moral issues surrounding equity, but because it makes good economic sense and because my children's futures will be happier and safer if their cohorts are also prosperous. These are the values that guide me. They're actually quite practical.

It is a fact that accessibility to higher education leads to higher prosperity for all in the community. Investing in

our youth means investing in our collective futures. This may be all Greek to the Premier, but it is a fact.

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): It's a pleasure for me to participate in the debate today. I want to say at the outset that our critic for training, colleges and universities will be in later to make more remarks, so I won't take up a great deal of time here this afternoon, because of course he will have a great deal to say on each of the items that have been listed in the resolution.

For my part, I was particularly interested in the point raised with respect to tuition, because students at colleges and universities across this province know that under the Harris government, they have seen tuition increase by a whopping 60% since this government has been in office. Of course, for those programs where the government has deregulated tuition costs, students who are trying to get through those courses have seen a much greater increase, far out of the reach of most modest- and middle-income families to ever be able to afford.

Of course the flip side of the huge increase in tuition is a huge increase in student debt load. It is particularly the increase in student debt load and the lack of response by this Harris government that I want to address in the time I have today. I want to focus very specifically on the Harris government's response to the millennium scholarship fund, because I think this government's response, which was a blatant cash grab, really points out that they couldn't care less about the level of student debt in the province and that they certainly couldn't care less about the debt levels of some of the students in the gallery today and the many thousands of other students across this province who are facing personal debt loads of \$30,000, \$40,000 and \$50,000 trying to get a university or college degree. Let me deal with the scholarship fund and this government's response to it.

As most people would know, the federal government established the millennium scholarship fund. They established a foundation in 1998, which was given the task of disbursing over \$1 billion in funding to most needy students, and that was to be done over a period of 10 years, I believe. Through the course of that, the federal government, through the foundation, agreed that they would enter into negotiations with each provincial jurisdiction to determine how that cash flow would occur.

I think it was clear from the announcement of the federal government at the time, and certainly from the mandate that the foundation has, that the principle was that the federal funding would go to the most needy students. It is not a scholarship based on merit or academic standing; it is a scholarship that is based on trying to provide those neediest students, those with the greatest student debt load, with some financial relief. I think the other principle that was established at the time the foundation was announced was that the money would go directly to students to help them deal with their debt load. I don't think the federal government ever intended that the money would go to financial institutions. This was to go directly to those most needy of students to help them with their personal debt load.

So the corporation or the foundation began negotiations with each of the provinces about how that federal money would be transferred to each of those provincial jurisdictions, and in Ontario the Harris government decided that \$3,000 would be provided to each student who qualified. A student doesn't have to apply to the millennium fund as long as they have completed an OSAP application. This province takes it upon itself to send to the foundation those students who could qualify for this financial assistance.

What is interesting about what Ontario did—I believe British Columbia was the other jurisdiction that did this and I'm ashamed to say that an NDP government ever would have gone down this road. This government decided that the money would not go to the student but would go to the financial institution, and as a result of doing that allows itself now to have a windfall, and in fact uses federal money to compensate money that Ontario would have paid out to deal with student debt.

Well, how does this work? Ontario has what they call an Ontario student opportunity grant, which says that a student will not owe more than \$7,000 in any one academic year. If a student owes more than that, then the portion above that \$7,000 is forgivable; it is paid by the province of Ontario. That was in place when we were the government. Under our government the level was \$6,000 and after that the province picked up the debt, and this government changed that to \$7,000. So it made it more difficult for even those students to get some financial relief. The government decided that the money would go directly to the financial institution. As a result, the money that comes from the federal government offsets the Ontario student opportunity grant. It offsets the amount of money that this government would have paid as a forgivable loan for Ontario students.

The scenario that has been set up at the end of the day is that the Ontario government benefits directly because it pays that much less to reduce student debt. It uses the amount of money that it gets from the federal government to reduce the amount of money that it should be paying to reduce student debt under its own incentive, under its own student aid program.

I want to give you two very clear examples of how this works directly. The first comes from analysis that was done by the Canadian Federation of Students in their submission to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. Their presentation occurred on February 4 of this year. This is how they describe the millennium scholarship and its impact on students. Given that these are the people who are directly affected, I would assume that they know better than anyone else how it's affecting students. Here it is:

"Despite its many shortcomings, the millennium scholarship does offer an opportunity to reduce student indebtedness in Ontario. To date, however, the Ontario government is using the money from the scholarships not to buy down student debt, but to help finance already existing provincial student aid programs. As it stands, most of the debt being reduced by the millennium

scholarship payments in Ontario would already be forgiven under the province's Ontario student opportunity grants, formerly known as loan forgiveness, which forgive any portion of a student's debt over \$7,000 per two-term academic year. As such, the millennium scholarships are only serving to reduce the Ontario government's loan forgiveness payments and are not reducing the overall post-graduation debt of the majority of Ontario millennium scholarship recipients. Some students actually stand to lose money if they accept a millennium scholarship, since any amount over the first \$500 of a scholarship is taxable.

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"The Canadian Federation of Students condemns this blatant attempt by the government of Ontario to appropriate scholarship money earmarked for students. By its own admission, the provincial government stands to gain \$50 million from this exercise in diverting funds away from students and into its own coffers, although some estimates have put the figure closer to \$77 million. While there have been vague promises regarding the reinvestment of the millennium scholarship in ways that help needy students, no concrete proposals have been forthcoming."

I'm sure that some on the government side would say: "Well, that's what we would expect the Canadian Federation of Students to say. We wouldn't expect that they would have anything good to say about the millennium scholarship fund. In fact, they've got it all wrong. That's not how it works."

So I want to also read into the record an excellent letter that was sent to our leader, Howard Hampton, on February 3. It comes from Confederation College in Thunder Bay. The board of governors there took a long, hard look at the millennium scholarship fund and determined the potential impact that it would have on their students. I think they have a very good idea of how this impacts on their students because they would have used information from their financial aid office to determine what the level of student debt was, who had OSAP loans, in what amount etc. In their financial aid office, they would have that on file for all of their students. I believe the information that they provided to our leader, Howard Hampton, is correct and points out very clearly how this scholarship works, how it takes from the pockets of the neediest students and provides a windfall to the province of Ontario. Let me quote.

"Dear Mr Hampton:

"I am writing on behalf of the board of governors of Confederation College to express our concern with the way in which the province of Ontario has chosen to administer the Canadian millennium scholarship fund. We understand that Ontario and British Columbia are the only provinces where the benefit of this important federal program largely accrues to the province and not to the students for whom it was intended.

"To our knowledge, 312 students at Confederation College have been advised that they qualify for the scholarship this year.

“—173 students will obtain no personal benefit whatsoever as the province is using their scholarships to pay down the forgivable portion of their student loan.

“—These students actually never see their \$3,000 scholarship, however they will be taxed on it.

“—It may also affect daycare or rent subsidies and other income-contingent assistance,” they receive.

“—The province is the only party to benefit since the forgivable portion of the student loan is now funded by the millennium scholarship, not the province.

“—139 students will receive only a small benefit as their overall student loan will be reduced by an average of \$800 (and pay tax on \$3,000).

“—56 students from reserves will have their loans reduced by an average of \$1,515.

“—12 students will have their student loan reduced by the full \$3,000 (and pay tax on the \$3,000 scholarship.)”

Twelve out of a potential 312 will receive the maximum \$3,000 that they were intended to receive through the federal program, which the province in effect has stolen to have a windfall for itself.

“As you can see”—I’ll continue with the letter—“this approach suggests most students should refuse the scholarship as it increases their financial burden rather than reducing it. For most it has little benefit. For all, it has possible tax implications. In some cases, it may have a negative effect on the tax situation of supporting parents. We do not believe that this was the intent of the fund.” Of course it wasn’t. “Your assistance in redressing this situation would be appreciated.”

So there you have it from a college board of governors, signed by John Walker, chairman of the board of governors of Confederation College, who took the time to review the proposal that had been arrived at by the provincial government and came to the conclusion that in fact most of their students would not benefit at all, and that they would all be paying tax on a scholarship that most would never receive into their hands.

The question then is, given that the Canadian Federation of Students has exposed the government and how the government is using this federal money to subsidize its own costs, how is it that the government decided to do this? We addressed that very issue when we had the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities before us on February 25, before the public accounts committee.

I referred to some of the questions in Hansard, because I was very curious how it was the Ontario government arrived at implementing this kind of scheme, which so clearly penalizes students and which so clearly benefits the coffers of the province of Ontario. We had before us the deputy minister, Dr Christie, and we had Mr Zisser, who directs OSAP and some other ministry staff, but it was clearly Dr Christie and Mr Zisser who responded to most of the questions.

I asked if there were other provincial jurisdictions where the governments decided to fund directly to students, versus the approach Ontario took, which was to fund the financial institution. He replied that he believed there were some others. I then asked how it was that the

province of Ontario arrived at such an agreement. How was it that the Ontario government decided not to give money directly and students, but decided rather to give it to financial institutions and cut its own costs?

He said, “It would not have been possible under the current legislation.” The question I had asked was: “Is there any legal or legislative reason why a student in Ontario could not have received a millennium scholarship, the full amount directly, and not still have received the Ontario student opportunity grant? What legislative or legal barrier was there to say that they couldn’t receive both?” He replied: “It would not have been possible under the current legislation.”

Then I asked: “Can you provide this committee with a copy of the piece of legislation that would clearly have said that these students can’t receive both. What legislation is that?” He replied: “Well, there’s no legislation that has that wording. The regulation that specifies how the student opportunity grant is calculated indicates that there is an order in which we do things, which is that the student must complete their program,” blah, blah, blah. I interrupted him and said: “Sorry, this is a regulation?” He said, “Yes.”

