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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 21 November 2000

Mardi 21 novembre 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 21 November 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 21 novembre 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ST JOSEPH'S VILLA

Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot): I rise this afternoon to speak about St Joseph's Villa, a schedule D non-profit long-term-care facility in Dundas, which currently serves some 389 residents. The demographics of this facility are changing considerably. Increasingly, the residents are older and more vulnerable. Because of those changing demographics, like some other schedule D facilities in Ontario, there's a need for facility enhancements or rebuilding. In fact, some 13,500 units are scheduled to be rebuilt. To this government's credit, there has been a commitment of some \$18 million of \$29 million in funding. They're doing a good thing but too slowly.

The problem is that the non-profit sector, unlike acute care facilities, is hamstrung in terms of their ability to raise funds. In this particular case, because the provincial government funding is over 20 years, the total cost of the project will approach \$51 million.

I'd like to call on the provincial government today to revisit this policy and see if there's some way these kinds of facilities could be treated in a fashion similar to acute care facilities like hospitals, where 70% of the funding is front-loaded. That would make it easier for the very good thing this government wants to do to happen more quickly.

SCOUTS CANADA

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's my privilege to rise today and speak about Saturday, November 18, when Scouts Canada had their awards ceremony for the White Pine region. It was held at Bowmanville High School in my riding of Durham. It's just a wonderful opportunity to speak positively about youth in our community.

Scouts Canada has long been known for its contribution to communities throughout Ontario and indeed across this great country. It teaches our young people the values of co-operation, resourcefulness and civic responsibility, among many other things. In short, it helps them become good citizens, and that is a goal to which we all

aspire. These values were honoured at this year's awards in Bowmanville.

I would like to recognize and thank Hugh Coutts, the district commissioner, for his role in the ceremony and his contribution to this wonderful organization. I'd also like to recognize those who received some 64 chief scout awards, including Michael Stroyan, Donald Bark, Jesse Gilbert, Derek Shafer, Benjamin Ronson, Mark Noel, Matthew Bowler and Lambert Barr.

Also on the chief scout list this year were Kevin and Sarah Connelly, Ryan Knowler, Andrew Norton, Matt Rodgers and Bobby Skan. Finally, I want to recognize David Baxter as the sole recipient of the Queen's Venturer award for the riding of Durham.

I know that all members of the House will join me in congratulating these young leaders for their achievements over the past year and in wishing them well in the future. This is another example of Ontario at work and the young people leading the way.

TAX REBATE

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I want once again to bring to the attention of this House that approximately 800,000 senior citizens in this province will not be receiving the "Harris cheque." My office and the offices of my colleagues have been inundated with calls and inquiries regarding these cheques. To be clear, the Harris government does not believe the very people who worked hard, fought for this country, raised families in this province and built this province deserve the cheque. According to Mike Harris, 800,000 seniors don't deserve a cheque because they don't make enough money.

After all, in the Mike Harris Ontario, only income taxpayers count. These seniors, many of whom are facing escalating property tax bills, heating costs which might rise up to 50% this winter and who face a myriad of new user fees, will not receive a dime from the Mike Harris government. Income taxpayers will receive this Jesse Ventura-inspired vote buyer.

In fact, one of my constituents in a small town had his cheque hand-delivered by a neighbour. The cheque and all his personal, private tax information was conveniently sent to one of his neighbours so they could peruse it and deliver it personally. Now we know, seniors and any regard for personal privacy don't exist in Mike Harris's Ontario.

POLICE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): I rise today, as I have in the past, to recognize the efforts of police services in making our communities safe in Ontario. Today I recognize the Police Association of Ontario, which has worked hard to keep our communities safe. The Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Police Association of Ontario have worked together with one common objective: to reduce crime in Ontario. As a government, we think we've been successful, but we could not have done it alone, without the hard work of the Police Association of Ontario.

I ask the House to recognize the members from the association: President Bruce Miller, Ted Thornley, Bob Baltin, Dave Kingston, Brenda Lawson, Brian Miller, Terry Ryan and Rick Houston.

The Police Association of Ontario was founded in 1933. It is the official voice and representative body of Ontario's front-line police personnel. It provides representation, resources and support for Ontario's 70 municipal police associations. Its membership is approximately 13,000.

I thank the Police Association of Ontario for sharing their commitment to safe streets and safe communities.

ANTI-CRIME LEGISLATION

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): I am pleased to rise today and say, on behalf of Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals, we on this side of the House aren't just talking about crime, we're actually doing something about it.

Bill 6, introduced by Rick Bartolucci, the member for Sudbury, would have cracked down on child prostitution, pimps and johns. Yet that bill, which was supported by all members of the House at the end of the day, stalls. It will not go to third reading because this government won't let it become law.

Bill 67, supported by police associations all across Ontario, as is Bill 6, supported by police chiefs and associations, the Toronto Sun and the Toronto Star, would crack down on guns; 40% of the guns that end up being picked up by the police in cities like Toronto, Ottawa and Windsor. We would stop the proliferation of these BB guns, air guns, pellet guns and starter pistols. But this government wants to play politics. It has the support of everybody: the police, the chiefs, Ontarians. It has passed second reading. I urge the government: stop playing politics on this issue. Get out of your partisan bunker on behalf of the gun lobby and pass Bill 6 and Bill 67. The sooner they are passed, the sooner police and victims in Ontario will be safer.

YORK UNIVERSITY LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I have a letter from a Ms Ruppert, which I endorse, and I want to read for the record.

"Over 2,400 teaching assistants, course directors, and graduate assistants have been on strike since October 26, 2000. One major issue of the strike is job security for course directors, some of whom have been teaching at York University for 15+ years and still have to reapply for their jobs every year. In addition, teaching assistants like myself are resisting the administration's decision to remove tuition indexation from our contract. Tuition indexation has served to help offset rising graduate tuition. Graduate assistants at York University are asking for their first contract and have thus far only been offered a wage of \$4,500 for eight months' work. To define the context further, it is important to mention that graduate students at York University pay approximately \$5,200 of tuition per year. The administration's current offer leaves graduate assistants unable to pay tuition from their wages and teaching assistants with close to \$700 per month to live on.

"This is not a dispute that centres on wage increases that a fledgling employer cannot afford. Currently, York University is running an \$18-million surplus ... and the retention of qualified employees who have dedicated decades of their life to York. Instead, this dispute centres on York administration's unwillingness to ensure that graduate education remains accessible to all who wish to pursue it and that Canadian students receive the best possible learning environment."

I urge York University to deal fairly with these workers. I hope they come up with a settlement that treats them fairly.

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ROYAL AGRICULTURAL WINTER FAIR

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I rise today to recognize the world champion farmers from Perth county who received top honours at this year's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, the highest-regarded fair in the world, I might say.

Lorne Fell, from Staffa, won first place for wheat seed. It was Lorne's 22nd world title. Brian Miller, also from Staffa, won his sixth title for oats. Warren Wolfe of RR5, Mitchell, was champion in white and coloured beans, and Warren's wife, Bernadine, placed second in this category.

Eileen Haig, of the St Marys area, was grand champion and reserve champion in both the classical male llama and classical female llama categories. Gerry De Groot, from the Wartburg area, did very well in the hog competition.

Seventeen-year-old Heather Anderson, a 4-H member from RR2 Tavistock, placed third in the intermediate showmanship category out of more than 140 competitors from across Canada.

I'd also like to congratulate 20-year-old Brian Innes, from the neighbouring county of Oxford. Brian won the Young Speakers for Agriculture competition. He spoke about the changing face of agriculture and preserving family farms.

I want to commend the farmers from Perth county, and indeed those from the surrounding area, who took part in this year's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Winning at this year's fair was especially gratifying for many farmers, given the low commodity prices and poor weather conditions they've had to endure.

Please join me in congratulating the award-winning farmers from Perth county.

POLICE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): I would like to take the opportunity today to welcome in all our galleries all the police officers and staff who are present for the Police Association of Ontario's annual lobby day here at Queen's Park. A particular note to my good friends and colleagues, people I've grown up with as students and safety officers and everything, Mr Len Ellens and Mr Mark Ireland: I appreciate your presence here, gentlemen.

The Police Association of Ontario represents 13,000 police and civilian members of municipal police forces across the province who work hard day in and day out to ensure our communities remain safe and secure. Some have even lost their lives in the performance of their duties. To them and their families, I offer my heartfelt gratitude and prayers.

Today the PAO has come to Queen's Park, where they will speak to various members throughout the day, to discuss their concerns about both community and policing issues. These issues include amendments to the Employment Standards Act of Ontario to extend maternity and paternity leave to one year, so that it falls in line with new federal guidelines. They remain vocal in opposing the privatization of our jails and of themselves.

Furthermore, as a result of downloading, the OPP and municipal police forces are forced to compete for police contracts. There are now 30 fewer police forces in Ontario than there were five years ago. I firmly agree with the PAO that communities have the right to select the type of policing that is right for them.

I look forward to discussing these and other issues with members of the police association today and hope they can convince the government that their needs are the needs of our communities.

TORONTO MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Mr David Young (Willowdale): I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the candidates for Toronto city council, the Toronto District School Board, the Toronto Catholic District School Board and, of course, the 26 candidates for mayor of the city of Toronto.

Municipal campaigns present special challenges for candidates. Unlike provincial and national candidates, who tie their political fortunes to party accomplishments, party platforms and party machinery, municipal candidates have only themselves and their records to rely on as they approach each and every door in their constituency.

That's why municipal campaigns are very daunting, and often humbling, experiences.

The candidates in Willowdale included John Filion and David Shiner, both of whom were returned as councillors. Against them were Ron Summers, Youval Zilberberg and Bernadette Michael. Judi Codd will be returning as the public school trustee. Dave Shory, Raj Manucha, Michael Del Grande, Tommaso Stenta, Joshua Colle—another successful candidate—Marnie Ferguson, Phillip Horgan and Scott Cusimano also put their names forward, as did Nick Dominelli, Ryan Ward and Bill Higgins.

I'd like to take a moment before I conclude my remarks to also mention the fact that Joan King and Norm Gardner will be retiring, both of whom have served their respective communities for a considerable period of time. They will be missed.

I know that over the next three years I'll have the opportunity to work with the successful candidates, all of whom I consider excellent individuals, and I look forward to having that opportunity.

SPECIAL REPORT, PROVINCIAL AUDITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the Special Report of the Provincial Auditor on Accountability and Value for Money.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION ACT, 2000

Mr Kells moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr32, An Act respecting the Canadian National Exhibition Association.

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

MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT ACT (ADULT ENTERTAINMENT PARLOURS), 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES MUNICIPALITÉS (LOCAUX DE DIVERTISSEMENT POUR ADULTES)

Mr Bartolucci moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 146, An Act to amend the Municipal Act with respect to adult entertainment parlours / Projet de loi 146, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités à l'égard des locaux de divertissement pour adultes.

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

Carried.

The member for a short statement.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This bill amends section 225 of the Municipal Act relating to adult entertainment parlours. It prohibits a person from operating such parlours unless they are issued a licence to do so by the municipality. It includes a requirement that the applicant for a licence not have been found guilty under the Criminal Code of Canada of keeping a common bawdy house, of living off the avails of prostitution in relationship to the adult entertainment parlour or of participating in organized crime.

The bill also prohibits a person licensed to operate an adult entertainment parlour from employing a person who is under 18 years of age or who does not hold a licence to work or perform or provide services in the parlour.

The bill amends the definition of “adult entertainment parlour” to include premises from which dances, escorts or nude or partially nude dancing are arranged for a fee and in which telephone, electronic or Internet sex lines are available.

The bill adds section 226 to the act. This section gives local municipalities the power to pass bylaws requiring persons to be licensed to work, perform or provide services in an adult entertainment parlour.

A person is prohibited from providing such services in a municipality unless a person holds a licence issued by that municipality. A person must be at least 18 years of age in order to be issued such a licence and have qualifications similar to those required to hold a licence to operate an adult entertainment parlour.

The licence issued by the municipality must contain a picture of the licensee and the licensee’s date of birth. A person who works in an adult entertainment parlour must have that licence available at the parlour at all times while working and produce it for inspection upon request by a peace officer.

A person who is under 18 and is working in an adult entertainment parlour may be apprehended by a peace officer and brought to a place that is a place of safety within the meaning of the Child and Family Services Act. A person who is conveyed to a place of safety under these provisions may be detained for up to five days and shall be subject to part III of the Child and Family Services Act.

In conclusion, the penalty for any violation is, “on a first offence, a fine of not less than \$20,000 and not more than \$100,000 or to imprisonment not exceeding six months,” and, “on a subsequent offence, a fine of not less than \$50,000 and not more than \$250,000 or to imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both.”

Finally, the municipality will revoke the licence upon conviction and also inform the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario of that revocation.

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STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

APPRECIATION OF POLICE

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I wish to rise today to speak on behalf of all the people of Ontario. I want to pay tribute to Ontario’s police officers, the brave men and women who risk their lives in the service of others. Like so many in this province, I consider the work of our police officers to be a noble calling, one of the highest forms of public service.

Here in Ontario, we are especially fortunate because we are served by outstanding officers of the law, the dedicated men and women of our province’s police forces. They are, in my opinion, the best of the best. They are our everyday heroes and we depend on them every day. To them, risking their lives is part of the job. They do it without question and they do it without hesitation.

That’s why I want to take a moment to say on behalf of the people of Ontario: thank you.

We count on Ontario’s police officers constantly. We count on them instinctively. That’s why I want them to know they can count on us. The overwhelming majority of the people of Ontario share, I believe, this sentiment—not all of them, and I say that sadly. To those who disagree, I want to ask you a couple of questions. What kind of society have we built if we forget or if we disregard those who risk their lives to protect us? What kind of society have we built if we tip the balance against the police and in favour of those who commit crime? What kind of message does harsh and constant criticism of our police send to those who choose to live outside the law? What does it say to our children? They must understand from the outset who are the good guys and who are the criminals.

When it comes to taking sides between lawbreakers and those who enforce the law, or between victims and their assailants, let there be no doubt where this government stands. We stand for the victims, and we will continue to work to uphold and enhance their rights. We stand for the men and the women who risk their lives to enforce the law and to keep the public peace. We will continue to give them, to the best of our ability, all the support and resources they need to do their job, which is to ensure the safety of the people of this province.

That’s why we’ve moved to meet the changing needs of police officers all across this province. That’s why, through the community policing partnership program, Solicitor General David Tsubouchi has announced a long-term commitment of \$35 million per year that is putting more than 1,000 new police officers on Ontario’s streets. I’m pleased as well to announce to the House today that we reached our initial goal of 1,000 new officers on November 6 of this year.

Later in this session, Attorney General Jim Flaherty will be introducing legislation designed to address organized crime and to seize and freeze assets that have been acquired through illegal activity. Yesterday, Correctional Services Minister Rob Sampson introduced new legislation to further reform our prison, parole and probation system. These reforms include drug and alcohol testing for parolees and prisoners and the requirement that prisoners earn any remission of their sentences.

We have also launched a new and determined \$4-million-a-year campaign to fight organized crime in Ontario. We've improved public safety with initiatives such as the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act, which imposes tough new penalties for those who flee the police.

Our police officers not only serve our communities; they and their families are also valued members of our communities. When these families suffer a tragedy, we all feel the pain. That's why we have established and continue to support the public safety officers' survivors scholarship fund. This fund grants scholarships to relatives of officers killed in the line of duty, enabling them to complete their education despite the loss of an important family member.

We have also renewed the mandate of the Crime Control Commission. One of the commissioners is Frank Mazzilli, the member for London-Fanshawe, who is a former London police officer and now the parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General. David Tilson, the member for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey and the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General, also serves as a commissioner.

Already in this term we have fulfilled our Blueprint commitment to introduce a Parental Responsibility Act.

Together with police officers and concerned citizens across Canada, we will continue to fight for changes at the federal level as well, including scrapping the existing laws governing young offenders and replacing them with tough and effective new measures; repealing the "discount law" that routinely lets offenders out of prison after serving only two thirds of their terms; repealing the "faint hope" clause that causes victims and their families so much trauma and so much grief; and stopping the practice of giving federal pardons to sex offenders.

Last spring I helped unveil the memorial to 200 Ontario police officers killed while serving others. At the time we all hoped and we all prayed that no new names would be added to that number. Sadly, since that time another officer, OPP Sergeant Marg Eve, was killed in the line of duty. Like her fallen colleagues, Sergeant Eve will be missed dearly by her family and by her colleagues and friends. As with all police heroes who have fallen, she will be remembered by all of us in this Legislature. The people of Ontario indeed will not forget the price these brave men and women have paid.

The police officers we pay tribute to with this memorial have made the ultimate sacrifice. They have earned our gratitude, our respect and now the place of honour we have created for them a thousandfold. The

police memorial ensures they will forever be regarded as heroes in life, not death.

Today I urge every member of this assembly to recognize the contributions made by the members of Ontario's police forces past and present. I invite them all to find the time in their busy schedules to visit the police memorial and to take a moment to remember the more than 200 brave men and women who served their communities at the cost of their lives. At the same time, I encourage the people of Ontario to support their local police, to remember the dangers they willingly face every day and to give them the respect they have earned.

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Solicitor General): Today I rise not only to support the Premier in his comments concerning our police services, but also because I want to bring to the attention of the Legislature a fact that the Premier omitted from his remarks.

I'm sure the members will be interested in learning that earlier today the Police Association of Ontario honoured the Premier with a special award, recognizing his continued commitment to law enforcement.

In presenting this award, Bruce Miller, president of the PAO, cited many of the government's achievements under the leadership of Mike Harris, achievements that help to create an Ontario in which citizens not only are safe, but also feel safe.

As part of the Mike Harris team, I've been privileged to support the initiatives that are giving our police the tools they need to do their job, a job that is sadly becoming more difficult and more dangerous every day.

As the Premier has mentioned, we've kept our promise to put 1,000 net new police officers on Ontario's streets. In fact, just last week I presented a cheque, along with Tina Molinari, to the York Regional Police Service, to Police Chief Bob Middaugh. Also present, of course, was the association representative, Dave Kingston. This cheque represented the one thousandth police officer, as the Premier has indicated before. We also introduced the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act.

1400

It was at the very sad occasion of the funeral of Rick McDonald that the Premier and I had a chance to speak to the family, and the representative there as well, Brian Kingsley. It was at that time that both the Premier and I committed to bring forward legislation that would address the problem. I'm happy to say that we did pass the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act with the support of all members of this Legislature.

We have also honoured our fallen police officers with the Ontario Police Memorial. All this shows is that we are on the side of the police officers and we care about our police officers.

We've also taken action to enhance public safety in Ontario when the federal government has refused to act. For example, I was proud to introduce Christopher's Law, an act which received the unanimous support, again, of the members of this House, which establishes Canada's first provincial sex offender registry.

I know I speak on behalf of my colleagues Attorney General Jim Flaherty, Correctional Minister Rob Sampson and all of my caucus colleagues as well when I say that we are committed to ensuring that Ontario has safe streets in safe communities.

At the same time, we must all understand that while the government passes laws and provides resources, it is the brave men and women of our municipal and provincial police services who are on the front line every day. We rely on their dedication and bravery, and I welcome the opportunity to join the Premier in saying to them, thank you for your work; thank you for your sacrifices on our behalf.

