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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 19 December 2000

Mardi 19 décembre 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 19 December 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 19 décembre 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): Today I'm addressing the subject of failure. I'm talking about the complete failure of this government to meet the needs of its citizens.

There have been many signposts on the road. We on this side of the House have worked to raise the alarm about the dangers of the Harris government agenda. They believe over there that they are not government; that they are only there to fix government. We see how well things have been "fixed." It took seven deaths in Walkerton for people to see that clearly. Health care cuts and forced hospital closures have created a crisis in health care: not enough beds, equipment, nurses or technicians anywhere. The doctor shortage in rural and northern Ontario has spiralled out of control.

This government has failed to invest wisely, failed to get their priorities straight. We're looking at a school system in chaos. We knew Bill 160 would create a crisis. In fact, it was their goal. It resulted in mass school closures. We knew that centralized power in the Ministry of Education would poison the atmosphere in our classrooms. It has come to pass. Yet the minister still refuses to consider the Liberal peace plan from Dalton McGuinty.

Downloading and privatization have created havoc for Ontarians in the environment, on our highways, in our ambulances, in meat inspection. We knew that would result in illegal abattoirs. We were not fearmongering. We were pointing out real risks. Now we see that Ontarians are at risk in dozens of ways because of the failures of this Mike Harris government.

OPP WALL OF HONOUR

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Last Thursday, December 14, the Ontario Provincial Police Association hosted a rededication ceremony of their newly designed Wall of Honour built in memory of their fallen officers. The ceremony was held at the OPP general headquarters in Orillia. OPP Commissioner Harold H.

Graham dedicated the first honour roll on December 4, 1978, at the OPP headquarters in Toronto. At that time the honour roll contained 46 names. On September 16, 1995, the honour roll was moved to the foyer of the new general headquarters in Orillia. On that day, there were 69 officers named on the wall. Today, tragically, there are 89 officers named.

I was honoured to be represented at the dedication ceremony, along with OPP Commissioner Gwen Boniface, Solicitor General David Tsubouchi and OPPA president Brian Adkin. Also in attendance were the OPP Chorus, the Commissioner's Own Pipes and Drums and the OPPA/Barrie Youth Band.

Along with 12 others, the name of Sergeant Margaret Eve of the Chatham-Kent OPP was added to the honour roll. Sergeant Eve, as you all know, was tragically killed in a police cruiser accident during the spring session and is the most recent officer named on the wall.

I'd like to close by repeating what OPP Commissioner Harold Graham said on December 4, 1978, at the time of the original dedication, as he refers to the police: "Dedicated to preserving memories of our members who lost their lives in the pursuit of peace and tranquility for the citizens of this province."

ROAD SAFETY

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): A few days ago, Mr Wettlaufer, the Kitchener Centre member, raised what he thought was a major law-and-order issue. He found that "younger members of our society, particularly those that wear the skateboard pants, are ... disregarding the rules about the appropriate way to cross roadways.... They walk across the road, eyeing down motorists.... They walk across with a swagger." The Solicitor General said he has plans to fight this with both the Highway Traffic Act and the Criminal Code.

I wanted to point out another problem to the Solicitor General. There are, in many areas, gangs of youth on residential roads. They are armed with wooden sticks, they're propelling hard rubber missiles and they wear gang garb: blue Maple Leaf shirts. Catching them is going to be very difficult because, once again, they're very cunning. As soon as the police car rounds the corner, they have a code: they yell "car" and they scatter.

Just as Mr Wettlaufer is tracking down these young people who walk with a swagger, wearing skateboard pants, the Solicitor General may want to turn his atten-

tion, as he fights for law and order, to another serious issue: these young people on the roads, with wooden sticks, playing with these hard rubber objects.

Once again the government is using our police organizations to fight law-and-order issues. I think in some respects they would be better off fighting the real criminals, rather than going after young people who walk with a swagger and wear skateboard pants.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I've got a message from the Canadian Federation of Students, and it's addressed to Minister Cunningham.

"I wish to communicate my concerns to you regarding private universities. Like many of my colleagues, I do not believe that the move toward private universities has anything to do with providing students with 'innovative and flexible choices,'" as you say. "Rather, it is our belief that the establishment of private universities will lead to a two-tiered system of post-secondary education.

"Private universities will be exclusive places of privilege, open only to those who can afford to pay the high tuition fees they charge. What's worse is that private universities may draw on public funds in the form of tax incentives, financial assistance for students, and research grants for faculty. In other jurisdictions, private universities have drawn on public resources without enhancing either the quality or accessibility of a university education. By allowing tuition fees to skyrocket beyond the reach of working people many will lose the opportunity to pursue post-secondary education.

"Education should not be a for-profit enterprise—a business—accountable only to shareholders. Education is a right. Thus, I call on the Ontario government to stop Bill 132 and to restore funding to democratically controlled publicly funded universities. If your government is truly committed to creating choice then it should be reinvesting in the existing, public post-secondary education system, ending deregulation of tuition fees, freezing and reducing tuition fees and implementing a system of needs-based grants. Only through these measures will you ensure that every willing and qualified student has a place at a high-quality public university."

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland):

'Twas the week before Christmas,
and all through the House,
Not a critic was stirring, with nothing to grouse;
The stockings were hung by the Legislature with care,
In hopes federal tax cuts soon would be there.

The Tories were nestled all snug in their seats,
Too much Christmas shopping
had worn out their feet;
The malls were all full, the retailers were happy,
As all took advantage of an economy snappy.

But on the other side of that august chamber,
The Grits didn't share in the holiday cheer,
Away to the PM they flew like a flash,
Dalton tore into the Tories, and attempted to bash.

But the Prime Minister said, with a laugh and a grin,
"Tax cuts aren't bad, they're most certainly in.
Although I'd never admit, they're old Micky's idea,"
And the voters all say, "That's a good place to be-a."

Now Shawinigan Jean's a right crafty old elf,
And Tories laugh when they see him,
in spite of themselves.
But with a wink of his eye and twist of head,
He assured dear old Dalton he had nothing to dread.

"It's the taxpayers' money," the PM intoned,
"You'd better get used to it," he continued to drone.
Dalton spoke not a word, but he turned with a jerk,
"I'll spend my tax cuts on my family,"
he said with a smirk.

For the season in Ontario was filled with much joy,
Such a wonderful time for each girl and boy.
Even Dalton McGuinty got the holiday right,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

1340

PRIVATE CLINICS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): The management and delivery of publicly funded rehabilitation services in Ontario is increasingly being turned over to large for-profit corporations.

My research suggests that one company, LifeMark, recently acquired at least five clinics, in Hamilton, Scarborough and Downsview. That brings their total acquisitions in Ontario to 22 publicly funded clinics. I understand that LifeMark would like to have 50 clinics in Ontario before the end of another year.

Another company, Accelerate, which is part of a large American-based health management company, already has 10 clinics in Ontario, at least five of which are physiotherapy clinics. Accelerate is projecting a doubling of their profits next year and attributes part of their expected growth to their expansion in Ontario.

We should all be aware that the public funds that are made available for rehabilitation are extremely limited. So the fact that more of this limited public funding is going to the profit margins of large corporations is an area of concern.

But I am also concerned about the redirection of rehabilitation services by companies interested in financial bottom lines. LifeMark and Accelerate appear to be targeting their services to nursing homes, where they receive twice the fee from OHIP that they can get for treating someone in a community clinic. Without doubt, nursing homes that have to provide physiotherapy out of their over-stretched budgets will welcome getting this

service for their residents. The problem is that the budget for these public physiotherapy clinics is capped at \$40 million, so any service offered to the nursing homes comes at the expense of even longer waiting lists for physiotherapy.

The bottom line is that waiting lists for physiotherapy are getting longer and longer, and more and more people are having to pay for treatment out of their own pockets.

There must be some limits placed on the expansion of these corporations in Ontario. The government should make any sale of further licences for publicly funded clinics contingent on maintaining community access to those clinics.

FANSHAWE COLLEGE

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I rise today to give our instructors and students at Simcoe's Fanshawe College a pat on the back.

Fanshawe College, Simcoe campus, may be small, with about 300 students, but it recently earned itself top marks with respect to provincial statistics. This campus, which serves Norfolk county, ranks tops among the four Fanshawe locations in a study conducted by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The study asked students to rank the quality of instruction, value of the skills they learned, how prepared they were for jobs and whether they would recommend the campus to others.

Overall, 81% of Fanshawe's 1999 graduates were satisfied or very satisfied. This is up 12% from Ontario's average. Another key statistic: 89% of employers of Fanshawe graduates were satisfied or very satisfied, compared to the provincial average of 80%. Fortunately, 92% of the 1999 graduates from Fanshawe were employed six months after graduation. I think this is outstanding.

Today, I'd like the rest of the Legislature to know about this top-notch educational facility. As a former student, a former instructor and a former member of the advisory committee for Fanshawe, I join the friends of Fanshawe and others in my riding in offering hearty congratulations to this outstanding institution.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Two words which have virtually disappeared from the vocabulary of the Harris government are "energy conservation." With home heating oil, natural gas, diesel fuel and gasoline prices skyrocketing, the Conservative government of Ontario has all but abandoned any initiatives designed to bring down the demand for energy.

Programs established in the late 1980s and early 1990s to curb the rising demand for fuel, to power everything from electric power plants to vehicles to household appliances, have been abandoned to satisfy the red tape eliminators and the budget slashers, who prefer a laissez-faire regulatory regime and who have an unquenchable appetite for the tax cuts, even at the expense of the

elimination of valuable and effective energy conservation programs.

California, where supply is insufficient and costs are rising dramatically for electric power, is an example of deregulation at its very worst, yet Ontario is bound and determined to follow this ill-advised path.

Whether it's the conservation of water, prime agricultural land or energy, the Harris government has relinquished its responsibility to play a key role.

It's time to embark upon new and innovative energy conservation initiatives to reduce the demand which is driving costs to the consumer sky high and allowing essential and declining resources to deplete at an alarming rate.

In transportation, at home, at businesses and industrial operations, and in the production of electric power, energy conservation is the answer to our energy crisis. Bold, thoughtful leadership by our provincial government is needed but unfortunately is sadly lacking.

EQUESTRIAN RIDING SAFETY

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): How many of us know children who love horses, who want a pony for Christmas, who want riding lessons for their birthday? An ever-increasing number of Ontarians are choosing to go horseback riding for recreational purposes, but many of these weekend riders are inexperienced and have no idea what to expect. Many of the riders are children who do not have the strength to control a large and unpredictable animal. Many of these children have been hurt, sometimes killed, in accidents which could have been prevented.

A riding helmet, boots, and breakaway stirrups are simple pieces of equipment which need to be worn every time, every ride. If 10-year-old Elizabeth Hader had been provided with safety gear, she might be alive today. It is nothing less than a tragedy that a little girl who loved horses was involved in such a senseless accident.

For this reason, I would like to take this opportunity to inform the House about an important piece of legislation which will be debated this week. On Thursday morning, my private member's bill is scheduled for second reading. Bill 156, An Act to increase the safety of equestrian riders, is a much-needed piece of legislation to provide minimum safety standards to an unregulated industry. By requiring that riding establishments provide certified helmets and proper footgear to riders under 18, we will be putting the safety of our young people first, and we will be doing everything we can to see that preventable accidents are just that—prevented.

On Thursday, I ask for your support of Bill 156.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): In the members' gallery east we have a former MP, Mr Jim Jones, who was the member for Markham in the federal House. Would all members please join in welcoming our federal colleague.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (OUTSIDE RIDERS), 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (PASSAGERS À L'EXTÉRIEUR D'UN VÉHICULE)

Mr Galt moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 173, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit persons from riding on the outside of a motor vehicle / Projet de loi 173, Loi modifiant le Code de la route pour interdire à des personnes de circuler à l'extérieur d'un véhicule automobile.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

The member for a short statement.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): This bill would increase road safety by prohibiting passengers riding on the outside of motor vehicles. Fire department vehicles and motorcycles are excepted, and there are some exceptions for those whose line of work involves riding in the back of a truck, including agricultural activities.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

Mr Murdoch moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 174, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act / Projet de loi 174, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

The member for a short statement.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound): It's my pleasure to introduce the Ontario Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2000. If passed, this act would allow each and every member of the provincial Parliament to have a real opportunity to effectively impact on proposed laws.

In short, every member of this House could vote to reflect the wishes of his or her constituents. However, if passed, this act would ensure that the defeat of a government bill would not mean the automatic defeat of the government. Governments would only be defeated in the

Legislature on express votes of confidence or non-confidence.

Nothing in this proposed act would impact on bills dealing with budgetary issues.

If enacted, this bill would see something unique in Ontario: representative democracy; the right to exercise a basic freedom, freedom of speech. It's my opinion that in today's government too much freedom of speech and too much honest representation are forfeited in the name of party discipline on both sides of the House. The Ontario Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2000, if passed, would mean the end of the trained-seal syndrome that has overcome this House.

1350

The Speaker: If the vote is tied, it's going to be interesting to see how the Speaker votes to break the tie on that particular one.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to give second and third readings to Mr Murdoch's bill.

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

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Would you help us to elicit from the member whether he has cleared this with the Premier's office and specifically with Guy Giorno?

The Speaker: As you know, that's not the Speaker's role. I can only guess what the answer to that question is.

Mr Brad Clark (Stoney Creek): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent of the House to change the title of the bill to the Sheriff of Nottingham Act.

The Speaker: I'm afraid that isn't able to be done even with unanimous consent.

NORTHERN ONTARIO HERITAGE FUND AMENDMENT ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LE FONDS DU PATRIMOINE DU NORD DE L'ONTARIO

Mr Murdoch moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 175, An Act to amend the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Act / Projet de loi 175, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Fonds du patrimoine du Nord de l'Ontario.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

The member for a short statement.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound): Today I have the pleasure of introducing the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Amendment Act, 2000. This act, if passed, will designate the Bruce Peninsula, including the town of Wiarton, as part of northern Ontario, making it eligible for extra funding under the northern Ontario

heritage fund, which was doubled during last May's budget.

Recently, many of you will remember, the electoral riding of Muskoka-Parry Sound was given this northern designation, but what many of you may not be aware of is that Parry Sound and the village of Lion's Head are on the same latitude. Surely if one is to be considered northern, the other must as well. The Bruce Peninsula is equally deserving of the economic benefits of this designation.

I have, over the course of the last several months, received letters from local municipalities, hospitals and schools supporting a northern designation for the Bruce.

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR LA PROTECTION DES ENFANTS CONTRE L'EXPLOITATION SEXUELLE

Mr Flaherty moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 176, An Act to protect children from sexual exploitation and to amend the Highway Traffic Act /
Projet de loi 176, Loi protégeant les enfants contre
l'exploitation sexuelle et modifiant le Code de la route.

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

The Attorney General for a short statement.

Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): I'll make a minister's statement.

ST. CLAIR PARKS COMMISSION ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR LA COMMISSION DES PARCS DE LA SAINTE-CLAIRE

Mr Jackson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 177, An Act to repeal and replace the St. Clair Parkway Commission Act /
Projet de loi 177, Loi abrogeant et remplaçant la Loi sur la Commission de la promenade Sainte-Claire.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

The minister for a short statement.

Hon Cameron Jackson (Minister of Tourism): The proposals contained in this bill will continue the St Clair Parkway Commission under a new act as the St Clair Parks Commission. The proposed amendments allow for the exit of the municipality of Chatham-Kent; it is a request of their council to leave the commission. The new act will also create a new structure which will enable the commission to grow and to continue to provide world-class tourism and recreational facilities along the St Clair River and the shores of Lake Huron, which is an important tourism gateway to our province.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

CHILD PROTECTION

Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): Our children are our province's future. Our responsibility includes caring for them and helping them to grow into healthy, contributing adults. Protecting them from danger is our obligation. There should be no higher priority for us, as individuals and as legislators, than protecting our children from sexual exploitation and victimization.

Earlier today, I moved first reading of the Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation Act. If passed, this legislation would protect children who are exploited by prostitution and assist them to begin a new life. These children are not offenders. They are victims, victims of abuse by adults, victims of exploitation by adults.

It is estimated that the majority of prostitutes in North America begin at the age of 13. To put that in perspective, the average 13-year-old is in grade 8. Children of that age should be attending school, playing sports or trading hockey cards with their friends.