Mr Speaker, you know and I know and this government knows that a regulation can be changed like that. We’re not even talking about a piece of legislation that blocked the Ontario government from giving money directly to students and that blocked them from also receiving the opportunity grant. No, a regulation in fact—many of them go to cabinet every Wednesday and the ministers who are here today would know that—easily could have allowed this government to have those students, the neediest, those who have the greatest financial debt, receive the federal millennium scholarship and also have a portion of their loan forgiven through the student opportunity grant.

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That’s all that was required, a regulation like the regulations that are passed every Wednesday morning in our cabinet. No discussion in this Legislature, nothing. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities should have brought forward that legislation and ensured that Ontario students did get the benefit of this federal money, instead of doing nothing and allowing the money to be used to subsidize the government of Ontario’s own costs.

That was what Mr Zisser confirmed, because I said: “If Ontario had really wanted to put money in the hands of the neediest students, Ontario could have had a regulation change which would say that Ontario students would receive the full amount of the millennium scholarship, \$3,000, and could also receive the full amount of the Ontario student opportunity grant at the same time—we could have done that by regulation, correct?” And the minister replied, “The province has the ability to make regulations.”

I compliment Mr Zisser, because he tried as best he could, not to get the minister into any hot water and not to admit that what was lacking here was in fact the

political will to make sure that Ontario's neediest students, those with the highest debt load, got the federal money they were entitled to receive. That's what this was all about. A regulation could have been drafted overnight, presented to cabinet at any one of those Wednesday morning cabinet meetings and allowed Ontario students to receive the \$3,000 and the grant, and to guarantee that the money they received would deal with their own personal debt, not to help subsidize the portion of forgivable debt that the province was already going to pay.

What is the benefit to Ontario as a result of setting up the scholarship fund in this way? We tried to get at that during the committee hearings as well, and we had some difficulty. I think it is important to remember that this is a program which, as I understand, runs over a 10-year period. So if the Ontario government maintains its current unfair practice of using the federal money to subsidize its own costs, the benefit to Ontario over the 10-year period could be very substantial.

We know that in a cabinet document dated November 1999, which was leaked, the potential savings for this academic year by the province subsidizing its own costs with this federal money are estimated to be about \$90 million. There was a later estimate that was mentioned publicly in some news articles on January 25 that the actual benefit to the Harris government is in the order of \$106 million. So I went back again to the Deputy Minister and to Mr Zisser and tried to pin them down on the potential savings to Ontario. Dr Christie, the Deputy Minister, said: "For the fiscal year 2000-01 the gross benefit may be between \$50 million and \$75 million. We're not sure how much it is yet, because they still have to see how many students pass and, of course, how many students will be entitled to receive the forgivable portion of their loans, but between \$50 million and \$75 million." Then I asked the Deputy Minister, "Did that \$50 million"—although it's the lower figure—"include interest payments that would have been paid out if Ontario was making payments under the Ontario student opportunity grant for those people, and the government now has that offset by the millennium fund? Does it also include potential interest payments?" Mr Zisser from the ministry replied that he didn't think it did. So the actual estimate of the windfall to the province of Ontario, estimated by the Deputy Minister to be between \$50 million and \$75 million, is probably even higher than that once you calculate the interest payments the province would have paid but now has an opportunity to forgo because the federal government is picking up those interest charges under this situation.

So we have a situation where, at least in this academic year, we have a potential by the ministry's own estimates of between \$50 million and \$75 million that the province stands to gain. If you consider that the province will probably keep in place this really blatant and ridiculous scheme in terms of not giving that money directly to students, where it should be going, the province stands to gain quite a bit of money over the next 10 years, doesn't

it, even if you do \$50 million over the next 10 years? If you add the interest payments, it's probably more than that.

The question then remains: What is the government doing with this windfall profit they have realized by subsidizing their own payments with federal government payments, payments that I remind you should have gone to students, the most needy in the province? Are those savings going back to help students with debt? I think the Canadian Federation of Students said it best in their presentation to the standing committee, when they said, "While there have been vague promises regarding the reinvestment of the scholarship money in ways that help needy students, no concrete proposals have been forthcoming." Again, during the committee hearings on February 25, I asked the Deputy Minister what plans there were to take those savings, in the order of \$50 million plus, and give some of that money back directly to students to help their debt, which was what the scholarship fund was intended for in the first place. The Deputy Minister could only tell us, and I don't think this is his fault, that this matter is still under discussion and he didn't know when the government would release any detailed proposals about how they are going to reinvest that money. I could be wrong, but I don't think the government or the minister has done that to date.

We have a situation where we have college and university students in this province who have seen their tuition increase by 60% under the Harris government. If they are in deregulated graduate programs, though, the increase has been even more substantial than that. As a result, thousands of students in this province now face an incredible debt load as they try to get their degree or diploma, with no idea whatsoever how they are going to deal with that once they graduate.

The federal government, to its credit—I could make comments about the federal lack of funding for colleges and universities, but I won't do that today because I know my colleague, who is the critic, is going to do that in his remarks—did put forward a program to deal with the neediest students, those with the greatest financial need and the greatest debt load. I think it was their intention, and a principle of the millennium scholarship fund, that that money go directly to students to deal with their personal debt load. It is shameful that this government and, I regret to say, an NDP government in British Columbia would decide instead not to send that money to the neediest students but to use that money to subsidize their own costs, to compensate their own costs for student aid, to reduce their own costs for student aid instead of having those students reduce their personal debt load.

It's shameful that both governments decided to do that particularly because all that would have been required to allow Ontario students to have access to both the scholarship money and the student opportunity grant was a mere regulation that could have been passed at a cabinet meeting any Wednesday morning the cabinet sat. Indeed, if there was the political will by the minister and

this government, it could be done by next Wednesday morning to ensure that after this year, every student who is entitled to receive this money will get this \$3,000 directly. I hope that this government, if it cares anything about student debt load, particularly those students with enormous personal financial debt, will make a decision that they really shouldn't be using money intended for students to compensate their own costs but should, instead, be ensuring that that federal money, the \$3,000, flows directly to those students. I hope this government will do the right thing, the decent thing, and put forward a regulation change which will ensure that that money will flow to students who need it, students who deserve it and students who should have had it given the principle of the fund in the first place.

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): It is my pleasure this afternoon to rise in this House and speak to the Liberal motion with regard to colleges and universities.

I'd like first to state some critical issues concerning post-secondary education as put forward by the Liberal critic. I welcome the chance to emphasize that this government has a vision for our colleges and universities and that is there will be, as there has been over the history of governments of all political stripes in the province, a place for every qualified and motivated student.

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I think all of the legislators here today have a sincere interest in ensuring our young people are prepared to lead full and productive lives. It's vitally important to us as parents, and of course as citizens of this great province of Ontario.

We should be very proud in this province of the investment we have made in our post-secondary institutions and training programs. They're second to none. We have benefited from the highly educated and trained citizens who have passed through our halls of learning and of training. Their contributions and their great success stories have been a key factor in our shared and growing prosperity in recent years.

Ontario already has one of the highest post-secondary participation rates in the world. For 18- to 24-year-olds, 35% are enrolled in our post-secondary system. But we must continue to work even harder to lead Canada and other countries around the world in economic growth, job creation and prosperity. We need a system that provides high-quality learning, that is relevant to the real needs of the workplace, and that will have a plan for all willing and qualified learners.

Our vision is to work in partnership with all sectors to create a made-in-Ontario education and training system, one that will support sustained prosperity for individuals, our province and our country.

In today's world a top-quality education is not a luxury, it's an absolute necessity. This year we are spending \$4 billion on post-secondary education in Ontario, and that's a greater investment in post-secondary education than has been made by any other government in Ontario's history. I should add that in the 2000-01

academic year post-secondary operating grants will increase by more than \$68 million, to a total of nearly \$2.4 billion. This will help to provide even more spaces for students and to improve the quality of education.

I would like to address the motion before the House today and the recommendation that tuition fees be frozen or re-regulated. I find it very interesting that the Liberal Party has put forward this motion to freeze tuition fees when in their 1999 election platform they claimed they would indeed immediately cut tuition by 10%. That is what they would have done. But today they're satisfied to freeze it. Obviously, they're learning something. They're either not aware of their own party policy or they have finally got the message that our government has been advocating: that the current tuition fee policy is fair and reasonable.

You see, there is no convincing evidence to support the claim that higher tuition fees are limiting access to post-secondary education—no convincing evidence. As a matter of fact, our government is proud that more students than ever are accessing higher education. In 1998-99, 35% of the Ontario population aged 18 to 24 was enrolled full time in college or university, the highest participation rate in Ontario's history, and preliminary undergraduate enrolment data for next year shows an increase of about 3%.

Under the NDP, 25.5% were enrolled. Under the Liberal government, even fewer: 23.3% were enrolled. The NDP and Liberals both allowed tuition to increase under their governments, but obviously did very little to increase accessibility. Under the Liberals, university tuition increased by 35%; college tuition increased by 29%. Under the NDP, university tuition increased by 50%; college tuition increased by 36%. Imagine that in four years under the NDP university tuition increased 50%. And I listened to this diatribe from the member. I forget what the riding is—it's a new riding—but anyway I'll figure it out.

Our government, on the other hand, wants to make post-secondary education accessible. As a result, our government is providing the most financial assistance ever available to students in Ontario, of which everyone in this House should be very proud.

The facts are extremely confusing for some of my colleagues. What I resent about that is that some of my colleagues in opposition confuse our young people and absolutely wipe out their hopes and dreams. Our system is accessible. We want them to be there. We want their parents to be part of the planning. We know that it's necessary to provide support.

Some of the ways we have done this: We have increased OSAP support by 30% over 1995-96. We have introduced the Ontario student opportunity trust fund, which was a new, innovative and modern idea. Even tonight, I'm going to Victoria-Haliburton, where the Kawartha Manufacturers Association will provide \$5,000 to Sir Sandford Fleming College, and of course the government of Ontario will match that. It is those small donations of \$5,000, matched by the Ontario government

to the tune of \$5,000, that in fact have created a fund of over \$600 million to date. That is people helping our students. That's business, industry and unions helping our students. If we want to be competitive, we'd better help them in a different way than the former two governments refused to help them. Over 10 years, that means 185,000 new students will be helped through the student opportunity trust fund.