In closing, let me once again congratulate the Premier on receiving this very special recognition award from the Police Association of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Responses?

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

On behalf of the members of the Ontario Liberal caucus, I want to offer my words of support and thanks to the men and women of Ontario's police services. Let me say directly to the officers present in the gallery today and to all those watching these proceedings on TV, for your courage, your sacrifice and your dedication, for your strong commitment to serving our communities, we thank you.

Words are important, but we in the Liberal caucus know that words alone will never be enough. We believe that fighting crime starts with actions, not words. That's why we took the lead on banning replica guns in Ontario. When Michael Bryant first proposed it, the Solicitor General and Attorney General laughed. I am proud to say that our bill will soon be law and our police and our broader public will be the safer for it.

Because we believe fighting crime takes action and not words alone, we fought hard to end the Harris government's practice of allowing criminals sentenced to jail for fraud and drug trafficking and drunk driving to serve their sentences outside of jail, in a place much more comfortable, like their homes. When we first raised this matter, the corrections minister said we were wrong. After we provided additional evidence, it was the minister who was forced to admit that he was wrong. I am proud to say that because of Ontario Liberals and the work of my caucus colleague Dave Levac, the drive-by window has been taken out of Ontario's jails.

When it comes to victims of crime, it was Ontario Liberals who came to the aid of the surviving family members of that tragic OC Transpo shooting. You will recall that when I first raised the fact that Mike Harris's transition team was attempting to thwart the will of the people of Ottawa to give compensation to the families of those who had survived a terrible shooting, both the Attorney General and the Minister of Municipal Affairs refused to stand up for victims.

There is so much more that this government could be doing to fight crime and make our streets safer here in Ontario.

The Harris government talks tough about young offenders, as the Premier just did, but when it comes to enforcing the law, it becomes clear they are all talk and no action. In 1998-99, that fiscal year, Ontario only bumped up six young offenders into adult court. During the same period of time, Manitoba moved 29 young offenders up to adult court, Alberta moved 20 young offenders up to adult court and Quebec moved 23 young offenders up to adult court. But apparently here in Ontario, there is no such desire or appetite on the part of this government.

There is so much more this government could be doing to fight crime and make our streets safer here in Ontario. They could support tougher penalties for customers of child prostitutes, as Rick Bartolucci has proposed in his private member's bill. They could adopt Pat Hoy's school bus safety bill. They could listen to our police who oppose this government's plan to privatize our jails because, like us, they understand that privatization means a greater number of escapes, putting our public at greater risk.

This government might join us in putting a stop to the expansion of private police services in Ontario. Unlike the former Solicitor General, who thought private policing was an appropriate way to reduce government costs, I understand that there is a world of difference between a trained police officer and a security guard.

If the Harris government was really interested in public safety, they would take themselves out of the holster of the gun lobby once and for all. That means taking guns out of the hands of our 12-year-olds. It means allowing judges to take guns out of the hands of men who beat their wives, something this government refuses to do. It means supporting, not opposing, gun control.

Ontario Liberals have offered real solutions to both prevent and punish crime. While we've been tough on crime, the Harris government has proven time after time that it's just tough on talk. The Harris government is content to lay blame at the feet of Ottawa, but we happen to believe there is still much more for this Legislature to do when it comes to making our families and our police safe. I assure you that we will continue to do that work on behalf of those people.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I want to say a word directly to police officers across Ontario. I think police officers across Ontario ought to know that they enjoy the support and the respect of citizens across this province, that every day we thank them for the work they do, every day we thank them for their devotion to our safety, our security. We especially appreciate their devotion to their duty. I want every police officer in the province to know that.

I also want to take the time to respond directly to some of the Premier's comments, because while the Premier said that he wanted to congratulate and support police officers, there are a number of problems with his statement.

First of all, the Premier says that his government stands for victims. The only piece of legislation passed by this government with respect to victims was in fact reviewed by judges in Ontario courts who have said that you've done nothing for victims, that the legislation you passed is hollow. It is superficial. It grants no rights and no protections to victims. There is an ongoing need, if this government says that it stands for victims, to actually do something—not just to say something, but to do something.

The government says it is proud that, through the community policing partnership program, new officers will be added to police forces across Ontario. There's a little bit more information that needs to be made open to the public on this issue as well. Municipality after municipality across this province has been very clear and very outspoken on the fact that because of this government's downloading of ambulance services—you set standards here but the funding level is down here—because of your downloading of the responsibility for clean water and for sewage treatment, because of your downloading of the costs of seniors' housing and social housing and the downloading of dozens of other community services, most municipalities in this province don't know where they're going to get the money to be able to participate in the partnership program. They honestly don't know where they're going to find the money, never mind the money to operate the ambulances, never mind the money to ensure their citizens will be drinking clean, safe drinking water.

1410

The Premier refers to corrections. The auditor today, in a special report—to my knowledge, the first time an auditor of Ontario has had to release a special report—has said your ministry of corrections is in a state of chaos. While the number of inmates is going down, the cost of operating the system is going up, and there is no rhyme or reason to why these costs are so out of line.

Then you talked about organized crime. In your mention of organized crime, I wish you had pointed out that the Criminal Intelligence Service Ontario has said the biggest threat from organized crime in this province is its infiltration of solid waste companies, its infiltration of companies that handle hazardous waste. They believe it is a problem that seriously threatens the safety of Ontario citizens. Your government has been silent, except for your close relationship with one of the major solid waste landfill site companies, WMI, a company that has been fined hundreds of millions of dollars in the United States.

You talked about parental responsibility. I have a challenge, Premier. You know that police officers here today have asked your government to increase parental leave because hundreds, perhaps thousands of female officers, who we pay tens of thousands of dollars to train, are leaving police services because there is not adequate parental leave for them to spend time with their children and their families. If you care seriously about parental responsibility, extend parental leave, as police officers across the province have asked you to do.

I want to say again to the officers, thank you for your devotion to duty; and to the government, we'll continue to hold you accountable.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I want to join with the leader of the NDP, Howard Hampton, in expressing our high regard for police officers, but also our commitment to work with police officers and other partners within communities across Ontario to make Ontario a safer place for all our citizenry. That's why, when it came to impoundment rules for suspended drivers, we wanted the government to toughen up its legislation to ensure that impoundment was a consequence for suspended drivers caught in repeat offences. But the government didn't want anything to do with—

The Speaker: Order. It is now time for question period.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): On a point of order, Speaker: Given the unanimity in this House in terms of our respect and admiration for the police services, and given the unanimous support in this House for Bill 67, I seek unanimous consent for third reading of Bill 67 by month's end.

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

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): On a point of order, Speaker: The Solicitor General in his comments indicated that police officers need the tools in order to do their job. We are in agreement with that. In fact, police officers from across Ontario have told the Premier, the Solicitor General and the Attorney General that Bill 6, An Act to protect Children involved in Prostitution, is necessary for them to do their job. I ask for unanimous consent that this be called before the general government committee immediately.

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

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to give second and third readings to Bill 122, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalties for driving with a suspended licence, introduced by Mr Bartolucci.

The Speaker: Consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

Mr Bartolucci: On a point of order, Speaker: On December 9, 1999, I introduced Bill 32, An Act to amend—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat. The member for Brampton Centre is not going to shout out like that. I will handle it. It's a point of order. Yesterday your Minister of Education did points of order to get the same thing. I'm going to hear the point of order. Please don't shout out again.

The member for Sudbury.

Mr Bartolucci: Thank you, Speaker. On December 9, 1999, I introduced Bill 32, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require a driver's licence to be suspended if a motor vehicle is used when purchasing sexual

services from a child. I ask now that it be referred to the committee on general government immediately.

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

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to seek unanimous consent that Bill 24, my school safety bill, be referred to the general government committee.

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

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In May of this year, the Raves Act, 2000, was passed in this House during private member's bills and has not yet been called to the committee of social justice. I would like that bill to be called if I could ask for unanimous consent to do that.

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

The Minister of Correctional Services on a point of order.

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services):—important bill for correctional services. I ask for unanimous consent for second and third reading of that bill today.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?
Interjections.

The Speaker: With all the noise, I couldn't hear. I'll ask again. Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SPECIAL REPORT, PROVINCIAL AUDITOR

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question today is for the Premier. We believe that we have a solemn duty to protect the safety of the people of this province. Today the Provincial Auditor tells us, time and time again, that people's lives are at risk because of your government's negligence. His report is chock full of evidence.

First of all, let's deal with your government's abysmal record when it comes to the matter of land ambulances in Ontario. In 1998, more than one-half of our land ambulances did not meet response times. In 1999, in more than 60% of the cases, they did not make the standard. The auditor is now telling us that your disastrous plan to dump the responsibility of land ambulances on to our municipalities could make things still worse.

Premier, lives are at risk. In the face of the Provincial Auditor's report today, and his comments on this matter, will you now scrap your plan to download ambulance services and instead do your job, protect public safety and start by fixing the system that we have?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I appreciate the question, and I appreciate the interventions of the auditor to give us advice in all of these areas, including the Ministry of Health, including land ambulances.

I think you know that the government this year is spending about \$390 million for emergency health services in Ontario; \$280 million for land ambulance services, substantially more than has been spent by any other government in Ontario's history. Indeed, we have not downloaded full responsibility for land ambulance services. Instead, what we have proposed to do is to work—and committed to working—with municipalities in developing a new partnership to improve ambulance services and to ensure high quality, responsive and seamless services are in place by 2001. We are working with that. Municipalities, for the most part, are quite excited about this opportunity.

1420

Mr McGuinty: I can tell you, Premier, that municipalities and the Provincial Auditor are not excited about the opportunities. Take a look at page 10 of the auditor's report and look at the auditor's specific comments when he says, "Our major concerns were: Land ambulance services were being downloaded to municipalities at a time when over 50% of land ambulance operators were not meeting response time requirements."

Take a look at the report. The auditor tells us there's another way in which you're putting the health of Ontarians at risk. He tells us there has been a 41% cut in the number of inspections at our toxic waste dumps. He tells us there has been a 64% cut in the number of inspections at our water treatment plants. He tells us there has been a 25% cut in the number of inspectors to do the job of protecting our environment. The auditor says you're not preventing environmental disasters; you're sitting around and waiting for them to happen, and the people of Walkerton have paid a terrible price for your negligence.

Will you now stop putting lives at risk and start putting in place the inspectors and enforcement officers we've been asking you to put in place for some six months now?

Hon Mr Harris: Let me reference, first of all, your comment about land ambulances and municipalities. As you will know, many municipalities operated the services previously. The new 50-50 funding formula is in tune with our partnership model. Speaking about the transfer of responsibility, here is what one mayor said: "We'll want to get the best bang from the buck, and the best way to do that is to run it ourselves." That was McMeekin in the *Hamilton Spectator*, September 18, 1987. Mr McMeekin also said that moving to a fully integrated ambulance service reduced duplication and costs and dramatically decreased response time.

We appreciate the auditor's intervention, and we are moving exactly to increased service, to improved service and to improved accountability.

With respect to the Ministry of the Environment, which was the second part of your question, again we appreciate the auditor's report. I think the auditor himself references a number of initiatives we've taken in this area and acknowledges—

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

Mr McGuinty: The auditor is telling you, Premier—and I would recommend you take the time to actually look at his report—that you are placing public safety at risk. He's telling you that you are endangering Ontario lives. That's what he's telling you.

He's also talking about a very important issue: the safety of our children. He says you're doing a very lousy job when it comes to inspecting school buses. He says that you care more about saving a few bucks on inspections than protecting the safety of our children. He says you're not inspecting enough buses and, on top of that, you're not doing enough to keep tabs on the high-risk operations here in Ontario.

You want to take a chance with our kids' safety, you're taking a chance with the safety of our sick who want to be rushed at the earliest possible opportunity to the closest hospital, and you're taking a chance with the health and well-being of all of us by refusing to stand up for the environment. When are you going to do what the Provincial Auditor has asked you to do, which is to start protecting public safety?

Hon Mr Harris: The question involves a whole bunch of areas of the auditor's report. Perhaps to put it into perspective, the auditor, while identifying some areas that need correction, particularly in the Ministry of the Environment, which you commented on in your supplementary, applauds the initiatives we have taken with the Givens report and a number of initiatives to improve standards and services. He also, as you know, points out the abysmal record we inherited. I can go back to your own government, to auditor's reports when Jim Bradley was Minister of Environment, where the Provincial Auditor pointed out that a number of areas were not at all being investigated.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): Name one. You can't. You're all confused.

Hon Mr Harris: If you would like me to name one, I would be happy to. It says right here in the auditor's report, 1987, then-Minister Jim Bradley—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, that dog just won't hunt any more. Start acting like the Premier. Start acting like the leader of the government. Start taking responsibility for the actions of your government.

You know something else the Provincial Auditor tells us? Not only is this government failing to protect people, it's failing to protect our people's money. My second question is about those high rollers over at Agricorp. Instead of administering crop insurance, it's playing craps with the public purse. The auditor's telling us that Agricorp was playing the markets in hopes of making a quick buck and it quickly lost \$325,000 in two weeks. I'd like to hear from the guardian of the public purse, the champion of the taxpayers' interests, how it is that his government was standing on guard for taxpayers when Agricorp lost \$325,000.

Hon Mr Harris: I think this very issue has been asked a number of times in this Legislature. The Minister of Agriculture responded on a number of occasions and acknowledged at the time that Agricorp acted inappropriately and that the board acted inappropriately, and those people are no longer working for the government of Ontario.

Mr McGuinty: I can see why the Premier wants to get this behind him, but let's bring out a few more of the facts because they're really very, very delicious.

Premier, when farmers invest in crop insurance they expect that the money will be available to them should they happen upon hard times and need the money. Not only did Agricorp lose \$325,000, it actually paid somebody \$400,000 to lose that money for them. The auditor says that an investment adviser was paid \$400,000 for—and this has got to be the understatement of the year—advice that “was of little value.”

Premier, the advice wasn't only lousy, it was against the law. The auditor says that the adviser was suggesting investments that Agricorp was prohibited, by law, from making. That's \$325,000 lost on bad investments and \$400,000 lost on bad advice.

Premier, again, how can you boast about protecting the interests of taxpayers when this sort of stuff happened right under your nose?

Hon Mr Harris: In this case, the Minister of Agriculture has already reported to you the full report from Agricorp. In fact, Agricorp reported in good faith. They obtained legal advice, entered into a three-way agreement—the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada—to access a portion of the interest earned on the crop insurance fund. The auditor, by the way, subsequently said he didn't think that was appropriate. Neither did we think it was appropriate when it was brought to our attention. That's why the money has been returned to the access funds; it's been returned with interest, and that employee is no longer with the government.

Mr McGuinty: It gets better still. I've so far talked about \$725,000 lost by Agricorp, but that's really small potatoes when you compare it to the \$14 million put at risk. The auditor says that Agricorp paid \$14 million for a reinsurance scheme that wasn't put to tender—it may not have been necessary—not to mention the improper expense and travel claims or the fact that after six vision statements in three years, Agricorp still doesn't seem to have a clue of what it's all about. Premier, who's advising these guys? Your friends over at the ORC?

Let's put this all together: \$725,000 lost; \$14 million spent which probably never should have been spent in the first place, and that matter was never put to tender. We've got improper expense and travel claims. I can understand, Premier, why you want to put this matter behind you and you want to move on to other issues, but don't you think the appropriate thing to do in all the circumstances is to ask the Ontario Provincial Police to conduct an investigation into this matter?

Hon Mr Harris: I'd be happy to accept the advice and see if the OPP thinks it's appropriate. In the mean-

time, this is an issue that the minister himself has come forward with, acknowledged, dealt with, and the person responsible is no longer with the government.

1430

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): New question.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. If you haven't read this special report of the Provincial Auditor, you ought to read it now, because the Provincial Auditor wants to know why it is under your government the ambulance services of the province have become a threat to life instead of a lifesaver. He wants to know why under your government the ambulance service can no longer even meet the 1996 standards. He wants to know why under your government, in too many communities across this province, ambulances with gravely ill patients wait at the emergency ward for up to 45 minutes before they can deliver their patient. What's your response to the auditor? Why have ambulance services in this province deteriorated so badly under your government?

Hon Mr Harris: I think the auditor's report says nothing of the kind. The auditor's report points out that even though we have given significant increases in funding to ambulance services directly, even though municipalities have contributed increased funding to ambulance services directly, still there are areas of the ambulance system that are not meeting all the standards we expect of them. That was the case when we took office, and it is still the case now, although better we believe.

We do have a plan, which I think the auditor and many municipalities have acknowledged is in place. As I indicated, many mayors and reeves understand that if we get accountability, municipalities feel they will do a better job. We are full 50-50 funding partners of this. We appreciate the auditor's pointing out these things. As you know, we have dealt with a number of them, and we are confident that, once and for all, unlike the five-year period of your government, we can have an ambulance system that will meet the standards they did not meet—

The Speaker: Order. The Premier's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr Hampton: Premier, your line sounds fine, except the auditor directly contradicts it. This is what he says about your so-called realigned service, the one you're downloading on to municipalities. He says, "The realigned land ambulance system may not provide a balanced and integrated system of services and may be more costly to Ontarians." He doesn't refer to the 1990s or the 1980s. He points out that the deterioration has been since 1996. You were the government in 1996, Premier.

How many more inquests like the Fleuelling inquest is it going to take before you recognize that your strategy of, first of all, creating problems in health services and then trying to download the problems on to municipalities is not going to work? That's the point the auditor is making, that your whole strategy, first of all, of mis-managing the ambulance service and then downloading the problem is wrong-headed. What's it going to take? How many coroners' inquests will it take to persuade you

that you're headed in the wrong direction and you're putting more lives at risk?

Hon Mr Harris: What the auditor points out is that you had no standards. In 1996, we recognized that. It was all over the map. Municipalities provided some, the government provided some, hospitals provided some and private sector operators provided some of the services. There were no standards. In 1996, we brought in new, improved, more strict, more responsive standards that had to be applied all across the province. At the same time, we are looking at a uniform administration. The auditor is right. It's not "may" be more costly, it will be more costly because we are improving and trying to meet far higher standards than we ever did in the past. We think that's important. We think that's what Ontarians want. Now that we finally have a standard that's public, transparent—something you refused to do—we can move toward that goal.

Mr Hampton: Premier, you can try to spin the line again, but it's right here in the auditor's report on page 10 that you are underfunding the system right now by \$53 million. That's what you're handing off to municipalities, a system that is underfunded by \$53 million a year. He says in this report that the uncoordinated system that's going to result because of your downloading is not going to improve services; it's going to make services worse. Everything he says in this report is a condemnation of your government's handling of this critical health care service.

What is it going to take to convince you that Ontario needs an integrated ambulance service, not one that is spread all over the map depending upon this municipality or that municipality? You're putting lives at risk. That's what the auditor says, and the plan of downloading is going to put more lives at risk. When are you going to realize you're wrong and reverse a direction, a strategy, that is going to harm more citizens in Ontario? That's what the auditor wants to know.

