



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 37th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 25 September 2001

Mardi 25 septembre 2001

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Tuesday 25 September 2001

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

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*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOME CARE

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I'd like to address the funding freeze to the community care access centre that this government announced last spring. The freeze amounts to a significant budget cut when you allow for the very large increase this past year in people who require some sort of home care. The effect has, in summary, been devastating. Patients who were saving the system vast amounts of money by living and caring for themselves at home, as opposed to being in the hospital, are being rewarded for their diligence and bravery by having the province cut back on their already meagre services.

I hold in my hand a dozen heartbreaking stories sent to me by constituents. These are not form letters. Many of them are handwritten, some a little shaky, but sent with great care. They are heartfelt pleas from people doing their very best in often troubled circumstances just to get by.

One letter is from a woman in her late 60s who is the sole caretaker for her 93-year-old mother. The woman has some health problems. She has heart disease; osteoarthritis in her knee, hip and back, and can only walk with the help of a cane; fibromyalgia; and kidney and bladder problems. She is the sole caregiver of her 93-year-old mother, who has broken both hips and suffers from depression and mild dementia. What's her reward for this? The CCAC has had to cut her weekly hours by a third.

This is just one story among thousands across this province. I call upon the government to restore its commitment to those who are eagerly struggling, day in and day out, and to those who are sick but still fighting to care for themselves or their loved ones.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I rise in the House today to recognize Legion Week, which ran from September 16 to 22. The Royal Canadian Legion has long been a pillar of the community in Ontario. Through the sponsorship of youth programs, sporting events and

seniors programs they have promoted community involvement through individual and group effort. Legion volunteers have given numerous hours so that others can enjoy these special activities.

What's more, the sacrifices made by our war veterans are a big part of what makes Ontario strong. In fact, Veterans Affairs Canada shows that Ontario is home to 145 World War I veterans, 124,944 World War II veterans and 5,205 Korean War veterans. Many of these veterans are still very active in the Legion today.

Last Sunday I had the opportunity to attend the kickoff of Legion Week in Quinte West, where I helped lay a wreath commemorating the air battle of World War II. To meet personally with those veterans was indeed a touching experience.

The recent events in New York City have shown that the price of democracy is eternal vigilance. May those terrible occurrences act as a reminder of what our veterans endured to give us the peace and prosperity that we often take for granted today.

ERNIE COOMBS

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Today it is an honour for me to pay tribute to someone who made children dream. He has been described as a national treasure. For 31 years, in more than 4,000 television shows, Ernie Coombs, better known as Mr Dressup, entertained countless fans of all ages.

He received numerous Gemini Awards for best children's programming, the first Children's Choice Award by the Association for Children and Television in 1994, and also the Earl Grey Award for excellence in TV from the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television.

In 1996 he was named to the Order of Canada by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, who called him an "icon, to be remembered for generations to come." His friend and colleague Fred Rogers, who hosted Mr Rogers' Neighborhood, said, "On and off the air, he was such a wonderfully artistic, whimsical man who never lost touch with the child within him." Children were always eager and delighted to see what Mr Dressup would pull out of his Tickle Trunk.

Mr Coombs was a gentle-natured entertainer who displayed creativity, playfulness and kindness. Ernie was reported to have thought he was a better person for being

Mr Dressup, and I would suggest that we are all better people as a result of his gift.

On Tuesday, September 18, Ernie died, predeceased by his wife. He is survived by his children Catherine, Chris and Barry. We offer them our prayers and condolences.

HAMILTON TEMPLE

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Yesterday, during our comments on the September 11 disaster, I mentioned the fact that the face of hatred had visited our city a few days afterwards with the burning of a Hindu temple, and I said that was not Hamilton and I talked about a meeting we had at city hall. My colleagues Dominic Agostino and Brad Clark were there, along with many other leaders in the community and religious leaders from across all the major faiths in our community.