We announced last week, as part of our millennium reinvestment for the students who are here today, our Aiming for the Top tuition scholarship—

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): Is that like the merit scholarship?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: It is not just merit; it is for people in need as well. It's for people in need and with merit. For programs that did not materialize, I will say to the heckler in the opposition—and I cannot speak for his heckling—that in fact beginning in September 2000 we will reward students with top marks and we will help top students with financial need. At maturity, more than 10,000 students will benefit.

For the heckler opposite, I have the new OSAP form. If you turn to page 12, it actually talks about our new Aiming for the Top tuition scholarship as well as the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation general award, which I will speak to in just a few moments. Our Ontario student opportunity grant program will give students who borrow more than \$7,000 a grant for the portion of their loan above this amount.

We believe that students who benefit from the education they receive should pay a reasonable portion of the cost of their education. Right now, students contribute, on average, 35% of the cost, with the taxpayer picking up the rest of the tab. We recently announced that institutions will be allowed to raise tuition for most programs by 2% a year for five years. That means the maximum allowable tuition fee increase for university arts and science programs next year is approximately \$77, which takes the tuition to \$3,951 as an average. For college programs, the maximum increase next year is approximately \$34, which takes the tuition in our college system to an average of \$1,718. This is the lowest rate of increase since the late 1970s. For the NDP member who was clapping, I do appreciate that. He doesn't think it's appropriate, but he must remember that his government raised tuition by 50% in just four years. We will maintain fees at a fair and reasonable level of approximately one third the cost of the education.

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By setting out a long-term tuition strategy, we're doing two things: We're assisting our students and our parents in planning and preparing for the cost of post-secondary education, which is an excellent investment in their future; we're also giving them good data about the institutions and the courses they want to take at those institutions, so that they can make a good choice as to what their success rate could be, and what their success rate could be in finding a job.

With both this motion and recent fearmongering via the media, the opposition would have you believe that

our government has no plan to accommodate the increased numbers who will be attending our post-secondary institutions in the future. I think as parents, as members of communities, as people who are totally committed to our young people, we know that we must have a plan—and we do have one. We had to start somewhere, and so the announcement of \$742 million in our SuperBuild funding set aside to help our institutions build and sometimes renovate buildings, classrooms and laboratories to prepare for the increased number of students who will be attending our colleges and universities in the future. When coupled with the investment by the private sector, I can say that we've invested \$1.4 billion to date this year.

This is the third-largest investment in the history of the province of Ontario, in the sense that after the First World War, when the soldiers came home, the government of the day decided to grow our university system; and in the late 1960s and early 1970s, John Robarts and Bill Davis built the college system. And now we're seeing exactly the same growth in our young people, in our student population, and that means that these are exciting times. This is the largest capital expansion in 30 years. Through 35 exciting projects across the province, we will create 57,000 net new spaces through this initiative alone.

The Minister of Finance has also indicated that he will work with the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to ensure that this significant additional funding will be coupled with even more, and this money will be made available this year to institutions with the greatest need. So we're not finished in the capital part of our plan.

We committed, in Blueprint, that all willing and qualified Ontario students will continue to have access to quality post-secondary education, and we intend to live up to that promise and that commitment. We will announce the appropriate operating support at the appropriate time. As we mentioned earlier, in our recent operating grant announcement we committed an additional \$68 million to our colleges and universities. A portion of this funding—\$23.5 million—is aimed at helping institutions accommodate more students next year. We will also ensure that OSAP has sufficient funding so that no student affected by the increased enrolment will be denied access to post-secondary education for financial reasons.

I've already set out in my discussion this afternoon all of the other supports that are available to students, and we take this very seriously. I too have spoken with our students from our colleges and universities about their disappointment, and sometimes anger, with the way the Canadian millennium scholarship was set up, and I too have listened to them and taken their recommendations. To date so far we have been able to establish that it will no longer be called a scholarship; it will be called a bursary. To date so far we have been able to establish that there will be no tax on this money, and to date so far we have written a letter and we have every reason to

believe that we will in fact be listened to. We're asking Mr Riddell, who is the executive director of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, "to change your practice of notifying award recipients of their award well into their academic year and issuing the awards during the second term of study. We feel earlier notification and issuance of the awards would bring far greater certainty to students about their financial situation as they embark on their year of studies." So, earlier announcements.

We have asked: We would liked to see payment made through cheques provided directly to students. We feel strongly about that. We feel we've made some changes, and perhaps these two requests will be agreed to and we can make some announcements in the near future. After 20 minutes of listening to the opposition member from the NDP, I will say that instead of just listening and standing up and complaining, it would have been very helpful if members of the opposition—some of them do—could work with us to make things better. For those who have sent letters to me and asked us to move forward together, we have had some success in working with the federal government.

I would like to move on here. Our government is working in consultation with Ontario's colleges and universities to plan for this increased demand. Our post-secondary education working group of ministry, university and college representatives is discussing capacity issues and helping us plan for the future. All of us working together will be the great success story of the time, working with students, parents, teachers, members of our communities, the business community, college and universities, trainers, to get it just right.

Our government has been the subject of criticism over our funding of high-tech science and engineering programs. The opposition claims this has been at the expense of the liberal arts and humanities. Let me assure this House and the people of Ontario that our government has not reduced financial support for liberal arts programs, period. The liberal arts are an essential component of our post-secondary education system, a fact we clearly recognized in our recent capital expansion announcement, SuperBuild. Over 680 new modern teaching classrooms are being created by 35 projects, many of which can be used for liberal arts programs.

One of the great strengths of Ontario's university system is that it provides a large number of spaces for students wanting to study the humanities and social sciences. Fifty-two per cent of Ontario students in first entry undergraduate programs are studying humanities and social sciences; those are 1998-99 numbers. Of all the humanities and social science undergraduates in Canada, 47% are here in Ontario, whereas we have only 38% of the undergraduate student population in Canada.

Student demand for arts programs has been decreasing—we know that—while the demand for science and engineering programs is on the rise. From 1988 to 1998, total applicant demand for science and engineering programs increased by 27.5%, while total applicant demand—these are our students—asking for arts

programs decreased by 28.5%. As the stats show, the spaces exist for students who wish to study liberal arts programs; however, there is a deficit of spaces when it comes to emerging high-technology fields that students are demanding access to in greater and greater numbers.

Through the access to opportunities program and other initiatives, we are ensuring that students wanting to study in technology-related areas have some of the same opportunities that are already available to those wishing to study in humanities and social sciences. The shortage of spaces in certain technological programs is unfair to students who want to study in these fields and cannot get access.

On the world stage, Canada has the highest percentage of arts and humanities graduates of any of the OECD countries, at 56% compared to the average of 38%. Ontario's percentage of arts and humanities graduates, 58%, is higher than the Canadian average, putting Ontario's percentage of arts graduates above all other OECD jurisdictions.

However, Canada has one of the lowest percentages of engineering and technology graduates of all the OECD countries, at 8% compared to an average of 14%—one of the lowest. We have to do better. Ontario's percentage of engineering and technology graduates, 7%, is below the Canadian average, putting Ontario's percentage of engineering and technology graduates below almost all OECD jurisdictions. This is unacceptable.

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Canada, and Ontario in particular, is doing an excellent job of educating students in the arts and humanities, but has fallen behind in providing the same opportunities for students interested in engineering and technological studies. That is why programs like the access to opportunities program, through which our government helps to create much-needed spaces in high-demand, high-tech science and engineering programs, are so important for the future prosperity of the province of Ontario and our young people.

This government clearly cares about our collective future. We want Ontarians to have access to high-quality education that leads to well-paying, rewarding jobs. We want business and industry to have access to a well-trained and well-educated workforce so they can continue to create opportunities for Ontarians across the province.

Our government is working hard in partnership with our educational institutions and the private sector to ensure that we marshal our resources as productively and efficiently as possible. We are working with our students. They have been our best advisers. We don't always move as quickly as they would like us to move, but we move in the right direction and we take their advice seriously.

We have a great deal at stake—no less, indeed, than our long-term economic competitiveness and our ability to generate sustaining and satisfying employment for years to come. We have a great quality of life in Ontario, one of the best in the world, and that is why we are doing our utmost to promote training and post-secondary education of the very highest calibre. Surely it is one of

the best ways to invest in our future and to invest in the quality of life for our children and their families.

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): It's a pleasure to speak on post-secondary education on our opposition day. I have to thank our colleague from Hamilton Mountain, who gave an overview of the reality that exists in post-secondary education in this province today. But I'd like to focus on a great, small community college called Lambton College in Sarnia-Lambton, and I would like to give the minister a bit of a reality check as to what is going on with small community colleges.

Lambton College has a student body of 2,350 students and its student population is in the catchment area predominantly from Lambton county. This college is rated as one of the top colleges in the province by graduates and employers. Lambton College, just to give you an indication, is a college that is internationally recognized in chemicals production engineering technology, that is, processing engineering. This program is well renowned in the petrochemical industry and has almost 100% placement.

I want to also highlight another remarkable program in this college that is recognized internationally, and that is the fire science program. This fire school has trained the experts that led the teams in the Kuwait oil fields that were burning out of control. They were trained at Lambton College in Sarnia-Lambton. This fire school, in partnership with our oil refineries, provides world-class training for students. But this college was shut out, among other colleges like Fanshawe, Conestoga and Mohawk, from receiving any grants from the SuperBuild fund.