Hon Mr Harris: Let's take the city of Toronto, for example. The NDP had 50-50 funding with the city of Toronto; we have 50-50 funding with the city of Toronto. So there is no change there. What has changed is that we have set standards. We have, previous to the latest announcement, increased funding by about 30% over and above what you funded ambulance services, including the city of Toronto. The minister has announced since the auditor's investigation an additional \$30 million over and above the 30% increase we've already given. Why? Because we set a new, higher standard.

I happen to agree with the former mayor of Flam- borough, who said, when we would have municipalities be responsible, "We believe that by moving to a fully integrated ambulance service"—as the auditor has called for, as we announced, as the former mayor of Flam- borough, now the Liberal member for that area, has indicated—"we could reduce duplication, reduce costs and dramatically decrease response time." He's excited about the potential, he says, and—

The Speaker: Order. The Premier's time is up. New question.

Mr Hampton: Now for one of your more-money boondoggles: the auditor reports that your appointees, your friends at Agricorp, took \$325,000 of farmers' money and blew it on speculation on the stock market. Then, he points out, your friends, your appointees at Agricorp, tried to take \$10 million out of the fund to protect farmers and use it to cover up their excessive administrative costs.

Where was your Minister of Agriculture in all of this? He was nowhere. The auditor had to step in and blow the whistle.

Premier, how is it that your Minister of Agriculture, your government, would allow \$10 million to be spent inappropriately, \$300,000 to be blown improperly on the stock market, and neither your Minister of Agriculture nor anyone in your government had a word to say about it? Where were you, Premier?

Hon Mr Harris: As I've already indicated in response to your very original question that has been asked about five times over the last number of months—and I've just given the answer—the Minister of Agriculture did intervene, and even though the board had a legal opinion that felt it was appropriate, our Minister of Agriculture sided with the auditor and said, "We don't think it was appropriate." He ordered restitution, which we did. We returned the \$10 million, with interest, and at the same time made changes to those operations because we believe, as you believe, as the auditor believes, as I think the whole public would acknowledge, something inappropriate took place there, and that's why that person is no longer with the government.

Mr Hampton: Once again the auditor completely contradicts your story. The auditor—and I'll quote him here—said he became so concerned about Agricorp's repeated attempts to "violate its fiduciary responsibility," to act illegally, that they had to intervene. Your Minister of Agriculture was nowhere to be found; your office was nowhere to be found. The auditor had to seek independent legal advice and read the riot act to your friends in Agricorp before they would stop spending money illegally.

The question is, Premier, where was your Minister of Agriculture and where were you when your appointed friends at Agricorp were prepared to break the law to cover up their own financial boondoggles and their own administrative incompetence? And why did the auditor have to come in and blow the whistle on it?

Hon Mr Harris: I thought the word was "fiduciary," but you're a lawyer; you would know a lot better than I. I would like to say that I've answered this question. We believe they acted inappropriately, and we took the appropriate action to correct that and to make sure it won't happen again.

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AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): My question is for the Premier, whose response to the audi-

tor's report on the land ambulance system is absolutely incredible. The auditor today delivered a scathing condemnation of your failure to deliver adequate land ambulance services.

Two weeks ago, Dalton McGuinty stood in this House and asked you if it was safe to download this vital service. You said, "Yes, it's safe." The auditor today clearly says it's not. The Premier today said they put a higher standard in place in 1996. Not so. All you did in 1996 was expect operators to meet the standard of what they were actually doing in 1996, and they haven't even been able to do that.

Let me repeat the facts from the auditor's report. In 1998, two years after you supposedly brought in this higher standard, 50% of land ambulance operators did not meet legally required response times. For the first half of 1999, six months further on your watch, the failure to meet those standards was up to 60% of operators. All you required was that they get back to where they were in 1996. It's gotten worse on your watch. People's lives are at risk because ambulance response times in this province are too slow.

Will you tell us, in the face of this evidence of the inadequacy of our ambulance service, of how unsafe the ambulance service is, why are you proceeding to downgrade this inadequate, unsafe service on to our municipalities?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): It was hard to hear the question over the yelling of the member from Windsor West, but I believe it would be a question appropriate for the Minister of Health.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Perhaps the member opposite does not recall the fact that the province has not been delivering ambulance services. We only had 10. Prior to the changes that were made, maybe you recall that 69 of them were operated by the private sector, 64 by hospitals, 13 by volunteers and 17 by municipalities. So what we have endeavoured to do is ensure that there is greater accountability within the system, that we are putting in place a seamless, integrated system of delivery of ambulance services.

We believe the municipalities are quite capable of delivering ambulance services, just as they do fire and police emergency services, so we are moving forward in that regard and we are continuing to meet—

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

Mrs McLeod: Minister, you set the standards and you also pay the bills, at least you do until January 1. In the entire time you've been the government responsible for this, you've not provided the resources necessary to maintain even a minimum standard of response times for our ambulance services.

You have been hearing from municipalities for months now. You've been hearing their concerns about the state of the ambulance system you're handing to them. They've been telling you exactly what the Provincial Auditor is telling you today in this report. The muni-

cipalities don't know how they're going to be able to afford to bring this totally inadequate ambulance service up to even minimal standards. The auditor says in this report that it will cost \$100 million more just to bring the ambulance system up to that 1996 standard you have so miserably failed to meet. Nobody has seen you put \$100 million on the table.

The conclusions of the auditor's report are absolutely clear and are of vital importance: ambulance response times are too slow. They've been getting worse on your watch. The municipalities simply can't afford to get their ambulance systems up to minimal standards. Will you stop the downloading and take the responsibility of putting a safe ambulance system in place?

Hon Mrs Witmer: I'd just like to quote from the Provincial Auditor's report of 1995, which says, "Ministry statistics indicated that in 1993-94, only three out of 21 central ambulance communication centres met current standards."

I want to tell the member that our government is working with municipalities to meet all standards. In fact, the member may not know that there have been meetings that have been ongoing, co-chaired by my parliamentary assistant, Brad Clark. They had a meeting on November 16. They are reviewing the response time standards. They are reviewing the standards for a transfer class of ambulance service and a variety of operational standards.

I'm very pleased to say that we have put forward to the municipalities \$30 million, and obviously we've committed to 50% funding to meet all standards.

MANDATORY DRUG TESTING

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): My question is for the Minister of Correctional Services. Many constituents of mine in York North have expressed a deep concern over public safety. There are so many aspects of this complex issue that our government has worked on, but there is still more to do. To promote safety in our communities, as well as assisting those in our communities who need addiction treatment, why is it important to ensure that mandatory drug testing of inmates is a necessary step in our quest for safer streets?

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): It's quite simple. It's very important for us to have an extensive drug-testing program in the institutions just like it's important outside the institutions, I say to the member from Parkdale. It's important to make sure we have very active control over the use of drugs, illegal or otherwise, in order to make sure we have effective treatment programs. I know the members from the various police associations who are watching here today know it's very easy to get drugs in the institutions around this province. Unfortunately, that is the case. We need to make sure we can start to identify the presence of illegal drugs, and drugs in any case, in jails so we can get a better handle on how to deal with that.

Mrs Munro: In tackling this complicated and dangerous issue, we need to bring this issue into the forefront on

all sides of this House. The Liberal opposition has objected to drug testing individuals who are receiving social assistance which, without doing so, will hinder their ability to get treatment for their addiction illness. Do you feel there would be opposition to this initiative and, if so, what would it be?

Hon Mr Sampson: I suspect there will be opposition. Just a few minutes ago I asked for second and third readings—and we didn't receive that from the opposition benches in this House—of the very important bill that will allow us not only to deal with the terrible incidence of drugs in our institutions, but also finally to deal, at least in our jurisdiction, with the discount law we have been actively asking the federal Liberals to discontinue, but they have not listened. So we will say that in Ontario you will not be able to get out of jail unless you have earned the right to be released early.

I wish the federal Liberals would take some action and get rid of the discount law in its entirety. But in the absence of that action—and, frankly, I don't hear federal Liberals speaking to this point during the election—we'll do what we can in Ontario to make sure that any release from jail, whether it's through parole or early release remission, is earned.

AGRICORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. On October 2 in this Legislature, I asked the Minister of Agriculture very specifically, "Minister, can you tell us why, on your watch, you permitted people at Agricorp to play with farmers' insurance money and lose \$300,000?" Your minister replied as follows: "I want to assure the member opposite and all the farmers in Ontario that at no time was any money that was designated for the farm assistance program or the farm safety net program in danger or used for these purposes."

Today in the auditor's report on page 26, the auditor makes the following finding: "AgriCorp also inappropriately used funds held for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in its daily trading strategy." It used \$2.9 million, which "came from funds held for the ministry to make payments under the Ontario whole farm relief program."

This money is designated for a very special purpose. Farmers contribute this money to make sure it's there and available to them should they fall on hard times. This money was used in a day-trading scheme which resulted in the loss of \$300,000. When I put this question to the minister, he said that at no time was this specially earmarked insurance money ever at risk. The auditor tells us today that, in fact, it was. Premier, what are you going to do about this?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I'm going to ask the Minister of Agriculture to answer it yet again.

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that at the time I was quoted as saying

that at no time was farmers' money put at risk—I want to assure the member opposite that what the auditor had discussed with us at that time was the amount the people at Agricorp had used in day trading out of their administrative funds. Later on it turned out that the auditor, in further investigation, found they had in fact bought a large bond using some of the money we had given them to send out the cheques. They had included some of that. That is where the \$61,000 loss comes from. Immediately upon that being reported, we put the money back to make sure the farmers were not put at risk.

1450

Mr McGuinty: Minister, I don't know if you recognize the seriousness of this matter. I asked you specifically in this House if at any time insurance monies that farmers had placed in this insurance program, which were specifically earmarked to help them should they fall on hard times, were ever put at risk. You said, "No, that money was never at risk."

The Provincial Auditor tells us today, very specifically, that those same funds were in fact placed at risk. Agricorp had a special fiduciary responsibility to protect this insurance money for farmers. I asked you about that, and you said that at no time was this money placed at risk. You have compromised your credibility. I think the appropriate thing to do, in the circumstances, is for you to resign.

Hon Mr Hardeman: On that issue, I would suggest that maybe the Leader of the Opposition should read the report of the auditor. I totally agree with the auditor's report. But I want to point out to the members of this Legislature and to the farmers of Ontario that in fact the insurance money we spoke of is in the crop insurance plan, in which there are farmers' contributions, federal government contributions and provincial government contributions, which are to be used to pay out crop insurance.

The money the auditor is referring to is in fact whole farm relief money, which is totally government money which was sent to Agricorp because they issue the cheques for the whole farm relief program. The applications are not processed by Agricorp; they only issue the cheques. I want to assure the member opposite that at no time was farmers' money, the premiums they had paid, ever put at risk in this—

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

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs Brenda Elliott (Guelph-Wellington): My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Our government recently committed over \$1 billion in infrastructure investment in our colleges and universities through the SuperBuild initiative. This is a historic commitment and one that will certainly strengthen the future of our post-secondary institutions. In my own riding of Guelph-Wellington, we've been pleased to

receive over \$50 million at our wonderful University of Guelph.

Our attention today is turned to the auditor's report. As in all areas of government spending, it is important for all concerned, especially Ontario's taxpayers, that we ensure this substantial investment is spent efficiently and effectively. Your ministry took the first step towards ensuring this money is prudently spent by choosing successful projects through a competitive process. Now that the winning SuperBuild projects have been chosen, our government must continue to ensure the efficient use of taxpayer's dollars through the life of the SuperBuild program.

In your ministry, what is the government doing to monitor SuperBuild funding and construction to ensure that our taxpayers do get the greatest value from this investment?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): The member from Guelph-Wellington is very much aware of what is happening across this province. I would like to add that all colleges and universities that have submitted and received SuperBuild awards must submit annual capital and investment reports. This will provide the public and our government with an overview of the state of infrastructure at our post-secondary institutions and allow for better planning and management. The project status reports are going to be received by the end of this month.

We are asking two things: first of all, the development status and, secondly, where is the private money? Has it in fact materialized?

What I'd like to emphasize is that this is the first time any government has asked for this kind of information, which should be ongoing with regard to the capital assets of this great province.

Mrs Elliott: I am pleased to see that you have considered carefully how this historic investment of \$1 billion will be monitored. These are investments in new construction.

Minister, as you know, in my riding many of the buildings on our university and college campuses are more than 30 years old. My president, Dr Rozanski, has met with me several times to talk about how to deal with the aging infrastructure. As the demand for post-secondary education increases, effectively using these facilities is as important as building new ones.

What is the government doing to ensure that our aging infrastructure in our colleges and universities is being kept to modern standards?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: We inherited a system that hadn't been given the kind of attention it needs. We know that new construction is not the only step that the government must take to support the future and the strength of our colleges and universities. That's why we are working also to maintain and upgrade our existing facilities. We want to make sure that the facilities are in good repair through record investments in the facilities renewal program. This is normally about \$40 million a year, but last year the finance minister awarded the col-

leges and universities some \$95 million, which is a 35% increase, to support the modernization of our facilities.

Again, regarding our facilities, our institutions must submit an annual capital plan and investment report. We want to ensure that the maintenance needs are kept up and that our colleges are working efficiently.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): My question is to the Minister of Labour. As we speak we have on the floor of this Legislature Bill 69, which, as amended by your government, will give you broad, sweeping, dictatorial powers to eliminate construction unions at will. We have Bill 139 in front of the House—where you've now tabled the time allocation motion muzzling any further discussion—which is going to allow many employers to have legal immunity to walk away from their collective agreements and their obligations, and it will encourage employers to pressure workers to get rid of their union. On top of that, we know that in the next few days you're likely to introduce a bill that will change the Employment Standards Act to increase the hours of work to up to 60 hours a week.

Yet in the midst of all that, Minister, the other day you had the audacity to stand in your place and say that electing the Mike Harris government was the best thing that ever happened to workers. I want to know how you can justify that statement in light of the fact that every labour law you've introduced has taken away rights of workers.

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Our friends in the galleries, we're very pleased to have you here and we understand that sometimes it gets emotional, but unfortunately you're not allowed to clap and participate. If you do it again, I'll have to clear the galleries. As I say, we enjoy having you here, but unfortunately you can't clap and participate in that manner. I'd appreciate your cooperation.

Start the clock. Sorry for the interruption, Minister of Labour.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): I think it's fairly clear to most people in the province that the legislation adopted by this government has done a great deal in propelling the economy, creating jobs, creating opportunity, creating work, giving people an opportunity to get off welfare, to get off unemployment insurance and giving them jobs and prosperity in order to feed their families, pay their mortgage, pay their rent and do those things that are best for them. I appreciate the fact that you don't agree with the approach we're taking, but I think any balanced and unbiased individual who tried to compare your administration's goals and objectives and what they qualified and did as compared to ours would suggest categorically that this government has been a roaring success while you were a dismal failure.

Mr Christopherson: Minister, let me tell you, the rhetoric that you continue to use impresses no one. Let

me talk about real people, real individuals and real laws. On February 2 of this year, 10 electricians were fired from Drycore for the simple act of exercising their democratic right to join a union. Under legislation that existed when you took power in 1995, within a few weeks if not a few days, those individual workers would have been in front of the Ontario Labour Relations Board having their day in court. As a result of your changes, they are not scheduled to have their day in court until at least January 17, 2001. Never mind the rhetoric. Tell me how those 10 electricians have been bettered in terms of your legislation when clearly their rights have been denied by labour laws that you've rammed through this Legislature.

1500

Hon Mr Stockwell: You know full well that, specifically before the Ontario Labour Relations Board, things are referred there at any number of times. We have a responsibility, being an arm's-length agency, that we not comment nor relay information on issues that are before the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

It's no secret that when you were in government, programs and processes also took some time before that board as well. The fact remains that they have their opportunity to appeal decisions. They may appeal those decisions before the Ontario Labour Relations Board. If in fact they were wronged in any way, shape or form, orders to comply will be issued to the company and they will be conformed with.

I don't believe we should be able to jump in and tell a quasi-judicial tribunal how to operate. I don't think you believe it, nor do I.

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

AGRICORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question again is for the Minister of Agriculture, and I want to return to the same matter I raised a few moments ago.

Minister, when I raised this matter with you in October of this year, you said that at no time was any insurance money placed at risk or used in this speculative scheme.

The Provincial Auditor prepares his report based on work completed by the end of March, fiscal year-end. Minister, are you telling me you had no inkling whatsoever that the Provincial Auditor had been inside Agricorp, was very concerned, had conducted a full inquiry and left no stone unturned, and yet when I put this question to you in October of this year, you had no knowledge whatsoever that insurance monies that had been set aside for farmers in Ontario, insurance monies that were impressed with a fiduciary trust, were at no time placed at risk?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I want to point out that I did meet with the Provincial Auditor when he started the value-for-money audit with Agricorp. He pointed out some of the concerns he was finding and made some

suggestions on what we could do to encourage Agricorp to correct some of the problems that were coming up. At that time, the auditor did not come out and itemize each item of where the concerns were, just in general terms that there were concerns as to the appropriateness of some of the action Agricorp was taking. It was from there on that we took what actions we could to make sure the systems were put in place at Agricorp and through Agricorp to make sure the farmers' money was properly protected.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, if I take you at your word—and that's not an easy thing to do given the information provided by the Provincial Auditor—why is it, then, that when you finally received information, which you say you did not have in your hands in October when I put this question to you, you did not at some point in time return to this Legislature and inform the House that some illegal activities had taken place, that monies were used inappropriately? Why is it that in September you sent a letter to Steve Peters, my caucus colleague, and again said no illegal activity took place when it came to this very matter?

Minister, your credibility is at stake here. You told us that at no time was this insurance money used in a way that would be illegal. The Provincial Auditor tells us clearly that in fact it was used in an illegal manner. I think it's your responsibility to take responsibility for this. I think the appropriate thing to do in all of the circumstances is to step aside.

Hon Mr Hardeman: I just want to point out that I'm not aware at this time that illegal activities took place. What I am aware of is that very inappropriate action was taken by the board and the management at Agricorp and that's why, in consultation with the Provincial Auditor and upon recommendations, we put the safeguards in place and the changes in place that were required.

But I think I do want to just quickly highlight for the members of the House and the Leader of the Opposition that in fact the auditor says, "Agricorp also inappropriately used funds held for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in its daily trading strategy." That was the money that was put over at Agricorp so they could issue the cheques for the applications that were going through the whole farm relief program. That was not money—

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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): My question is for the minister responsible for children. Families in Ontario are fortunate to have a wide variety of supports available to them to help their children grow into strong, healthy and successful adults. But because there are so many different services for children funded by the Harris government, it is often difficult for parents to know where to begin. I'd like to be able to help the parents in my riding of Peterborough find the help they need for their children. Is there one easy source of information,

one easy way for parents to find the services they require?

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): I thank the member for Peterborough for his question. Our government has made services for children a high priority, and so there are a great number of incredible supports in place for children and their families.

In the last five years alone, we've launched new programs like Healthy Babies, Healthy Children; our pre-school speech and language program; and of course we're currently developing a network of early child development and parenting initiatives.