Unfortunately, in small and large communities across Ontario, children 13 to 18 years of age are forced to become and stay prostitutes. Their stories are heart-wrenching. Many are runaways. However, running to the streets comes with many hazards: predators such as pimps and johns, regular beatings, and drugs.

Police officers will tell you the stories of these children. They will tell you about children who clutch teddy bears for comfort, yet know all about drugs and turning tricks. They will tell you about children who are terrified of breaking away from the person or persons who orchestrate and profit from their exploitation.

Today I'd like to welcome, in the public gallery, Detective Steve Tracy of the Toronto Police Service's juvenile task force. The input of the Toronto Police Service's juvenile task force is reflected in this bill, and their assistance is greatly appreciated.

It was through consultations with experts who work to help these children that our government was able to design this bill.

If passed, this bill would give police and children's aid society workers more tools to remove child victims of prostitution from dangerous situations and take these children to safe, secure places.

Police and child care workers would be able to remove the child from dangerous situations with or without a warrant. That means if a child is being held in a bawdy house, massage parlour or motel, a warrant could be obtained to enter the premises. A warrant would not be necessary when there is an immediate risk to the safety of the child.

The child would be placed in a safe, secure location where the children's aid society would assume responsibility for managing his or her care.

The bill recognizes that each child has different needs and that flexibility is required when deciding the appropriate assistance each victim should receive.

To respect the rights of the child, within 24 hours or as soon as possible a judge or justice of the peace would review the validity of the apprehension and the grounds to hold the child for five days. During the five-day period, a second hearing would be held. At this hearing, the court could extend the placement for up to 30 days; return the child to his or her parents, if appropriate supervision would be provided; or decide that the child should be dealt with under the existing provisions of the Child and Family Services Act.

1400

Once in a safe environment, a wide range of services would be provided to the children, including drug and alcohol counselling, specialized legal services, medical services like detoxification and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, and mental health services.

Adults who profit from and sexually exploit children are engaging in a form of child abuse. The offenders are the pimps who enslave the children and the johns who sexually exploit them. Under the proposed legislation, adults who prey on these children would have their driver's licences suspended.

This bill enhances the work currently being done by the Children's Secretariat to develop community-based outreach and education programs in collaboration with Save the Children Canada. Our government stands on the side of victims and children. The Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation Act is just one step we are taking to ensure that all of Ontario's children are given the opportunity for a healthy future. It's one more step we are taking to ensure Ontario remains the best place to live, work, invest and raise a family.

This is a complex and highly emotional issue. I believe the proposed bill is a good start. May I acknowledge the work done by the honourable member for Sudbury on this issue, including his private member's bill. The bill I have introduced today is different in several respects, treating children as victims, not as offenders, giving both children's aid workers and police the power to detain, and creating time limits and important due-process protections for children. But I thank the member for his work, which has been of great assistance on this issue.

I look forward to the advice and input of members of this House and the public as we work together to refine this legislation in the best interests of some of the most vulnerable children in our province.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): I appreciate the minister's comments and I appreciate the acknowledgement given to the member for Sudbury, but we have to say here that if adopting great Liberal initiatives on crime were a crime, this government would be a serial offender.

What we have today is nothing less than a legislative hat trick. In this legislative session alone, we have seen first Bill 129, An Act to authorize payments to the estates of the victims of the OC Transpo Tragedy, thanks to Dalton McGuinty. Secondly, we've seen Bill 67, an act

to crack down on phony guns, the imitation firearms act, about to become law. The last piece of the hat trick is in fact the ultimate hat trick. This bill before this House does not contain one private member's bill from the member for Sudbury, Rick Bartolucci; it doesn't contain two private member's bills from Rick Bartolucci. It contains three—count them, three—bills from the member for Sudbury, Rick Bartolucci. The member for Sudbury introduced Bill 18 originally, which then became Bill 10 and Bill 6, an act to crack down and deal with the victims of child prostitution; Bill 122, driver's licence suspension for johns and pimps; and Bill 146, cracking down on entertainment parlours. All these bills are contained in this bill.

So let the word go forth to all Ontarians: the bill currently before this House ain't a Tory initiative. Today is the day of the Bartolucci bill bonanza. Congratulations, Rick.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): There are many people to thank with the introduction of this bill. Certainly, I'd like to thank Dalton McGuinty and my Liberal colleagues for their direction, their support and their advice. I'd also like to thank Allan, the father of the teenage prostitute that I spoke of originally. It is in fact three years ago today that I first met Allan at the City Centre in Sudbury, and he was the motivation behind this bill. I phoned Allan today and congratulated him and his daughter Mallory, who had the courage to testify at the public hearings two years ago. I want to say to Allan and to all the Mallories who are out there, there is some hope now for you.

I also want to give credit to the Sudbury Regional Police Service, Chief Alex McCauley, Deputy Chief Jim Cunningham, Superintendent Ian Davidson and the 38 other police forces that wrote letters of support to the Attorney General, to the Premier and to the Solicitor General.

In particular, I want to thank Steve Tracy and Mike Beauparlant from youth services, who really dedicated themselves to this initiative.

Good ideas exist on all sides of the House. If there's a lesson to be learned from all of this, it is that we should react quicker to good initiatives so that the protection of the people of Ontario is paramount in our minds whether we are in government or in opposition.

To that end, I encourage the government to pass Bill 24, sponsored by Mr Hoy, with regard to providing a safer haven for children as they ride school buses, and Bill 73 by Ms Papatello, An Act to promote public peace and safety by regulating late-night dance events, such as raves. I suggest that those are two good initiatives that will provide the protections that are necessary for people in Ontario regardless of their age.

I would also suggest that it is important that while I support this legislation, I believe the legislation hasn't gone far enough. I honestly believe that in this legislation, although it recognizes that children who are being sexually exploited or abused are victims—and indeed the Attorney General is right; they are victims—we do not go far enough in punishing johns or pimps. My bill would

have allowed for punishment up to 24 months in jail and a fine of \$25,000. I believe johns and pimps have to know that there is punishment besides the punishment that exists in the Criminal Code of Canada.

I would suggest to the government that in future they ensure, if they're not going to adopt our ideas, that their reaction time is a lot quicker, because at the end of the day no one in Ontario cares who sponsors the initiative. They only care for good legislation.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I'm going to make it very clear that the New Democrats, just as they supported the private members' bills which gave rise to this legislation, are supportive of the goals that are being sought by virtue of the legislation introduced today. This is an incredibly disastrous crisis that children in Canada are out on the streets being sexually abused and sexually exploited at the ages as young as being spoken of by the Attorney General and by the private member during his address to his bills earlier in this House.

New Democrats join in the recognition of Detective Steve Tracy and others like him, women and men in our police forces who have a very special interest and passion, as well as compassion, for those youngsters from all over Canada who find themselves in major cities, Toronto perhaps being first and foremost.

I say this to the Attorney General—and I don't diminish the seriousness of the issue in any way, but good God, Attorney General—a squeegee starts to look far more attractive as an option for a youngster out on the streets to eke out money on a daily basis than does prostituting oneself as a child in any number of contexts that carry with them their own unique special horrors and dangers for that youngster.

Attorney General, we say this to you: we're going to support this bill on second reading. You know, as well as other members of this assembly, that the bill deals with some strange contradictions in the law and the status of youngsters who are 16 and 17 years old as compared to being under the age of 16. I appreciate your comment, Attorney General, that it's not the role of any government, nor should it be, to victimize or criminalize the true victims. You're well aware of the litigation that has flowed from similar legislation in western Canada that has raised serious questions. You're proposing here some very dramatic intervention, forfeiture of freedom by young persons, in particular those who are 16 and 17. I'm talking about the prospect of effectively being arrested and being detained.

I appreciate that the legislation has what you hold out to be safeguards for those young people. During the course of what have to be committee hearings around this, there has to be discussion about the way the detention and restraint of any citizen, including 16- and 17-year-old citizens, is moderated to the point where it becomes least intrusive and where the rights of that young citizen are held as valuable as the rights of any of us.

I think also there has to be some clear discussion about exactly what types of programs we are talking about. I

find somewhat discouraging the prospect of detaining young persons, exposing them to the programs that you suggest will be made available, but those young persons, after whatever time frame, be it 15 days or 30 days, being right back out on the street, back to the lure of "the life," as it's referred to on the street.

I also suggest to you, Attorney General, that it's incumbent upon all of us to start talking in a far more serious way about exactly who these youngsters are, where they're coming from and how it is that they end up forced on to the streets, selling their bodies to support themselves and/or pimps who are controlling them and enjoying the profits. I think we have to have a far broader discussion in the context of this bill, Attorney General, about these young people, about where they're coming from and about what isn't there for them when they hit the streets by way of support and programs, and what isn't there and could and should be there in terms of non-judicial, non-police intervention so that people can be out there on the streets working with these young people, working with them in the context of drug addictions that undoubtedly are pervasive. For the life of me, I just am not about to condemn a young prostitute, or any prostitute, who takes drugs to sustain herself or himself during the course of their career, because I couldn't imagine how you could possibly do that without being stoned or on whatever drug happens to be available.

I think we have to be very careful that we look at this from a broad-based perspective, that we look at this as a crisis and as a serious social problem and not just a legal problem, and that we empower not only the police to intervene but any other number of appropriate agencies that can do as effective a job and a job that will have a long-term impact on those young people and on our communities.

VISITOR

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to recognize in the gallery this afternoon newly elected school trustee for Scarborough Centre Scott Harrison, who is also the son of the late, great Brian Harrison.

DEFERRED VOTES

CORRECTIONS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR LA RESPONSABILISATION EN MATIÈRE DE SERVICES CORRECTIONNELS

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 144, An Act to establish accountability in correctional services, to make offenders demonstrate that they are

drug-free, to set rules for offenders to earn their release, to give the Board of Parole a say in earned release decisions, and to change the name of the Board of Parole / Projet de loi 144, Loi visant à instituer la responsabilisation au sein des services correctionnels, à obliger les délinquants à démontrer qu'ils ne font pas usage de substances intoxicantes, à fixer les règles que doivent suivre les délinquants pour mériter leur libération, à permettre à la Commission des libérations conditionnelles d'intervenir dans les décisions en matière de libération méritée et à changer le nom de la Commission des libérations conditionnelles.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1413 to 1418.

The Speaker: Mr Baird has moved third reading of Bill 144.

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

Ayes

Baird, John R.	Hardeman, Ernie	Newman, Dan
Barrett, Toby	Harris, Michael D.	O'Toole, John
Beaubien, Marcel	Hastings, John	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Chudleigh, Ted	Hodgson, Chris	Runciman, Robert W.
Clark, Brad	Hudak, Tim	Sampson, Rob
Clement, Tony	Jackson, Cameron	Snobelen, John
Cunningham, Dianne	Johns, Helen	Spina, Joseph
DeFaria, Carl	Kells, Morley	Sterling, Norman W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Klees, Frank	Stewart, R. Gary
Ecker, Janet	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stockwell, Chris
Elliott, Brenda	Maves, Bart	Tascona, Joseph N.
Flaherty, Jim	Mazzilli, Frank	Tilson, David
Galt, Doug	Molinari, Tina R.	Turnbull, David
Gilchrist, Steve	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Gill, Raminder	Murdoch, Bill	Wood, Bob
Guzzo, Garry J.	Mushinski, Marilyn	Young, David

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Cordiano, Joseph	Marchese, Rosario
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martel, Shelley
Bisson, Gilles	Curling, Alvin	Martin, Tony
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	McGuinty, Dalton
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	McMeekin, Ted
Brown, Michael A.	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Peters, Steve
Christopherson, David	Kennedy, Gerard	Phillips, Gerry
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Ramsay, David
Conway, Sean G.	Lankin, Frances	Smitherman, George

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 48; the nays are 33.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

My first question today is for the Premier. You will know that I have asked your Minister of Education a number of times about our peace plan. She has continued to reject that substantive policy proposal, and she's offered a variety of reasons on different occasions as to why she cannot accept our peace plan. She told us at one time that it was simply too late to be of any value. She's told us it's unworkable, and she's told us it's too expensive. But yesterday I think she really provided the greatest insight into why she and, presumably, you are rejecting this peace plan. She said that to accept this proposal would be tantamount to capitulation.

She used the word "capitulation" yesterday in this Legislature, Premier, and that tells us everything about the perspective you bring to public education. Public education, from your perspective, is a battle, and our schools have become the battleground. In your attempt to be the winners at all costs, you've lost sight of students and parents, who are asking for peace.

Premier, this will be your first opportunity to comment on this peace plan in this Legislature. Will you join me in supporting this peace plan?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I thank the member very much, and I appreciate his interest. We've all said we would consider the proposal very carefully, and in fact the minister very carefully considered this proposal three years ago. This was the union position three years ago. Let me quote to you what the OSSTF proposed at that time: "If the government really wants teachers to spend more time in front of students, take a semestered school, extend the four periods of the semester day by 15 to 20 minutes. You've got another hour, not a half an hour. It won't cost you a penny and it won't reduce the teaching staff one iota." We rejected that.

The minister looked at that carefully three years ago, and you're recycling a three-year-old plan. At that time they offered to teach an extra hour at no cost. Why now, three years later, when we opted for a quality agenda instead of simply reducing workload, are you proposing a plan to go half as long, another half-hour, at a cost of \$150 million when three years ago they offered a full hour at no cost?

Mr McGuinty: Premier, you really have dedicated yourself to maintaining conflict in public education, haven't you? You have become so caught up in some sense of personal animosity that you aren't able to see through all this and understand that your first responsibility is to students. They need and deserve peace inside their schools.

Premier, you should be aware that this peace plan was up and running for two years straight in the Huron-

Superior Catholic District School Board. They wrote to me, and this is what they said:

“We note, with interest, the private member’s bill, proposed by you under the title ‘Peace Plan.’” Our board “is proud that such a plan has been in successful operation in our secondary schools for two years, (October 1998-June 2000)....

“Essentially, the periods were lengthened—the day began earlier and dismissed later.... Teachers fulfilled the regulation of 1,250 classroom minutes per week and, most significantly, students received additional classroom assistance.”

My plan has been road-tested. It has been proven to be roadworthy. It is being supported by parents and students and teachers and trustees and school boards. This is a good plan, Premier. Why can’t you support it?

Hon Mr Harris: I don’t know why you always side with the unions. I don’t know why you’re always after, “How can we have teachers work less? How can we reduce their workload?”

Three years ago, when a very similar proposal was brought forward—and at that time it was at no cost, as you know, and at that time it was an extra hour. We responded instead by hiring the same number of teachers that you are proposing, or more, to reduce class size. That was a quarter of a billion dollars. Since the union offered this proposal, the very same one you have, instead of extending the school day and instead of having a proposal that in fact did nothing to reduce class size and has nothing for quality, nothing but the union agenda of, “How do we work less?” we responded with more money than that: \$250 million for more teachers to reduce class size and improve quality.

Your plan, I guess, wants to go back three years, scrap that, scrap the reduced class size, and instead simply hire teachers to reduce workload. That’s the union agenda. We rejected it—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Final supplementary.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, there’s something you have never understood in the matter of public education. The delivery of public education is a team sport. Your problem is that as a coach, you don’t know the first thing about getting the best out of our players. There’s nothing wrong with the players; we just need a new coach.

Here’s what the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board had to say about the plan that was similar to mine, which they had up and running for two years. They talked about how “the positive advantages far outweigh the present system that we were forced into by additional/revised government regulations,” meaning Bill 74.

You may not like to spend much time thinking about their concerns, but this is what the chair of the school board said about students: students commented that under their plan, with the longer periods, they got a chance to ask more questions about homework, missed assignments, remedial work etc. Teachers felt they had more student time and were never in a rush between classes.

Premier, here is a positive, substantive policy proposal. It’s supported by parents and teachers and students and school boards right across the province. If you can’t put this into play, then you tell me, as the Premier, as the person ultimately responsible for peace in our schools, where’s your plan?

Hon Mr Harris: I find it interesting that now, after we’ve spent \$263 million to hire more teachers, to improve quality and reduce class size, now you’re three years back with a proposal that meets none of the requirements of the EIC report, meets none of the requirements of the Mustard-McCain report on where priorities are required. Your proposal talks about something you voted against when we brought it in. We have added school time. We added 10 school days to the secondary school year. You opposed that. You didn’t like that idea; you didn’t like more time. You didn’t like more classes.