The mayor of our community wrote to the minister saying that Lambton College is an integral part of the Sarnia-Lambton Council for Economic Renewal's direction for economic development, yet this college is in huge financial trouble. That is the reality, and it's having to cut programs. It's cutting programs. Actually, a program has been suspended in the graphic design fundamentals program. There is also a culinary program, as part of tourism, that's on the cutting block. Why is it that small community colleges like Lambton College are shut out in such a way that it is detrimental to their survival?

This government is funding colleges in huge-growth areas such as the greater Toronto area, but they're being funded at the expense of smaller community colleges. It appears to me that this government is out of touch with communities outside the greater Toronto area. Lambton College provides opportunity and accessibility to post-secondary education. An area such as Sarnia-Lambton, that is not growing at the rate of the greater Toronto area, is losing; it's losing in the end. I must say that by its actions this government shows it does not understand the value of a well-educated society as a way to prepare for the future. The government, by its actions, doesn't seem to believe in the validity of small colleges as a way of preparing for the future. Is post-secondary education just a numbers game? Is that all it is? And does it shut out small community colleges? Because that is the reality that we have in Sarnia-Lambton.

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): I'm pleased to rise today to join the debate on the resolution on funding for post-secondary education. I want to compliment the minister for her comments and covering a lot of the areas within that portfolio and clarifying all of that for the assembly.

I think it's important, though, that I begin by restating the fact that post-secondary education enrolment is increasing. In actual fact, in 1998-99, 35% of the Ontario population aged 18 to 24 was enrolled full-time in college or university. This represents the highest participation rate in Ontario's history, and preliminary data show that it will continue to increase. Under the NDP in 1990-91, only 25.5% were enrolled. Under the Liberals in 1985-86, even fewer, 23.3%, were enrolled.

The member for Hamilton Mountain and I have two things in common. One is that we were both elected in 1999 and the fact that we both have a keen interest in education. I think the member opposite would benefit from looking back at some of the history. I know that neither one of us was here in the early 1990s or mid-1980s, but it serves us well to look at what our predecessors did, or failed to do, for that matter.

With all due respect, the resolution is redundant. From the beginning, the member states, "The government should stop cutting and start investing in Ontario's colleges and universities." I ask the member, where has she been? Has she not heard repeatedly that provincial support for post-secondary education grew to \$4 billion this year? This is the highest level it has ever been.

In order to maintain this commitment, provincial support for post-secondary education will increase by \$58 million in the year 2000-01. We made a commitment in our Blueprint to improve access to post-secondary education and increase recognition of excellence and achievement, and we are doing that. I want to quote from the Blueprint:

"Tomorrow's world will demand more advanced skills and knowledge than ever before. Access to advanced education will be vital for the next generation of Ontarians to enjoy prosperity and personal success.

"Our plan will improve access to post-secondary education, increase recognition of excellence and achievement, provide more direct links between learning and jobs, and encourage universities and colleges to cooperate on innovative programs geared to helping students find jobs."

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This is a government that keeps the promises made during the campaign. The people of Ontario know exactly what they voted for and what to expect. Investing in our students is a very important priority for this government. They are the future of this province and the future of this country.

Ontario universities are among the best in the country. I'm proud to state that Ontario ranks fourth in Canada in total operating income per university student. This takes into account all the programs we have put in place to assist students and allow better access to post-secondary

education. Ontario universities' total operating income is \$301 more per student than the Canadian average as of 1997-98 data. So I don't understand the meaning behind this resolution that states, and I quote, "Increasing financial support to our post-secondary institutions to match the Canadian average level of funding." As I've indicated, we are above the Canadian average in per student funding.

It is important to realize and take into account all the initiatives that have been introduced and implemented, to get a clear and full picture. Isolating specific areas and dissecting them from the total picture does not give the full account of what's in place. Even Lyn McLeod agrees that you need to take into account the student assistance programs in place when considering tuition fees.

Allow me to quote from Hansard on November 1, 1988. Lyn McLeod, then Minister of Colleges and Universities, at the social development committee said, "I think the tuition-fee level is only one part of the question, and the second part is the support to accessibility through the student assistant fund plan." She went on to say, "That is why it is so critical that we look at the whole question of student assistance at the same time as we look at tuition fees."

We are the first government to tie tuition fees to quality of programs. Colleges and universities are required to set aside 30% of the incremental revenue from higher tuition fees to improve access to students in need, as well as to improve the quality of education they offer.

The 2000-01 tuition fee guidelines require the board of governors of any university or college that chooses to increase tuition fees to approve and make available to its community a plan to increase the quality of education at that institution. Boards are accountable for deciding how to put the money to best use in their own institutions.

The student assistance programs that Minister Dianne Cunningham has announced have increased accessibility for many students entering colleges and universities. Starting in September 2000, Aiming for the Top scholarships will be available. These scholarships will be available for students who earn top marks and require financial assistance. A student will be able to receive up to \$3,500 a year for four years. By September 2003, we will be providing \$35 million in scholarships. This program will reward the excellence and hard work of our top students.

The Ontario student opportunity grant provides a grant to students who in any academic year have a student loan exceeding \$7,000. This grant reduces the student's outstanding debt with the financial institution by the amount over the \$7,000 figure. The grant is paid out annually rather than after the student graduates, hence the student will know the actual amount of their repayable debt.

The Ontario student opportunity trust fund is expected to provide needs-based financial assistance to approximately 185,000 post-secondary students over the next 10 years. The province will match the amount raised by the colleges and universities, creating permanent endowment funds, a total of \$600 million to assist students. This is

another initiative that assists students who for financial reasons would otherwise not be able to attend college or university.

While our government is providing the necessary financial support to ensure that there are enough spaces for students, it is calling on the colleges and universities to be accountable for the programs they provide to students.

A portion of the current year's operating grants will be allocated to reward performance. The three key performance indicators for universities will measure the employability of graduates and graduation rates. At the college level, the key performance indicators will measure the graduate's employment satisfaction and the employer's satisfaction with the new graduate.

With the introduction of performance-based funding, colleges and universities will be encouraged to deliver high-quality programs that will prepare students for future successes. With this objective, Ontario's universities and colleges will continue to be one of the finest systems in the world. The graduates who will be leaving these institutions will be extremely well prepared for future endeavors within various fields.

Ontario continues to operate the best universities in Canada. In the latest Maclean's survey, Ontario has three of the top five medical-doctoral universities and three of the top five comprehensive universities. This is a direct result of the excellent work our universities are doing, and our students are benefiting from the expertise we have in our post-secondary institutions.

Many of these institutions received funding for expansion through our SuperBuild announcement. The \$742-million allocation to capital and the creation of additional student places will allow post-secondary institutions to prepare for the expanded enrolment in 2003-04.

When I read the part in the resolution being debated here today, that states, "Committing to extra funding specifically to assist universities and colleges to prepare for the anticipated 'double cohort,'" I have to ask, where was the member opposite on February 25, 2000, when Minister Cunningham announced at Convocation Hall at McMaster University one of many announcements made throughout the province on the SuperBuild approved projects? McMaster benefited directly from this fund with a total of \$22 million earmarked for two projects that will create 2,800 new student spaces.

A total of 35 new capital projects have been announced throughout the college and university system, creating new spaces for 57,492 net new student spaces. Fourteen projects in the GTA area include George Brown College, Ryerson, Seneca College, the University of Toronto, and York University, local institutions that will now have more than 26,000 spaces available to students from my riding of Thornhill. This will allow many of them to stay at home while pursuing education in their chosen field.

In addition to simply making significant investments to create physical space for more students, the gov-

ernment is also working to ensure there are sufficient operating funds to hire professors, provide up-to-date teaching equipment and meet the other costs of delivering high-quality education.

On December 22, 1999, the member from Hamilton Mountain rose in this chamber and stated—I quote from Hansard—“Our obligation, according to the president of McMaster University, is not just to enroll every qualified student; we must provide them with a quality education. I agree wholeheartedly.” Our government’s policies clearly address both these issues.

To date, the Ontario government has taken many steps to strengthen the universities’ capacity to hire and retain faculty and to provide universities with incentives to attract top researchers. We have provided a fair funding initiative in the amount of \$29 million to be used to increase the number of teachers at the undergraduate level and to enhance professional development programs.

Several other research funding programs have been established, which will enhance Ontario’s ability to attract top researchers.

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One example is the Ontario Innovation Trust, which will invest \$250 million in research infrastructure at Ontario’s universities and research facilities. I had the pleasure to be involved recently in two presentations of funds from the OIT to two local institutions, Seneca@York and York University, where students from Thornhill will now have the opportunity to pursue studies in highly skilled and innovative fields using the latest leading-edge equipment and laboratory facilities.

We also realize that the future, with its many innovative technologies, is spurring numerous new career options for our students.

This government also realizes that the increase in enrolment will continue for at least a decade given the famous “baby boom echo” generation that will be starting to graduate from high school. I see in my own riding, with our six high schools—St Elizabeth Catholic High School, St Robert Catholic High School, Thornlea Secondary, Thornhill Secondary, Vaughan Secondary and Westmount Collegiate—that the increase in graduating high school students is not a small blip, nor a trend limited to a few years.

Our universities are autonomous institutions which, driven by their students’ demands, determine their own decisions for programs. Over the past 10 years, applicant demand for science and engineering programs has increased by 28%, while over the same period demand for the arts program has declined.

Christine Ruffolo, a York University liberal arts student from Thornhill, has said: “The government cannot make someone study the liberal arts. Students are picking more science and technology courses as that is where the majority of jobs are now. Funding has to be proportionally given to programs based on their respective enrolments.” She’s right. Currently, there is a shortage of spaces in certain technological programs, which is unfair to the students who want to study in these

fields and cannot get in. It is also unfair to employers who are seeking qualified graduates in these fields for positions which need to be filled soon in order for the companies to remain competitive in this global market.