We feel it's very important for families to know about these valuable supports in their communities and we wanted to make it easy for them to find the services they need. That's why, for the first time in the province's history, we actually have a directory of provincially funded services. It's the Children's Pathfinder. It is a central resource offering parents and families a snapshot of a wide range of children's services—

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

Mr Stewart: I'm pleased to hear about the Children's Pathfinder reference book. In my own riding, we submit one for seniors, and I am a great believer in one-stop shopping. It's pretty difficult for parents or seniors to know where to go. If they have to run all around to access that information, I think it's very poor.

I know that many families in my community would find the guide very useful in helping them find supports for children in the Peterborough area. How can parents access the Children's Pathfinder? With the ever-growing list of government-funded services for children, is the guide totally comprehensive?

Hon Mrs Marland: I'm going to hold this up again, because people are able to hold up the auditor's report, and I don't think this is any kind of a demonstration.

The Pathfinder has been widely distributed to public libraries and community service agencies throughout the province. They can also find it on-line on our Web site at www.childsec.gov.on.ca. As a matter of fact, if they phone my office, we'll be very happy to mail it to them.

The Ontario Medical Association is so impressed with this Pathfinder directory of children's services that they have been distributing it through their doctors' offices, which is great.

You need to know that we plan, of course, to keep a list of our new services and supports as they continue to grow. We'll keep parents informed of new opportunities for their children and families. Especially now, with the implementation of our early years action plan, we will provide that updated information for them. I welcome the question on this important—

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

LABOUR LEGISLATION

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is to the Minister of Labour. Your destruction of the

labour movement and the destruction of the rights of working men and women continues. You're going to ram through Bill 69 any day. We're now dealing with Bill 139, which is going to have a devastating impact right across Ontario, but particularly on the building industry, on construction workers and people working in trades across this province. What this bill is going to do is lower wages in the industry. But even more dangerous and more damaging, it's going to increase the health and safety risks and unfortunately the death rate among Ontario construction workers.

Let me remind you of last year's statistics, Minister. Last year, out of 20 deaths in the construction industry, 18 of those occurred on non-unionized work sites. Let me remind you that if you work on a non-unionized construction site, your chances of injury are 250% greater than if you work on a unionized construction site.

1510

Clearly, with the changes you're proposing, with the changes you're going to make with the bill you have brought into this House, you are endangering the health and well-being and the lives of Ontario men and women who go to work in the morning to earn a living, take care of their families and want to come home at night in once piece. Can you explain why, in order to please your corporate friends, you're making these changes that are going to endanger the lives of Ontario construction workers?

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member take his seat. You've put me in a difficult position. There were some members who did clap—very few—and some who were very patient. I will say again, we love to have all the members come in here, but we can't have that. I'm not going to proceed to throw you out—

Interjection: Stop the clock.

The Speaker: Yes, sorry, stop the clock. I apologize.

I don't want to throw everyone out just because of a few members. I can't pick one out, but I would really appreciate your co-operation. I know you're very interested, but the situation will be that I'll have to clear the gallery and you won't be able to hear the answer. I would appreciate if our members in the galleries would co-operate. Thank you.

Sorry, Minister of Labour.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): Bill 69 does not decertify unions.

Mr Agostino: Bill 139.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Oh, 139. You said 69. I'm sorry. Bill 139 is a bill that goes about allowing employees the opportunity of choice. I appreciate the fact you see that as a strictly decertification mode, but in conversations and in reading the reports from Mr Hargrove, there is some concern with respect to employees having an opportunity to choose to decertify one union in order to certify with another union.

The fact remains, I say to the member who asked the question—and I know the member for Kingston's very interested in this. I believe, and I think you would

believe, that employees should have an opportunity to choose how they're represented and who represents them. I don't think that's an unreasonable request. I think it's fair and democratic, and that's what the bill does.

Mr Agostino: What you're doing through this bill is allowing non-unionized companies and construction companies to go in and undercut the wages, undercut safety and their well-being when they're competing for jobs against unionized companies who pay higher wages and protect their workers. That is what you're doing. But you're doing all this with a backdrop of not one day, not one minute of public consultation. You've spoken to your business friends. We know they're in favour. You admitted during the press conference that this came at the request of business. Let me quote Shawn Chamberlin, president of the Hamilton and District Chamber of Commerce, who says, "This is pretty much everything we asked for." You're right. It is everything business asked for. It has nothing that's going to benefit labour and working men and women. These people here in the gallery today have a right to have some input into this legislation because it's going to hurt their well-being. It's going to damage them. It may ultimately kill more people in construction than are dying today as a result of workplace safety.

Minister, you owe it to working men and women. Will you today commit to give these people and other working Ontarians a chance for public hearings and input into this nasty piece of legislation you've brought into this House?

Hon Mr Stockwell: The member across the floor and myself have a fundamental disagreement, and the fundamental disagreement is simply this: when public institutions are tendering public works jobs, my wholehearted and firm belief is every taxpayer has a right to bid on that work. I don't know how you, in good conscience, can look your taxpayers in the eye and say, "The only way you can bid on public jobs is if you happen to carry a union card."

You're telling me that if we introduced a program that excluded unions from bidding on public works, you'd be upset. I agree, but you seem to think it's OK to do the exact opposite with hard-earned tax dollars, and I don't agree with that.

Interruption.

The Speaker: Order. Stop the clock. I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask the gentleman to leave.

Clear the galleries on this side, please. A five-minute recess while we clear the galleries.

The House recessed from 1515 to 1520.

The Speaker: If my memory serves me correctly, we were going to the government. I think there were about four minutes and 25 seconds on the clock.

PROVINCIAL PARKS RESERVATION SYSTEM

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): My question is directed to the Minister of Natural Resources. I've been enjoying the Ontario Parks Web site for some time now,

in the way it allows us to explore the Ontario parks by name, by location, by parks classification and by the kinds of activities available in the parks. I've also been impressed with the useful maps, the pictures and the virtual reality tours available on-line. But most importantly, I've been impressed by the reservation system.

I recall just a year or so ago that we tried a new system and the opposition yelled and screamed about a few problems that new system had. They were even, I think, calling for your resignation. Recently they've been very quiet about it because they understand that the Ontario parks reservation system recently won an award of excellence from the Canadian Information Productivity Association. Minister, can you tell us what this award recognizes and what it means?

Hon John Snobelen (Minister of Natural Resources): I thank the member from Northumberland for the excellent question. It comes somewhat as a surprise today, but I'd like to first inform the member that as far as I know, the opposition hasn't called for my resignation in quite a long time, although my record with the media is not quite so good.

Seriously, last week Canada's information technology experts formally recognized our reservation system—our IT system for our parks—as one of the best in North America and gave us an award for that. This will make our members across the way much happier. This award doesn't go to the minister; it goes to the people in the ministry who have made that information technology work and have made it the best system in Canada.

Interjections.

Mr Galt: It's very difficult to hear you telling us about this unique reservation service and about the national and international recognition it has received. Obviously the opposition doesn't like to hear good news. With all the tools available on-line, combined with the toll-free telephone and the in-park reservation and information services, I can see that the combination of these systems will no doubt result in better service for the people of Ontario and for visitors from around the world. A hallmark of this government is customer service. Common counters have all available government activities such as kiosks from MTO and kiosks for registering businesses. Can you tell us how the system has been working so far and how Ontario Parks and its customers have benefited from this new technology?

Hon Mr Snobelen: This is a very massive system, some 66 parks and 15,000 individual campsites are up on our system. We have 16-hour-a-day service on our phone system. We have 24-hour-a-day service on the Internet. It's a very innovative system. It's the best in North America and it has used the hard work and the creativity of our people at the Ministry of Natural Resources to bring this into reality.

We have over 800,000 hits on our park reservation system already, and we're able to make the majority of our reservations on the phone system by answering within 60 seconds of that call. It's a massive system, one we're quite proud of. I encourage anyone to take

advantage of this award-winning system by contacting us at 1-888-ONT-PARK or by visiting our Web site at www.ontarioparks.com.

PETITIONS

SAFE STREETS LEGISLATION

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas charities such as the Goodfellows, the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, firefighters and many others participate in fundraisers on streets, sidewalks and parking lots;

"Whereas Bill 8 effectively bans these types of activities, putting police forces in the position of ignoring the law or hindering legitimate charities; and

"Whereas charitable organizations are dependent on these fundraisers to raise much-needed money and awareness;

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

"We ask that the government of Ontario amend provincial legislation to allow charitable organizations to conduct fundraising campaigns on roadways, sidewalks and parking lots."

I am happy to affix my signature to this as well.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition regarding this government's ongoing discrimination against northern cancer patients. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

"Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

"Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province;

"Whereas we support the efforts of the newly formed OSECC, Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care, founded by Gerry Loughheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario."

This has been signed by a number of constituents from my riding. I of course agree with them, and I'd like to thank Gerry Lougheed Jr for all his efforts in this regard.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I'm very pleased to present, on behalf of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, Mrs Joan Lonergan, resolutions convenor for St Joseph's worker council, Catholic Women's League, and many people on here—Moirra Ste Marie. It's to John O'Toole, MPP for Durham, and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death in North America; and

"Whereas studies conducted in the city of Toronto, the United States and Great Britain have reported that drivers using cell phones while operating a vehicle significantly increases the risk of collisions; and

"Whereas people talking on cell phones while driving may cause a 34% higher risk of having an accident;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ban the use of hand-held cellular phones, portable computers and fax machines while operating a motor vehicle. We further respectfully request that Bill 102,"—that's my bill—"An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit the use of phones and other equipment while driving on a highway, be passed unanimously by all members of provincial Parliament of Ontario."

I'm pleased to endorse this, because I wrote it, but I'd like to support it.

ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): I have an important petition sent to me by Dr Tom Puk, from Lakehead University, which petitions the Ontario Legislature to prescribe the Ministry of Education to the Environmental Bill of Rights without further delay. I will read it as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights was intended to give the citizens of Ontario a way of getting involved in environmental decision-making; and

"Whereas the Environmental Bill of Rights requires Ontario government ministries to develop a statement of values to 'guide the minister and the ministry staff when making decisions that affect the environment'; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Education has been exempted from the requirements of the Environmental Bill of Rights despite the importance of environmental education; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Education has eliminated environmental science as a stand-alone set of courses that focuses entirely on the science of the environment from the secondary school curriculum; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Education is responsible for developing educational policies that directly affect the

ecological literacy of future citizens and is, thus, partly responsible for the health of our environment; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario are being denied their right to shape the decisions being made about environmental education by the Ministry of Education's exclusion from the Environmental Bill of Rights;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to prescribe the Ministry of Education to the Environmental Bill of Rights without further delay."

I have signatures here from hundreds of constituents who are very concerned about this, and I'm very pleased to add my name to this petition.

1530

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): 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 \$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 full 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 Ontario."

I affix my signature.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This petition is to the Ontario Legislature and it's concerning northerners' demands that the Harris government eliminate the health care apartheid which is being practised in the province of Ontario right now.

"Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

"Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

"Whereas a recently released Oracle research poll confirms that 92% of Ontarians support equal health travel funding;

"Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province; and

"Whereas we support the efforts of OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), founded by Gerry Loughheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario."

I sign this petition and give it to Tim Love from Peterborough to bring to the Chair.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I have a petition from 600 members of Cambridge riding to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the current government of Ontario hasn't taken any steps or action toward making any changes to Ontario's Employment Standards Act; the needed changes to the Employment Standards Act would ensure the right of an additional 17 weeks of parental leave. We request swift action from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make these changes to the Employment Standards Act so that these changes will be effective January 1, 2001;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ensure that Ontarians will be able to take advantage of additional paid parental leave that has been granted and approved by the federal government and which will take effect on January 1, 2001."

I sign and attach my name thereto.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a large number of petitions to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Espanola area services a population of 12,000 people and government statistics project a growth in population of people over the age of 75 to reach an estimated 336 people by the year 2003;

"Whereas the long-term formula for the distribution of long-term-care beds would indicate a need for between 59 and 76 beds by the year 2003;

"Whereas just 30 long-term-care beds exist in the Espanola area with the result that a lengthy waiting list already exists and people are being placed in long-term-care facilities far distant from their home communities;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ontario government to immediately approve a proposal by the Espanola General Hospital, supported by the Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin and Sudbury district health units, for an additional 34 long-term-care beds in Espanola."

This particular set of petitions is signed by mostly people from Espanola and the Webbwood area.

McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I'm very pleased to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads as follows:

"Whereas the government of Ontario has introduced Bill 112, An Act to amend the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act;

"Whereas the McMichael Canadian Art Collection has grown and evolved into one of Canada's best-loved and most important art gallery collections of Canadian art;

"Whereas the passage of Bill 112 would (1) constitute a breach of trust made with hundreds of other donors to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection; (2) negatively impact the ability of all cultural institutions in Ontario to attract donors to their collections; (3) vest too much power in the hands of the founders, who have been more than compensated for their generosity; (4) diminish the authority and responsibility of the board of trustees; (5) limit the focus of the art collection and hamper the gallery to raise private funds, thereby increasing its dependency on the taxpayers; and (6) significantly reduce its capacity and strength as an educational resource;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to withdraw Bill 112."

There are a number of signatures.

REGISTRATION OF VINTAGE CARS

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there are many Ontarians who have a passion for perfection in the restoration of vintage vehicles; and

"Whereas unlike many other jurisdictions, Ontario vintage automobile enthusiasts are unable to register their vehicles using the original year of manufacture licence plates; and

"Whereas Durham MPP John R. O'Toole and former MPP John Parker have worked together to recognize the desire of vintage car collectors to register their vehicles using vintage plates; and

"Whereas the Honourable David Turnbull as Minister of Transportation has the power to change the existing regulation;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: to pass Bill 99 or to amend the Highway Traffic Act to be used on vintage automobiles."

Having agreed to this, I'd like to put my name to it.

FRAIS DE TRANSPORT
AUX FINS MÉDICALES

M^{me} Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier) : J'ai une pétition à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario des gens du nord qui exigent que le gouvernement Harris mette fin à l'apartheid en matière des soins de santé :

« Attendu que, d'une part, le programme de subventions accordées aux résidents du nord de l'Ontario pour frais de transport à des fins médicales offre un remboursement partiel au taux de 30,4 cents par kilomètre à aller seulement, à l'intention des personnes atteintes de cancer, et que, d'autre part, la politique de déplacement pour les gens du sud de l'Ontario rembourse en entier les coûts de transport, de repas, et d'hébergement ;

« Attendu qu'une tumeur cancéreuse ne connaît aucune politique de transport pour les soins de santé ni de région géographique ;

« Attendu qu'un sondage de recherche Oracle publié récemment confirme que 92 % des Ontariens » et des Ontariennes « appuient un financement égal de transport à des fins médicales ;

« Attendu que les résidents du nord de l'Ontario paient le même montant d'impôts et ont droit au même accès aux soins de santé, ainsi qu'à tous les services du gouvernement et à tous les droits de la personne inhérents que les autres résidents de la province ;

« Attendu que nous soutenons les efforts de l'OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), une association récemment fondée par Gerry Lougheed Jr, ancien président de Action Cancer Ontario, région du nord-est, afin de redresser cette injustice envers les personnes du nord de l'Ontario qui doivent se déplacer pour recevoir des traitements anticancéreux ;

« En conséquence, il est résolu que les soussignés exigent que le gouvernement Mike Harris propose immédiatement de financer en entier les frais de transport à l'intention des résidents du nord de l'Ontario atteints de cancer et mette fin à l'apartheid qui existe présentement dans la province de l'Ontario en matière de soins de santé. »

Il me fait plaisir d'y apposer ma signature.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I have a petition that reads:

"Whereas it is important to honour the courageous memory and sacrifices of Canada's war dead and of our veterans who fought in defence of our national rights and freedoms;

"Whereas there is a need for succeeding generations of young, school age Canadians to learn more about the true meaning of Remembrance Day;

"Whereas Ontario veterans' associations have created excellent education materials for use in Ontario schools on the meaning and significance of Remembrance Day;

"Whereas the special Remembrance Day curriculum for all grades in Ontario's education system, developed on the basis of the programs by Ontario veterans' associations and involving their direct participation, would increase awareness of, and appreciation for, Canada's wartime sacrifices in the hearts and minds of all Ontario citizens;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the provincial Ministry of Education and Training ensure that a suitable Remembrance Day learning unit be included in the curriculum of all grades of Ontario's education system."

I endorse this petition 100%.

1540

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BACK TO SCHOOL ACT
(HAMILTON-WENTWORTH
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD), 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR LE RETOUR
À L'ÉCOLE (HAMILTON-WENTWORTH
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD)

Mr Jackson, on behalf of Mr Stockwell, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 145, An Act to resolve a labour dispute between the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board / Projet de loi 145, Loi visant à régler le conflit de travail opposant la fédération appelée Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario et le conseil scolaire de district appelé Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

Hon Cameron Jackson (Minister of Tourism): Mr Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to divide this afternoon's time equally among the three caucuses, that at 5:50 this afternoon the question on third reading will be put, with no deferral of a division being permitted, that any division bell be limited to 10 minutes and that, having moved third reading, we respectfully submit that the member for Stoney Creek will lead off this afternoon's debate.

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

Mr Brad Clark (Stoney Creek): I found the debate last night in terms of the back-to-work legislation very interesting. I also found the process in terms of how we actually got here just as interesting.

We had four parents come down about a week ago. They sat in the House and actually saw the debate, and they expressed extreme frustration about the rhetoric and political posturing that was going on from all sides. They also found it very hard to understand what the facts were.

In the debate yesterday, we heard a great deal from the members of the opposition that we had created a crisis

and that all the problems with education and the labour disputes were the responsibility of the government.

If I may, I'd like to read into the record from Hansard: "Since the academic year 1975-76 to 1991, but not including this year, there have been some 56 strikes. During those 56 strikes we have held out of class 789,675 students and we have held them out for a total of 1,331 days, which is about seven school years. On average, we evict our students out of class for 24 days every year, the longest strike being about 56 days. In terms of an important statistic, we evict 50,000—in fact, it's 49,354—students every year for a strike and we evict them for one calendar month; in fact, a little more than one calendar month."

This was entered into the record Thursday, May 7, by the member for Ottawa South, Dalton McGuinty.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): What year was that?

Mr Clark: The member for Hamilton East asks, "What year was that?" It was 1992.

Yesterday, the member for Hamilton East was going on about how the crisis in education was totally created by our government. Looking at this, there have been labour disputes on an ongoing basis in education in every single government: a Tory government, a Liberal government, an NDP government and then our Tory government. Quite clearly, when you look at the stats, there have been ongoing labour disputes. It hasn't been one particular government that caused it.

A little bit of irony happens when you look at the past record. The member for Ottawa South read into the record, "My bill says that no strike or lockout can begin after October 31, again reflecting the fact that students are more sensitive to lost class time in the latter part of the year." This is the member for Ottawa South, and he stated back in 1992, when he was trying to get a bill through the House that would prevent teachers from striking, that after October 31 was when it became crucial.

It's interesting. I don't know what has changed in his mindset, because considering the fact that we have a heavier curriculum now today than we had back then, why wasn't the member asking for back-to-work legislation? Or why wasn't the leader of the official opposition questioning why they weren't back in school? Why wasn't he questioning whether or not there was jeopardy when the strike started on October 30? So the strike started on October 30 in 1992; the member said anything that happens after October 31 clearly begins to impact the school year. The member had that very clearly in his address back then.