I want to give a further update to this House as to how my community of Hamilton is responding. First of all, the people who attend the Hindu temple have received more than 20 offers of locations where they can hold their services. In fact, this Sunday they're holding their services at Barton Stone United Church. Just yesterday another offer was made to use the old York theatre on Concession Street at Upper Wentworth, which was recently renovated to the tune of \$1 million, and that's been made available to the members of that temple. Also, and I'm very proud to say this, the Hamilton building trades unions have stepped forward and offered their expertise to rebuild that temple, and if the funds aren't there, they are prepared to do it for nothing. That is the face of Hamilton and the face of Hamiltonians.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION WEEK

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): I rise today to acknowledge Violence Prevention Week, led by the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I joined the Solicitor General yesterday to help launch this week designed to raise awareness on the demonstrated link between the abuse of animals and violence toward people. The Ontario SPCA leads the way on this important link. With financial support from our government, through the office of the Solicitor General, the SPCA has been able to implement a groundbreaking animal-assisted therapy project matching hard-to-adopt shelter dogs with young offenders in an intensive 13-week program.

We all know about the recent successful raid on puppy mills. Our government was quick to respond with \$50,000 by the Solicitor General to help with the burden of over 200 rescued animals. This money will also help with the creation of a special operations unit dedicated to seeking out and shutting down puppy mills. My congratulations to Victoria Earle, the CEO, the members of the board, staff and the many volunteers who work so

hard to make sure that the goals of violence prevention are met this week and year-round.

1340

HATE CRIMES

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): I rise today along with, I'm sure, every single member of the Legislature to condemn the racist and hate-motivated attacks that have occurred in our community of Hamilton in the last two weeks. As you know, a Hindu temple was burned down and a Hamilton mosque was vandalized. This is not reflective of Hamiltonians; it is reflective only of a small group of renegades who are motivated by race and hate and nothing else. We stand today united with our friends in the religious communities in Hamilton in fighting this action.

Premier Harris, on September 18, announced a \$3-million fund to help the victims of the terrorist attacks in the United States. It was the right decision, the right thing to do. I ask today that the Premier of Ontario offer financial assistance to the city of Hamilton, to the religious mosques in Hamilton, to the Hindu temples, to the places of worship that are under attack, in regard to the extra security they have to put into place to deal with that, in regard to the extra police resources that are necessary, in regard to the extra work that is happening.

I believe that we need the assistance. I ask the Premier in the same spirit of co-operation in which we have worked in this House yesterday—and we all stand together on this issue—to reach out and offer whatever assistance can be given to the city of Hamilton, to the organizations of Hamilton that are fighting this, so that together we can send out a very clear message that we stand united against racist hate that is going on, and we stand together for all Ontarians as one.

Mr Premier, I ask you for that help; I hope you give it to us.

ATTACK ON THE UNITED STATES

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): As Ontarians stand together with our neighbours and friends in the United States, we are concerned about the failure of our Prime Minister to do the right thing and visit ground zero in New York. The response from Premier Harris and ordinary Ontarians far outshines our Prime Minister's lacklustre performance.

Today I would like to single out four Brampton firefighters—Rob Morrison, Brian Gorman, Scott Walker and Neil Kennedy—who jumped into Mr Kennedy's car at 8:30 pm on Tuesday, September 11, and headed to New York City. These Brampton firefighters did not wait to be asked for help; they did what they thought was right. The 43-year-old Kennedy, a 14-year veteran, said, "Our first priority was to try to locate local firefighters and get them out."

These men knew that those who lost their lives were not only employees working at the World Trade Center,

but many were everyday heroes; they were firemen, police officers and the civilians who took extraordinary risks to save others.

These men are heroes who followed their hearts, trusted their judgment and did what was right without waiting for an invitation.

I am pleased to say the residents of Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale, like our firemen, proudly stand with our Premier Mike Harris, President Bush and all the everyday heroes in Ontario, ready, willing and committed to doing our duty in this struggle against terrorism, domestic or international.

On behalf of all Ontarians, I would like to thank our four Brampton firemen for doing our city, province and country proud.