It should be noted that though the demand for science and technology spaces in post-secondary studies is on the rise, the Ontario university system provides a large number of spaces for students wanting to study the humanities and social sciences; 52% of Ontario’s students in first-entry undergraduate programs in 1998-99 study the humanities and social sciences, and Ontario counts for 47% of all liberal arts undergraduates in Canada.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that this government is committed to post-secondary education. Each of our policies indicates this commitment as outlined in our Blueprint and our promises to the taxpayers. “We commit that every willing and qualified Ontario student will continue to be able to attend college or university,” and “learning for its own sake is an admirable goal, but we must also ensure that that our graduating post-secondary students have the skills and knowledge to get a job and improve their lives.”

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I come to this topic from a background of 25 years at community college and also 17 years as a school board trustee. What I’ve observed over the years has been that this government has done a direct attack on elementary and secondary schools. I’m thinking of attacks on special ed and attacks on music and attacks on rural bussing. But from the community college perspective, it’s been more death by neglect than an intentional attack.

I honestly now believe that the Premier hates education. I can understand that, because I suspect that every time someone in Ontario gets an education, the Premier loses a vote. Over the 25 years at the college, I have had a variety of governments, initially Conservative, then Liberal and NDP, and now the Reform Party governing the province, and we’ve seen profound changes take place in education over the last five years.

What I’ve seen from personal experience in the college system—and I’m thinking of the students I’ve taught in the last few years compared to 25 years ago—is that students are far better prepared than they were previously, much more highly skilled, highly motivated, wanting to get ahead. People in the college system, mind you, are students who were in the secondary and elementary system years before this government was elected.

I also see the students much more highly stressed than they were in the past. We’ve seen tuition increases at the community colleges of 147% over the last 10 years, while at the same time we’ve seen the average family income in Ontario decrease. We’re seeing students more and more doing part-time jobs. Now, part-time jobs may sound very beneficial because it gives them experience working, but they’re very detrimental from the viewpoint that when they should be doing assignments, when they should be in the library, when they should be doing all

kinds of things focusing on their education, they're being forced to do part-time jobs to simply pay the bills. I look at adults who are returning to the college system and the challenges they have financially, where we now have students in the community college system getting their food from food banks.

Over the last five years at the college I was at, Loyalist College in Belleville, the per-student grant from this government to the college went from approximately \$5,000 to \$3,000 per student. These are the operating grants. That has caused larger classes, and there is a maximum size for a class. If you can teach 25, it doesn't mean you can teach 150. The classes have gotten larger in size. The programs have gone to fewer hours. For all that you want to talk about the challenging world and the new curriculum, what students need to know, if you cut a program from 24 hours to 18 hours, there are topics that will simply not be covered in that program. We're seeing that happen over and over.

We're seeing the system survive by going to part-time teachers. Part-time teachers are very dedicated individuals coming in, but for a student in a college system, learning takes place other than just in the classroom. There are occasions when they need to talk to the teacher outside of the class. Part-time teachers, by their very definition, will come in, do their teaching and leave. They're not available for the extra help. The student suffers. Granted, it lowers the cost for the colleges, and given that cut in grant they have no choice but to do it—but it hurts. We're also seeing the high-cost programs being taken out of the college system.

The funding formula itself has been fundamentally wrong. If we talk just about operating grants, not capital, instead of old empty classrooms, we're going to end up with new empty classrooms. Five years ago, this government asked college presidents to bring forward a recommendation, and their recommendation was that this government move to at least the average of funding for operating grants. Don't muddy the waters with capital money. That didn't happen.

I believe if we truly are interested in welfare reform in this province, welfare reform will only be successful if we can take the people on welfare and educate them and prepare them for another job. You can't hit them at both ends; you can't cut the money on welfare and cut their educational opportunities. This government is doing that.

1650

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I have to tell you, there is so much to say and there's so little time—22 minutes for this bill. And we're lucky, because normally we only get a couple of minutes, and we skip a turn around here, as you know, because sadly they elected more of you guys than of us. I recognize that. But I tell you, it's so difficult for the good Ontarians of this province to know who's telling the truth. How do they know? I wouldn't know. About 99.9% of the population doesn't have a clue about what's going on. So we say to the minister, "You're spending \$1 billion less." She says: "Oh no, we're not. We're spending more than any other

government before." Who to believe? Except that the people who are participating in those institutions, like the few young people we've got here, know. They know. But it's not enough, because in order to get a government to change direction, you need the general public to fall behind it, and the general public doesn't know what is going on. That's why I feel like—

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): These kids have parents.

Mr Marchese: Monsieur Beaubien, s'il vous plaît. I feel like Sisyphus. I mentioned him yesterday. You know Sisyphus, Mr Speaker? Interesting mythical character.

Mr Caplan: On the wheel.

Mr Marchese: Not the wheel, no. This fellow was sentenced for an eternity to lift that rock up the mountain—for an eternity. I feel like that in this place, lifting that rock every day in this place. And then you have the minister of post-secondary education saying, "Work with us," right? Here I am carrying the rock, and she's saying, "Work with us." If only they would work with us, then things would be so much nicer in Ontario. How can I work with them if I am so busy carrying this rock up the mountain dealing with these people that I've got no moment of lucidity, which only comes when I get to the top, to deal with them?

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): You've never had a moment of lucidity.

Mr Marchese: She's so nice, M^{me} Mushinski. I like her too.

I've got to tell you, the only moment of grace for me is when you get to the top, like Camus said, when you get to the top of that mountain, and that is the moment of lucidity where life has meaning. Every now and then we have a few successes around here that give us energy once again to fight the good fight. The problem is, the rock rolls down the mountain again, and then the toil and the work to get the rock up again. I feel like that every day. It is an interesting mythical character to bring into this place, because a whole lot of people outside of here understand this kind of toil.

Mr Beaubien: Address the subject matter.

Mr Marchese: Monsieur Beaubien, s'il vous plaît. Mais j'ai beaucoup à dire. S'il vous plaît, laissez-moi. Monsieur le Président, s'il vous plaît.

"Canadians Facing Record Debt" is the title of this article. Every now and then I bring a few articles to this place. We have a debt load that we have never seen before. Mr Banker, you will agree with that, correct? That's a research study that was done.

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): Anything you say.

Mr Marchese: OK, record debt. People are spending their money for the essential things, like housing—essential, we're talking about—like keeping yourself clothed and feeding yourself. At the end of the day—

Mr Beaubien: How much was that?

Mr Marchese: This suit? We'll talk about it later, Monsieur Beaubien, because I've got so many things to say.

At the end of the day, after you spend on all the essentials, there's very little left for anything. So when the minister of post-secondary education says smugly, "We have"—what is the term she uses?—"the highest participation rate ever," of course you do, because not only do young people recognize that a university or college education is critical, but everybody in society, including the troglodytes over there, understands that a post-secondary education is vital to getting a job, unlike the 1960s, where if you just used your back to toil away, as so many Europeans did when they were invited here to come and work for other Canadians and with other Canadians—unlike those times, we don't have a job market that allows people with a lesser education to get a job. Imagine, you need grade 12 to be a garbage man or woman, grade 12. If that doesn't tell you how difficult the job market has become, that without an education—

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Madame Mushinski, s'il vous plaît.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): The member for Scarborough Centre will please refrain and allow the member for Trinity-Spadina to give his speech here this afternoon.

Mr Marchese: Speaker, I don't mind every now and then; it's just that when you have the flow, it's difficult.

Garbage men and garbage women: grade 12. You could do that—

Ms Mushinski: Sanitation engineer.

The Acting Speaker: I'll not warn you again.

Mr Marchese: You understand the dilemma that young people have. If you need grade 12 to be a garbage man or woman, imagine what you need to do something else. Young people recognize that you need an education. But to hear this minister say, "We have the highest participation rate ever," you would think it's because of her policies, and nobody would know any better or be any wiser—how would they know?—except the young people who know that without an education they can't do anything and they can't get the jobs. That's why they're going. But you know what's happening? They are incurring debts beyond belief. I say to you, at what cost? It's at a tremendous cost and it is a tremendous burden. Canadians are facing record debt. Students are facing record debt, but we hear this minister say, "We don't have a problem in this country; participation rates are high," failing to understand that debt for young people is an incredible burden. Madame Mushinski, you will agree, from—

The Acting Speaker: The member will refer to members, of course, as he knows, by their riding.

Mr Marchese: From Scarborough Centre.

The point is that the rate of participation has to do with real need. People necessarily need to get to university and college. That's it, not because of the kinds of programs they have in place, because the kinds of programs they have in place have created a disaster in this province. The Harris government has slashed funding for colleges and universities to the lowest per capita level of any province in Canada. During their first term

of office the Harris government cut \$400 million. To hear them, they didn't cut anything. But they cut \$400 million in the first term. It's close to \$1 billion that they have cut.

Unlike Nova Scotia, where that government said, "We are firing 800 teachers," this government rules by stealth. There are cuts by stealth. The reason why people were able to mobilize themselves in Nova Scotia was because the government was blunt and said, "We're firing 870 teachers." What does this government do? It can't afford to do that, so at the secondary level they simply require teachers to work more. They call that more student-teacher contact. What it is is having fewer teachers teach more classes. As opposed to hiring more teachers to reduce the class size, they're using the present teacher force to teach more students. That's called getting rid of teachers. But they are saying: "We have more teachers now than ever before. We have more school funding than ever before." That argument applies to every issue that's debated in this place.

The sad thing is that regulated tuition jumped up by almost 60% since Harris took office. Average tuition cost \$2,470 for the 1995-96 school year and it now costs \$3,872 a year. It's even worse if you're in a graduate or professional program. But to hear the minister, tuition fees went up under the NDP government by 50%. OK. We had a recession. Tories of course are bemused by that, because if they were in power in 1990 they would have created a better business climate and we would have had jobs galore, I suppose.

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): That's for sure.

Mr Marchese: Yeah, "That's for sure."