We also heard a lot of interesting dialogue yesterday from the member for Hamilton East. I know he's going to follow me, so he can probably clarify some of this for us, because I'm sure we're all interested.

On August 23, on Michael Coren, the member for Hamilton East, Dominic Agostino, said, "Well, Michael, first of all, I hope it doesn't come down to a strike. I certainly hope that the government stops the teacher

bashing, gives the board the resources they need to come"—basically everything we've heard.

His response was to a question from a caller: "I'd like to know from the Liberal member, do you support teachers going on strike this fall if in fact it comes to that?" He went into this Liberal answer.

David Christopherson interrupted and said, "That's why he asked the question. That's why we need to ask again."

Michael Coren said, "A very Liberal answer."

Christopherson, above the din: "Answer yes or no."

Coren: "If they go on strike—"

Christopherson: "Just yes or no. If they're on strike will you, Agostino, support them?"

Tascona asks: "A simple yes or no."

Agostino answered: "I will walk the picket line with the teachers."

In the debate we're hearing the member for Hamilton East state that the kids come first, and the four parents who came down here were very upset about the political posturing. They have to ask, and they ask me consistently, "Why is it that no one's talking about the kids and their school year? All they're talking about is the rhetoric of politics." These are four parents, and the four parents have been very outspoken: Angela Bloomfield, Lisa Gibbons, Kim Hubbard, Sheri Nevitt. They were extremely outspoken and they stuck to something I have a great deal of respect for: they didn't take the side of the teachers; they didn't take the side of the board; they simply continually stated, "We want the kids back in school. Why aren't the kids back in school?"

But they did ask some interesting questions. If both sides wanted the kids in school, which the teachers' union and the board said, then why didn't they negotiate through the summer, July and August? It's been well reported that the negotiations didn't happen during July and August. If they wanted the kids to be in school, why wouldn't they have negotiated during the summertime?

They also asked the question—and the member for Hamilton East last night stated that I started caterwauling about asking for back-to-work legislation while they're in negotiations. Negotiations had broken down. I stated that if they didn't get back to the table and negotiate a settlement, I would ask for back-to-work legislation. They didn't go back to the table. Let me correct that: they went back for 14 hours and, as word has it from both sides, stared at each other and did nothing. So the negotiations had totally broken down, and that's why we asked for back-to-work legislation. I make no apologies about it. I asked for it, and I continue to state that this was the only way to resolve this situation.

The legislation that we have before us is a fair document. The legislation itself deals with a number of contingencies. It deals with the final vote; it allows that to happen. It deals with the actual arbitration, if necessary. It's all-encompassing. The fact of the matter is that the minister waited, as the member for Hamilton West stated very eloquently yesterday, until the ERC report came in. I give credit to the member for Hamilton West. That was

his position: he was going to wait for the ERC. I didn't agree with that position. As we had a new curriculum and there were no precedents from the ERC at this point in time, I felt it important to push for it.

As I've heard from some members, they're not even sure whether or not the ERC was dealing with the matter, because we hadn't heard anything. So by pushing for it, we caused the public debate. I don't apologize for that. I think 40,000 kids should be in school. I think everyone in this House agrees. There's no doubt about that.

1550

What is sad about all of this is the continuing rhetoric that it is continually our fault, that all of these problems about education are the government's fault. The reality is that funding has been increased for education. The reality is that every single government in the province of Ontario has had to deal with labour disputes between teachers' unions and boards of education—every single government. Mr McGuinty said it very clearly in 1992, and I do not dispute his facts at all. We were talking back then, in 1991, of 789,000 students who were pulled out in 56 different strikes, and all three governments had been in power previous to that. That says very clearly that it isn't just this government.

But what is also interesting is that Mr McGuinty gave another point which I found fascinating. "Between 1975 and 1997," he stated, "there were 3,600 sets of negotiations between teachers and their respective school boards. Of that, 104 situations resulted in either—I couldn't break this down any more than this—strike, work-to-rule, walkout or lockout. That turns out to be—I mean that's 3% out of the 3,600 sets of negotiations." Mr McGuinty states that 3% of the negotiations broke out in labour disputes. Gibbons responds, "What you're trying to say is that our school system has not in large measure been that disruptive." McGuinty said, "That's right."

On one side of the coin we're hearing the rhetoric in the House—and I understand partisan rhetoric—that this is the problem, that we're the ones who are causing the problems. But when Mr McGuinty is out and speaking to the press and being quizzed, he gives actual stats and facts. So very clearly only 3% of 3,600 sets of negotiations broke out into a strike, work-to-rule campaign or lockout. I look at that and I don't see that as being of a disruptive nature. I don't see that.

I think it's important for all of us to recognize that there is politics involved in the Legislative Assembly. What a surprise. But I think we should also recognize that when we're putting children first, that is a specific public interest for all of us.

We're at the point in Hamilton-Wentworth where the legislation has been drafted, it's passed second reading, and very clearly it covers all possible contingencies. As far as I'm concerned, I can't see any reason why any member in this House could logically, rationally or compassionately vote against it. If you're putting the kids first, you will vote in favour of it. If you're putting the kids first, you'll save the rhetoric, because the kids are going back to school. I would expect that the teachers

will act in a very professional way when they go back to school.

In closing, I'd like to read back into the record something that was published in 1992. I'm doing this for a specific point. The problems have been ongoing. This article was written in *Education Today* by Bruce Stewart under the heading "Does the Negotiation System Work Efficiently?"

"Certainly the perception of many participants in the process is that it does not. I have never experienced a labour relations environment where negotiations were so time-consuming, protracted and ultimately exhausting'....

"He goes on to say, 'One can fairly conclude that the system is not working efficiently when 70% to 80% of contracts are not resolved by contract expiry.' There's no other field of collective bargaining where we could have 70% to 80% of contracts not concluded by the expiration date. We're talking here about children and education.

"Behind the cold statistic of unresolved disputes, there are the dynamics of acrimony: teachers without a contract, the partisan rhetoric of media releases, the barrage of righteousness at fact-finding hearings; and gossip and discord in staff rooms and boardrooms. Invariably, the effects seep into the classroom, disrupting the educational environment."

This was read into the record on May 7, 1992. It sounds like something that would have been stated by the opposition today. It underscores the point that we will always have labour disputes from time to time in the province of Ontario with the teachers and the boards of education. We always have and we always will. But it also underscores the fact, and what Mr McGuinty said is, that it's a small percentage that ends up in walkouts and lockouts. It's a small percentage: 3% out of 3,600 sets of negotiations.

I encourage everyone in the House to support the bill as it goes through third reading. We want the children in Hamilton-Wentworth back in school. I support the bill wholeheartedly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): Further debate?

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): I listened very carefully to the remarks of my colleague from Stoney Creek. We may have a different definition of what rhetoric is. I'll try and stay away from rhetoric and give you my observations before and after my election in 1999 in the school system.

Mr Clark is right: there have been difficulties for years and years. But the extent of the difficulties since 1995 has been unprecedented, and I'll go into that.

First I want to say that on Monday I was at city hall in Hamilton. It was the day of the child and I was bringing greetings from the provincial government. Across the street, outside the board of education, the teachers were picketing, many of them parents of kids, on this National Child Day. Down the street the CCAC workers were picketing, again most of them women with children. As I was giving my greetings, I said, "What have we come to? Here it is National Child Day. Across the street teachers

are protesting and striking, and down the street CCAC workers are striking. At a time when we've balanced our books, what have we come to and why?"

My two kids have been at home for 17 days now. On Saturday they asked me, "What day is it?" They're confused. The member for Stoney Creek said 40,000 kids should be in school. I not only agree; I think 40,000 children should never have been out of school, and we have to analyze why.

On the weekend—and this is an observation, my colleague, not rhetoric; it's the truth—my daughter was reading the newspaper, all the editorials, all the teacher-bashing editorials. I thought, how unfair to her to go back into her classroom to her teacher having that in her mind. I've always raised my kids to respect authority, to respect their teachers, knowing, as an educational psychologist, that that is the only way they're going to learn: if they respect the person, the partner in their learning journey. I thought, why are these people being so negative? I understand the frustrations of parents. I share them. At times my kids were unsupervised, as were many others, because it's very difficult to find daycare for school-aged children out of the blue.

I thought of a former Minister of Education, John Snobelen, who said, "We need to create a crisis. Sometimes we need to break something and then fix it again and make it better." Now, was that rhetoric? What that was was a benchmark, and I thought, you create a crisis to make something better, but at what cost? These past six years, with these crises in education, a whole generation of children have been paying the price. Whatever side you're on, whether you're on the teachers' or the boards' or you say you're on the children's side, you can't deny that there's been an upheaval in education.

It's my observation, again, that before 1995, 1996, 1997—I was working at the board of education. I noticed a shift and a change in our senior management. Not all of them. Most of them stayed professional, caring, compassionate, the kind of leaders that empowered us. But at times I heard from some of our senior managers things like, "We need to do more with less." "You've had it too good," they said to the teachers. I wasn't part of a bargaining unit; I supervised a bargaining unit. They were telling us that to then trickle down to our bargaining unit. I refused, because I knew that was poor management. But in those discussions, if I closed my eyes, I could hear the voices of some government members. The change was subtle. It didn't happen overnight, but it happened: Permission was given to bash employees. Any public sector employee has had it too good. Business has had it rough, but no one bailed out business when they were having difficulties. Why should we bail out the public service etc?

Anyone who has had more than one child knows we're all different, but some individuals go toward business because they don't want to work by the clock. They want to be free. They want to be independent. They want to be entrepreneurial. That's great, and we support that. But again those of us who have more than one child

know that some individuals aren't like that. They don't mind going by the clock. That gives them security. They didn't invent the two months' vacation that keeps getting thrown in their faces. That's been around for over 100 years, and yet the teachers get blamed for those vacations. We support that too. We support the individual choices people make, that our kids make in their professional choices.

1600

The member from Stoney Creek has quite rightly said we have had difficulties for over two decades now, but the extent of the cutbacks in the last six years has been unprecedented. The extent of the changes has been unprecedented. Bill 160—the principals were taken out of the bargaining unit. Whether you agree with that or not, that was a major change. Bill 74 has that gun hanging over the teachers' heads with respect to extra-curricular activities. I know that the member for Stoney Creek was a manager in his previous job. I know that he knows there isn't a management theory in the world that says, "Force employees to work overtime with no pay." You know people will get their backs up. You know you cannot enforce what people are already doing voluntarily and what only a minority are not doing.

My job description at the board was to help kids and help teachers help kids, but the last two years there I was doing stress management workshops for teachers. That wasn't in my job description and yet that's what I was doing. That's not rhetoric, member from Stoney Creek; that's the truth. I was doing stress management workshops two to three times a week with teachers. We had an unprecedented number of teachers on long-term disability, an unprecedented number of sick days, which by the way is part of the difficulty in today's negotiations. The layoffs the boards are being forced to do as a result of this collective bargaining situation will be our long-term teachers. Who will replace our teachers who are on long-term disability? Will the classes get bigger? That's not allowed, and quite rightly so. But where will these teachers come from?

What we've done is, we've empowered senior management across the province in boards of education to be tough with their employees. That resonates with some members of the public as the right thing to do. That resonates with some members of the public as tough leadership. It's not tough leadership; it's poor leadership, and poor leadership begets poor leadership. That's what we have in our boards of education. We have stressed-out managers. We have trustees who have been downloaded the responsibility without any of the empowerment to do anything.

When I was first elected, the very first month here when the House opened, we had over 20 children in that same board at home because there wasn't enough money for educational assistants to treat those kids. I used to work with these kids. Some of those kids at home I've tested. I know that wasn't rhetoric; that was the truth. The board finally did hire the educational assistants at \$500 million. They didn't have this money. At that time,

the trustees were telling us, "We don't know where we're going to find this money. It's not from the envelope for educational assistants. We're going to pay for this later, but we can't have 22 kids at home not getting an education." They absorbed the costs, in other words.

Over the last couple of weeks, the board has been charged in the media, by parents and by others with mismanagement. The teachers have been charged with not caring about the kids. Some of the parents have been arguing with other parents on how to get the kids back to school. Yes, those four parents came last week, but I saw the scums afterwards. They didn't want back-to-work legislation last week. They were hoping the board and the teachers would work it out, because they know you can't force someone back to work and expect the same level of quality education.

That is what the teachers are fighting for. It's not only their own pay increases, which they deserve. Keep in mind that these negotiations were being carried out while we were arguing here about a 42% pay increase. Think about that. Someone who hasn't had an increase in eight years is asking for a 4% increase while their government is putting forward and arguing back and forth about a 42% increase. Think about that.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): But there's really not an argument.

Mrs Bountrogianni: It's really not an argument. The public believes it is an argument, and the public changed your minds pretty quickly.

What are parents, students, teachers, board managers and trustees going back to tomorrow? What has really been solved here? On a short-term basis, our kids will be back at school. That is great. I'm looking forward to my kids going back to school. But let's not think for one minute they're going back to a better-quality education as a result of anything this government is doing. There will be more vilification, more bad blood, lesser-quality education because the money isn't there. It has been taken away by this government since 1995, \$1,100 per student, so that there isn't money for special education and there isn't money for a very modest pay increase.

What have we come to in this province when on the day of the child yesterday all I could see around me were people striking, picketing and protesting and a bunch of children, some of daycare age, some of school age, in front of us with balloons attempting to celebrate childhood? That may not be an argument, but it's something to think about.

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I'm very pleased to join in the debate of the legislation called the Back to School Act (Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board), 2000.

The bill addresses the labour dispute between the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. It requires the termination of any strike or lockout and provides a mechanism for achieving a new collective agreement. The bill also converts all remaining professional activity days into instructional days in terms of the school calendar year.

The purpose of this legislation: Students have been out of school for three weeks. The Education Relations Commission has advised the government that the successful completion of the students' studies is now in jeopardy, and the priority is to get the children back to school. That is why the government introduced legislation.

The government prefers that the dispute is resolved through the collective bargaining process. If negotiations fail, the matter will go to mediation-arbitration. If the parties cannot agree on a mediator-arbitrator within seven days, the Minister of Labour will appoint a neutral party. The board has submitted a formal request for a last-offer vote. This process is underway. The act will allow for this process to continue.

The government has provided sufficient resources to permit boards to manage their affairs, so a negotiated settlement should be achievable. From what I understand, there's been a negotiated settlement with the secondary school teachers for that board.

Until a new agreement is reached, the terms and conditions of employment will remain those that were in effect when the labour disruption began. The remaining professional activity days have been designated as instructional days so that students can make up for lost time.

The act calls for maximum penalties of \$2,000 for individuals and \$25,000 for the board or union for non-compliance. Each day of non-compliance is a separate offence.

Certainly this measure of legislating the teachers back—and let's emphasize elementary teachers for this particular board—is a measure that has been advised by the Education Relations Commission. Students will be back in class on the first day after the bill receives royal assent.

There is a history in terms of negotiations and the way negotiations are structured with respect to teachers. As you can recall, the School Boards and Teachers Collective Negotiations Act was repealed under Bill 160. As a result, collective bargaining between teachers and their respective school boards is now subject to part X.I of the Education Act and the Labour Relations Act, 1995.

1610

Each district school board is now comprised of four fixed bargaining units: elementary teachers, not including occasional teachers; elementary occasional teachers; secondary teachers, not including occasional teachers; and secondary occasional teachers. Of significant importance is the exclusion of principals and vice-principals from teachers' collective bargaining units. So what we're focusing on here is dealing with the elementary teachers unit for this particular board—only that particular unit, which obviously is affecting a number of students in the Hamilton-Wentworth area. Because their school year, as we have been advised, is in jeopardy, we are moving expeditiously.

Speaking with respect to Bill 160, I think it's good to recall that amendments were brought into Bill 160 with respect to excluding principals and vice-principals. That

decision of the government was appealed by the Ontario Teachers' Federation to the Ontario Court of Appeal, on that particular issue of principals and vice-principals. During the strike surrounding Bill 160—and quite frankly, that was an illegal strike undertaken by teachers' federations and teachers around this province, an illegal strike against legislation—principals and vice-principals were faced with the choice of staying to manage the schools or leaving to participate in the process organized by their unions. Most principals chose the latter. So this new context to deal with what was essentially a political protest against Bill 160 led to the exclusion of principals and vice-principals from the bargaining unit as we know it today. As everybody knows, the principal and the vice-principal are in a traditional conflict-of-interest situation with respect to the classroom teachers they are responsible for under the Education Act to ensure that their duties are fulfilled.

We're not facing that ingredient. That's why I point it out today. We're not facing that ingredient where the principals and the vice-principals have walked out of the school to join the classroom teachers for the elementary section out on strike. I think that's a very positive feature in terms of maintaining some order with respect to our schools' management for those individuals who are given that responsibility.

The dispute will be settled, obviously subject to that final offer that's being put forth by the board. If the parties cannot negotiate an agreement—and that is the preferred option; that option has been chosen by a number of school boards and their bargaining units throughout the province, a negotiated settlement—mediation-arbitration is a specialized form of arbitration designed to encourage parties to negotiate their own collective agreement. If the parties cannot agree on a mediator-arbitrator within seven days, then the Minister of Labour will appoint a neutral, qualified third party.

The government prefers that the parties resolve disputes through the collective bargaining process. However, in this case, several weeks have gone by with no sign that the parties can unlock the current impasse, so the government must act to protect the interests of the students. We have to get the students back into the school now. The last offer vote, from what I understand, is something that is being monitored by the Ministry of Labour, and the bill allows that process to continue. That will be something that is dependent on the members, the classroom teachers who are out on strike at this moment.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Lock-out.

Mr Tascona: Lockout. The member from Hamilton Centre—

Mr Christopherson: Hamilton West.

Mr Tascona: West. The member from Hamilton West joins the debate. He's coming in shortly.

The thing is, there is a process in place: a final offer, a negotiated settlement. Anything can happen. But the bottom line is that the legislation be put in place but not get in the way of what's occurring at the moment.

When we deal with this particular issue, it's not a partisan issue of, "Will you support teachers if they go out on strike?" We know the position of the member from Hamilton East from the opposition party. He supports a strike. He supports the withdrawal of services against students. That position was very clearly put forth by the member from Stoney Creek, in which it was recorded. I was there. The member from Hamilton West was there also. Mr Agostino says, "I will walk the picket line with the teachers."

One has to maintain a distance with respect to negotiations that are ongoing between a school board and a union to achieve the best interests of the students and the classroom teachers. They are a part of this process. Parents are a part of this process, too. They've been impacted by what's been going on in Hamilton. Parents, students, classroom teachers, principals, vice-principals, everyone who is connected with the school board system is dependent on a collective agreement being negotiated by that school board and that union. The one union that is subject to this legislation is the elementary teachers. We're not talking about any other groups; we're just talking about the elementary teachers.

This bill achieves a balance with respect to maintaining the status quo in the sense of allowing the process to continue while at the same time bringing finality to the situation. Finality is what the parents want, it's what the students want, and that's in the best interests of them achieving their education. The bill allows the process to continue, but finality is very clear in this bill.