1430

There is absolutely nothing stopping any of our teachers from giving additional time at any time. In fact, the good teachers do that now. They do it willingly and co-operatively as they plan and they engage in extra-curricular activities.

So yes, we’re interested in solutions that will improve the quality of education, but we’re not interested in going back three years to the old union argument of, “Oh, I’m working too hard. Reduce my workload.” I understand why you support it. You’re in the pocket of the unions.

GOVERNMENT’S RECORD

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My second question is for the Premier. Premier, on November 16, 1993, you said the following about the NDP government, and I quote: “For a government that promised to be open, this closure action is the height of arrogance, the height of exactly everything you campaigned against and you said you were for.”

We had a little bit of research done in this regard. We found that Bill Davis and Frank Miller cut off debate in this Legislature three times in four years. David Peterson did it four times in five years. Under Bob Rae, the number increased to 21.

I wonder if you’d care to take a guess at just how many times you’ve cut off debate in this House. Do you know what it was, Premier? You’ve cut off debate in the House, you have limited the democratic process in this House, 63 times. Given that you called it “the height of arrogance” when Bob Rae cut off debate 21 times, what do you call it when you cut off debate 63 times?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): If you’ll check the record back even to the Bill Davis days, but certainly to the David Peterson days or the Bob Rae days, I think you will find you had a far more co-operative and responsible opposition than we have here in the Legislature today. That really has been the major change.

You will also find, if you check the record, that we have had more sitting days, we have had more sessions than the Rae government or the Peterson government.

We've had more night sittings than the Rae government or the Peterson government. We've had more public hearings than the Rae government or the Peterson government. We've had more debate and more time on legislation.

The only thing that's here is a totally irresponsible opposition.

Mr McGuinty: I'll give you one thing, Premier: you have a wonderful sense of humour. I never knew you were such a funny guy. You are really Mr Democracy in action. There's no doubt about that whatsoever, and you're generally perceived to be that throughout the province.

You would think most people would recognize that, but for some reason the Toronto Sun didn't. They were writing in an editorial this past weekend about your Employment Standards Act, and they had this to say about that. I thought you might be interested. The Toronto Sun called on you to abandon your "ongoing bid to rush into law far-reaching changes to the Employment Standards Act."

The Sun went on to say, "These changes ... could negatively impact on the working conditions of every employee in Ontario, particularly the most vulnerable."

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Question.

Mr McGuinty: Finally, the Sun said, "The Tories have yet to answer criticism that this really amounts to less pay for equal work, with non-union workers at the low end of the salary scale being the most vulnerable."

This is what the Toronto Sun had to say about your legislation. Government is a privilege as well as a responsibility. Part of the responsibility includes listening to what people have to say. Why won't you listen to what people have to say about your changes to your employment standards bill?

Hon Mr Harris: Certainly this is a piece of legislation that has undergone consultation and hearings by two separate Ministers of Labour. Even before the current minister came along there were extensive consultations.

Since you don't think we've had the same amount of debate or time as your government, let me talk about the 36th session. We've spent an average of four hours and 50 minutes on second reading debate; you spent an hour and eight minutes; the NDP spent an hour and 28 minutes. On third reading debate we've spent an average of two hours and 10 minutes; you spent an average of seven minutes for third reading debate; the NDP an average of 48 minutes. So clearly there was far more responsible opposition. It was probably able to get its point across without mundane, boring repetition like the failed opposition we have today.

With regard to the Toronto Sun, as right as the Toronto Sun is on many issues, they were either wrong then or they've not taken into account all the changes we've made since they wrote that.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, if we held a race for Premiers to determine who succeeded most when it came to missing in action, you would get the gold for missing in action.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock. Order. Minister of Labour, come to order. Sorry for the interruption; the leader of the official opposition.

Mr McGuinty: I want to remind the Premier and Ontarians of the painful details once more. Bill Davis and Frank Miller cut off debate in this Legislature three times in four years. David Peterson did it four times. Bob Rae increased that number to 21 times. You, Premier, have established an all-time Western democracy record. You've cut off debate 63 times. You've shut down democracy 63 times; 63 times over you told Ontarians, "I don't care what you people have to say when it comes to this matter. I've got all the answers. I run the government. I run the show."

You know what, Premier? I think it's wrong to rob workers of their overtime pay. I think it's wrong to force parents to spend even more time away from their families. I think it's wrong not to hold open, public committee hearings. Why can't the people of Ontario have a say on how you direct your affairs?

Hon Mr Harris: I earlier indicated to you the fact that we provided far more debate on second reading and far more debate on third reading than either the Liberals or the NDP. But now you want to talk about consultations across the province. So here we have the Liberals when they were in government, and we've taken the same number of years they had: for committee travel time outside of Queen's Park, for the Liberals a total of 349 hours and 45 minutes; for the Progressive Conservatives a total of 798 hours and 14 minutes.

So we have provided more than double the amount of committee time for hearings for the people across the province, more second reading debate time and more third reading debate time than you did when you were in government, and more than when the NDP was in government. Clearly, the only thing that has changed is that the opposition is not nearly as responsible here in the Legislature as it was when we were in opposition.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. I want to know how you can sleep at night when you personally are responsible for so much pain and so much devastation among the poorest citizens in Ontario. You broke the Charter of Rights with your spouse-in-the-house rule, you bully recipients of social assistance into signing liens for their home, and then you steal the child tax benefit from children who are forced to rely on social assistance.

Minister, this Christmas I want you to do us a favour: will you ask Santa for a conscience for yourself?

1440

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): I'm not going to dignify that with an answer.

Mr Hampton: Minister, let me just go through the long list. Women came and asked you for emergency services so they could escape violence and abuse, and you turned them away. People with disabilities asked you to change the law so that people who live with disabilities would have a better chance. You ignored them. When people asked you to increase benefits for those who have to rely on social assistance, you held up your gold credit card and tried to insinuate that people who rely upon social assistance were somehow living high off the hog. Seniors are forced to use food banks and you say, "That's not a problem." There are more and more families facing homelessness; you say, "That's not a public problem." More children are living in poverty; you and your Premier say, "Hogwash."

Minister, how can anyone with a conscience give those kinds of answers, every day condemn people whose only problem is that they're poor? How do you do that?

Hon Mr Baird: We on this side of the House don't measure compassion by the extent of the hand out; we measure compassion by the extent of the hand up. Our government has brought in an economic agenda that has helped create more jobs, that has helped create more opportunity, so that more people in this province can realize the dignity that comes with a job and the pride that comes with being independent. In this province we saw child poverty reach an all-time high in 1993. Since this government has been elected, we've seen child poverty begin to decline. But we're not satisfied; we are not happy. Campaign 2000 said that just last week. We're not pleased by that, we're not satisfied with that; we said we could do more. That's why we continue to make job creation a big priority.

The member opposite spoke about violence against women. I am tremendously proud that since I became minister, funding within my ministry has increased by 15%, because I pushed that and this government pushed that. I'm tremendously pleased that since I became minister we saw a \$50-million increase supporting people with developmental disabilities. I supported that and this caucus supported that. We're seeing more and more people realize the dignity that comes with a job. We're not satisfied. We're going to continue to work hard so that more people can realize the benefits of a growing economy.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Final supplementary.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): Minister, that line of rhetoric just isn't flying out there. When your government was elected in 1995, you were given executive powers. There was an expectation then, and there still is, that you would work co-operatively with Parliament, because Parliament represents different political persuasions, represents different communities from across this province and brings a sense of conscience and heart and soul to this place. We become the heart and soul of Ontario.

When you decided to turn over the delivery of programs to the most vulnerable and marginal in our

province to Andersen Consulting, you effectively split those functions. Minister, will you today return the heart and the soul and the conscience of this province to the issue of poverty and do something at Christmas for the poorest among us? Will you do that today?

Hon Mr Baird: I'll do that today and I'll do that each and every day. This government gets up every morning and works hard to try to create a growing economy. The member opposite wants to talk about when we were elected. When we were elected, there was despair in the land. Unemployment in my home community in 1995 was 10.9%. There was despair, people were unemployed and it wasn't getting better; it was getting worse. We took an economy on the brink of destruction and turned it around. We've seen more than 568,000 people break free from the cycle of welfare dependency. We've seen more than 800,000 people get jobs—net new jobs. They said it couldn't be done. Our agenda of cutting taxes and promoting economic growth is allowing more people than ever to realize the benefits that come with a growing economy, but not for one single moment do we suggest the job is done. Job creation continues to be a priority, ensuring that every single Ontarian who wants to work can realize the dignity that comes with a job and the pride that comes with being independent. That will be our priority and the job is not done. We continue to work hard on this side of the House.

LINDSAY-OPS LANDFILL SITE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question for the Premier. Anyone who has watched the Walkerton disaster shudders when they hear of the Lindsay-Ops landfill site. The landfill site is only 500 metres from the Skugog River and your Ministry of the Environment already admits that the water quality in the Skugog River isn't up to ministry standards.

The situation is so bad that the International Joint Commission is coming to Ontario to investigate groundwater contamination from the Lindsay-Ops dump site. Premier, when an international commission has to come to Ontario to study groundwater contamination, don't you think your government should stop any planned expansion of that dump site?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think the Minister of the Environment can respond.

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): I want to say today that a full environment assessment was conducted on the site once the county of Victoria had identified its preferred location with respect to the Lindsay-Ops landfill site. After an extensive public consultation, the county of Victoria submitted the Lindsay-Ops site as their preferred location. A submission under the Environmental Protection Act must still be reviewed and it's being analysed and approved by the ministry.

I cannot believe that the leader of the third party would come here today and talk about the Lindsay-Ops landfill. When his party was the government of this province, they approved the expansion of this site and the

expansion was given by the minister at that time. But what surprises me the most is that their expansion was not subjected at all to an environmental assessment. They accepted that site.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary?

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): Minister, because the landfill was placed just 500 metres from the Skugog River, you do not have to repeat that mistake. You are the government right now and you know that years ago a lot of mistakes were made by many governments when siting landfill sites. We know a lot more today. You can laugh all you like, Minister, but after what happened in Walkerton we are more and more aware of the vulnerability of our drinking water. Don't you understand that your expansion plan will increase the loading of poisons to a river that provides drinking water to several communities?

We must learn from our mistakes. Surely after what happened in Walkerton you are willing to do that. We cannot play around with this any more. So will you do that? Will you just say no to an expanded Lindsay-Ops dump today?

Hon Mr Newman: Again I want to remind everyone that the county of Victoria undertook extensive public consultation to determine the preferred location as to the Lindsay-Ops site. There were three alternative sites that were identified, all of which were greenfields.

The decision was made locally to proceed with the Lindsay-Ops site, and after thorough technical analysis, we approved the environment assessment on this project and we stand behind that process. In fact, the county of Victoria's application has undergone extensive technical analysis to ensure that everything is adhered to. We have been absolutely clear on the Lindsay-Ops site. The expansion application has been subjected to a full environmental assessment. The approval of the environmental assessment spells out requirements as well as any additional approvals that must be taken by the proponent with respect to the expansion of this site.

WINTER CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My question is for the Premier. Christmas is almost here and you have indicated to Ontarians that you want to know about children who need a Christmas gift this holiday season. You speak about your commitment to children, but your government's policies are leaving children cold. An Ontario Works policy allows low-income families to apply for a winter clothing allowance only in the month of November. I know of a family of four who did not qualify for the snowsuit allowance because they received a retroactive national child tax benefit in November. This month their income qualifies for the allowance, but the assistance is not offered in December.

Toys and games are an important part of the holiday season, but Premier, I would ask you for a true gift for these children, something you could do today that would immediately and significantly improve the lives of our

children. Will you give Ontario's children the gift of warmth? Will you act today to ensure that every child in Ontario who needs a snowsuit will get one?

1450

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): You're talking about an individual case, and I'm glad to look into the individual case for you. If you have other individual cases, I'm happy to look into those. Certainly we have a policy in my constituency office that if somebody comes who needs a coat, we get them one.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I do have another individual case, Premier, but I would suggest to you that this person isn't the only one to find themselves in this situation. A young mother came to my office. She had a baby on December 5, and Ontario Works would not help her buy a snowsuit for her newborn baby because she missed the November 30 deadline. Premier, it's a new baby, a new life, and instead of ensuring that baby stays warm this winter, your policy has turned its back on him. In Ontario, winter is longer than just one month. December and January are the coldest months of the year. You have a \$1.4-billion surplus, you have sent out \$200 cheques and you have promised gifts to Ontario's children. I'm asking you today to look after our most precious gift.

Premier, you have tried to assume the role of Santa Claus for Ontario's children. Instead of toys and games, will you ensure our children have what they need? Will you extend the timeline for the winter clothing allowance for Ontario Works families and will you do it for Christmas?

Hon Mr Harris: I appreciate the member's interest. I think she will acknowledge that no government has done more for children than this government with support programs, as evidenced by the fact that under the Liberal government children living in poverty went up, under the NDP government children living in poverty went up, and since 1995 children living in poverty has gone down according to every study, including the latest national study.

Having said all that, with 250,000 off the welfare rolls, with improving statistics, there are still children who need our help. I'm sorry that you mock and belittle my efforts to try and ensure that every child would have a toy at Christmastime. I will do my very best to do that. If you have any child who needs a snowsuit, who needs a coat, we have a program for that. If somebody is falling through the cracks, an individual case, please bring it to my attention if you can't resolve it locally, and I'll make sure we do the best we absolutely can for every child, for housing, for food, for clothing—

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

MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY RATING PROGRAM

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): My question is for the Minister of Transportation. With Ontario's economy booming, both interprovincial and international trade have been steadily increasing in recent

years. Since the vast majority of Ontario's exports are transported by truck, the safety of these rigs, and I might add the safety of buses as well, is an important concern for people in this province. I understand that your ministry recently implemented what is referred to as a motor carrier safety rating program. Can you tell me about this program and what measures have been taken to ensure that the public has access to information on safety ratings of not only bus but also truck companies?

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): In the past year over 75,000 public safety ratings have been assigned to bus and truck companies. Ratings summarize the safety performance of motor carriers and range from excellent to unsatisfactory. Ratings will help to enhance road safety by providing the public, shippers, the insurance industry, school boards and indeed government ministries with an opportunity to review the safety record of motor carriers prior to using their services. Safety ratings can now be retrieved at no cost on the Internet at www.carriersafetyrating.com. Additionally, the operating record of a bus or truck company or the driving record of a commercial vehicle driver can be viewed for just \$5. Internet access to these products has recently improved the flow of this information.

Mr Barrett: Thank you, Minister. It sounds like an excellent program, and it provides the public with an opportunity to access this important information on truck and bus safety. However, there are members of the public—and I'm thinking of some of the smaller trucking companies—who don't have access to the Internet. I suspect that may be the case with some people in my riding. What are the options for people in this position?

Hon Mr Turnbull: Individuals without Internet access can obtain information by visiting any Ontario driver and vehicle licence issuing office or government kiosk. Also, individuals can obtain, free of cost, guidelines on the carrier safety rating program as well as a manual to assist motor carriers in undertaking a self-audit of their safety performance by contacting MTO at 1-800-387-7736.

SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I have a question for the Premier. I want to ask you to drop your partisan bluster. On behalf of 9,000—

Interjections.

Mr Kennedy: The members opposite are laughing. They're happy to have partisan bluster in place of responsibility. In each of their ridings there are students in the position of the students I want to raise with the Premier today, and those are the students in the Durham school boards.

Premier, in most of the province, your inaction, your lack of leadership has meant 105 days of no or reduced extracurricular activities. In Durham region, where you modelled the staffing which has caused this problem around the province, it has been missing for two and a half years. In that area, they tell us—in fact, not teachers

but the chair of the board tells us: "The loss of extracurriculars hasn't blown over and it won't blow over on its own. We have tried attracting parent volunteers in our schools, partnerships with community sports and reaching out to our local MPPs," who include members of your caucus.

Premier, will you, on behalf of the people in Durham, embrace the proposal we're putting forward, or put forward on your own something that will bring them back the extracurriculars you have helped to deny them for the last two and a half years?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): The minister can respond.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): If the honourable member would read the local paper, the News Advertiser, he would note that many teachers, sometimes with harassment from other parties, do provide extracurricular activities in that community. They go beyond for the kids, because they know it is important for those kids.