1700

The New Zealand experience tells us that all the policies you have entered into are not very healthy things to have done. After 15 years of privatization, of selling off public assets, of giving the tax cuts you people are doing, they're in a disaster in New Zealand—the same policies, but we'll have to wait a couple more years to see it. Wait until the next recession. In a good economy, these people have increased these rates to this extent. In a good economy, M. Beaubien, comment peut-on faire cela? That was in a good economy. Imagine, if we are facing—and we will face a recession in the next short little while, I would say a year or two. I hate to predict these things. But when we get into a recession under this government, what will happen if tuition fees are now at 4,000 bucks and there is no revenue coming in any longer? What's going to happen then? If tuition fees are \$4,000 now, they are going to jump to \$8,000, presumably, because you won't have the money.

They love to talk about fearmongering. Did you hear, Speaker? The poor minister, who was distressed, said, "in spite of the fearmongering by the media." I was wondering, which media are we talking about here? It must be the Toronto Sun, the one that supports the NDP. Oh yes, that one. But then I thought, "It can't be." The National Post, owned by my good buddy M. Conrad Black, a good guy. That must be the fearmongering

initiated by Conrad Black, no doubt. I'm certain. But that can't be, I then realized, because it's a Reform-minded paper. I thought, "OK, another national paper." It had to be the *Globe*. But it couldn't be—another good Conservative paper, surely they wouldn't be fearmongering. I know: the *Toronto Star*, the only other Liberal paper left—they're fearmongering. It has to be.

Do you see the point? It's laughable, right? It's so laughable, it's pitiful to hear these people speak on these issues. Fearmongering by the media: Who, their old friends? It is so, so tough in this place.

Do you know what? They say they have a vision of partnerships. You know what that is, right? As soon as you talk about partnership, it means government's getting out of the way, government's spending less on post-secondary education, on the college system and university system. It means less money for those institutions, those public institutions that are there for the common good. The students who study in those colleges and universities do us all a public good—not for themselves alone, but their participation is for us all. So when they say "partnerships," they mean, "We're going to put in less, and good God, we pray that the private sector is going to come in and give the money."

I've got to tell you, I'm not a friend of the interference, not only of this government, as we've witnessed in the negotiations that have been going on between the boards, Catholic and public at the secondary level—interference, gross interference—but we have at the post-secondary level what they call friendly partnership participation of the private sector. I don't think it's a great thing to be doing, but that's the only thing that universities and colleges have left. They've got to go to them for money, because the public sector, through the governments, is giving less.

But what do they extract from public institutions when they get involved? I'll tell you: a whole lot. That money doesn't come for free; it's binding. They help to shape public policy at that level. They help to determine the kind of direction that those private institutions want them to go into. We are commercializing the post-secondary level and commercializing the secondary level. People are fundraising to death at the elementary, at the secondary and post-secondary levels. They're fundraising to death. They shouldn't have to do that. They should be getting the adequate dollars they deserve to do the job they need to do, without having to run to the private sector for financial support.

I'm reminded about the contribution of the federal level of government. I've got to say, they haven't been too helpful or too good. You know, M. Sampson, I'm going to whine with you, all right? Speaker, you remember I have some beautiful quotes of Mr Gary Carr, the now Speaker. When Bob Rae used to wail against the federal government, at the time Tory, and then Liberal—we would wail against the unfairness of their contribution to Ontario, in a recession yet. And you had people like Mr Carr—you know him well, Speaker. This is what he used to say: "This statement by a Premier of the province

of Ontario is pathetic. This wasn't a statement, this was public whining. In Ontario, we have always been the leaders in Confederation. We've now become the whiners in Confederation." That was Mr Carr, your buddy. You weren't here, M. Sampson. But M. Carr, the now president of this assembly, said that. And it wasn't just him. I quoted Mike Harris the other day, and few other speakers.

You remember when you were whining about the federal government not giving you enough money for health? I'm just reminding you. You now, with a wealthy economy, the wealthiest in Canada, are whining, whimpering little children. You have so much money in your coffers that I have to ask myself, where is it going, that you're begging the federal government to give you the fair share that you wouldn't give us when we were in a recession? Whiners of Confederation. And by the way, while you're whining about health, you might want to also whine about post-secondary education support, because while they gave us a couple of billion for health, it was also a part of the package to support post-secondary education. And how much of that has gone to the post-secondary institutions we'll never know. We will never know. We don't know where the money is going. That's the sad thing.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): Tax cuts.

Mr Marchese: I know it's going to tax cuts, but they will argue differently.

I wanted to get to something that I find interesting: the millennium scholarships. "If a student gets a scholarship but has a student loan, the scholarship money won't go to the student; it will go directly to the financial institution where the student has a loan. In many cases, the scholarship money will be used to pay off already forgivable loans." Can you imagine a provincial government that has so much money that they're snorking away, sucking up federal money that's supposed to go to students and they're sucking it away for themselves. Rather than giving the money directly to those students, they're snorking like the greedy, rich Ontarians they are, and they whine about the federal government not giving them enough money. Can you believe that, fellow Liberals? I can't.

Mr Agostino: You're one of us?

Mr Marchese: No, please, please, Dominic. I'm one of us over here. It's a little group here.

Harris—I've got to jump around, Speaker; there's so much to say. The minister made it appear like somehow she's not against the liberal arts programs. She admitted as much, right? But mon ami M. Harris had a different opinion. On several occasions he has made utterances that are scary, and he's the Premier of Ontario—scary stuff. "Mr Harris told an audience of high-tech employees at a Brantford high-tech plant Wednesday that universities were producing 'great thinkers, but they know nothing about math, science, engineering or the skills that are needed in the workforce.'" Poor great thinkers. How reduced they were to some puny sub-humans, I imagine. He goes on. "Mr Harris's comments

were only jokes for a friendly audience, but they represent a real aspect of his thinking.” Don’t they? Of course they do.

A Mr Jeffreys, who was interviewed by the Ottawa Citizen on this, says, “Many successful business leaders would say a liberal arts background is more valuable than a technical background.” “English literature PhD candidate Sharon Hamilton presented a paper linking the arts degree to higher incomes and faster promotions in the workplace at an academic conference in Sherbrooke, Quebec.”

The point is, we shouldn’t even be debating this issue. There’s a role for everyone, but to hear Harris, you wouldn’t think so.

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): He didn’t say that.

Mr Marchese: Oh, he never said that. I wish I’d brought a few other articles, because he did say that. He pooh-poohed the liberal arts, he did. About two or three years ago he even started with his ruminations. God bless that he doesn’t do too many of those. He should cogitate less in public and do it more in the washroom, I urge him. But I’ve got to tell you, the liberal arts, business leaders have said, is an essential component of individual growth and business growth and any kind of growth imaginable. So Mr Harris has so much to learn from so many other people, and God only knows that I worry about him.

There’s so much to say. Here, look: “Demand for university education is growing dramatically, therefore”—

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: I beg your pardon?

1710

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): You’ve only got another minute.

Mr Marchese: I’ve got a minute. You’re right. There’s so much to say.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations tells us that the demand is going to grow so much—an increase in the population of 18- to 23-year-olds. There will be 190,000 more young people in the province by the end of this decade. Ontario is experiencing rising participation rates. In 1985-86, only 13% of 18- to 23-year-olds were enrolled in universities. That number increased to almost 22% in 1997-98. And it goes on. There are a few other points.

The point is that this government is not investing for the future; not investing for the double cohort; not investing to have more professors to reduce the class size at the university level; not investing to put into those universities and colleges the things they need to be able to produce good students. They’re not investing. I hope the population of Ontario will do what they’ve done in Nova Scotia. They’re got to get into the streets and fight to preserve education at the elementary and secondary levels and particularly at the post-secondary education level, where we need it the most.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate.

Mr Stewart: I’d like to share my time, which is about eight and a half minutes, with the member for Scarborough Centre.

When I read the resolution put forth today suggesting that “the government should stop cutting and start investing in Ontario’s colleges and universities now to ensure our students are prepared to meet the social and economic challenges of the future,” I wonder where the opposition has been for the last number of years. We’re trying to create unique partnerships, unique initiatives, investment, and we are investing in the future.

I want to talk about two institutions of learning in my riding, one being Trent University and the other one being Sir Sandford Fleming College. Certainly Trent is one of the very infamous small universities in this province and is in the process of looking towards a \$32-million addition, and indeed investment in the future of our particular area. Their goal is to create a teaching, learning, research and living environment facility to offer a distinctive, excellent and continually evolving teaching program and to sustain and enhance opportunities.

If you look at what Trent has done over the last over number of years, certainly the funding that has been achieved to pursue research has been pretty phenomenal. I want to congratulate Dr Jim Parker of the psychology department and Dr Holger Hintelmann of the chemistry and environmental research studies department from Trent, who were recognized by the Premier’s Research Excellence Award this past year. Trent ranks third in research grants in Ontario, and Trent remains one of the nation’s top undergraduate universities, ranking third. They are a very forward-thinking university.

The other institution of learning in our particular area is Sir Sandford Fleming College, which just got funded under the SuperBuild fund to the tune of \$27.4 million. If you don’t think that is thinking about the future, I don’t know what is. This money from the SuperBuild Growth Fund is going to translate into high technology facilities in Peterborough and Lindsay and a brand new campus in Haliburton. The Peterborough facility will have 127,000 square feet, and it will be able to accommodate 3,000 additional students over the next 10 years. The Lindsay campus will have expanded facilities for students as well as Haliburton.

So I just want to suggest that I believe this government—unlike other ones which constantly threw money at a problem and when the money was spent the problem was still there. If you look at the past track record of the two previous governments regarding increases in tuition, I suggest to you that has created much of the problem that we face and that students face today.