I've been very pleased to speak on this piece of legislation, and I know that other members will be speaking shortly on it as well.

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): It is a pleasure to be here to talk on this particular subject, although I have to say that we're not here for a noble purpose. We have heard from the member opposite something about finality, but we hear the government members trying to speak from high ground with mud all over their clothes. This isn't a Legislature far, far away from the classroom of Hannah Jepperson, of Timothy Burke, of students in the Hamilton system. We stand here pretending somehow to have their concern at heart with the bill that's been put in front of us today.

This is not a Legislature that did everything to prevent this strike. This is not a Legislature that did everything to prevent Timothy and Hannah and Joshua Whitelaw and other kids in the Hamilton system from getting their full school year. This is a government that stuck its head in the sand when faced with the problems that it had induced in the school system.

What do we say to Hannah and Joshua? What do we say to them about this bill today? We heard a member opposite say, "Finality. This is it. This is going to work." That member knows better. That member knows much better that all this is is the cheapest of fixes in the sense of the law compelling people to go back to the classroom. It doesn't address the underlying issues. It doesn't address the fact that the member opposite and the mem-

ber for Stoney Creek speaking before represent a government that cut \$1,100 per student away from Hannah and away from Timothy and away from every student in the board in question here today; has said to those kids, "You're worth less."

1620

Only about 6% of that money, something like 30 bucks, came out of administration. Almost all the rest of it, \$1,070, came out of their education, as we used to know it, came out of their resources. The three children I mentioned are special education kids who got robbed of their education for days and days last year because the government opposite didn't have the courage to take responsibility for the fact that they were forcing the Hamilton board to spend money on special education because they wouldn't provide it. Over and over again this Legislature has been forced, compelled by children like Hannah and Joshua, to come up with more funds, still not approaching the money that's been cut out.

We're here today as a legacy of what the government has done with Bill 160 and Bill 74, bills that mean nothing to the average member of the public out there, mean nothing to Hannah, mean nothing to Joshua or to their parents, except that they know his is not a government that has tried everything in its power to see the schools of this province work.

We now see it registering out there. Why has it been that three out of four years we have had problems? Why has it been that when there's a professed outlook on the part of boards and teachers not to have strikes, we see one out there? Because this government has changed what was a more level playing field, they have changed the possibility for success, they have reduced the chance that the children of Hamilton are going to receive a decent education.

What we have put in motion in this House today will likely, if it bears any proximity to the offer that was on the table before, see Hannah or Joshua or somebody else in Hamilton with less chance to get special attention, because 65 teachers are going to be laid off. Sixty-five positions will be eliminated as part of what's being put forward, as part of what has been implicitly endorsed here today in this slam-bam kind of legislation.

If there is jeopardy, and we have heard from the Education Relations Commission that there will be jeopardy—negotiations have broken down, and there's now a problem that the school year can't be successfully completed—it will not come up today. If there is jeopardy, it's jeopardy brought on by this government and specifically by the lack of courage of the leadership in this government to put into our boards and our schools terms that will work.

I think the people of Ontario are saying to themselves, "It's not working. A government has been there for six years. They seem to be great at bringing out troubles and instilling problems. They don't seem to have any idea how to solve them. They're a one-trick pony: they force people to do things and they love compelling people." That's part of what the bill here today does.

There's at least \$7 million missing from the special education budget in Hamilton, that has been spent, brought from somewhere else. This is the government that promised early this year that they would be giving a 2% raise to teachers and then failed to provide the funds to make sure boards could do that. This is not the first time and will not be the last time we stand on this kind of matter. But this is a special kind of thing where we can have no sense of finality or fairness in terms of what those children need to have happen for them. What they and their parents want is some assurance that from here or from any point of finishing or completing agreements or discussion and whatever the past 15 days have been worth, something good will come of it. No such guarantee can be made today. Goodwill is at a lower ebb. It's induced by the fact the boards no longer have the discretion to make decisions on behalf of the students who live in their communities, because this government took it away with Bill 160.

When the parents and students of Hamilton and area and the Hamilton board, which encompasses places like Stoney Creek and other areas, look to the government in these times, what would they really want? They want to see fairness. They have the board and the teachers at an impasse. What they need most is a fair referee. Instead we have a government that is constantly putting its thumb on the scale, that can't resist weighing down on the side that's convenient for them, a government that is not a referee any longer. If they were a referee, they would not, for example, have the Minister of Labour appoint the arbitrator here. They would let it be done by the Education Relations Commission, by somebody independent, not by the people who have to pay the bills. That's what is being done here.

They would do a number of other things that would make sure the outcome of this would be fair. They have referenced in here a certain kind of outcome that actually ends up reducing the wages of teachers or that certainly would not give them the same prospect of a fair settlement that they had going into this. That's because this government cannot bring itself to see its duty as not weighing in on one side or the other. It has this unfortunate thing that allows students like Hannah and Joshua and Timothy to lose out. They need a referee at this time, and it's not there. This government isn't capable of doing that.

This government should have put back in place what it took out with Bill 160, some way for these disputes to be resolved. Instead, we're here at the Legislature. We have strike votes being taken around the province.

What is this government going to do when those fail, when they don't arrive at agreements because of the self-same conditions I've referenced before? What's going to happen then? Are we going to allow agreements that eliminate teacher positions? Is that the view of this government? Or are we going to keep calling the House back right through Christmas to see if we can't get some peace in our schools?

Peace in our schools isn't something that even this arrogant government can snap its fingers and get. You do

it by showing respect. You do it by creating goodwill. You do it by doing the hard thing of rolling up your sleeves and supporting the collective bargaining process right to the time where it can deliver an agreement that's going to generate the goodwill that Hannah and Joshua and Timothy and all the students in the Hamilton board deserve to have. They don't just deserve a forced solution.

This has been prejudicial activity on the part of this government, always threatening, always not putting forward constructive things, not prepared, for example, to be flexible in terms of how some of these things could be done, not being straight with the public about the funding, which we need to submit to the auditor, to somebody objective, and let it be told how much money is missing from the pot and why these deals are going off the rails or why we're having to eliminate teacher positions, taking away precious amounts of learning from children.

I defy the members opposite to say it's a good idea that we have fewer teachers in the schools today. I defy the members opposite to stand up and be that accountable, that they would put in place what they took away in Bill 160: a way to resolve these disputes without having strikes or lockouts. The lockout in Hamilton that this bill purports to end, to give some resolution to, was eminently avoidable except for the preconditions this government put in: the inability to arrive at flexible arrangements, the inability to pay for basic things, for transportation. Our new member of the Legislature for the Liberal Party came here partly because this government made kids walk in a manner which was unsafe rather than take a bus.

Instead we have in front of us a bill that doesn't bring about finality or fairness, or respect Hannah or Joshua or Timothy. Here we are, miles away from Hamilton, telling the people of Hamilton, "You no longer control education for those kids. We're going to do it for you." I think that's the height of arrogance. I think it's the height of misguidedness for us to make that pretense. I would hope every member in the Legislature today will stand instead and make a commitment to those kids that the quality of their education will be served when the people here buckle down and come up with a plan to put peace in our schools, and not just the things the unctuous members opposite feel are all right. The members opposite obviously believe in cutting resources to kids. We on this side do not.

Mr Christopherson: Right from the outset, when the lockout started, I think all of us in the Hamilton area started to receive phone calls. I certainly did. Most of the calls that came in were from parents, many of whom said things to the effect that I was at fault for part of this, because I didn't have the guts to stand up to the teachers. For a number of weeks—three and a half weeks, to be exact—I've been defending the fact that I was quite proud to stand with the teachers during this lockout, because I knew this wasn't just about teachers and their collective agreement; it was about classrooms, it was about children, it was about learning and it was about

ensuring that the schooling our children receive is the one they're entitled to. I believe that. I continue to believe that.

1630

Today some of the phone calls are from parents saying, "Thank you for getting my kids back in school." A lot of them, however, are from teachers, and they're saying that I didn't have the guts to stand up for teachers. As I said last evening—and I won't go through all of that last night; it's there in the Hansard to be seen by anyone who wants to. But the fact of the matter is that the Tory government, in particular the member for Stoney Creek, has for quite a few days now, if not weeks, been advocating, with no particular expertise to point to, that the teachers should be ordered back into the classroom.

The position of our caucus has always been that teachers have every right to be out on strike. They have a right to exercise their rights under the charter, their rights under the labour laws of this province.

Our past actions have shown that our policy also says that when we reach the point where the children's school year is at risk, where if things continue some children, if not all, may have to repeat an entire year, then the needs of those children have to be made the absolute number one priority, no matter how much it hurts. I want to tell you, some of the phone calls—and I had a discussion with Kelly Hayes today—are not easy. But we do have a process. We do have an ERC, and they have reported that the school year for children is in jeopardy.

I made the statement last night and reiterate it again: if there's a problem with that process, then maybe that's where we ought to be taking a look for the future. If there are arguments by experts—and I'm not an expert as to whether or not a child's school year is in jeopardy. That's why you rely on a commission like the ERC. If we need to take another look at how that works, if that's going to become the trigger point as to whether or not legislation like this comes into this place, then let's do that, let's take that look. But I maintain that it's healthy for the system.

If the member for Stoney Creek, a member of the Tory government, had had his way without the ERC system, I'm convinced we would have seen this government bring in back-to-work legislation long before now and they would have made up their own justification, their own rationale without benefit of being able to point to a panel of experts.

Having said all that, the member for Stoney Creek found it interesting to read earlier Hansards. I want to read an earlier Hansard, but not that far back: last night. Last night the member for Stoney Creek said, "In this legislation, I think it's fair. I think it's equitable. It gets the kids back in school and it allows the labour process to continue, and at the end of the day, if the teachers and the board and the parents and the media and all of the legislators are saying 'the kids come first,' then why would any responsible person oppose this? If you read the bill, there's absolutely no reason why anyone would oppose this back-to-work legislation. It's not a sledge-

hammer. It resolves the problem very clearly for the residents in my community and puts the kids back in school.”

The only thing I agree with in there is that it does put the kids back in school. This it does; everything else it does not.

Yes, our caucus is allowing the expedited process for the bill in this House. That does not mean that everything in that bill, by any stretch, is what should be there.

The member talks about fair and equitable? Let me bring to the attention of this House a decision released today, just today, a few hours ago, by the Ontario Court of Appeal. In this ruling, based on a hearing on April 12 and 13 of this year, this is in part what the court said about the government's new method of appointing arbitrators. I want to tell you, one of the things that's so inherently unfair in this legislation is the arbitration process. You know it's one thing to stand back and say, "Look, we've had a panel of experts say the children's school year is in jeopardy and therefore we've got to get them back in the classroom," knowing that we are then going to pretty much end any effective bargaining on the part of the teachers and the board because you've denied the teachers the one tool they have to leverage at the bargaining table.

The only way you can really resolve those issues in a fair way is to send it to an arbitrator. That's the usual thinking behind these kinds of situations. We do something very similar where certain citizens don't have the right to strike, like firefighters and police officers. There is an arbitration process that's supposed to be fair.

You will see, from quotes that I will enter into the record from that court decision released today, what we have now in the province of Ontario in terms of where these disputes go when exercising your charter right to withhold your labour has been removed. There's nothing fair in here. Members of the government, you can say it's fair and equitable and hold your breath and stamp your feet and say it's fair and equitable, and that doesn't make it so.

What did the court say today? The court held that the minister's actions in changing the appointment process, meaning the appointment of arbitrators, was "an attempt to seize control of the bargaining process and to exclude" the unions "from it," and "to replace mutually acceptable arbitrators with a class of persons seen to be inimical to the interests of labour, at least in the eyes of the appellants." They also held that the minister's actions violated the union's legitimate expectations in that the minister had promised to continue the existing system for the appointment of arbitrators and then "proceeded in an entirely different direction, one that in the circumstances may be regarded as provocative or defiant."

The bill that's before us today says in subsection 11(2):

"Appointment of mediator-arbitrator

"(2) On or before the seventh day after this act comes into force, the parties shall jointly appoint the mediator-arbitrator referred to in subsection (1) and shall forthwith

notify the minister of the name and address of the person appointed."

No problem so far. If the board, the trustees and the teachers' union can agree on an arbitrator, we don't have a problem, nobody has a problem. But when they can't agree, and it's not that infrequent when they can't, then we get to subsection 11(3), which says:

"(3) If the parties fail to notify the minister as subsection (2) requires," which I just read, "the minister shall forthwith appoint the mediator-arbitrator and notify the parties of the name and address of the person appointed."

Therein lies my problem, one of them, and certainly the Ontario Court of Appeal's. What did they say today? I will, for the benefit of the House, say that this refers to the arbitration process in the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act, but nonetheless, I think members will agree, it speaks very clearly to this government's attitude and approach and desired outcome when making appointments. Given the total freedom the minister will have, I think this is an important part of what ought to be considered.

The court said, "As stated earlier, the pre-existing system dated back to about 1979. The system of choosing an arbitrator by mutual acceptance has evolved over the years and was recognized by the statutory amendments made in 1979. The system appears to have worked reasonably well at reconciling the fact that the right to strike had been replaced by mandatory arbitration with the fact that the right to appoint the chair of the arbitration was in the hands of an entity which was not directly a party to the arbitration but which had a very substantial interest in it. Having worked as well as it did for almost 20 years, the arrangement must be regarded as having been successful."

1640

That was before Bill 136. Bill 136 changed that system the court said has to be regarded as having been successful. That was another one of this government's infamous pro-labour laws, as the Minister of Labour likes to shout and state while he's on his feet, about how wonderful the legislation has been, another example of what has happened in terms of workers' rights.

About the current process, this is pretty wild stuff you've got coming out of the court. "In addition, having regard to the circumstances surrounding the appointments, the minister has failed to meet the legitimate expectation of the appellants, contrary to the principles and requirements of fairness and natural justice."

This is the minister who wants us to rely on his goodwill if a mutual choice can't be arranged to appoint an arbitrator. This minister wants the teachers to feel that their best interests in terms of fairness will be represented by this bill, yet look what the court says about what this minister does when they make appointments to boards of arbitration.

I'll read the sentence that ends, and then I'll go back up. It says, "The relief claimed in items one, two and three of the preceding paragraphs should be granted."

This is where the court sided with the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Service Employees International Union. They said:

“(1) A declaration that the minister created a reasonable apprehension of bias and interfered with the independence and impartiality of boards of arbitration established under HLDAA, contrary to the principles and requirements of fairness and natural justice.

“(2) A declaration that the minister interfered with the legitimate expectations of the appellants and other affected unions, contrary to the principles and requirements of fairness and natural justice.

“(3) An order in the nature of prohibition preventing and prohibiting the minister from exercising his discretion to appoint persons to sit as chairs of boards of interest arbitration under HLDAA, unless such appointments are made from the long-standing and established roster of experienced labour relations arbitrators.”

This is exactly the point and the position the NDP caucus took at the time Bill 136 was in front of this House. That's why there's nothing in this legislation that's fair or reasonable. It does save the potential for the year to be in jeopardy—that's a given—but it does nothing else to resolve the issues that are at the heart of this lockout.

In light of this, I would like to seek unanimous consent to put the following amendments before this House. I'll read the amendments to you, but after reading them into the record I am seeking unanimous consent to place a motion to have these amendments put before the House with regard to this bill. These are amendments to subsection 11(3):

Delete existing wording and substitute, “If the parties fail to notify the minister as subsection (2) requires, the chair of the Education Relations Commission shall forthwith appoint the mediator-arbitrator from the long-standing and established roster of experienced labour relations arbitrators.” In light of the ruling today, this seems pretty reasonable and fair.

Further, replace 11(4)(a) with the following:

“The chair of the Education Relations Commission shall forthwith appoint a new mediator-arbitrator from the long-standing and established roster of experienced labour relations arbitrators and notify the parties of the name and address of the person appointed.”

Also, delete subsections 18(1), 18(2), 18(3) and 18(4) and replace it with:

“The mediator-arbitrator shall make an award that is reasonable and fair in all of the circumstances.”

Next, delete 18(5) and replace with:

“The new collective agreement that implements the award shall be effective for a period beginning September 1, 2000, and ending August 31, 2001.”

Delete section 19 of the act.

Delete section 22 of the act and replace it with the following:

“The parties shall jointly determine whether and in which manner instructional days lost as a result of the lockout will be replaced.”

Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to place these amendments before the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): I have some difficulty in that we would have to ask unanimous consent for the House to revert to committee of the whole House. That would have to be the first step, if you'd like to do that.

Mr Christopherson: To follow the appropriate process, I will seek that unanimous consent first, and then, when we're in committee of the whole, place these amendments.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Christopherson has asked for unanimous consent to revert to committee of the whole House. Agreed? I heard a no.

Mr Christopherson: Let the record show that the noes came, of course, from the government side.

I can't say I'm all that surprised, but I am disappointed. I thought there was the possibility that as a result of this extremely embarrassing decision of the court, the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education would have taken another look at this. But obviously that would mean they really did want “fair and reasonable,” and we know you don't; otherwise, you wouldn't have brought in legislation that has done the damage it has to our education system.

Let me just talk about a couple of other—because I want to share my time with our education critic, Mr Marchese.

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: No, I'm not worried about those guys and their heckling. If that mattered, I would have sat down a long time ago.

Section 18 talks to the mediator-arbitrator and it speaks to the limitations or the boundaries they have to work within. There are three of them:

First, it has to “be consistent with the Education Act,” which sounds on the surface reasonable, except that it goes on to say “and Ontario regulation 170/00, student-focused funding legislative grants for the school board 2000-01 fiscal year, and with the other regulations made under that act.” What does that mean? It means they have to act within the confines of the grants that this government unilaterally made to the boards, which is at the heart of why we've got this lockout.

Second, “The mediator-arbitrator shall make an award that permits the board to comply with the legislation mentioned in clause (a) (enabling clause);

“(c) can be implemented in a reasonable manner without causing the board to incur a deficit.”

What does that mean at the end of the day? It means either the teachers are not going to get a fair collective agreement—plain and simple, no matter what you say, they will not get a fair contract—or they will get a fair contract, but because of the language in here, we're probably going to see teachers laid off and supports to the children and programs cut.

But your approach is always one of: lock everybody into a box and make sure they've got no room to move—I mean, you're the greatest social engineers this province

has ever seen—and force people to work within that fiscal box no matter what it means, because you need and needed and will still need to find the billions of dollars you've given away in corporate tax cuts and tax cuts to the very wealthy. This the price. These are your tax cuts at work.

The Minister of Labour yesterday was condemning us for saying it's about money, that all disputes are about money. Most times in the past it was a localized argument. That was the way it worked. There was flexibility on the part of the board to set the education portion of the property tax to reflect local priorities. All that is gone. You took total control of everything. You provide money that's insufficient to meet the needs of our children and the needs of a fair collective agreement, and you stand back and tell the trustees to do it anyway. When we end up in the situation we are in, with a lockout and our community starting to divide in a very serious way, you stand back and say, "It's got nothing to do with us. Those are local negotiations." You've got all the power, all the money, you make all the decisions and pass all the laws, but it's somebody else's fault when they can't make the system work because you cut the funding.