I have been the first in this government to admit we have a problem with extracurricular activities and teachers choosing to work to rule and not provide them. I would like to know where the honourable member was when I was saying to all the partners in the union, "We need to find a resolution to this problem." The Liberals weren't raising this. We were raising this, because we recognized it was a problem.

There are several steps this government has taken. We still do not have it consistently across the province. We're not giving up until we get it resolved.

Mr Kennedy: This is what the parents and students around the province are afraid of. They're afraid of a minister who will ignore the problem they have just like she has ignored the problem in her own riding for two and a half years. Nothing has been done to restore extracurricular activities.

Now there's a solution on the table. The elected chair of the school board says, "We see a number of very positive things in what the Liberal Party is presenting. We believe the 1,250 minutes could be achieved if it is gone about in a different manner—it can be worked out but there has to be some flexibility by the teacher unions and the government."

We have had demonstrations outside here by people like Steven Murray, parents like Jennifer Thompson and Charlene Westbrook. They come from Whitby, Ajax and Pickering. They come here on behalf of students who are suffering the damage that you have an opportunity today to fix.

Minister, this is on behalf of the kids in your own area—two and a half years without extracurriculars. Many of them believe this is a good plan. Will you agree to at least make it possible by passing this bill, or a modified version of it, before the House rises tomorrow, or are you simply going to condemn the whole province to the purgatory that extracurriculars—

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

Hon Mrs Ecker: With all due respect, this is not a plan. This is a suggestion the OSSTF put forward three years ago.

When we put forward our quality reform agenda in education, we said that having better student achievement and bringing in a tougher curriculum was going to take a lot of work by all parties. We've asked students to work harder: we've extended their school year; they have more homework. We've asked parents to work harder; they're part of the team that has to help the students with the curriculum. We've asked school board trustees and officials in boards and the ministry. And we've asked teachers: four hours and 10 minutes, what other teachers are doing across the country, for increased student achievement. We're all having to work harder to make that happen. It's a worthwhile goal. It's an important goal and we're going to keep doing what we said we would do to achieve that goal.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, there are several excellent post-secondary centres in my riding of Scarborough Centre, both publicly and privately operated. With the introduction of the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, our government is acting to expand the choices available to students by allowing qualified private institutions to operate in Ontario. Minister, some of our government's critics have suggested that this means that somehow our public institutions will be compromised. What is the government's commitment to public colleges and universities in Ontario?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): Everyone in this House knows that over the years in this great province, the commitment of every succeeding government has been to public education, and that includes our colleges and our universities. We are committed to providing a place for every qualified and motivated student in our post-secondary system, and in order to do that we are facing a huge impact beginning about three years from now. We're preparing with the buildings, and last year, with our private sector partners, we invested \$1.8 billion in new buildings. Members in this House are looking at the progress that's being made.

Interjection.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: I will say in answer to the member from Kingston and the Islands that we also increased our operating dollars—

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister, take your seat. This House stands adjourned for 10 minutes. Clear the entire gallery.

The House recessed from 1502 to 1513.

The Speaker: The member for Windsor-St Clair. The clock will be running, by the way.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): A very brief point of order, Mr Speaker, on your ruling to clear

the gallery: First of all, our security staff do an excellent job, and our Sergeant at Arms. It was very clear to members on this side of the House that in fact there appeared to be three people who were involved in the demonstration, and the whole gallery was cleared, including a number of high school students and indeed two legislative interns who have now turned up on the other side.

I would just ask you in the future, sir, recognizing the difficult job you have and the very difficult job our security have, that in clearing the gallery—in this case I believe we threw people out who really didn't deserve to be thrown out.

The Speaker: It's a difficult task, as you know, but my job is also to protect the members. In circumstances when people are protesting—in this case stuff was coming out of the galleries, and I'm going to err on the judgment of protecting the members. It's a difficult task. In a situation like that, where I can't judge who it is, it's unfortunate. We have some people who do come down here in good faith to see the goings-on and the proceedings, but when we do have a disruption like that it is very difficult for everybody. I've had the opportunity to watch some of the visitors in the gallery who, to say the least, are a little unnerved when it happens as well because they aren't used to seeing it.

I would say to all members on all sides, in situations like that, let the constables do their job. I agree with the member: they do an excellent job. There shouldn't be any encouragement or any yelling up to any members. We can quietly leave and let the constables do the job. That's the best way to deal with it.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Could I ask your indulgence and ask that the two minutes we just used be put back on the clock?

The Speaker: The point of order includes the two minutes. We're getting down now. We've had a period of time. It allows the freedom to sometimes do that, and if people want to use points of order, unfortunately you do it too much. I see the member's signal to me. Right, I'll let question period go on.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: We were talking about our commitments, as other governments in the past, and this one building on those commitments. Our first priority in this province is to public education, including our colleges and universities.

I was talking about increasing our operating funds by \$103 million this year alone. Our investment in research and development is second to none. We want our young people to get the best opportunities to stay in our colleges and universities, move on and be competitive with the world.

To close, we have created the new scholarship Aiming for the Top. Our young people, 4,000 of them, got those scholarships this year, up to \$3,500 every year that they maintain their marks. We are committed to our students and we are committed to our public institutions.

Ms Mushinski: Thank you for that answer, Minister. Ensuring quality and high standards is an important part of our government's policy at all levels of the education system in Ontario. Indeed, through our government's commitments to accessibility and research we have made significant investments in enhancing the quality of education offered at our colleges and universities. I believe it's important to our province that we continue to emphasize achievement and excellence in post-secondary education.

Minister, what measures does this legislation contain to ensure that new programs offered in Ontario serve both the students and the taxpayers by maintaining the highest standards?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: Strengthening Ontario's reputation for excellence, which is our standard for our students, is an important goal of this legislation. Bill 132 creates a quality assessment board, and this quality assessment board will ensure that the calibre of any new programs will meet the test. There will be expert panels that will report to the quality assessment board and we will be relying on the best-qualified citizens in this province to serve on those boards. So excellence is what these programs will be about, if indeed approved.

I will also say that the new institutions must demonstrate this quality. There will be checks and balances. There will be performance indicators if they intend to offer well-equipped, degree-granting programs in the province of Ontario.

There are many steps that we have taken. We have listened to the input we have. We're confident that this legislation will increase choice and excellence for our students.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): My question is to the Minister of Colleges and Universities. I want to talk to you about your scheme to price post-secondary education out of reach of most Ontario students. Phoenix university is a private outfit you're considering for Ontario, and they charge \$40,000 for a degree. Another outfit, PrimeTech Institute, is drooling with desire to offer private university education, which is expected to cost 85,000 bucks. Debt is already a veritable \$20,000 burden here for a general degree in Ontario.

How can you believe that \$40,000 for a Phoenix university degree and PrimeTech Institute, which is an \$85,000 degree, provide, as you say, innovative and flexible choices?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I actually object to the word "scheme." This is not a scheme; this is a carefully thought-through plan with a quality assessment board so that any private institution that will operate offering degrees in the province of Ontario will have better standards than any other private institutions.

May I add, we have private elementary schools; we have private secondary schools; we have private vocational schools. We actually have, indeed, some private

degree-granting institutions. Why wouldn't we have this kind of competition? What is the member afraid of? Our colleges and universities are not afraid of competition, and this is about students and about students' choice. They must be educated, make good choices, including the cost of their education.

1520

Mr Marchese: I just point out that the Canadian Federation of Students with signed petitions, hundreds of students, disagrees profoundly with your remarks, in addition to the fact that you don't answer the question very well, which is quite deliberate.

Under a Conservative government, tuition fees have increased 60%, with a corresponding explosion of debt. The evidence from Statistics Canada and other surveys shows that it's only the children of the wealthy who go to university. With your government taking \$1.4 billion out of operating funds since 1995, and yes, you've restored some of the funds, it's pretty bad in our university system. When will you share the bounty of this so-called prosperous economy with students, and our university that is desperately looking for your support?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: I in fact have had many meetings with the Canadian Federation of Students. We have exchanged views. We have taken some of their concerns into consideration. But in the end there is one piece that's extremely important. We have a whole sector of students who are mature students. We have a sector of people who are working in the public sector whose institutions and jobs require that they upgrade their standards, that they complete degrees, that in fact they get applied degrees. Applied degrees will be possible under this legislation at our colleges. These are specific programs that our province needs young people and people in the workplace to have access to so we can be competitive.

This is a bill that provides people, no matter where they work, where they live, how old they are, with other opportunities for a post-secondary education. It's about choice and excellence.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. We all know that the aging baby boom generation of people with disabilities, many of whom are still living with their elderly parents, is a demographic fact. These men and women need residential services when their parents are no longer able to provide care. Thirteen agencies in the Kingston and Frontenac-Lennox and Addington area use a common process and a waiting list to house physically and developmentally challenged individuals.

Currently there are 86 men and women on the waiting list, eight of whom are in a crisis situation, yet the lack of adequate funding has forced both Ongwanada and the Association for Community Living to close two group

homes this past summer. Concerns have been expressed for almost two years to your ministry officials. The announcement last spring added only \$135,000 to the allocation for Frontenac county.

Since institutional settings are being closed and phased out, and since many of these men and women live much longer than in the past, and yet many of their parents are getting older and are no longer able to look after them, will you now commit to additional funding to ensure that these challenged individuals can live their lives to their maximum potential, and that their parents live out their remaining years without fearing for the future welfare of their children? Will you do the right thing, Minister?

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): All members in the House will know that providing supports to people with developmental disabilities is an important priority for me as minister. Over the past 18 months we've worked very hard with associations for community living right across Ontario, building on the \$35-million investment made by my predecessor. We worked hard and got a \$50-million increase in the budget this year. While I recognize that didn't respond to all the challenges and all the need out there, it was the biggest increase in more than a decade and demonstrated this government's commitment to providing supports to people with a developmental disability.

This fall, since September, we've been consulting with associations right around Ontario to get their views and their suggestions on ways in which we might improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families. We've literally had hundreds of meetings across the province. As those discussions conclude, we'll take the time to reflect on what we've heard and come forward with additional measures.

Mr Gerretsen: More of these people are being de-institutionalized and are staying at home and need care. So whatever amount of money you're putting in, you need more.

As a result of a recent announcement at the Ministry of Transportation in which 150 ministry employees will lose their jobs, much anxiety has also been created for 55 people with disabilities who have been engaged in subcontract work, processing vehicle registrations and licensing for microfilming at MTO. These individuals have worked hard to establish their own businesses and have succeeded in forming five such co-operative corporations. From personal observation, I can tell you that this work has brought much dignity and meaning to the lives of these individuals.

If the records management department of MTO is contracted to an operator that removes it from the Kingston area, 55 people with disabilities and seven non-disabled workers will lose their jobs and five businesses owned by these disabled workers will be lost as well. What assurances can you give those 55 individuals that their contract, which they have so effectively carried out

over the last 10 years, will be secure so that they can live out their lives with dignity and feelings of self-esteem that they have received as a result of jobs they've been able to do for MTO?

Hon Mr Baird: I'll certainly take the opportunity to look into the issue which the member opposite raises. I can say that providing additional supports, employment supports to people with a developmental disability through our ODSP is important. Over the next number of years we'll be doubling the budget for employment supports so that more people with disabilities, particularly those with a developmental disability, can realize the dignity that comes with a job and the place that makes for them. But as I said, I'd be very pleased to look into it.

The announcement which you raise—I look at David Barber, the president of the Ontario Association for Community Living: “The minister should take full credit for listening and responding to the concerns that families and their associations have expressed.”

Sue Dolan, the president of OASIS: “Your May 5 announcement”—which I made in Kingston—“demonstrates the government's commitment to individuals and families with developmental disabilities.”

David Barber, the president of the Ontario Association for Community Living: “You have rebuilt these channels of communication and re-established the trust.”

We'll continue to work exceptionally hard to provide more opportunities for people with a developmental disability in this province.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN LONDON

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): My question is for the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology. Minister, yesterday you were in London announcing a \$127-million investment at the University of Western Ontario. This is to go toward research and development in the province. Can you tell us how these investments will help London area researchers?

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): I appreciate the question from the member from London-Fanshawe. In fact, the total amount we announced yesterday was \$150 million, \$127 million from the Ontario Innovation Trust and \$23 million in Ontario government support from the research and development challenge fund. Four very interesting projects were announced for Western and the London Health Sciences Centre, totalling about \$21.5 million in support from the Ontario government.

One we can all be very proud of is that Dr Douglas Boyd is proposing to establish the National Centre of Minimally Invasive Robotic Surgery. Last year, a first in the world, Dr Boyd performed the first beating-heart coronary bypass using robotic arms and a miniature camera. In the past, prior to perfecting this surgery, you used to have to rip open the sternum and open the chest cavity in order to do bypass surgery. Dr Boyd has successfully done a number of operations now using a

camera and a robot. It's very precise surgery with less recovery time for patients. In fact, one of the patients, Wally Seip, who was operated on on his 67th birthday, on October 4 of this year, was there. The honourable Minister Cunningham and I and others were there to witness the tremendous health he's in and the tremendous technology that this operation has brought—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary?

Mr Mazzilli: These investments speak well for Londoners, and indeed Ontario will benefit. The robotic surgery that you mentioned—the Premier was in London and actually had an opportunity to use the equipment very successfully, just practising.

As you know, government cannot be the sole investor in research and development. While our government strives to move Ontario's economy forward, we need the private sector to create jobs and invest in Ontario. Can you tell me how the private sector investment is going in research and development?

Hon Mr Wilson: Again, with yesterday's announcement for Western and the London Health Sciences Centre and Fanshawe College of \$21.5 million of Ontario government support, that's the leveraged total of all four projects announced for the London area yesterday of \$60 million: a third from the private sector, a third from the province and a third from the university, the hospital and Fanshawe College.

1530

Another project I want to mention is the Shared Hierarchical Academic Research Computing Network, or SHARC-net as it is called, the world's fastest computer, located at the University of Western Ontario. It is a tremendous partnership with Compaq Computer, the university and the Ontario government. We are very proud of it. They already have a waiting list of people to do large computations on that computer. We can be very proud that we have the world's largest and fastest computer here in the province of Ontario. It puts us on the leading edge for new jobs, high-tech jobs, and it positions London and southwestern Ontario to be world leaders in high analysis, high-end computer programming and operations.

ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Roger Hacker, director of animal research, says support for the animal lab by the government is anything but strong, that the facility is inadequate in its ability to diagnose and attack diseases. Larry Milligan, vice-president of research, confirms there's been a \$3.5-million cut, and an additional \$4.2 million. Dr Pat Shewan, chair of patho-biology, cites inadequate funding, leaving the lab little latitude to do anything proactive. Will you meet with these individuals?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I want to reiterate, as we did yesterday, the comment on the issue the member opposite

referred to. He suggested we were going to reduce the budget. The manager of the animal health lab in Guelph said that was not the case. The member opposite was totally wrong. He was inappropriately or wrongly informed, or was telling less than the truth. As it relates to whether I will meet with the—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Stop the clock. I may have heard the minister wrongly. I don't know if he referred to him as not telling the truth. If he did, I'm sure he would withdraw that.

Hon Mr Hardeman: I'm sure I would not imply that the member would not tell the truth. I was just referring to the fact that what he was saying was not the facts. I want to point out to the member opposite that the animal lab services are run by the University of Guelph under contract with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and I want to assure the member that we meet regularly with the university to discuss the contract and to make sure—

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

Mr Peters: Minister, I would ask you to meet with Roger Hacker; I would ask you to meet with Larry Milligan; I would ask you to meet with Dr Shewan. Yesterday you said I was totally off the mark. I'd ask you to meet with Dr Carl Ribble, head of population medicine, who says the province keeps upping the ante as to how the lab has to pay for itself, going down the Alberta route of privatization.

Deborah Whale, chair of the Poultry Industry Council, says government policy has endangered the livestock and poultry industries, citing small, overcrowded facilities, undersized labs and outdated equipment. The lack of a level 3 testing facility forces them to go out of the province. She calls it an issue of public health and safety.

Minister, why are you not talking to the real people to get the real answers instead of spouting political doublespeak in this Legislature? I'm giving you a heads up today. Talk to those people. Go meet with them first-hand, as the member from Guelph-Wellington did, to hear the damage you're inflicting, cutting their capital budget, forcing them to buy second-hand equipment, not giving them adequate dollars to do the important things that are needed in this province.