On the other hand, some of the increased debt and the constant debt that students are having these days amazes me. I look at my own children, who I did not fund for college or university because I couldn’t afford it, but I can remember my son coming back from Toronto every weekend, leaving late Friday night so he could be in Peterborough to start work at McDonald’s, for very poor wages, at 6 o’clock in the morning. He worked every

weekend. He didn't have a cellphone, he didn't have a new car and he didn't have a camcorder, but he put himself through university without debt. My daughter did the same. I also have a co-op student in my office now who works three jobs and will not have any debt.

Again, it's all called partnership. It's not only partnerships between the government, the private and public sectors, but also partnerships between the students and the teachers and government and the private sector. Working together, we can overcome the situation.

I'm going to turn the rest of my time over to the member, if I can.

Interjection: It goes in rotation.

Mr Stewart: It does go in rotation? Sorry.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): I am pleased to participate in the debate this afternoon on post-secondary education. It is, and will continue to be, a very important issue.

Ce débat me touche encore de plus près parce que dans mon comté j'ai l'Université d'Ottawa et j'ai aussi la Cité collégiale, le premier collège communautaire francophone de la province.

Ce gouvernement demeure toujours une menace à l'accessibilité et aux moyens disponibles afin de se procurer une éducation du niveau postsecondaire.

This Conservative government still remains a threat to the accessibility and affordability of post-secondary education. They have hiked tuition fees and increased the amount of debt each student can take on.

Le gouvernement se doit de demeurer dévoué au principe d'une éducation postsecondaire de qualité, non seulement de qualité mais aussi accessible à tous. L'accessibilité est le facteur le plus important dans ce domaine. À quoi servent ces institutions si elles ne sont pas accessibles? À quoi sert un programme de premier rang si les étudiants doivent accumuler une dette énorme afin de suivre ce programme? Un individu ne devrait pas compléter ses études avec une dette moyenne de 25 000 \$. C'est un lourd fardeau pour quelqu'un qui vient tout juste de joindre le monde du travail.

The solution is simple: freezing tuition fees.

On se doit d'arrêter l'endettement étudiant. Les statistiques démontrent un taux d'endettement des plus élevés chez les étudiants, encore plus flagrant pour certains francophones qui souvent viennent d'un milieu économiquement plus faible. Comment est-ce que ce gouvernement peut justifier une augmentation des frais de scolarité de plus de 60 % chez les universités et une augmentation de 53 % chez les collèges? On ne peut justifier cette augmentation. La qualité demeure toujours pareille et il n'est sûrement pas l'augmentation qui augmente la possibilité de se trouver un emploi une fois qu'un étudiant reçoit son diplôme. Donc, comment justifier?

Le gouvernement n'est certainement pas en mesure de justifier ses actions. Il fait preuve encore une fois de sa tactique d'imposer la responsabilité sur une tierce partie,

incapable de prendre une initiative qui est juste et qui serait en mesure de protéger nos étudiants.

N'oublions pas qu'un diplôme est un prérequis de nos jours dans le monde du travail, car sans diplôme, un individu n'a aucune chance de réussite. L'augmentation des frais de scolarité à laquelle nous sommes tous témoins n'est ni raisonnable ni abordable.

1720

A second solution would be to increase financial support for students. Le nombre d'étudiants qui reçoivent des argents du régime d'aide financière aux étudiantes et aux étudiants de l'Ontario, OSAP, a augmenté de 59 % entre 1991 et 1997. Malgré une augmentation d'étudiants, malgré une augmentation dans le nombre de prêts accordés par OSAP, la valeur totale de prêts a diminué de 46 \$ millions. Il est donc évident que plus d'étudiants sont éligibles, mais il y a moins d'argent.

Voyons que je n'ai qu'une minute qui me reste. I would say that Liberals remain committed to the principles of higher education with quality and accessibility. We believe that funding to universities and colleges is an investment, not a cost.

Ms Mushinski: Let me start off by apologizing for interjecting. I will try to control myself during my speech, Mr Speaker.

First of all, I want to recognize the honourable member for Hamilton Mountain for her dedication to this issue. I have worked in committee with the member and I know that she has the best interests of our young people at heart, and certainly when she created this resolution that was utmost in her mind. Unfortunately, however, I will be voting against her resolution, not because I disagree with its spirit, but because I think a lot of the initiatives that it proposes are either redundant or counterproductive.

The first portion of the resolution asks the Legislature to put a freeze on tuition and re-regulate post-secondary programs. Traditionally, a student's tuition fees account for approximately one third of the cost of his or her education, and certainly it was like that when the Liberals were in power. But in 1992, under the NDP government, it fell to less than 20%, which meant that the Ontario taxpayer was expected to pay \$4 for every \$1 that a student paid towards his or her education.

Obviously, this situation was completely unsustainable. The NDP knew this and that's why they increased university tuition by 50% during their first term in office. It was also, I believe, very unfair to ask the taxpayer to subsidize students at this level.

In 1995, when I first ran for a seat in this House, I campaigned on a detailed plan. The Common Sense Revolution was a plan to put Ontario back on track and I am particularly proud to say that it has been tremendously successful in restoring Ontario to its pre-Peterson glory.

In the Common Sense Revolution we promised to increase tuition rates to restore the traditional balance between subsidy and tuition. We restored balance in post-secondary funding by asking students to pay a very

reasonable 35% of the cost of their education. In 1995 this promise was spelled out quite clearly in writing, which we know is something that is quite foreign to Liberal policy manifestos over recent years. Again, in the Blueprint of 1999, we reiterated our commitment to this principle.

We recognize that an increase in the level of tuition each student is asked to pay will result in more demand for student assistance programs. We recognized this demand and we acted upon it. We decided to make more money available to students than ever before to assist them with their tuition fees. Under the Mike Harris government the amount of money available under the Ontario student assistance plan has been increased by 33%. We've provided tax credits to students that help them to pay the interest on their student loans. The Ontario student opportunities—

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): First of all, I would like to commend my colleague from Hamilton Mountain for her commitment and dedication to this issue, for bringing it to the floor of this House, because I believe some very important points were raised. I hope the members of the government are listening, because certainly many of the issues that have been raised here today do require some attention and action.

I'd also like to address a comment that was made in the House earlier today by the member for Carleton-Gloucester. He presented a question to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and indicated, "Much rumour and innuendo has been circulating on the other side of the House about the state of Ontario's colleges and universities." I was somewhat puzzled by that statement, and I suggest that much of the concern about the state of colleges and universities in this province has not only been from this side of the House—and certainly I think we have a responsibility to reflect what we hear within our constituencies and from some of the students who in fact are with us today. They have very real concerns that we do try to highlight and bring to the attention of the government.

This morning I attended a public agencies committee meeting. Present at that meeting was Dr Katherine Quinsey, a professor at the University of Windsor and also a member of the Ontario graduate scholarship program. If I might quote from Hansard, the doctor indicated that: "Obviously, the Ontario graduate scholarship program is about training investment in the brightest. Some will probably address this point, but I'll raise it now. We are in the midst, of course, of a faculty hiring crisis, and we want the best and the brightest out there." So here is a professor at the University of Windsor who very clearly indicated that there is a hiring crisis in universities right now. I'm going to address some of my remarks to that particular situation, which I believe the minister needs to pay some specific attention to and provide us with the plan, which we've heard nothing about so far in the debate today.

I'd like to tell you how we treat our brightest and best young professors. I know a young academic who finished first in his undergraduate class of over 500 engineers. He won a scholarship, went to Cambridge and came back to Ontario with a PhD to pursue his career. That was nearly 10 years ago. Since then, he has been snapped up by a leading university and has developed an impressive research program. Graduate students from across Canada, and indeed around the world, come to work with him. He has won awards for his teaching. He is 35 years old, has received tenure and is currently acting as a department head. This professor's salary was frozen for the first five years of his career, and now, 10 years into his career, his salary is equal to what he would get as a starting professor at an American university. Ladies and gentlemen, those institutions are knocking at the door. This is why we have a brain drain. This is why our young professionals in Ontario are leaving us in droves, and we are headed for a crisis. We will need 32,000 new professors by the year 2010 to deal with the double cohort. Twenty thousand will retire at that time, and we will need an additional 12,000 professors to manage the increase in numbers. How can we expect our young professionals to stay when we treat our best and our brightest like this?

There are so many issues, and I know that my time is limited. Another issue that I think is worth pointing out and directing the government to: We talk about the SuperBuild fund and the dollars that have been directed towards the bricks and mortar, and that is important. What about the operating dollars? The minister said earlier today that that information would be released at the appropriate time. I suggest that the appropriate time is now. If colleges and universities are to plan for the management of the double cohort, they need to know what resources they are going to have to manage the numbers they will receive.

Finally, I would also like to make reference to the fact that money for new student places does not impact the huge deferred maintenance bill facing Ontario universities. The tab for accumulated deferred maintenance represents approximately \$5,500 for each full-time student.

There are lots of issues that need to be addressed, and I thank my colleague from Hamilton Mountain for providing this opportunity for us to focus on that this afternoon.

1730

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): There are basically three issues I want to raise quite quickly. Before getting into those, I want to talk about the high quality of the educational institutions I have within my own riding: the world-renowned Queen's University, the Royal Military College and St Lawrence College, of which we are extremely proud in our area. Not only that, we know they do an awful lot for the local economy, which is extremely important as well. They employ an awful lot of people both in-house and out-house.

Let there be absolutely no doubt about it: The people of Ontario have heard an awful lot of figures here today, but all one has to do is look at the budget document that Ernie Eves gave to this House last year and compare it to the budget document that was given four or five years ago when they first came to power. Everyone in Ontario should know that \$400 million per year in annual operating grants has been cut out of the universities and colleges over the last four years, each and every year, and only \$23 million of that has been restored. We are the lowest per capita funding jurisdiction within North America now, save one or two.

The government members have talked today about only one thing: the fact that some new money is going into capital investments in this province. They somehow feel that as long as the new money goes into building new buildings, which are needed—certainly in Kingston we are very pleased that we're getting a new building at a cost of about \$40 million to \$50 million—that's going to solve all the problems and somehow deal with the lack of operating money that the universities and colleges have been suffering under over the last four to five years.