1650

Yes, when the ERC came down and said, "We believe the school year is in jeopardy," we responded to that by supporting a process that will put the kids back in school. But make no mistake: we will oppose the legislation itself, because no matter what you say, it's unfair and it's not reasonable, and I remind you that the courts have supported that you are not fair and reasonable. This is not going to solve the problem. The children are not going to get the education they deserve and the teachers are not going to get the contract they deserve, because you've rigged the game ahead of time.

Yes, we'll have the expedited process and, yes, we'll put the kids back in school, but we're not going to support language that pretends to be fair and reasonable and is the exact opposite.

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): It occurred to me over the last couple of months in the travels I've had to schools—not just in my own riding but even as of last Friday at Saint Paul High School in Niagara Falls, where I was invited by Nick Closimo to visit with four different classes—that one of the constant questions asked of me in speaking to students is, "Why are students always in the middle of the fighting between the teachers and the government? It's not fair."

We could take quite a lesson from students across Ontario and really listen to students like the students I met at Saint Paul, like the ones at Assumption high school and Massey high school in my own riding, where in the last couple of weeks the students asked me the same question, "It's not fair. Why are we always in the middle between the government and the teachers fighting?"

It occurs to me it's time the government showed leadership in the area of education. I ask the people of Windsor West to watch what is happening in Hamilton

today. Watch what is happening with those school boards there and what they've been dealing with. Let's remind ourselves that every school board in Ontario will face what Hamilton faces and say, "Who starts the fire?" This government is like a fire starter. They jump from garage to garage, lighting the fires, watching the garages burn and then have the nerve to call the fire department, grab the hose and start putting out the fires themselves.

That's what we're doing here today, talking about back-to-work legislation. Who created this mess in education? This very government, since the day it took power in 1995. It started with the merging of school boards without a plan and created no end of havoc in terms of how boards were to be amalgamated. The list goes on with all the initiatives in education the government is so proud of but hasn't done one of those initiatives in the right way, not with the right planning and not with the right funding. Every one of them has been some sort of photo op to be perceived as doing something in education.

We talk about a new curriculum. We launched a new curriculum in our schools. We cut one year out of high school, not with a plan. Going into the new school year, we didn't even have textbooks to match the new curriculum. But you just shoved it through anyway without taking appropriate time to do it properly.

Then there was the new report card for Ontario. You ran television ads about your new curriculum and your new report card. You forced teachers to spend hours and hours of their own time to launch this new report card system. Did any members on the opposite side of the House look at the forms they used in report cards, the matrices they had to fill out that parents couldn't understand and said, "Could we please have our old report card system back?" because of the speed with which you as a government decided to introduce this new initiative into our education system?

Look at the history of education bills from this government. Let's not forget Bill 136 in the last term of this government, which was referred to already. It changed forever the fairness in public sector negotiations. It's no wonder that no one will want to go to that board of arbitration. It will be government-controlled, so in the end the government's will will be done. Everyone out there knows that. You have forever taken the fairness out of the system.

Back to the education bills, do we remember the code of conduct? That was the biggest joke going in the education field. They sing the national anthem. They say the Lord's Prayer. To have this bill put forward as though there was no conduct whatsoever, no level of discipline in our schools, was ridiculous and frankly an insult not just to teachers but to parents and students who are models across the nation. We can look at Ontario schools that lead in a whole host of areas, including sports and academic achievement, because there are good students in our schools.

Let's talk about Bill 160. That was the first huge error in terms of funding for schools. We knew it didn't work.

It wouldn't work. Then came Bill 74, the patch job or Band-Aid solution to 160, which still isn't working and today has created havoc at our school board level. In the last municipal elections, I would ask anyone running for trustee positions with our school boards, "Why would you run when you have absolutely no power in terms of how your budget will be spent, because it's determined here at Queen's Park?" If you leave it to Queen's Park, they will make errors like they've done in the area of education since the day they came to power in 1995. The fire starters are the Ontario Conservative government, and the people who now are thrust with the decision to put an end to it are the Ontario Conservative government.

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): It's indeed my pleasure to rise and offer a few comments on the very necessary bill we're debating this afternoon.

The member opposite from Windsor suggests that somehow we have been the architects of some downturn in the quality of education in this province, when of course it was the two previous governments that showed absolute neglect, absolute disdain for improvements in education, an absolute disregard for the need to make sure we had the toughest curriculum, that we were teaching our kids subjects that were relevant to the 21st century, not the 19th century, that we were getting accountability out of all aspects of all the operations we fund, not the least of which is the education system.

We have certainly heard a great number of horror stories. I'm sure Aesop would be pleased to add them to his book of fables. When you look at the facts, though, they suggest a very different evolution in the education system. My father approached me a few weeks back and asked me what we were doing in terms of funding in Northumberland county, where my four nieces and nephews, his grandchildren, are all in school. He had heard that one of the schools, a very modern school and by all reports an excellent facility with a great reputation for its music program, had announced that because of "government cuts," the music program was going to be cancelled.

I followed up with the ministry. I'm sure, Mr Speaker, you would be as confused as I was when I found out that last year the Northumberland schools, the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, received \$245 million, and this year the funding under our funding model went up to \$258 million. As surprising as that \$13-million increase would be, in light of the threatened closure of a program, when you do a little more research you'll find there are 500 fewer pupils. Let me get this straight. The one involvement of the provincial government was the writing of a cheque. Last year we gave the Kawartha Pine Ridge school board \$245 million. This year they have 500 fewer students and we're giving them \$13 million more, and they have to close programs? Obviously, they should be adding \$13 million in new programs, \$13 million dollars worth of new text books, new science equipment, more teachers, smaller class sizes. But that's not what they're doing. They're playing political games. Nowhere in this province have we seen the tactics of the school

boards, and in this case the tactics of one of the unions, more directly impact the education that students are receiving than in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

1700

Students have been out of school for three weeks. That's three weeks far too long. We were dismayed yesterday when one of the NDP members twice refused to allow us to undertake the debate we're having today at an earlier time; hopefully, with the passage of the bill, those same kids would have been back to school today. The Education Relations Commission has advised the government that the successful completion of the students' studies is now in jeopardy. In that light, I don't know how any member, no matter what their party affiliation, would want to stand in the way of the education of those kids. The priority has to be to get the kids back to school, and that is why the government has introduced the legislation we've brought in today.

We've seen an awful lot of mismanagement and waste in the system over the years, and I don't want to suggest that school boards were unique in that regard. We saw here in Toronto the school board chair and her cronies rip out the playgrounds in 173 schools, after her own staff told her not to. Many of the trustees afterwards admitted they didn't even read the staff report: "Because Gail Nyberg asked me to do it, I voted along with her." Well, that's not exactly the model of proper stewardship of our schools that we were looking for from trustees.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey): Yes, she's a winner.

Mr Gilchrist: My colleague says he's heard of her. There's no doubt that Ms Nyberg did an awful lot of things like that, and I'm sure it had nothing to do with her aspirations of running for city council.

Mrs Brenda Elliott (Guelph-Wellington): She wasn't elected, was she?

Mr Gilchrist: Her unsuccessful attempt. Thank you. Her unsuccessful attempt, because the voters in East York certainly saw through the charade of her candidacy.

We have half-empty schools in my riding. One of the little known idiosyncrasies in the education system and how it's evolved over the last century is that while there was an option for junior high schools, they are by and large a Toronto phenomenon. Some exist in other boards, almost exclusively in other urban boards, but they were primarily an invention of the Toronto District School Board.

In the middle of my riding I have one school, an elementary school from kindergarten to grade 6, which is designed to hold 480 students and has 247. Immediately next door is a much newer junior high school designed to hold, coincidentally, 480 students, and it has just over 250. In other words, if the population of the two schools were combined, you would have one efficiently operating and at-capacity school. You would have one fewer principal, one fewer vice-principal. You'd have fewer janitors. You'd have lower heating costs. You'd have lower landscaping costs. You would have more money to

invest in after-school programs, in the gymnasium, in the auditorium, in textbooks, in science equipment, in smaller class sizes.

I don't recall as a citizen in Toronto, as a voter, as a voter for the last 20 years—more than 20 years. What am I thinking? Almost 30 years. I don't recall ever being asked if I wanted that duplication and waste. I don't recall the Toronto District School Board ever coming to the public and saying, "You have a choice. We can manufacture this middle school. It will cause the disruption of kids leaving one school environment at grade 6 to become the new kids in grade 7, only to uproot them again just two years later. We can do that, or we can put the investments into better-funded elementary schools and better-funded senior high schools and cut the duplication and cut the waste."

We were never asked that, and I am very proud that our funding model is now forcing school boards like the Toronto District School Board, that to this day continues to get more money per pupil than any other school board in the province of Ontario—and when they cry poor, the appropriate response from every member in here should be that if 71 other school boards are able to deliver those services properly, why is it that the one—the Toronto District School Board—claims they have insufficient resources? Are they too fat? Are they spending too much on administration? Absolutely. They have done nothing to downsize the fact they had 14 head office buildings, and still do to this day.

The fact of the matter is they don't have anywhere near the constraints that other school boards that didn't have a rich property tax base have always had to deal with. In Toronto, if you got another factory downtown, the school board got more money. You've heard the statistics and perhaps the people watching have—or perhaps they haven't—that in the decade before we were elected, from 1985 to 1995, enrolment went up 16%. To be fair, inflation went up 40%. But education property taxes in this city went up 120%. I can tell you that the quality of education didn't go up 120%. The spending per pupil didn't go up 120%. Our kids weren't 120% more likely to be winning spots in first-year university courses. The fact of the matter is the efficiencies are out there. The challenge is there for all the school boards to meet that test. It's being done by other boards and it can be done here.

As to Hamilton, I say to the members opposite, the government is giving fair resources to every school board. There have been settlements in many other boards. You can't deny that. What is so unique about the circumstance in Hamilton that kids have to be deprived of three weeks of education to make a political point between unions and school boards?

This isn't about money. The money is there. It isn't about a new curriculum. That's there. It isn't about a greater focus on education, because we've done all those things in our first term. The fact of the matter is that this is about a labour dispute between an employer—not the province but the school board—and a group of employees, in this case the teachers' union.

Our challenge is to the two of them, to recognize their true responsibilities, to recognize that the time for games-playing and finger pointing is long behind us. If other boards can settle, that's the model they should follow. The time has come to remember that kids must come first.

Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot): I am pleased to be up and to add my voice in this debate and to talk about the obvious sorry state of labour relations in this province. Over the last several months, we've seen things deteriorate. We've seen it with the CCAC folk, who are still on strike; we've seen it with our VON nurses, dramatically underfunded nurses, by the way; we've seen it with the school boards; earlier today, we saw it with construction workers who were here.

The level of discontent grows. It's never been my belief, I need to say, that you ought to measure success by how many friends you can turn into enemies, by how many caring professionals you can alienate or by how many persons you're serving who can be inconvenienced. There was earlier reference to a previous minister talking about creating a crisis, and my colleague from Hamilton Mountain asked was that rhetorical, was it rhetoric. No, it wasn't rhetoric; it was prophetic. We've seen the result of that.

Over the last five years, we've seen this government launch its all-out assault, not just on the workers of this province but on the people they serve, with their cumulative demeaning of the caring professionals who we see increasingly walking picket lines with the disputes they're having to deal with.

If there's any good news in this bill, and there is some, it's that the children will be back to school on Wednesday. Unfortunately for the kids, they don't understand all the political machinations that go into creating this kind of turmoil. I'm pleased they'll be back in the classroom, but what I'm not pleased about and can't support is the way this government has literally swapped off its responsibilities for public education, and seems intent on continuing to poison the public education well.

1710

I want to say for the record that there was another way, another credible alternative, another vision, a road less travelled, one that would have and could have charted a new course, a way that would have affirmed respect for public education and also celebrated its future, a more rational and compassionate approach—to quote my colleague from Stoney Creek—one that would have really had some common sense. It would have been the no-fault approach, but this government doesn't seem to believe in a no-fault approach. When it comes to no-fault, that's the kind of insurance you want to carry, and we all pay the premium for that in Ontario. Whenever anything goes wrong, it's everybody's fault but this government's. You notice that? I know my colleagues from Hamilton West and Hamilton East have spoken about that, as has Mrs Bountrogianni, the member from Hamilton Mountain.

Over the last two and a half weeks, I've had about 600 calls from parents, many of whom are significantly inconvenienced, some parents and grandparents who are in tears on the phone with worry about their kids. A very deep concern. But the concern hasn't only been to get this labour dispute settled, it's been very much for the future of public education, the public education their kids and grandkids would receive.

There was a better way to approach this, one that would have reflected potentially a just resolution, a fair resolution, one that didn't lay blame, one that could allow for a win-win, one that might benefit all and not set out to hurt anybody, in fact, I suggest, a progressive, cautious, conservative approach that would have worked, one that would have served the people it was designed to serve but also shown respect for public education, one that might have provided a template for settling future disputes, and rest assured, there are going to be future disputes. I think there's a vote this evening with the Toronto school board—interesting timing, isn't it? One has to wonder, but that would be all too much in keeping with this approach.

The alternative approach would have done something other than leave this continuing sad legacy we're seeing in Ontario when it comes to important issues and important labour things. This way would have been—I attempted to engage the minister on a couple of occasions around this and had conversations with her over the last couple of weeks—one that would have acknowledged charitably that while no one is guilty, all of us are responsible and that we need to move forward in a way that works. I suggested to the minister that she use her good offices to approach the parties and ask for a period of normalization, that there be a 90-day cooling off period through which negotiations could continue, hopefully with her using her good offices to get up and go. That didn't happen, unfortunately. The government seemed intent somehow on abandoning that approach and going to finger pointing instead.

I'm really concerned, in wrapping up here, that the arbitration—and the member from Hamilton West alluded to this—seen here really ties the hands. I would think that if the minister and her government were serious about good faith arbitration, not only would they not require the two sides to pick up the costs, which is something that hasn't been discussed here—you'd think the government would pick that up—but you would also think that in the context here the arbitrator would be freed up.

I think the member from Hamilton West tried to capture that in his proposed amendment which, predictably, was rejected. If you want others to enter into good faith arbitration, you've got to be prepared to take the risk too, particularly when many, including the chair of the school board and others, believe that the fundamental problem has been the lack of funding. We shouldn't have tied the arbitrator's hands. I'm glad the kids are going back but, for the reasons I've outlined, this individual will stand later in this House today and vote against this legislation.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I want to say at the outset that our member from Hamilton West has stated very clearly that our caucus will be voting against this bill.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: I'll tell you why in a sec. He stated very clearly, of course, that when an advisement of jeopardy is made by the Education Relations Commission, it's a concern for all of us. Jeopardy means that a continuation of the lockout would put at risk the successful completion of courses of study by the affected students. Of course, when that advisement is made, we are concerned about the children. Naturally, parents want the children to be in the classroom and getting the education they need so their full year can be completed, and hopefully completed successfully.

While that may solve the matter for the parents and the students, it doesn't solve the problem that we are facing in the educational system. It will not help teachers who are aggrieved and angry about what this government has done for the last six years, and it's only going to get worse, not better, in the coming years.

The member for Scarborough East is saying that it's time to end the games. I'm assuming not the games he is playing or the games the Conservative government is playing. He's saying it's time to end the games that presumably the union bosses are engaged in—so they are the real cause of the problem, not the government. In fact, the member claims, as he and his government often do, that they've put more money into the system, not less. The problem is that the teachers and the parents, those experts, know that we have a funding problem in our educational system. Why do they know? Because they're there on a daily basis see the tremendous cuts that we have seen.

Of course, the government members don't want to see that, don't want to listen to that. They don't want to hear that. They simply want to have people saying, "Oh, no, the system is great." "Please, those of you who are not parents, join with us, the Conservative government, as we bash the unions. They're the real problem." You had the member for Scarborough East say this again: the real problem, once again, is the bureaucracy. This is where the billions of dollars are and if we could only continue to savage those bureaucrats, then we would have more money in the classroom.

He continues to play this game, while at the same time accusing the union bosses—you know, those dreadful people who cause chaos in our system, the ones who are really eating the money, presumably for themselves. I'm assuming they're taking the money out of the educational system. Not perhaps the bureaucrats and not the government, but maybe the union bosses are taking it. Why don't you say that? You could say that. Some people will believe you, as they're believing you in so many other areas of myth-making, the kind of nonsense you people are engaged in. You are in such constant denial day in and day out that it's laughable.

The opposition says, "You've cut." The government members, the Minister of Education, say "No, we

haven't; we've added billions of dollars." The poor public is confused. They don't know who to believe. All I say to the public is, believe the parents who are actively involved in the educational system and have seen the loss and the cuts and have seen the effects of those cuts on their children. Believe them. Don't believe me, if you don't want to. Don't believe anybody else in opposition. But for God's sake, whatever you do, don't believe the member for Niagara Falls. Don't believe Bart. And please, whatever you do, don't believe the Minister of Education. Go into the classroom. Speak to some of the parents who are connected to the school system as part of the parent council and ask them, "What do you think?" Don't, for God's sake, listen to the member for Scarborough East when he speaks about these things, because he doesn't have a clue. He speaks well, I must admit he does, and sometimes you might be tempted to even believe him—although the former Minister of Education was more believable, but he lost that election. But you can't believe the member for Scarborough East, for God's sake.

1720

Look, they cut \$1.5 billion. That's a lot of bucks. Why else do you think they would have centralized education financing, except to take money out of the system? Otherwise they would have left it decentralized and permitted the school boards and the trustees to raise money out of the property tax base as a way of funding their needs. The government took that tool away. Why? Not to put money in but to take it out; otherwise, they would have left the system alone. Good taxpayer, I'm sure you know that.

You, citizens, you know better, because the taxpayer the Conservative government speaks to is just concerned about putting money in his pocket, getting money back for himself. The citizens, however, who are concerned about the students, concerned about the larger interest and the public interest, know that when you take money out of the educational system—the purpose for Bill 160, for centralizing—you're doing it for a reason.

So what has been cut? I'll tell you. Over 138 schools have closed or are slated to be closed; 10% fewer—

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): Aha. Say that again.

Mr Marchese: You'll have 130 schools that will be closed; many have been closed and many more will be closed. You'll have more or less that number. Deny that, if you can or will.

Some 10% fewer elementary schools have full-time principals because presumably they are bureaucracy, the fat cats that we don't need in our educational system. So we have 10% fewer full-time principals because, if you follow the logic of Scarborough East, they are the bureaucracy—we don't need them. Some 42% of elementary classrooms have 26 or more students. Class sizes have been increasing since the Conservatives came to power. For grade 2 students, class size has increased by more than 10%. Some 24% fewer elementary schools have ESL programs. We don't need that. We don't need those programs, presumably, because it's a Darwinian

kind of Conservative ideology. You survive and if you don't survive, it's too bad. You come into this country and if you don't do it on your own, you're certainly not going to get help from the Conservative government to help you out. You are on your own. That's the nature of the Darwinian society the Conservatives are having us live in.

Operational funds: the funding formula allocates money based on square feet, not the needs of students. What a dumb, dumb way to fund our educational system—based on square footage, not on the needs of our population. Speaker, don't you find that dumb? Sure, it is.

Mr Tilson: That's smart.