Minister, I ask you again: will you commit the funding to ensure that this lab meets adequate levels? Would you meet with the—

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon Mr Hardeman: I want to assure this House and the member opposite that food safety is the number one priority for the agriculture and food industry. As it relates to speaking to the real people, one would I think appropriately suggest that if you were going to speak about the function of the lab services in Ontario, one would speak to the people responsible for operating those lab services.

The member opposite suggests that I made quotes. Yesterday I was not quoting myself. I was quoting from a newspaper article in the Guelph Mercury, where the person responsible for operating the lab services said, "That information"—and this was the information the

member opposite was presenting, “... Manager Pat Collins responded Wednesday to Peters’s figures. ‘It’s just plain wrong. I think he’s completely off base. What we’re getting back from OMAFRA is strong support for the program.’”

That’s what the operator of the service said, and I can assure the member opposite I’m quite prepared to meet with all the people who are involved in working in that place to make sure we’re getting the best quality—

The Speaker: The minister’s time is up.

PETITIONS

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This is a petition to the Ontario Legislature. It deals with the northern health travel grant. It’s northerners demanding that the Harris government eliminate health care apartheid.

“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 affix my signature to it and give it to Pascal Bouchard from Elliot Lake to bring to the table. This is a 1,500-name petition, part of the 69,250 signatures that we have received in northern Ontario.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas domestic violence detrimentally impacts on the very survival of thousands of women in Ontario;

“Whereas the sole emphasis on punitive measures ignores that only a small fraction of domestic violence cases get to, let alone get through, the justice system;

“Whereas issues of prevention, investigation and redress of domestic violence need immediate and meaningful attention by the Legislature;

“We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to: (a) provide funding for second-stage housing, emergency shelters and to organizations concerned with domestic violence; (b) provide training in domestic violence issues for police, lawyers, judges and justices of the peace; (c) address recommendations from the May-Iles inquest regarding the capacity of this province to prevent, investigate and redress acts of violence in the family; and (d) promote studies on the causes, nature, prevalence and consequences of domestic violence and on the capacity in Ontario to prevent, investigate and redress acts of violence in the family.”

I have over 200 signatures on this petition and I will affix my signature as I agree with this petition.

DIABETES TREATMENT

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

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

“We are suggesting that all diabetic supplies as prescribed by an endocrinologist be covered under the Ontario health insurance plan.

“Whereas diabetes costs Canadian taxpayers a bundle. It is the leading cause of hospitalization in Canada. Some people with diabetes simply cannot afford the ongoing expense of managing diabetes. They cut corners to save money. They rip test strips in half, cut down on the number of times they test their blood, and even reuse lancets and needles. These budget-saving measures can often have disastrous health care consequences;

“Whereas persons with diabetes need and deserve financial assistance to cope with the escalating cost of managing diabetes. We think it is in all Ontarians’ and the government’s best interest to support diabetics with the supplies that each individual needs to obtain the best glucose control possible. As you all know, good control reduces or eliminates kidney failure by 50%, blindness by 76%, nerve damage by 60%, cardiac disease by 35% and even amputations. Just think of how many dollars can be saved by the Ministry of Health if diabetics had a chance to gain optimum glucose control.”

I affix my signature.

1540

REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a large number of signatures on this petition from Dubreuilville.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the existing Highway 519 bridge over the Magpie River, south of Dubreuilville, is a single-lane, 45.7-metre span Bailey bridge; and

“Whereas the safety of the residents, workers and visitors driving into and out of Dubreuilville is constantly jeopardized because of the single-lane capacity; and

“Whereas the minister has been made aware that there is an immediate need to replace this single-lane bridge with a two-lane bridge; and

“Whereas the ministry has agreed to prepare a design for a future double-lane replacement bridge, however, they have not yet approved this project;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario government once again to immediately approve the replacement of the single-lane Bailey bridge by a two-lane bridge.”

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I've got thousands of names on these petitions of students who oppose for-profit universities. It reads:

“Whereas the Ontario government's Bill 132 permits private corporations to apply to open private for-profit universities; and

“Whereas once private universities are part of the post-secondary system, international trade laws would prevent Ontario from discriminating against foreign corporations and keeping them out; and

“Whereas Bill 132 allows the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to delegate important public responsibilities to an unelected board and allows public resources to be used by the private universities; and

“Whereas Bill 132 entrenches a corporate-driven definition of quality into the post-secondary system, promotes a hierarchy of institutions and allows post-secondary administrators to contemplate further job reductions and cutbacks to service delivery;

“We demand that private for-profit universities be rejected and the legislation be enacted to guarantee our right to accessible, affordable, publicly administered post-secondary education, academic freedom and democratic regulation of the post-secondary system in Ontario.”

I support this fully and I will sign this petition.

SEWAGE SLUDGE

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents of the Durham riding have raised concerns over the spreading and storage of sewage sludge and biosolids; and

“Whereas Bill 149 has been introduced by Durham MPP John O'Toole to regulate the spreading and storage of sewage sludge and biosolids, including paper sludge; and

“Whereas Bill 149 would require that no persons shall spread sewage sludge or other biosolids without a certificate of approval or provisional certificate of approval from the director;

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

“To pass Bill 149 to amend the Environmental Protection Act and add the relevant sections regarding the spreading and storage of sewage sludge.”

I'm very pleased to receive this and present it to the House today. Jessica is going to take it to the table for me.

HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition that reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the province of Ontario has produced a \$1.4-billion budgetary surplus this year, and a provincial economy that has grown more than that of the US or any G7 country this year;

“Whereas there are many people living in the streets of Ontario despite this time of apparent wealth;

“We, the undersigned, are concerned with the increasing number of homeless and poor people on the streets of Ontario. We, the undersigned, feel the provincial government needs to take responsibility for this issue and would like the government of Ontario to seriously address the problem of homelessness and poverty in Ontario in an attempt to solve the problem.”

This petition comes from Lakeshore Catholic High School, home of the Gators, in Port Colborne, Ontario. I affix my signature. I'm in complete agreement with the sentiments of this petition.

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; and

“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.”

I agree with the petitioners. I have affixed my signature to it. Most of these petitioners are from North Bay, the Premier’s own riding.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): As we approach the Christmas break, I think it’s important that the government understand that the discrimination we face related to the northern health travel grant is unacceptable to all northerners, and petitions continue to come in. I will read this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We will not give up this fight. I am very proud to add my name to this petition. I will pass it on to Silvia.

FRAIS DE TRANSPORT AUX FINS MÉDICALES

M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay) : J’ai ici une pétition des gens de Smooth Rock Falls qui dit comme suit :

« Pétition à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Les gens du nord exigent que le gouvernement Harris mette fin à l’apartheid en matière de 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 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 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 Loughheed 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 de mettre fin à l’apartheid qui existe présentement dans la province de l’Ontario en matière des soins de santé. »

Je signe cette pétition.

HUNTING AND FISHING LEGISLATION

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Premier Mike Harris committed in August of this year at the International Symposium in Ottawa to see hunting and fishing legislation introduced at Queen’s Park;

“Whereas the Minister of Natural Resources, the Hon John Snobelen, has vowed on several occasions to bring forth legislation pertaining to hunting and fishing;

“Whereas hunting and fishing continues to be an important industry in Ontario because of its recreational, economic and humane benefits to the province of Ontario;

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

“That the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources bring forward as soon as possible an act entrenching hunting and fishing in the province of Ontario.”

I will sign that.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas it has been determined that recent funding allocations to the developmental services sector in the communities of Sarnia-Lambton, Chatham-Kent and Windsor-Essex have been determined to be grossly inadequate to meet critical and urgent needs;

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

“That the Ministry of Community and Social Services immediately review the funding allocations to the communities of Sarnia-Lambton, Chatham-Kent and Windsor-Essex, and provide funding in keeping with the requests made by families and/or their agents.”

Signed by a number of residents of Tilbury, Chatham, North Buxton and Blytheswood. I affix my name to it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 152, An Act to implement the 2000 Budget to establish a made-in-Ontario tax system and to amend various Acts, when Bill 152 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered for third reading;

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

That the order for third reading of the bill may then immediately be called. When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, the debate time being divided equally among the three caucuses, after which time the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That, notwithstanding standing order 28(h), the vote on third reading may not be deferred; and

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): Before we begin debate on this, yet another time allocation motion, I beg the indulgence of the House for a moment to share with you that I have become increasingly concerned over the last number of weeks and months here about the lack of debate about important issues that affect all of the people across this province and every one of our jurisdictions and the role that I play in that. I am no more concerned than about the issue of poverty and how we

cannot seem to get that issue on to the table of this place so that we can have a real debate about that reality which affects so many of our neighbours, our family members, our brothers and sisters out there. I find it in my own personal conscience that I can no longer serve as the Deputy Speaker in this place and so will be laying my robe on the chair.

I'm inviting all of you to participate with me as I preside over another forum which has been set up at Victoria College at the University of Toronto that will take place this afternoon until midnight tonight and until midnight tomorrow night.

I will be calling for a 10-minute recess so that the table can, with all due respect, replace me in this job.

The House recessed from 1554 to 1604.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Mr Klees has moved government notice of motion 90. The chief government whip.

Hon Mr Klees: I would seek consent to yield the floor to my colleague the member for Willowdale.

The Speaker: Is there consent? Agreed.

Mr David Young (Willowdale): Thank you very much for providing me with this opportunity to speak to this very important bill, a bill that allows us to fulfill a Blueprint commitment, a commitment that we went to the people of Ontario with in written form, in some detail, considerable detail, the year before last.

We said to the people of Ontario during the election campaign that if they provided us with the further privilege of re-electing our government—as they did; they provided us with a second majority government—if they returned us to this assembly, we would continue the policies that were commenced in the Common Sense Revolution, which was the first policy document we went to the people of Ontario with in 1995. We would continue policies that were designed to ensure the people of Ontario would continue to see growth and prosperity.

As I have stated before in this Legislature, our government's vision for Ontario is of a province that encourages people to innovate, a province that encourages people to create, a province that has a strong social safety net to ensure that those in true need can get assistance to get back on their feet. Our government is sticking to its revolutionary plan that will help build a strong, healthy province.

Mr Speaker, over the last short time in this Legislature, there has been some discussion and demonstration of concern surrounding the time allocation aspect of this initiative. I want to say to you, to those in the gallery and to those watching at home that when governments take office they are faced with a number of different options. They can study and study, and they can debate and debate, and no matter how good the intentions of the individual members of that government, after lengthy debate and consultation and after study ad nauseam, at the end of the day there is no time for passage of the bill. Governments of all political stripes have fallen into this trap. It is not a trap the Harris government has fallen into. We believe in moving forward with initiatives. We do

not believe in simply talking the talk; we believe in walking the walk. That is why we have passed so many pieces of legislation in this session and in prior sessions, and that is why we've been in a position to cut taxes on so many occasions.

I want to talk a little about what led to this legislation, essentially the budget bill we're discussing today and that we have been discussing over the last short time, and why I believe it is most appropriate in this instance for the budget bill to proceed in a timely fashion, as we are suggesting in the time allocation motion moved by Mr Klees a few moments ago. In order to understand why it is appropriate and why it is time for action and time to put the dialogue—the lengthy consultation process—behind us, because that has taken place, one has to consider how much time was spent conferring with the people of Ontario and with the other parties in this assembly. After considering that, I am sure you will agree, as do I, that it is time for action. We cannot leave ourselves in a state of paralysis where all we do is talk and we do not act. That's not the way of this government.

The minister undertook extensive prebudget consultation with Ontarians. His efforts included the following: 13 round-tables, representing a broad spectrum of interests, and invitations that were sent out to 370 organizations and individuals. In total, 220 organizations from across the province participated. Three hundred individuals participated in the consultation process that commenced about 11 months ago and continued until this piece of legislation was tabled. The ministry received and reviewed 150 further written submissions—and that is probably a low, conservative, modest estimate—in addition to the consultations I just mentioned.

The minister also participated in the prebudget efforts that were made at the standing committee level, as did many members of this Legislative Assembly. That all-party committee, with representation from all three parties in this assembly, spent 10 days conducting hearings, and they did not limit those hearings to the city of Toronto or other major urban centres across the province. They travelled to places like Timmins, Kenora and Chatham. They did so to engage in a good-faith, meaningful consultation with the people of this province, and they did just that.

1610

The standing committee—again, an all-party committee—commenced its work about 11 months ago, to come forward with the piece of legislation we're here to talk about today. It's time to get on with it. The standing committee heard from 102 organizations as diverse as trade unions, social advocacy groups, community organizations and businesses. We heard from individuals, and the standing committee also received 44 written submissions. The standing committee's report on prebudget consultations was indeed a valuable resource, a tool the Minister of Finance utilized in putting together the budget.

That budget has been the subject matter of many hours of debate in this Legislature over the last three weeks or

so. All parties have debated that piece of legislation. I have had the honour of being present for almost all that debate. I will say, Mr Speaker—and I preface my comments by saying that this is somewhat partisan rhetoric coming from this side of the Legislature, as opposed to the partisan rhetoric we heard earlier coming from the Speaker's chair. I will preface my comments by saying that the dialogue on both sides of the House to date during the hours and hours of debate on this legislation has been very partisan and very repetitive.

I can predict what the Liberals and New Democrats would say if they were to speak for another one or two or three dozen hours. It's the same thing they said to the people of Ontario when they campaigned in 1995. It's the same thing they said during the last session, the four years we were in government from 1995 to 1999. It's the same rhetoric we've heard since we resumed office in 1999. They don't agree with our approach; that's acknowledged. They don't think for a moment that the right attitude is for us to implement further tax cuts. They're reluctant, they are resistant to acknowledge that each year we have \$14 billion more coming into the coffers of this province as a result of the tax cuts we have implemented. They found that to be an offensive approach in 1995, and they continue to feel that way.

I understand that the Liberals and the New Democrats don't support the tax cuts we have implemented. That's a given. For them to say it again and again, I guess, is their job. But with the greatest respect, it isn't what the people of Ontario want and deserve. They want and deserve a government that's going to move forward, a government of action, a government that is going to keep its promises, and that's exactly what we are doing.

We have come a long way in slightly in excess of five years. We all remember that in the early part of the 1990s our province experienced the most difficult times, arguably one of the most difficult times in our history. Unemployment was high, welfare rolls were bursting at the seams, deficits and debt were crushing the government's ability to deliver quality services to Ontarians. I want to come back to that, because I talked about a strong social safety net earlier. I want you to know, Mr Speaker—and it's not just rhetoric—that I sincerely believe that in order for a government to do what it must do, in order for it to be in a position to look after those who require and deserve assistance, the government has to have the financial wherewithal to do so. You don't have that ability, that economic might, if you spend beyond your means over and over again. You don't have that ability, and you cannot sustain a level of spending the likes of which was in place before the Conservatives took office.

Without going through all the rhetoric again, let's remember that when we took office, the predecessor government in the early part of 1995 indicated that it was going to run a deficit in excess of \$11 billion. They were going to spend in excess of \$1 million more an hour than they were taking in. You cannot do that for any length of time and be left in a position where you can look after those within this province who require assistance.

The rhetoric around this province, in restaurants, around water coolers and in homes back in the early 1990s, was one of pessimism, was one that talked in terms of this province becoming bankrupt. Few believed that the economic plan that we outlined in the Common Sense Revolution would work. The pundits and the non-believers were numerous, and they said that Mike Harris's plan to cut taxes while protecting priority services was ludicrous, that it was crazy, that it was trickle-down voodoo economics. They suggested that that would bankrupt the treasury and we'd have less money coming in if we implemented tax cuts, that as a result we'd be spending less money on public education and we'd be spending less money on health care. They said it rather emphatically. Many of the Liberal and NDP members present in the House this afternoon were the authors of many of those doom and gloom predictions back in 1994-95 leading up to the election of the Mike Harris government.

I am here to say to you, and the facts and the numbers confirm, that the sky has not fallen, that since we've taken office the fortunes of this province have turned around. In fact, Ontario's future has never been brighter. This past spring, we balanced the budget, just as we had promised to do. Minister Eves delivered the first back-to-back balanced budgets in over 50 years—the first time in over 50 years that we've had successive balanced budgets in this province. I'm proud to say I was part of a government that did so.