They've got to understand that just because you put new capital money in place, it doesn't replace the \$400 million you've taken out of the annual budgets of the universities and colleges for the last four to five years, particularly when you realize that only about \$62 million of the new money they're putting in is for the repair of existing college and university buildings in the province. An independent study has clearly shown that what we lack here in Ontario is close to \$1 billion that would be required to bring all the physical plant of colleges and universities up to date. So \$62 million out of the new funding is a mere start. I would like to see this government and future governments make that kind of commitment on an annual basis and not just be a one-term shot.

The second point is about students. That's really what it's all about. Students' fees have increased by 60% for university courses over the last four to five years, and over 50% for college courses. The average debt load right now is \$25,000 per student. Sole-support parents have been cut off the social assistance program so they can get OSAP, which they have to pay back. You and I know that what the Mike Harris government did was raise the level of forgiveness from \$6,000 to \$7,000, which in effect is saving the treasury of this province \$80 million. The government members never talk about that.

The final issue I quickly want to draw to your attention is the double cohort issue. Ninety thousand additional students will be coming into the system in the year 2003. What provisions have been made for them? Is there going to be faculty ready for them? I attended a meeting, together with my colleague from the adjacent riding of Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, about two months ago where there were over 300 parents of grade 9 and 10 students at Holy Cross school in Kingston, parents who were deeply concerned over the fact that their students in grades 9 and 10 in effect will

have to compete with each other, because in the year 2003 there are going to be twice as many students looking for those college and university spots than otherwise would have been the case. Those students—and some of the pages here may be among them—are going to be deeply affected, and the kinds of decisions that they will have to make will affect them for the rest of their lives.

I say shame on this government for not dealing with that kind of a situation, which affects the livelihood of our future generations at a much earlier time. They haven't done anything about it, and it's high time that very serious problem gets addressed as soon as possible.

Mr Caplan: I'd like to focus my remarks on an area that hasn't been touched on today, which is the crisis in student housing. Not only are the costs escalating for things like tuition, but the cost of living for students is making it nearly impossible for some students to continue their education. The Harris government has made it worse by limiting the abilities of universities and colleges to address this very significant problem. I'd like to outline what has contributed to this crisis, and there are two main factors; the first is, frankly, there's no interest from the Harris government, from the minister, in providing housing, compounded by two policy directions that they've undertaken.

The first policy direction is that the government is developing programs to increase enrolment in universities without regard to whether universities and colleges and their respective communities have places to find safe, decent, affordable housing. It's fine to expand engineering programs in Waterloo, mathematics programs at Queens or science programs here in Toronto or anywhere else around this province, but when you do that and you have oversubscribed residence spaces and low vacancy rates in communities, that's when you have a crisis.

The Harris government says to the universities: "Make do with what you have. Find your own money if you want to build. Maybe raise tuition fees to help." They say to the students: "Don't worry about the rental market. We're going to make sure that it's there to serve you. If you can't afford to rent, then borrow money. Go further into debt."

The other policy direction is that they've announced their much-touted SuperBuild fund. Actually it really should be called SuperFraud. The fund provides buildings for students to learn in. Unfortunately, the monies cannot be used to build somewhere for students to live. It was restricted to academic places only.

The other major factor is the lack of affordable housing options for students not fortunate enough to get into residence to begin with. We know there's a crisis. There's a crisis in every corner of this province. As students came to school back in September 1999, we heard about these problems. We heard about them in Waterloo, in Toronto; we heard about them in Ottawa, in Guelph. Not only are there more students looking for housing, there are fewer listings of housing for those students not fortunate enough to get spaces. I want to highlight a few of the locations in Ontario.

Here in Toronto back in September students were saying that high rents, low vacancy rates and dismal conditions were par for the course. The manager of the University of Toronto's off-campus housing office, Victoria Austin, said there was an 18% decrease in listings since the same time in 1998. She said quite directly that "The removal of rent control would seem to be the most clear influencing factor." Bachelor apartments in Toronto which used to rent for \$500, maybe \$600, now rent around the \$700 mark. She also said that landlords who used to rent to students are targeting the higher-income market because they were able to raise the rents under the policies passed by the Harris government.

University administration plastered downtown Toronto with posters this fall in an attempt to find places for students to live, people who would be willing to take them in. This is the first time this has ever happened, and it's a shame that it did. The university's 6,100 residence spaces were fully booked, and there will be no new rooms until the year 2003. You can be sure this is going to happen this fall, next fall and the fall after. In fact, the University of Toronto had to book two floors of the Primrose Hotel in downtown Toronto just to accommodate first-year students who were guaranteed rooms to be able to pursue their studies at the University of Toronto.

In Waterloo, the situation was no different. There's a local housing shortage in Kitchener-Waterloo. It was so tight that university president David Johnston has appealed to his employees to make room in their homes for the expected 500 extra first-year students. He did this through a letter to staff, to faculty and to retired employees, to accommodate an extra 290 students. At Laurier, the university also had to make do.

Finally, Kitchener-Waterloo has one of the lowest vacancy rates in the province. In fact the lowest is in Guelph. In Guelph, the students found themselves in tents in September, the beginning of the school year. I met with the school counsellor at Guelph in the fall. At that time they still had students living in music rooms with many other students. This is not an environment which is going to produce the best and the brightest and the best hope for students and their futures.

Thank you to the member from Hamilton Mountain for bringing this very important resolution.

1740

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane): I'm very pleased to join with my colleagues in this debate and I thank the member from Hamilton Mountain for bringing this to the attention of the House.

I'd like to speak very briefly on behalf of Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology. It has a catchment area of 158,000 square kilometres. It goes way up the James Bay coast, up to Peawanuck, down to just south of the Tri-town in a town called Latchford, west to Hearst and east to the Quebec border. It's a tremendous area of 140,000 people spread over all those thousands and thousands of square kilometres that they have to serve.

Basically, Northern College is broke. They're running this year at a budget deficit of \$931,000. They do not foresee running in the black for the next five years. They look at the SuperBuild fund that's supposed to be out there. I agree with my colleague who just spoke that it really is a fraud. They put in an application for \$14 million for various programs they could put on and they got just \$71,000 out of that, to put on a vet technician program.

The main reason given to the college was that the criteria for SuperBuild are you need high-tech partners—partnering is the big buzz word right—or to partner with a university. Well, we don't have either of those organizations. We don't have a university in that whole catchment area and we don't have any high-tech partners we can partner with. We're not a Fanshawe or a Sheridan College. It's another example of a policy crafted down here at Queen's Park that really doesn't apply to northern Ontario.

This college struggles to try to bring some very basic programs to help people work and stay in northern Ontario. They're looking at trying to develop a trade centre. It looks like they might be able to get the vet technician program going now. We're looking at a mining technology program, waste facility management, hospitality training, as tourism is going to be one of the bigger industries in northern Ontario.

There's a laptop computer infrastructure project. This would be a great little high-tech program for Northern, to attract local residents and students and others to come to do that, but they don't have that high-tech partner because they're not in Kitchener-Waterloo or they're not in Kanata, so they can't partner up with a company that maybe could provide some assistance for that.

They'd like to expand all these different programs. They just don't have the money to do that. They need the cash. There's no doubt about it, a university or college system such as Northern College has to have the financial support to keep going, to keep their campuses with attractive courses and be able to do the marketing to attract the students to come.

Quite frankly, it's a tough job competing against the other universities and colleges in the province with some of the marketing programs they have to try to retain even some of our own students to stay in the area. We have a very small employer population base which is based primarily in the city of Timmins, the only city in the whole area. The rest are spread out through the whole region. They have very small employers, with very small and specific training needs. They really can't specialize for our vast community into one or two courses that maybe some of the colleges do down here.

It's time the minister really took a look at the funding of all the colleges, but especially many of the smaller ones throughout the province, not just in northern Ontario, that have great difficulty trying to keep a critical mass of programming there to attract students to remain at those campuses.

They have housing at the South Porcupine campus of Northern College. It's very difficult to maintain that housing and it's running at a deficit also. I think one of the hard decisions the college may have to look at is possibly getting rid of that housing project on the campus. It would be sad if that happened, because they do have students coming down from the James Bay coast.

Again, let me congratulate the member for Hamilton Mountain for presenting this in the Legislature today so that we can discuss this and bring forward our concerns about the vast importance of post-secondary education in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Mrs Bountrogianni has moved opposition day motion number 3. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1746 to 1756.

The Acting Speaker: Members will take their seats. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Crozier, Bruce	Marchese, Rosario
Bartolucci, Rick	Curling, Alvin	Martel, Shelley
Bountrogianni, Marie	Di Cocco, Caroline	McGuinty, Dalton
Boyer, Claudette	Dombrowsky, Leona	McLeod, Lyn

Caplan, David	Duncan, Dwight	Peters, Steve
Christopherson, David	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Churley, Marilyn	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Kwinter, Monte	Ramsay, David
Conway, Sean G.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	

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

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Guzzo, Garry J.	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Baird, John R.	Hardeman, Ernie	Palladini, Al
Barrett, Toby	Hastings, John	Runciman, Robert W.
Beaubien, Marcel	Johns, Helen	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Kells, Morley	Sterling, Norman W.
Clark, Brad	Klees, Frank	Stewart, R. Gary
Coburn, Brian	Marland, Margaret	Stockwell, Chris
Cunningham, Dianne	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tascona, Joseph N.
DeFaria, Carl	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.
Dunlop, Garfield	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Ecker, Janet	Molinari, Tina R.	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Flaherty, Jim	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Galt, Doug	Mushinski, Marilyn	Young, David
Gilchrist, Steve	Newman, Dan	
Gill, Raminder	O'Toole, John	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 26; the nays are 43.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1759.

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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