Mr Marchese: My goodness. Where are you from, my friend? There you are, in the front. My friend here from Dufferin-Peel says no, that's smart, that funding for square footage is smart. But surely you, taxpayers-citizens, would know. You, taxpayers, surely would understand that you don't fund on the basis of square footage; you fund on the basis of the needs of our population. Surely you, Mr Taxpayer, would know, poverty is a concern, wouldn't you say? So that if you come from a well-to-do place and some child comes from a poverty-stricken home where they might have psychological or physical problems—that's a burden on the teacher and on the educational system and you would want to introduce compensatory educational programs to make up for that. Would you believe that or no?

I ask you, Mr Taxpayer, because the member from Dufferin-Peel says funding on square footage should suffice. Surely you don't agree with that, do you? If you don't agree, you've got to let these people know, because these people are managing our government. They're managing 11 million people. That's a whole lot of people with a whole lot of worries and concerns. Can you imagine social policy being set by people who think we've got to create our funding formula around square footage as opposed to needs? Please.

Busing: all boards had their transportation budgets cut. In the Hamilton-Wentworth board, for example, this resulted in the loss of \$1.2 million and busing services cut for 1,500 students.

Textbooks: the funding formula permits a \$100 expenditure per year for textbooks, computer software and library materials. A high school student taking a full course load would have textbook needs adding up to more than \$400. To hear these people, we're overfunding them, they've got more money than they know what to do with, yet when you present the reality, what do they say? They say they've got a whole lot of money, and fat cats; get rid of the fat cats and that will solve the problem.

Mr McMeekin: Point fingers.

Mr Marchese: Point fingers? No, only the member for Scarborough East can do that. He can say, "Don't listen to the teachers' unions," as he points fingers at them. "But please don't look at us as being the problem. It's somebody else. It's the fat cats. It's not the square footage that's the problem, it's something else."

In 1998, under a Conservative government, Ontario's ranking in education spending slipped to 55th place in North America. The United States average per pupil spending on education is \$7,250. Ontario's average is \$4,007.

Special education: more than 34,000 children in elementary schools alone are on waiting lists for special education services. God bless the Tories.

Since 1997, there has been a 38% decrease in elementary school psychologists.

There is no provision in the funding formula for specialist teachers. The Conservatives consider these teachers non-classroom spending and have forced the following cuts in elementary schools: last year, 44% had no music teacher; 63% had no physical education teacher. "Don't worry about your health. We don't need physical education teachers. It's not classroom spending." Some 62% had no ESL teacher; 82% had no full-time librarian. "We don't need librarians in the schools; they're non-teachers." Design and technology teachers have been cut by 48% in elementary schools since 1998.

The teachers have been so brutalized by these people that we're losing them. They have been so demeaned and diminished and brutalized that they're leaving the system. Good people are leaving the system. We have a brain drain caused by these Conservatives here and they have no way of slowing it down, because everything they do complicates it even more and builds on the incompetence of every decision they made in the past.

Bill 74 compounds the problem, where they have forced secondary teachers to teach longer than ever before and burdened them with more work, as a result of which some of them are saying, "I'm tired. Sorry, I'm tired. I don't have time for the extracurricular activities any more because you've burdened me with more work. I have to make a choice between my health and my desire to do the extra for the kids. You keep on beating me up, and when I get beaten up, I say I'm sorry, I'm tired. I'm hurting a little bit." That's what they're saying.

In that same Bill 74, these people were going to force teachers to do extracurricular activities. That's a professional courtesy that they have performed for years and years. Now they were about to say to teachers, "It's your obligation. You've got to do it whether you like it or not." Then with the pressure they said, "OK, we won't do it, but we'll keep it in abeyance in the event that you don't do it, and then we'll bring it into law."

The final thing is that trustees have no more power. The trustees have been shackled and tape has been put over their mouths, because they can't comment on anything. Not only can they no longer run a deficit, but they can't speak out against anything having to do with curriculum, having to do with budgets, with classroom sizes, teacher-pupil ratios etc. They can't do anything. The only thing they can do is negotiate with the teachers. The only thing boards have left is to negotiate with teachers as it relates to their salaries and benefits. That's all they've got. But there is no money. There is no money in the kitty. There's no money there for the boards to negotiate any longer with their teachers.

That brings me to this bill. What we have is a board or boards many of which will have difficulties down the line, many of which will be facing strikes because boards cannot meet the expectations of teachers who are asking for a modest increase, because there is no money to give. The funding formula is so limited, so tight, so inadequate that there is no extra money to negotiate with teachers. There's no more to give them. So the only tool they had, which is to strike, in my humble view, will yield very little because even if they go on strike, the board in the end says, "I'm sorry, we have no money. We can't help you." So it leaves the government to say, once the boards can't negotiate with the teachers, "We're going to bring back-to-work legislation and get those people back into the classroom."

1730

What we have are several things: a funding formula that is inadequate and a board that can't incur deficits, which means that whatever boards and teachers negotiate, it will be negotiated in such a tight, restrictive environment that boards will not be able to satisfy those needs. When they are told they have to go back to work or are given another opportunity to accept the final offer of the board, the final offer of the board will be limited, and no arbitrator is probably going to give an amount greater than the board is able to offer. Why? Because the arbitrators are restricted to the kinds of decisions they can make, based on the board's ability to pay. If the board doesn't have the money, do you think the arbitrator's ruling is going to be any better than what the board is going to offer? No.

So when the board makes its final offer, as suggested in this bill, my suggestion is that teachers will reject it, it will go to an arbitrator and the board, whose hands will be shackled on the basis of its ability to pay, will say, "Sorry, we won't be able to offer much." Even if the arbitrator is a good one and deems that teachers ought to be getting a much more adequate or fair benefits package or a fair increase in their salaries, he won't be able to give the kind of money that is asked for because it's based on ability to pay, and the board's ability to pay has been diminished because of the inadequate funding formula.

There, good citizens, is the crux of the problem. We need to get back to an adequate funding formula that respects the needs of students and respects the needs of teachers and non-teachers in the educational system. That, good citizens, is what you have to communicate to the Minister of Education and to this government, because they're not listening. They will only listen to you; they won't listen to us. That is why you must become much more engaged. Without you, we will have a system that will be eroded and made worse for students and teachers.

Mr Maves: I appreciate that my colleagues have left me a few minutes to join in this debate. In them I'll have an opportunity to respond to some of the comments by my friend from Trinity-Spadina.

He ended his comments by saying there just wasn't enough money to settle this dispute. He wants to go back

to the days when the box had no bottom and teachers' unions and school boards could just tax and tax and keep reaching into the box, which is empty, in order to give the adults in the system more and more money. Those are the days he wants to return to. Taxpayers clearly said they didn't want that to happen any more.

Interjections.

Mr Maves: The member opposite is yelling about the 42% increase he took when he was a school board trustee. He wants the basket to be a bottomless pit, so they can always reach in and grab more for the adults in the system. But the people of Ontario knew we had to straighten out our own house. They have budgets in their own homes—

Interjections.

Mr Maves: Speaker, how can anyone continue with the cacophony across the way? I'd appreciate it if you would bring some sort of order.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Trinity-Spadina will come to order.

Mr Maves: The other point that has to be made here is that the member for Stoney Creek, a member who is uniquely affected by the dispute this legislation seeks to end, made this House aware that the president of the teachers' local was stating very clearly that the board has the money to fund the salary increase without the loss of teaching positions. That was the position of the teachers' union leader. So his supporters, the teachers' unions in this field, are saying the money is there. They're saying, "No, you're wrong, member for Trinity-Spadina. In fact, the money is there. The provincial government has provided the money."

The other thing the member happened to say was that people within the system are so discouraged that they're leaving the system. Why are they leaving the system? Many of them are leaving because we provided an 85 factor many years ago. Many years ago teachers waited for a 90 factor, a combination of age and years taught equalling 90, before they could retire. We've lowered that for them. We brought in the 85 factor, and a lot of teachers are taking advantage of that and are leaving the profession.

And you know what? People are clamouring to get into this profession. When we recently completed our SuperBuild competition for funding for post-secondary institutions, there were a whole bunch of institutions that applied for funding to increase the number of spaces they had in their institutions for people entering teachers' college. Why? Because for many years we haven't been able to provide enough spaces for the number of people clamouring to get into this profession. My own wife had to go to Canesius College, and other people have had to go to Niagara University and other places in order to get a space in teachers' college so they could teach. So in the recent SuperBuild application process we opened \$1 billion in the post-secondary institutions for infrastructure, all kinds of programs, including my own Brock University. We need the increased spaces because we have so many people who want to enter this profession.

For the member to say people are leaving the profession because they don't like the way they're treated, they are actually leaving the profession mostly because of the 85 factor, and, as I said, there are people clamouring to get in.

I also want to remind the members opposite that it was them who brought in the social contract. Teachers around this province have pay grids. They usually get about a 5% increase automatically every year in most boards. Depending on your experience and education, you make a higher amount of pay. The members opposite froze that grid, which totally offends, by the way, their belief in supporting a collective bargaining process.

We came in and one of the very first things we did was to get rid of the social contract. We took away the freeze on those pay grids. So what happened is that for almost every teacher around the province, immediately when we came into office in 1995, those pay grids were unfrozen and they moved up about \$8,000, \$9,000, \$10,000 in the pay grid, increase in their annual paycheques, and they've been moving along those pay grids, whereas under the NDP social contract they weren't there.

We've done a lot of other things: board amalgamations to make sure money is not being wasted on administration but is being spent in the classroom; a tough new curriculum, which teachers wrote and teachers like; defined classroom spending so we could protect it for them. We lowered average class size; it was always negotiated by the boards and the unions, and we took what they had negotiated and we have recently lowered it after making the provincial average.

The money is there, the system improvements are there, accountability is now in the system, and it's time to support the kids in Hamilton and get them back into school. That's why I support this legislation and the member for Stoney Creek who worked so hard to get it.

Mr Agostino: I am pleased to have a few minutes to join the debate. I want to make it very clear from the outset that I'm pleased, along with Dalton McGuinty, Marie Bountrogianni, Ted McMeekin and the rest of our caucus, to oppose and vote against this legislation that the government is ramming through the House today. Our job here is to oppose, not obstruct. We are here clearly because the government has mishandled the education system, has mishandled education, has underfunded education, has forced the teachers on to the picket lines, has forced students out of the classroom.

Earlier the member for Stoney Creek accused me of standing with the teachers and against the students, accused me of walking the picket line with the teachers. Isn't that exactly the problem, the attitude that the member for Stoney Creek reflects with this government as one against the other, that you don't see teachers and students as being on the same side? This member believes that because you're standing with the teachers, you're against the students. That is the confrontational us-against-them attitude that has to end in this province.

I'm proud to stand with the teachers, because when I'm standing with the teachers, I'm standing with the

students and I'm standing for better education across this province. I'm proud to walk the picket line with the teachers, because they are there for the betterment of their students, for better education, for smaller classes, more textbooks, more computers, the things that this government has cut out. It's a question of priorities.

Interjection.

Mr Agostino: I hear the member from Niagara, Mr Maves, heckling again. He thinks this government has its priorities right. This government believes it's OK to propose 42% increases for MPPs. This government thinks it's OK for MPPs to get a 42% increase. I understand that. We don't. We believe it's more important to put the money into the classroom. We believe it's more important to look after kids than after our own increases. They don't understand that. They think this is the solution here. This is the quick fix. "We're going to be bullies. We're going to use the power of government to legislate back to work." Let's understand clearly that the ruling by the ERC is the shortest in the history of the province of Ontario for the year being in jeopardy, 15 days. Let's understand that what this government is doing here tonight is simply putting a Band-Aid on a very serious problem.

1740

Forcing teachers back into the classroom tomorrow morning doesn't solve the fact that they have ripped and stolen and taken \$1,100 per student out of the education system in Hamilton. That is the problem. The reason the teachers are on strike is because of Mike Harris, Janet Ecker and the government destroying and gutting our education system in Hamilton, and forcing the teachers back to work tomorrow morning is not going to solve that problem. You'll have the students back in the classroom, but you'll have a serious problem on your hands.

This government has demoralized and attacked teachers, they've gone after teachers and they have made teachers public enemy number one. This government has had five years of beating up and demoralizing some of our most valuable assets in this province: the men and women whom we entrust with our children's future; the men and women in the classroom who look after the kids in this province. That is what this government has done. They have made them out to be some evil, uncaring group of individuals who are selfish, who care only about themselves. That is wrong; that is inaccurate; that is the portrayal this government wants. It is not one that we believe in on the Liberal side of the House.

The system you've put in place is rigged. You now have a situation where you're going to have an arbitrator, ultimately, at the end of this, an arbitrator whom you put a straitjacket on, an arbitrator whom you have put some very tight controls on, who cannot rule beyond the ability to pay. But you've set that ability to pay for the boards. You have set the rules; you have set the game; you have decided exactly how this is going to unfold, and frankly you are to blame for the situation you have today.

Understand clearly that what this government has done in Hamilton they're going to repeat across Ontario.

There are going to be strikes, there are going to be lockouts, there are going to be disputes, because you have fundamentally taken away the ability of school boards to make decisions; you have taken away the ability of local communities to make decisions. You have taken away the bargaining process that was in place. Let me tell you, when the Minister of Education and the member for Stoney Creek started talking about back-to-work legislation a week or 10 days ago, you killed any opportunity whatsoever of a local negotiated settlement. You poisoned the well. You disrupted any hope there was of a local settlement. The teachers wanted a local settlement, the board wanted a local settlement, the parents wanted a local settlement, but you have taken that away.

Let's make it clear—the members of the government don't understand this—teachers are not the enemy here. The teachers are not whom we're fighting against. The teachers are on the same side as the students and parents: quality education, smaller classrooms, better equipment, textbooks that are not 10 years out of date—working conditions for teachers are students' learning conditions. This government doesn't understand that. Tonight with your majority, with the blank cheque that you've written yourselves to control education in this province, you're going to flex your muscles, you're going to pound your chest and you're going to proclaim you've won. You're going to proclaim that you forced teachers back into the classroom and that you've won this fight. There's no win here for anybody, because you have poisoned the relations in Hamilton. You have demoralized teachers even further and you've done absolutely nothing to help students in the classroom.

Again I say to this government, if they were serious about helping education in Ontario, if this government were serious about improving the quality of education with this legislation, they would also send back to Hamilton the money they ripped out of our system. Understand clearly: there is \$1,100 per student less today in the Hamilton public school system than there was five years ago. I'm sorry the Minister of Labour just walked in. We made it clear at the beginning and we're going to continue as a caucus to make it clear that we will not support this type of regressive, teacher-bashing, anti-education, anti-student legislation that this government has brought in.

Interjections.

Mr Agostino: In the government they're all heckling. The ministers are rolling in; the limos are revving up. They're here for this vote. The limos are all waiting outside so they can get out of here after this vote is over and celebrate their victory over the teachers. We understand that. But let me tell you, here in the Liberal caucus we stand with the teachers, because the teachers stand with the students, the students stand with the parents and they all stand for better education, for quality education, for effective education, unlike this government, that believes that what is effective is to beat up teachers and demoralize teachers. We believe we work

with teachers, we work with parents, we work with students and we work with every party in the education system. We're going to oppose this legislation, which does nothing but help destroy education in the city of Hamilton.

The Deputy Speaker: The time allocated for debate is now complete.

Mr Jackson has moved third reading of Bill 145, An Act to resolve a labour dispute between the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1746 to 1756.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will stand one at a time until they're recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Baird, John R.	Harris, Michael D.	Palladini, Al
Barrett, Toby	Hastings, John	Runciman, Robert W.
Beaubien, Marcel	Hodgson, Chris	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Snobelen, John
Clark, Brad	Jackson, Cameron	Spina, Joseph
Coburn, Brian	Johns, Helen	Sterling, Norman W.
Cunningham, Dianne	Johnson, Bert	Stewart, R. Gary
DeFaria, Carl	Kells, Morley	Stockwell, Chris
Dunlop, Garfield	Klees, Frank	Tascona, Joseph N.
Ecker, Janet	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tilson, David
Elliott, Brenda	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.

Flaherty, Jim	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Galt, Doug	Molinari, Tina R.	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Gilchrist, Steve	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Gill, Raminder	Mushinski, Marilyn	Witmer, Elizabeth
Guzzo, Garry J.	O'Toole, John	Wood, Bob

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Curling, Alvin	Marchese, Rosario
Bartolucci, Rick	Dombrowsky, Leona	Martel, Shelley
Bountrogianni, Marie	Duncan, Dwight	Martin, Tony
Boyer, Claudette	Gerretsen, John	McGuinty, Dalton
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	McLeod, Lyn
Caplan, David	Hoy, Pat	McMeekin, Ted
Christopherson, David	Kennedy, Gerard	Patten, Richard
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Peters, Steve
Cleary, John C.	Kwinter, Monte	Phillips, Gerry
Conway, Sean G.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Pupatello, Sandra
Cordiano, Joseph	Lankin, Frances	Ruprecht, Tony
Crozier, Bruce	Levac, David	Sergio, Mario

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 51; the nays are 36.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

It being 6 of the clock, the House stands adjourned until 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1759.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
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Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Beaches-East York	Lankin, Frances (ND)	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 déléguee aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
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	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	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
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Com- mercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	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
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines		
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail		
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
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 East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Nipissing	Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Northumberland	Galt, Doug (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stoney Creek	Clark, Brad (PC)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa-Orléans	Coburn, Brian (PC)	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)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Palladini, Hon / L'hon Al (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
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)
		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.

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Gerard Kennedy
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Alvin Curling
Gilles Bisson, Alvin Curling, Gerard Kennedy,
Frank Mazzilli, John R. O'Toole, Steve Peters,
R. Gary Stewart, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Finance and economic affairs /
Finances et affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Doug Galt
Ted Arnott, Marcel Beaubien, David Christopherson,
Doug Galt, Monte Kwinter, Tina R. Molinari,
Gerry Phillips, David Young
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

General government / Affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Steve Gilchrist
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro
Toby Barrett, Marie Bountrogianni, Ted Chudleigh,
Garfield Dunlop, Steve Gilchrist, Dave Levac,
Rosario Marchese, Julia Munro
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Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bruce Crozier
James J. Bradley, Bruce Crozier, Leona Dombrowsky,
Bert Johnson, Morley Kells, Tony Martin,
Joseph Spina, Bob Wood
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales

Chair / Présidente: Marilyn Mushinski
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Carl DeFaria
Marcel Beaubien, Michael Bryant, Carl DeFaria,
Brenda Elliott, Garry J. Guzzo, Peter Kormos,
Lyn McLeod, Marilyn Mushinski
Clerk / Greffier: Tom Prins

Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: R. Gary Stewart
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Brad Clark
Marilyn Churley, Brad Clark, Caroline Di Cocco,
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Jerry J. Ouellette, R. Gary Stewart, Joseph N.
Tasca, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Public accounts / Comptes publics

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John C. Cleary, John Gerretsen, John Hastings,
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**Regulations and private bills /
Règlements et projets de loi privés**

Chair / Présidente: Frances Lankin
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Claudette Boyer, Brian Coburn,
Garfield Dunlop, Raminder Gill, Pat Hoy,
Frances Lankin, Bill Murdoch
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

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