A few weeks ago, Minister Eves delivered even more good news, more success stories about how the people of this province are making Ontario a world-class place to do business, a world-class place to live and a world-class place to run a family. So today, as we approach the end of the year 2000, our economy is still growing faster than that of any other G7 nation. Our businesses are still creating jobs at a vigorous pace and hard-working Ontarians are still creating new opportunities.

Let's emphasize the last point, because it is the work of the hard-working people of Ontario, it is their efforts, that deserve the greatest round of applause, accolades. They're the ones who deserve the praise.

This strong economic growth that I've described is reflected in record job creation numbers: 184,000 net new jobs have been created in this year alone, in the year 2000 alone. Since 1995, in excess of 830,000 net new jobs have been created in this province. Since we've taken office, there are almost a million more individuals working.

Even some of the naysayers have of late acknowledged that we are indeed on the right track. I want to, if I may, quote in a moment from an individual who was one of our greatest critics for the many years that we implemented tax cuts and suggested that this would be the way to make Ontario more competitive, that this would be the way to turn around the fortunes of the economy.

But before I do that, I'm going to take a moment to anticipate what the Liberals and the New Democrats will

say when they have an opportunity to speak because, again, as I said before, I am quite aware of the fact that through the debate that has taken place with reference to this bill and through the discussions that took place before this bill was tabled, there is a level of repetitiveness in the dialogue. There isn't much new, frankly, that has come up. They have their approach and we have ours.

I'm sure that before long a Liberal member of the Legislature or perhaps a New Democratic MPP will get up and say that it's thanks to the American economy that we in this province have experienced success. In fact, I hear my friends across the way say that with some regularity. "Thanks, Bill Clinton," I think the member for St Catharines is prone to say.

1620

I challenge any member of the opposition to step out of this Legislature and go into an auto factory in, say, Windsor or Oshawa, or perhaps a high-tech firm in Waterloo or Ottawa—

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): How about Alliston? Honda.

Mr Young: —or, as my friend from Simcoe North correctly talks about, the Honda assembly facility in Alliston that is world-renowned.

I challenge the members opposite to do more than just shout back and forth within this assembly if they really believe what they're saying. I think they're wrong, but if they really believe what they're saying, why don't they walk up to the hard-working men and women who get up each morning and go to these factories, go to these offices and go to these companies? Why don't the Liberals and New Democrats say to them, say to their faces, that their hard work has nothing to do with the success they've achieved personally and that this province has achieved? Why don't they say that thanks to Bill and Hillary, they've achieved any level of success? They won't do that because it's simply wrong. It's because of the hard work of the people of this province, it's because they wake up each and every day and take pride in their work that this province has achieved the recovery it has over the past short while.

Over the past number of months we have seen numerous individuals come forward and talk about the financial success of this province. Let's listen to what the Bank of Montreal recently had to say about Ontario. They said the following: "We estimate that the broad-based expansion in Ontario will continue at a robust pace. Overall consumer and business confidence should remain firm, keeping the province well positioned for sustained expansion in subsequent years." They went on to say, "The healthy state of Ontario's economy is reflected in its stellar labour force performance and strength in all major categories of demand, consumer spending, housing business, investment and exports." Indeed, they are right.

Ontario has now become not only competitive as compared to other provinces in this country; Ontario has become the envy of almost any economy in North

America and, as I indicated earlier, is growing at a rate higher than that of any other nation within the G7. That is undoubtedly why the Prime Minister of this country recently, while speaking in the United States at a major university I believe, crowed about how Ontario is as competitive as or more competitive than any US state. He now understands that we have reconfigured this province to a point where a business deciding where to settle, where to bring its investment dollars, where to create wealth, where to create jobs, a business like that must seriously consider Ontario.

Our government's comprehensive economic policy of cutting taxes, cutting red tape, eliminating the deficit and paying down the debt and restructuring government services for greater efficiency is making Ontario a place where companies like that, where individuals, want to invest, want to do business and want to raise their families.

Our government is also making record investments in education, in health care, as well as in research and development. I come back to that because I started my comments this day by talking about how important it is that we have a strong economy in this province so that we can sustain the social infrastructure that we all take pride in. I mentioned it in the middle of my comments as well and I come back to it by way of conclusion because I sincerely believe that.

I'm very proud of the fact that we're spending in excess of \$22 billion on health care in this province. We do that annually. It's a greater amount than has been spent by any other government prior to this one. It's a greater amount than is being spent in any other province and it is an amount that is in excess of what we had promised the people of Ontario we would spend. We're spending more at an earlier stage. We said we'd get to this point at some point during the term, but I'm proud to say we have almost fulfilled that Blueprint commitment many years ahead of schedule.

It is because of the economic strength of this province that we are in a position to do that and it's because of that I feel it is so important that this budget legislation is passed in a timely manner so that the success within this province may continue.

The Speaker : Further debate?

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I'm pleased to continue the debate on another motion to cut off debate and to say how sad we are that this happens.

The previous member talked about consultation. I just say that the finance minister, who is the one who defends government policy on financial and fiscal matters, has spent more time with Tiger Woods since he became finance minister than he has with our legislative all-party committee. Every year we have begged him to come to our committee for more than an hour. He comes for one hour once a year to the duly-elected, all-party legislative committee. He gives us one hour. He spends 15 minutes with a presentation and then gives 15 minutes to each party for questions and then he's gone for another year and refuses to come back. We want him to come to

debate tax policy because part of the bill we're debating here is to cut our taxes in Ontario dramatically lower than our neighbouring US states. We understand the reasons for that but we said to the minister, "Why don't you come and tell us how we are going to be able to afford our health care system, our education system, our quality of life." He refused to come.

In my leader Dalton McGuinty's and our caucus's opinion, we have blown a golden opportunity in Ontario. We've now spent the last five years missing the opportunity to get our health care system, our education system, our social housing system, our labour relations and our quality of life in order.

We saw earlier today—the public may not be aware but one of the Speakers of the Legislature, the NDP member who's a Speaker, decided that he no longer felt comfortable being a Speaker of the Legislature and laid his coat down and left the position. I think he did it for very valid reasons. As I said before, I think Ontario is missing a golden opportunity and the issue that particularly troubled Mr Martin was our treatment of our most vulnerable people in Ontario.

Ontarians should be aware that while Ontario has been prosperous over the last five years, people on social assistance—and be aware that a single parent with two children is living on \$15,000 a year in this province; there are cabinet ministers who spend more than that on their holidays every year—have had no cost-of-living adjustment.

I just want to say on a personal note, I am very disturbed about the behaviour of the Minister of Community and Social Services. I've said this in the House before and I'll say it again: he is, in my opinion, stomping on our most vulnerable. He puts posters up in public buildings saying if you even suspect anyone on social assistance of fraud, turn them in; phone this number. We don't do that for tax evaders, we don't do that for any other members in our society, but you go into public buildings and John Baird has posters, essentially "Wanted" posters.

Recently, he held up a credit card—and it plays to misconceptions in the population. I realize a lot of people are concerned about abuse by people on social assistance, and all of us know we have to stamp that out. But he waves a credit card around in here as if this was a general problem with people on social assistance. He then held a meeting where he held up syringes and needles saying "We're going to randomly test people on social assistance," as if people on social assistance somehow or other had a drug problem far in excess of anyone else in society. He refuses to consider that these people have gone five years, often raising two or three children, with no increase. They're living on \$15,000 a year. I say to the Minister of Community and Social Services, the vulnerable in our society need an advocate. In my opinion, he daily stomps on the most vulnerable in our society. I frankly find it very disturbing. I've said that here before; I'll say it again. Somehow or other he has to come to grips with the fact that he is being—grossly unfair is an understatement.

1630

As we deal with this bill, let's recognize that what has driven the Ontario economy, without a question of a doubt, has been exports. The government produces a book that talks about why you should locate in Ontario. Why are companies locating in Ontario? It's because of our health care system. It's because of our education system. It's because of the quality of our workforce. It's because of the quality of our environment and the quality of life in our communities. Those are the very things that Harris has chosen, in this time of good economic times, to undermine.

Does anybody in this province think health care is in better shape today than when Mike Harris became Premier? Does anybody believe that? The first huge mistake Premier Harris made was to announce cuts for hospitals of 20%. He began implementing that within months of taking over. He undermined our hospital system. I remember nurses being laid off by the hundreds, and I remember his comment, "Well, it's too bad. They're just the same as Hula Hoop makers. Their time has come and gone." We now all know we are desperate to recruit nurses to come back to Ontario that Premier Harris drove away.

Does anybody believe our secondary schools are operating better now than they did five years ago? Frankly, they're in chaos. My leader, Dalton McGuinty, just a week ago proposed a plan that, in our opinion and in the opinion of school boards, parent groups, student groups, teacher groups, is at least a short-term solution to the chaos we're facing right now in our schools. But Premier Harris, because I think he needs total victory in all of his fights, is refusing to even consider it.

As I say, I always carry this around. When they're talking to communities outside, this is what it says here about Ontario's environment: "Ontario means beautiful, sparkling, shining waters." What have we done? The auditor pointed out that one of the early things Premier Harris did was to cut 25% of the inspection staff from the Ministry of the Environment. What were the results? The government itself acknowledges that at least half the water plants in Ontario didn't come close to meeting standards, that we've got problem after problem in Ontario. By the way, that's not the opposition speaking; that's the Provincial Auditor, who says, "Listen, this is a serious problem." The government decided they were going to cut 25%—here it is here. Since 1994, which is right around the time Harris became Premier, the inspection division has reduced its staff by 25%. This has meant a 34% decrease in the number of inspections conducted per year, and in 31% of the cases there were significant violations—not just violations, significant violations. I say to Ontario, the third area that I think is crucial to our quality of life the Premier has chosen to undermine.

The fourth area is the whole issue of housing. There has not been one single unit of housing built in Ontario in the last five years for people who require assistance, not one single unit. Those who know this area say we should

be seeing at least 15,000 rental units built per year. We're seeing none of the modest-income rental units built and a few, a dribble of high-rental units being built.

The fifth area is the whole issue of labour relations. Once again, the government, on time allocation without debate, will force through several bills on labour relations. Again, I go back to the government's own document. Here's what they say: "Ontario—exceptional workforce." They say, "The labour-management legal framework in Ontario is streamlined and balanced. Labour-management relations are constructive and stable. Bargaining is rooted in realism and a clear understanding of the competitive nature of the global economy. Contracts are settled without incident. According to the 1999 World Competitiveness Yearbook, business leaders ranked Canada's educational system ahead of Japan and the United States in terms of meeting the needs of a competitive economy."

It goes on to talk about what a terrific labour-management environment we have in Ontario, and now Premier Harris has turned his fine hand of bringing chaos out of order to this area. So we'll now see a dramatic shift in the balance between employees and employers, when the government itself said it was properly in balance, and we will see, tragically, unrest in the workforce.

One of the Toronto dailies on the weekend had an editorial—and I might say it's a Toronto daily that would traditionally be very supportive of the Harris government—saying, "You're going too far on this. You're undermining the relationships that exist in the workforce for no apparent advantage other than benefit to the employers and penalties to the employees."

I say to all of us, think about this. Think about five years ago. Our health care system is worse, our education system is in turmoil, our environment is under tremendous threat, and part of it, without question of a doubt, according to the Provincial Auditor, is as a result of the government cutting back on ministry staff. Housing is a crisis of growing significance. Labour-management relationships are about ready to be torn apart.

A test of Ontario society is, how do we deal with those most vulnerable in our society? We all, by the way, in our lives—all of us—periodically need a helping hand. I think the actions of Mr Baird—and I say again, I find it unacceptable that the minister, who should be speaking for and be the advocate of the most vulnerable, is choosing to play on the fears of people, choosing to demonize people on social assistance, rather than being the person who says, "Let's understand that the majority of people on social assistance are children." These are young people who, if there are two of them with one parent, live on \$15,000 a year. I repeat, there are members in this Legislature who spend more than that on holidays every year. We live here in an unreal—

Mr Dunlop: I don't.

Mr Phillips: The member says no. It's a matter of public record that members of this Legislature spend more than \$15,000 a year just on holidays.

In the last two weeks, my leader has raised the issue with the Premier several times that surely, at the very

least, at this time, we should be looking to provide some assistance. Frankly, I compliment Mr Martin, who took a stand today on that issue and who, as a matter of conscience, could not continue as the Speaker as a result of that.

On the issue of the golden opportunity missed, I heard some discussion last week on some of the financial matters. I use these numbers because many of us don't necessarily pay a lot of attention to it, and I think the public often are unaware of them.

I say, firstly, that Premier Harris has added \$24 billion of debt to the province of Ontario. We are spending every hour—listen to this—\$200,000 to pay the interest just on the debt that Premier Harris increased for the province.

1640

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): Every hour.

Mr Phillips: Every hour \$200,000, every single hour. The reason I raise that is because Premier Harris always loved to go after the previous government with numbers like that. Premier Harris has added \$24 billion to the debt of the province, according to his own numbers. We are spending \$200,000 hour after hour to pay the interest on that debt. That was always one of the issues. Would it have been better to do what Alberta did and what the federal government did and what Quebec did, which was to balance the budget before dramatic tax cuts?

For those who are interested in figures—this is over a 10-year period—today the net provincial debt as a percentage of GDP, which is one measurement—debt to GDP—is 28.7%; 10 years ago it was 14.2%. By the way, the number in Alberta is 11% and—this is always interesting—the number in British Columbia is 21.8%, in Manitoba is 20.7% and in Saskatchewan is 29%. The public debt interest as a percentage of revenue 10 years ago was 9.3%; today it's 15.1%. The expenditures as a percentage of GDP 10 years ago was 14.9%; today it's 15.6%.

I point those numbers out because a lot of my business friends simply assume, because the name "Conservative" is there, that Mike Harris must be a good money manager. I say, recognize—

Mr Gerretsen: Look at the auditor's report.

Mr Phillips: My colleague said, "Look at the auditor's report," and he's right about that. I'll just close off this thought, though. Remember this: Premier Harris has added \$24 billion of debt to the province, \$200,000 an hour, every single hour, 24 hours a day. This isn't just during—

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): Christmas Day.

Mr Phillips: Christmas Day it's \$200,000 an hour, says my friend from Cornwall.

The final point I'd make, because my other colleagues would like an opportunity to talk, is the Provincial Auditor's report. He produces a report for the taxpayers every year. He is the independent watchdog for Ontario taxpayers. He's the one who watches over government spending. He has a press availability after he issues his

report. The media this year said, "This report seems quite damaging. Are things getting worse?" The auditor said—he's now been the auditor eight years—his last two reports are the most damaging reports he has produced. Management of government money, of public money by the government, is getting worse. His eight years obviously include part of the NDP tenure.

I say to my business friends, recognize that the auditor is saying that things are getting worse, not better in terms of management of government money. He points out that Agricorp was spending money, frankly, illegally. He had to step in and catch them on it. The ambulance service that's being downloaded is going to cost more and, according to him, is probably going to work less well than it does now. The environment: as I pointed out earlier, cutting the staff has resulted in dramatically fewer inspections and, when an inspection does take place, much more serious problems.

So to all of us—once again, this bill is going to be forced through—I say we have spent five years and we've missed a golden opportunity. We had a chance to get our health care system, our education system, our environment, our housing, our labour relations in shape and we've missed it.

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: Harris was focused on tax cuts to get re-elected. The debt went up and the problem grew and now, in those key areas, we have, rather than a better situation, a worse situation.

Finally, I think it is tragic that rather than a debate at a legislative committee where the public can have an opportunity to provide some input, we are dealing with another closure motion that will cut off the debate that should have taken place in a public forum.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Further debate?

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I'm certainly pleased to join in the debate today. I want to speak about our colleges and universities and training programs, which were largely set out in the 1960s to meet the needs of that generation.

Since then there have been incremental changes to our system, but in today's challenging world that is not enough. Our world has changed dramatically and it is time that our system responded to that change.

That is why we have, firstly, introduced the first major reform of our apprenticeship system in more than 30 years and launched the single largest commitment to capital construction in our publicly funded colleges and universities in 30 years. This legislation continues that reform. The legislation that we're dealing with is Bill 132, which is the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Statute Law Amendment Act, 2000.

This government is responding directly to the needs of not only students but all Ontarians by proposing to give them the full range of flexible choices in post-secondary programming that have become commonplace in competing jurisdictions. As the member from Simcoe North knows, that's good news for Simcoe county and that's

good news for Georgian College, which is situated throughout the county, with its main campus in the city of Barrie.

I recognize that any change can be difficult for those who have grown accustomed to the old ways of doing things. However, I want to remind the members that our post-secondary and training system is not about our past. It is about preparing our students for the increasingly complex world in which they will graduate and build their lives.

That focus on the future, on seizing opportunities, was the thinking behind the establishment of our community colleges in the 1960s. That was the thinking that allowed the college system to grow from an idea to a mature system capable of responding to the needs of students and local communities. Our colleges and universities have gone so far, but under this outdated legislated framework things had to change.

With Bill 132 we are once again proposing to rekindle the spirit of innovation that produced a brand new set of post-secondary choices for our students, choices that will respond to their needs and their futures. Today those needs are different and we need the courage to move forward to refocus the system so that Ontarians have the opportunities throughout their lives to gain the skills and expertise they require to reach their full potential.

This is true not only for recent high school graduates going to colleges and universities for the first time; increasingly, Ontarians of all ages, many who have already earned a diploma or degree and now have full-time jobs, will also need learning opportunities available at times and places that are convenient for them.

This legislation recognizes the reality that all our students and workers face, and it would ensure that our post-secondary system is once again centred on the student and the learner, able to anticipate and respond to their changing environment needs.

If passed by the Legislature, this act would allow for, one, the expansion of student choices to include applied degrees at our community colleges, which is very good news to communities located in Simcoe county because Georgian College is there and it gives an opportunity for the students to stay within the community and not have to go outside of it; and two, the expansion of private degree-granting universities in Ontario.

I think these changes that are set out in post-secondary learning opportunities are of tremendous significance for communities which do not have universities but focus on their community colleges. Like Georgian College, they're going to benefit significantly from this legislation.

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I'm indeed saddened to be here speaking again this evening on another time allocation motion.

The priorities of this government are certainly mixed up seriously. Priorities where they should be working to help people, priorities of making sure that issues such as poverty and homelessness are addressed, are not being addressed by this government. This government is fixated on tax cuts and fixated on trying to help those

who don't need the help as much. The individuals who need the help and the assistance are abandoned by this government. It's very sad that the most vulnerable have seen no increases, not even a cost-of-living increase in a disability pension or Ontario Works allowance.

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At the same time, the government proposes a 42% increase for us, which we were totally opposed to. At the same time, the government claws back child tax benefits, a government that I'm sure will claw back the heat subsidy that's going to be issued by the federal government in late January or early February; a government that has cut the environment of this province, and not only cut the Ministry of the Environment but they've cut the staff, the frontline workers who ensure that the environment is safe in this province. Those employees have been cut by this government.

Housing: we deal with the housing issue in this province, a serious problem not just in Toronto but all across this province. In my riding of Elgin-Middlesex-London, a report was prepared to look at Where's Home? Do you know how many units of new public housing had been built since this government came to power? Zero. Your government promised that the private sector was going to do it. The private sector isn't there for that. There is a role for government to play in people's lives. It's incumbent on us as elected officials to put people first and not always think of the upper echelons within this province.

Another area that this government has totally abandoned is the area of agriculture. It's extremely disturbing to look at the cuts that this government has put through on the Ministry of Agriculture: the cuts of closing down the agricultural offices, the cuts forcing people to travel a longer distance, the cuts forcing people to do their business by computer. There are parts of this province that do not have the ability to tap into the World Wide Web, yet this is the approach this government takes.

Let's look at the area of subsidies to farmers. This government—the minister spoke up many times for the farmers of Ontario, for them to get their fair share, and I compliment him on that, that he did ensure that the farmers of Ontario were getting a fair share from the federal government. But this minister and this government aren't giving the farmers of Ontario their fair share. When you look at other provinces, you look at Alberta, you look at Quebec, you look at the support they're giving to the agricultural community. That support is non-existent from this government.

Another area that we need to be concerned with: we've got one, maybe two days left in this Legislature. Where is the agricultural operations act? The Minister of the Environment has been consulting on this for over a year. Where is this legislation? This legislation is wanted by the farmers, it's wanted by municipalities, it's wanted by citizens in this province, and this government is hanging them all out to dry—extremely sad.

Post-secondary education: we had a demonstration here today. I can hear them outside right now debating and protesting Bill 132. But has this government supported post-secondary education? No, they haven't

supported post-secondary education. Ontario is now the most expensive place to gain a post-secondary education. We've seen our tuition costs rise by over 60% as a result of actions by this government. We've seen an over \$400-million cut to our post-secondary institutions in this province by this government. Is this government trying to invest in our future? No, not at all. They're piling more and more debt on students of this province, debt that it's going to take them years and years to get out of.

Another area where they've totally abandoned the students of this province is in the education sector. Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party have put forth a good idea, a peace plan, to bring all sides to the table, to get on with getting our students back into the classrooms so they can enjoy those extracurricular activities. But could we get support from this government to look at this peace plan that Dalton McGuinty has put forward? No, not at all. This government is prepared to continue to do war with teachers, to continue to do war with school boards. But you know there are always casualties in a war and these are the casualties that this government has abandoned. These casualties are the students of this province. I think it's just shameful the way the Minister of Education has treated students in this province.

Another issue of extreme importance we've lost sight of is that with this government's fixation on tax cuts in this province, since they've been in power they have added \$24 billion in debt, including \$10 billion for tax cuts. Tax cuts are one thing, but by adding debt on to future generations like these pages in the House, you've abandoned these young people in this House and you've abandoned the future generations of this province by imposing on them unprecedented future debt responsibilities.

Let's just talk a little bit about downloading. I don't know how anybody from a municipal background can stand up and face a municipal politician because the downloading to municipalities has been unprecedented. You have not treated municipalities with any respect; you've treated them with total disdain. I think what you've done is shameful, and how any one of you who is a former municipal politician can sit over there and stand and face municipal politicians is beyond me. You've abandoned them.

Merry Christmas to the residents of Elgin-Middlesex-London.

Mr Dunlop: It's a pleasure to speak this afternoon on the time allocation motion on Bill 152, the Balanced Budgets For Brighter Futures Act, and yes, we do have a bright future in this province.

I was talking earlier today to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and he gave me a brochure from the Ontario Mining Association. I hear all the discussion on the other side of the House that most of our economy is built on the American economy and the automotive industry. That's what you try to say but—

Mr Gerretsen: Well, it's true, isn't it? Is it true?

Mr Dunlop: No, it's not true. I'm going to read a statement from the Ontario Mining Association. I'd like to read this into the Hansard:

"Perhaps because of the nature of the commodity business, miners are people who patiently wait for better times. They're used to the swings in prices and the vagaries of business cycles. Yet, even when the better times do arrive, miners remain cautious and sometimes even suspicious. While good times are anxiously anticipated, when they do arrive, they are regarded with trepidation.

"So without raising any fears—or hopes—let's look at some of the things going on in the industry in Ontario during 2000. Earlier this year, Agrium Inc held the official opening of its phosphate mine near Kapuskasing in northeastern Ontario. The capital investment in this project in Ontario was \$75 million. On October 19, Goldcorp held the official opening of its Red Lake mine. This gold producer invested US\$56 million in a mine and mill expansion and has committed another US\$20 million.

"Along with these mine openings, several companies made announcements of significant investments in Ontario. They included Falconbridge investing \$640 million in its Kidd Creek operation in Timmins; North American Palladium spending US\$126.5 million to upgrade and expand its Lac des Iles mine; Inco investing \$116 million in its Sudbury area mines combined with exploration being at its highest level since the 1970s; and Barrick Gold investing \$1.7 million to expand the mill at the Holt-McDermott mine.

"Also, Kenora Granite Company Ltd is putting \$4.5 million into a dimension stone quarry near Ear Falls and De Beers holds the prospect of a diamond mine near Attawapiskat on James Bay.

"Then we need to look at a provincial government that is striving to make Ontario a preferred destination for mineral investment dollars. In its budget this year, the government reduced the mining tax to 10% from 20% over a five-year period, offered a 10-year exemption from mining tax for new remote mines and lowered the overall corporate tax rate to put Ontario on a more competitive footing with other jurisdictions. Through its Operation Treasure Hunt, the provincial government is bringing new geological data to light and it is investing in developing geoscientific information in advanced technologies.

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"Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines is striving to rehabilitate old mine sites and is increasing funding for the northern Ontario heritage fund. The government made true on its word on tax cuts to the mining industry going back to when elected in 1995. In addition, it is implementing a flow-through share incentive plan of its own and it has encouraged Ottawa to do the same. These actions are making investing in the exploration end of the business more attractive.

"When things improve, good fortune is not shared equally and mining is a sector with more work to do and more problems to solve. However, without wishing to jinx the apparent trend, perhaps we should ... let these constructive actions by companies and governments

speak for themselves.” I think that sums up the “brighter futures” aspect of this bill.

This government has put forth 166 tax cuts since 1995, and by the end of this year we will have increased revenues \$14 billion. That compares, I might add, to the 32 tax increases that the New Democratic Party put in and the 33 tax increases that the Liberal Party put in, and you didn't increase revenues at all.

As far as I'm concerned, I stand firmly behind this bill. I stand firmly behind Minister Eves and his job as finance minister of this province. I think everybody in this House should support this bill.

With only four minutes left, I'd like to leave a little bit of time for the member for Durham, who would also like to make a few comments on this bill. Thank you very much. The same as the member for Elgin-Middlesex-London, I want to wish everybody in this House and the people of Simcoe North a very merry Christmas and all the best in the new year.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this time allocation motion that, again, brings down closure on a significant bill. It really has become routine around here that these sorts of things happen.

I can recall just last week, on second reading during our lead-off, saying to this House how there wasn't much chance that the current boom was going to continue and that a lot of the observations and measurements the government wants to take now are not going to hold for the foreseeable future.

It was with interest that I noted today—more than interest; worry, especially since the corporation in question is a mainstay of the Hamilton economy. Today's *Financial Post*—because I made the argument the last time that this wasn't just me, it wasn't just the NDP; that there were serious indicators that suggest we're heading for a downturn. We have been saying that the economic platform of this government has worked in the short term solely, in our opinion, because of the momentum built from the American economy, and that our numbers—GDP, job creation, it doesn't matter what you want to look at—those things would have been there anyway. I think, and we believe, that the proof in the pudding, if you will, will be when a recession unfortunately does hit. It will remove the façade of your argument that it's your policies that are creating the North American boom that Ontario is a part of.

You've been really quick all along to take credit, saying, “Oh, no, we disagree with you. We disagree with you, Christopherson. The NDP got it all wrong. It's not because of the North American economy. It's not because of the direct relationship between the American auto industry and the auto industry here in Ontario in terms of its horsepower within our economy. Oh no, that's not it; it's because of our policies.” Of course, we've maintained all along, what possible difference could it make to an ordinary, middle-class, working family that lives in Wisconsin with regard to your tax cuts? Whether they buy a new vehicle or not is what

sends the message back here: increase production, increase productivity, hire more people. That goes for the direct assembly, the supply market, the after market and the direct service market of new vehicles.

What will be interesting is that when the cover is ripped off all of this and you're exposed, and you will be—

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Keep hoping.

Mr Christopherson: I'm not hoping, as the minister says. I resent the fact that he would suggest that.

The Deputy Speaker: Through the Speaker, please.

Mr Christopherson: Through you, Speaker, I resent that he said that. The fact of the matter is that it is going to happen. It will be interesting to see. As I say, once the veil has been lifted and we get a look at what's left of the real fundamentals that affect the quality of life in Ontario, then we will see them in all their starkness. The question is going to be whether or not this government is going to stand up and say, “Yes, it is our fault; we take responsibility.”

You wanted to take all the credit even though nobody suggested you deserve it. You were foolish enough, in my opinion, politically speaking, arrogant enough, in my analysis, to say, “We, the Tories, caused all this. It's all because we were here. If we weren't here, none of this would have happened.” That's been your position all along. When the bottom falls out, let's see if the appropriate ministers, the Premier himself and the know-it-all backbenchers who sit deep in the Tory backbenches are prepared to stand up and say, “Yes, we took the credit when things were good, especially since it really wasn't our doing, and now I'm prepared to stand here and be all grown up and adult and very mature and take responsibility for the fact that we are into major serious times and innocent people are being hurt.” It's not going to happen.

What is going to happen is that at some point the unveiling is going to happen. Earlier I was indicating I wanted to reference today's paper. I know well the minister who commented. Given the fact that this is a Hamilton corporation I'm talking about, I know he would be aware that it brings me no joy to read this kind of headline, given the implications for my community. Here it is nonetheless, the *Financial Post*, Tuesday, December 19, “Dofasco's Profit Meltdown.” Then, inside on page 3, “Gillette Slashes Workforce to Trim Operating Costs: Sales Slump, Costs Rise.” Page 4 in the Canada section, “Union Fears St Thérèse a GM Target: Report Automaker to Slash Product Lineup by 20%.”

Lest we think that somehow the *Financial Post* has become a leftwing fearmonger, the business section of today's *Toronto Star* has, “Buyers Market Drives the Auto Lot,” and the subheadline is, “Automakers Scramble to Offer Best Incentives.” Why? Because people aren't buying. Cars aren't moving. It is deadly serious for us.

I think it is fair to say that whether or not these headlines and the indicators we've been seeing over the last few weeks and few months, particularly if you watch the

stock market and its volatility and what is happening in the high-tech sector of the economy both here in Canada and in the United States—there are reasons to be concerned.

I want to tie this into the comments of Mr Young, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, who is also the member from Willowdale. He said earlier today—he was making a reference to last year's pre-budget consultation. I link these two by way of this: if we get into recessionary times, people are reading and hearing analysts and economic pundits on TV trying to decide—and they're talking more and more like it will—will it be a soft landing or a hard landing? And I guess they've got a new one in there now: will it be just a bumpy landing? We're getting more categories as time goes on. They mean it primarily in terms of what is going to happen to the markets. That is always the be-all and end-all gauge.

1710

In large part, whether you have a hard or a soft landing will be determined by what your bottom line shows when you're mailed out your mutual fund or stock option balances. Whatever investment tool you're using, it'll be that bottom line. It'll be a hard landing if you lose more than you wanted to. It'll be a soft landing, I guess, if what was lost is sort of OK because you're in for the long term, or the "it could have been worse" sort of approach.

But there's a huge difference between a hard landing when you're one of those earning better than \$300,000 a year. When you're in that category, this budget alone gives you about another 10 grand. That's on top of the tens of thousands of dollars they've already received. So a hard landing for those individuals is going to be a world of difference from the hard landing of some of those auto workers who are being notified they may be laid off, or somebody who hasn't yet benefited. I don't know how we describe the feeling of someone who's already in poverty, if we go into a recession, in terms of what a hard landing means for them.

I know this government doesn't like to pay any attention to those who are not part of this boom. You like to say that everybody who's working is somehow sharing in this boom. But that's not the case. I grant you that jobs were created. I grant you that during an economic boom it is inevitable that you will create jobs. Whether you'd reach the same or higher levels with this policy or different policies, of course, remains the focus of debate for us. But it's a given that new jobs will be added to the economy. Guess what? When you're in a recession, the opposite happens. Jobs disappear, the economy contracts. If you're someone who has already been left out of the gift-giving—and that's the majority of people, by the way—you have every reason to be terrified of a hard landing.

My friend Tony Martin from Sault Ste Marie made a very important decision for himself today and performed a dramatic exercise of his rights when he stepped down, resigned as a Deputy Speaker and has now moved across the street and is presiding over what is being called a

people's parliament, talking about poverty issues, talking about real issues that reflect the lifestyle of real people and pointing out why their situation has been made worse by this government.

I applaud Tony Martin for that. Many of you in this House will know that Tony is a member and a long-time activist in the Catholic church. His faith is very important to him. His religion is a big part of his life and his values, and those of his family.

Before he came here in 1990, he was the director of a food bank.

I just heard the Minister of Transportation mumble under his breath, "Well, that explains a lot." You're right, it does. Arguably, he brings more compassion, more love and more awareness of poverty issues than just about anyone else in this place. Maybe there are a few other people who could come close to matching his life experience; however, I would say to you with a great deal of humbleness that in our caucus I think he has a greater understanding and depth of feeling about the issue of poverty than the rest. That's not to say we don't care or that other members of this House don't care, but this is something Tony feels in every fibre of his body.

I won't go into the details—and people will understand why I'm respecting Tony's privacy—but I can tell you it was very moving when he came to a special caucus meeting late last week to tell us of his decision. My point in raising that is that Tony Martin, the MPP for Sault Ste Marie, felt he had to do something, that he personally was not putting enough of who he is and using his position as a member of this Legislature to draw attention to the issues of poverty and, more important, try to create a dynamic where there is discussion of how to alleviate and eliminate poverty.

Rather than being cynical, and it's easy to be cynical when any of us do anything in this place, I suggest that we take a very hard look at the individual we're talking about and his background and the position he has taken. If you read his Hansard over the last decade, you will see that today should come as no surprise to any of us. This is about Tony returning to his roots. He listened to his soul, and his soul told him that he needed to do more. That's not an easy thing to conclude, especially when you're a member of the third party. There aren't a lot of levers of power and authority, or even influence, for that matter. Yet I think he has found a way. Certainly I expect there will be a great deal of media attention this evening, as there ought to be, and that was his whole point: we aren't dealing with this enough. You never hear the government backbenchers talk about it. The best they'll come up with is, "Yes, poverty is a challenge, especially child poverty, and we need to do more. The job's not done. We need to do more." That's it. That's as far as they go, and I'm sure if we had a look at the briefing notes they all use, you'll find that line in there. If things get too hot or they get an issue of poverty thrown at them, particularly child poverty, this is where they go. But you don't hear many government backbenchers in particular talk about poverty in their communities.

I raise all this in the context of a budget bill and a debate around the budget, because there are a lot of people who are not yet in poverty but they're on the brink, whether that's because their job is questionable—uncertain in terms of its future—or whether they're one of those who are paying more than 50% of their income for rent—and let's remind ourselves that you eliminated rent control, so you've got to bear some responsibility for that. There are seniors who are making decisions every day about whether they buy food or medicine.

Is it expensive to solve that problem? Yes. Is it expensive to solve the homeless problem? Yes. But you found \$4 billion during the life of this budget to give to the wealthiest corporations and the wealthiest individuals of Ontario. You found \$4 billion to give them and turned your back on everyone else.

1720

Lest someone think they can't be in this category, be laid off for six, eight, 10, 12, 15 months. Remember the social safety net that we were all so proud of, especially those people around my age? It doesn't exist any more like it used to. Why? Because this government had to cut hundreds of millions of dollars out of the Ministry of Community and Social Services to help pay for those tax cuts that you gave to the wealthy. It's not just wrong, it's obscene.

Economically it didn't even make any sense. You had to borrow the money to give the tax cuts because you didn't put that money, that revenue, toward the deficit. If you had, you would have balanced the budget sooner and you wouldn't have had to tear the heart out of the social safety net in this province.

In terms of health care, what do we hear now from the right, the hard right wing in this province and in this country? Two-tier health care. Listen—it has been said many times; it can't be said often enough—if you've got enough money, a two-tier health care system makes a whole lot of sense. Why not? Common sense, financial sense, any way you want to do it, it makes a great deal of sense. Where it doesn't make sense is for the average, working, middle-class family; it makes no sense. But as long as you keep saying tax cuts are the answer for everything and you get enough people willing to believe you, that will be the order of the day.

But if this recession comes and we get the hard landing, how do the tax cuts help support our quality of life in Ontario when the recession hits? How? What is the sustainability of that? What does that do in the long run? You can argue today because of the numbers—falsely, I submit, but you can at least argue, and you do. You stand up and every good thing that's going on you say is because of the tax cuts. Given the dynamic of what's out there, you can do that. That doesn't make it true. That doesn't make it true just because you say so. It doesn't make it untrue just because I say so. But the reality is that you are saying that everything is wonderful because of our tax cuts and without those we wouldn't have this. You know how we feel about that. If we're in a recession, how do you even begin to argue that tax cuts are

going to solve the problem or that they've been good for us as a population in the long run? How do you do that? I don't believe you can, because I'll tell you what's going to happen, absolutely guaranteed. When more and more major cracks and gaps happen in the health care system and in the education system as a result of the money you've already taken out to pay for your obscene tax cuts, your gift for the very wealthy, and because those systems are already so fragile and beginning to crack under the pressure that's being placed on them, you're going to say, when we're in a recessionary time, "We can't afford to do anything." Whether you want to or not—it'll be interesting to say whether you want to—you've got legislation now that says there has to be a balanced budget. Oh, you've set up a safety valve, if you will, but we have to be almost in a depression before you hit that safety valve.

At the lowest point in the recession of the 1990s, which was the worst recession since the Dirty Thirties, the depression of the 1930s, your legislation—I think if it kicked in at all, it was one year. I think it may not have kicked in at all, but at best it kicked in one year. I don't think it did. So first of all, they're going to say, "We can't go into a deficit position, so we don't have any money to inject into the health care system or into the education system or into the rising number of people who are no longer on EI and are having to turn to welfare." All those things you said no to in the good times are going to get a no with a stamp and packaging and a bow on top of it, because now you've got the greatest excuse for a Conservative politician, and that is, "We can't afford it; we're in a recession."

We've said to you consistently that you had an opportunity to advance the province so that more people could benefit from this boom, but we also said that you have an opportunity here to invest in the future because the down days, the recession days, are going to happen at some point, and you sure aren't going to spend any money in a recession that you wouldn't spend during the boom. So what you will have done is squandered—absolutely squandered—a magnificent opportunity that comes along once in a generation, if then, where you have a record-setting economic boom. You had such an opportunity to do so much, and yes, that would have included balancing the budget.

I remind the Tories that the first province in Canada in the modern economic era to balance their budget was not a Tory. It wasn't a Liberal. It was an NDP government under Roy Romanow in Saskatchewan. Now, isn't it interesting that Saskatchewan also happens to be the province that created universal health care? It's interesting that Tommy Douglas—if I'm getting this correctly, because it wasn't part of my notes, but if I'm remembering correctly—was either the first or within the first group of people inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. Tommy Douglas, who had doctors out in the streets protesting that there was a Communist takeover of the health care system going on in Saskatchewan. They went on strike, they had committees in the com-

munity, they had everybody going wild. Tommy Douglas.

What's interesting about this story, aside from a great brag story for the NDP, is, number one, it points out how there is a direct relationship between good fiscal management, balanced budgets and the quality of life of the majority of people. There's a direct link. I don't think anything that we have said or done as NDP goes against that, and if it does in any small way—because no government's perfect—it's not near what you have done: the obscenity of taking all that billions of dollars and giving it to those who don't need it, or need it least of all.

1730

Tommy Douglas. Tommy Douglas was the Premier of Saskatchewan for almost 16 years. Do you know that it wasn't until near the end of his 16th year—I think it was around year 14 or 15, right near the end because part of it was still continuing after he'd actually left—toward the end of that lengthy career and term as Premier, and you ask, why would I raise that? I'll tell you why: because Tommy Douglas was under enormous pressure from the activists and from members of his party—then known as the CCF, the forerunner to the NDP—to bring in universal health care. He'd made it a huge issue, he'd said it was so close to his heart, and they kept saying, “Tommy, why won't you do it? You've got a majority government. Do it.” Do you know what his answer was? He said he wasn't going to bring it in until it was on a sound program basis, in other words, until it had been thought through, because much was at risk. If he had failed, we would have had a great deal of difficulty pressuring the then Liberals in a minority situation to bring it in federally. There's no other model. This was creating something brand new, and look at what a wonderful thing they brought into our nation.

The second thing Tommy said was, “We have to be able to afford it, because I don't want future governments coming in and using the excuse of the financial viability of universal health care to eliminate it.” He didn't want that excuse to be available to the Tories, to the right-wingers, to many Liberals; he didn't want that.

He also said he didn't want to make the banks rich off Saskatchewan's health care system.

So, you see, you don't have a monopoly on good fiscal management or its priority in our lives. I say to the members opposite, the numbers in and of themselves are not the story. They're not the end. They're not the reason. They're the means. You could have taken \$4 billion and you could have lowered tuition. You could have brought in a provincial housing program to start actually producing housing that, once it's paid for, belongs to the people of Ontario for as long as the stock is there, so that it can be used by people when they need it. When they're able to stand on their own they can move and then it's there for the next group that needs it. If someone is in a working middle-class lifestyle and they start to fall, then there is that net there and it also acts as a bit of a bounce to get them back. Eliminating the net or creating all kinds of holes does one thing only: it guarantees that people

who need it are going to fall right through and hit the pavement.

You could have done something about the crisis in our health care system. You've got enough money. Where's the money for community health? You cut it out of the institutional side. You were told you had to reinvest it there and, if you didn't, you'd have a crisis, and that's exactly what we've seen: crisis after crisis.

You could have invested more money in our universities. We were once the pride of the nation and beyond. Now our universities are crumbling because you've cut and cut to pay for your tax cut. What does that do for the future? What good is that tax cut? You can't even argue that it's creating jobs, because that myth is blown away when you're in a recession. What ongoing, sustainable benefits do huge tax cuts to the rich do for the vast majority, particularly during recessionary times? Nothing. I hate using slogans, but I've got to tell you that at the end of the day all that does is make the rich richer. For those already in poverty, it makes them poorer. For those who are not in poverty but are not rich, they aren't going in the rich direction, they're going in the other direction. It's all about quality of life. It's all about sustainability. It's about building. At least it's supposed to be, but under this government and this kind of budget and this kind of legislation, it's about greed. Pure and simple, it's greed.

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's my privilege to speak on this time allocation motion on Bill 152. It's clear this motion is necessary to make sure the minister's statement is approved, passed and voted on. I want to bring it down from the member from Hamilton West and the pessimistic notes. If you want to look at what they did to this province in doubling the debt and the deficit, they can't lecture. They've got to look at the facts. If you look at the increase in revenue, the increase in expenditures in high-priority areas like health care, the whole concept of trying to help people to help themselves is quite foreign to the member.

I think we should all, at this time of year, take a few moments and realize just how well off we are, and I don't mean this in any partisan way.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr O'Toole: I'm going to read an e-mail that was sent to me by a constituent. Her name is Suzanne Elston. It was sent to me as a Christmas reminder and I thank her for it. These are quotes:

“Below is a reminder of the de facto aristocracy of the planet. Think of our era as the 1890s in France.

“If you feel a little ‘down’ over the holidays, a few facts to ponder:

“If you have food in the fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of” the people who inhabit “the world.

“If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and a little spare change lying in a dish somewhere, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

"If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than millions of people who will not survive this week.

"If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people in the world."

The point here is we on all sides really do want the best, but I think the most important thing is, when do we stop demanding from society?

Mr Christopherson: For the rich, never.

Mr O'Toole: The member from Hamilton West and his party had five years of government and they absolutely destroyed the fundamentals of this province.

I spoke the other week on a few issues, and with the limited time that is left to me, one of the key areas is health care. The investments in health care are clearly outlined in our budget document. If people want to call, I'd certainly send them one, Budget 2000. Changes to the expenditures in health care, no thanks to the federal government: from just over \$17 billion to close to \$23 billion. That's just one area.

The improvements in health care have been commented on by many. Cal Stiller, chair of the Canadian Medical Discoveries Fund: "The creation of the Ontario research and development challenge fund and the Ontario Innovation Trust have launched a new era of exploration and excitement in both public and private research communities here in Ontario."

We're building an infrastructure to have a stronger Ontario for all Ontarians. With that, I wish everyone the very best.

1740

Mr Gerretsen: I guess the Conservative members just don't get it. Some people are doing quite well in this province, no question about it, but we're talking about, on this side of the House, the people who aren't doing so well.

The one thing that has really disturbed me over the last two or three weeks is that whenever a question was asked either of the Premier or of the Minister of Community and Social Services about those 100,000 children who still live in abject poverty in this province, and what was the government going to do about that—was the government actually going to give them a cost-of-living increase as far as their social assistance payments are concerned? After all, they have been the same for the last five years, after suffering a 21% cut back in 1995. What was the government going to do about it? Very, very legitimate questions. What did the Minister and the Premier say about that situation, about the fact that there are still people who are suffering on a day-to-day basis, including the 100,000 children who are living in poverty? They basically ignored it. They didn't answer the question.

They told us how wonderfully everybody else is doing, and that was all that mattered. But no matter how well most people in this province may be doing, there is still a significant number of people, adults and children, out there who aren't doing so well for whom this will not be a merry Christmas.

It has always seemed to me that if we regard ourselves as a compassionate, caring society, the way we want to be portrayed to the outside world, the way we are regarded as the best country in the world to live as far as quality of life is concerned, then we should also care just as much about the most vulnerable in our society.

Whether those most vulnerable are children living in poverty with their families or whether they are senior citizens who cannot get the necessary medical prescriptions or medical care in hospitals or cannot get community health care, we should be concerned about those people. It is not good enough to simply say, "Well, everybody else is doing all right and everybody else is doing so great." Let us care about those people who aren't doing so great. That's really what government should be all about. Government should be about caring for those individuals who, for whatever reason, cannot make it in life the way you and I perhaps are fortunate enough to make it. Surely we owe that to the 100,000 children who live in poverty. Surely we owe that to the seniors in this province. That's been the argument on this side of the House.

That is what has been totally denied by anyone in cabinet whom these particular questions have been addressed to over the last two weeks. I find that offensive, because I have never been involved in any government structure in my 25 years of involvement in public life where we simply do not care about a significant number of people in our society. If the government does care, then at least answer our questions on those kinds of issues, which has been completely and totally lacking.

It doesn't just end there. We heard today that this government has trampled upon the democratic process 64 times; 64 times in the last five years you have invoked closure, cutting off debate on bills large and small. You simply didn't want to hear any more.

It's kind of interesting: I did a little survey and determined how often closure was invoked in the 128 years prior to that, since we started in 1867. Do you know how often it was invoked prior to that? A total of 30 times in 128 years. In the last five years this government has invoked closure 64 times. That tells me something about how they feel about our democratic process.

The other thing, and the member from Hamilton West talked about this earlier: we talked about the provincial debt in this province. This government likes to pride itself on the management with which it looks after the affairs of state. Yet it's very interesting that when you look at the reports of the Provincial Auditor for the last two years running, he emphatically states that those have been two of the most damning reports he has ever had to issue in his role of Provincial Auditor, which basically deals with whether or not the money that the government spends on various programs has been spent in a cost-efficient and an effective manner. As far as the auditor is concerned, in ministry after ministry there has been waste, there has been mismanagement. We've gone through all that on a number of occasions in the past.

I would just say to this government, there are real problems out there in education. Take a look at the education peace plan that my leader, Dalton McGuinty, has come up with. It's been hailed throughout the province by teacher groups, by editorialists—

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): The OSSTF.

Mr Gerretsen: I don't care whether it's the OSSTF or not. It's a plan that's out there. You're always criticizing us for not coming up with a positive plan. Here's a positive plan, and what do you do with it? "Oh, it's not really your plan at all." You ridicule it, and that's exactly what you're like.

Secondly, take a look at the health care system if you really think everything is all that well in this province. When you look at the waiting lists, when you look at the lack of community health care services, there are still major problems in this province. Particularly in this time when we all like to enjoy the holiday spirit, let us never, ever forget the most vulnerable people in our society. We as a government have the duty and an obligation to protect them and to see that they're well looked after.

The Deputy Speaker: The time allocated for debate has now concluded.

Mr Klees has moved government notice of motion number 90. 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. This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1748 to 1758.

The Deputy Speaker: Those in favour please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Cleary, John C.	Kennedy, Gerard
Bartolucci, Rick	Conway, Sean G.	McMeekin, Ted
Bountrogianni, Marie	Crozier, Bruce	Peters, Steve
Bradley, James J.	Duncan, Dwight	Pupatello, Sandra
Bryant, Michael	Gerretsen, John	Ramsay, David
Caplan, David	Gravelle, Michael	Sergio, Mario
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Smitherman, George

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 51; the nays are 21.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

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

The House adjourned at 1800.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
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 déléguée 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, minister of Correctional Services, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre des Services correctionnels 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, Rob (PC)
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.

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