SERVICES FOR THE HEARING-IMPAIRED

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I would like to thank the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health for the telephone service that they provide to those who are hearing-impaired; to the other 22 ministers: shame on you, absolute shame on you. As you move to your centralized control, you've established toll-free telephone numbers for any citizen in Ontario to contact your central office—as long as they can speak. But every other TTY line is a payable line. You have 1-800 numbers only for those with voices.

The Minister of Citizenship is responsible for developing an ODA act, a work in progress for quite some years now. A general inquiry if anyone wished to phone: 1-800; the TTY line: 1-416.

The Minister of Community and Social Services, who is responsible for the payment to those who have the disability, pays Andersen Consulting thousands of dollars a day. They can call free. Someone who is a recipient under the ODSP and receives approximately \$11,000 a year maximum must dial a 1-416 number and pay to find out why their meagre cheque has not been sent or what is going on with their case.

Ministers and Premier, I call upon you to act immediately. Get rid of the two-tier system and give the hearing-impaired full access to the government services they pay for.

ONTARIO AGRICULTURE WEEK

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I rise in the Legislature today to remind members that next week is Ontario Agriculture Week. To mark this occasion, I'm sponsoring a kickoff breakfast on Monday, October 1, in the legislative dining room beginning at 8 am. I hope that all my colleagues from both sides of the Legislature will join me and our agriculture minister, as representatives from all the commodity groups will be there as well.

I also want to inform members of another event taking place next week in Toronto at Nathan Phillips Square on Wednesday, October 3, 2001. This event is being organized by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. This will be of particular interest to the member from Windsor.

For my constituents, I would like to invite them to drop by my constituency office on Friday, October 5, between 2 and 4 pm, for an open house to help celebrate the billion-dollar agri-food industry in Perth-Middlesex.

I introduced the Ontario Agriculture Week Act in 1998 to provide an opportunity for everyone in our province to celebrate the contributions of Ontario's agricultural communities and farm families. Individuals and organizations can help salute our agri-food industry in their own way in their own community by sponsoring local appreciation dinners, encouraging restaurants to feature Ontario-grown food, or organizing a farm tour. These types of activities will help remind Ontarians of the unique role played by those who help bring food from the farm gate to their dinner plate.

During Ontario Agriculture Week, show your support for our farmers. Invite Ontario home for dinner.

LEGISLATIVE INTERNS

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just before we begin, in the Speaker's gallery we have some honoured guests. We have with us the legislative interns for 2001-02.

We have Lyndsey Saunders, Samantha Majic, Sara Lyons, Peter Hargreave, Nathan Fisher, Karim El-Bardeesy, Maria DiFabrizio and James Cairns.

Please join me in welcoming our special guests.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I would also ask all the members to join in welcoming the legislative pages serving in the second session of the 37th Parliament. With us we have Meg Allenby from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant; Thomas Fabian from Don Valley West; Paul Gosset from Eglinton-Lawrence; Anthony Harrison from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Christopher Henry from Toronto Centre-Rosedale; Andrea Holmes from Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge; Jonathan Hwang from Halton; Gregory Keefe from Mississauga East; Ellen Leitch from London North Centre; Rachel Marsh-Petronis from York Centre; Emma McGuire from Kingston and the Islands; Kathryn Miskell from Kitchener-Waterloo; Owen Moffitt from Scarborough Centre; Ian Morrison from Haliburton-Victoria-Brock; Andrew Reszitznyk from Burlington; Caitlin Taguibao from Scarborough Southwest; Cynthia Tran from Essex; Ana Vadeanu from St Paul's; Katherine Walkiewicz from Simcoe-Grey; and Simon Yam from Trinity-Spadina.

Please join me in welcoming our new pages.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I beg leave to present a report on institutional services and young offenders operations from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr Gerretsen: A very brief one, Speaker. There are 13 recommendations contained in the report. Just to highlight a few of them, the first one states that the Ministry of Correctional Services should conduct an evaluation of its modernization initiative under the adult infrastructure renewal project at the completion of the first year of operations. One of the other recommendations is that it should monitor external contracts to ensure compliance with the terms of the agreement, thereby avoiding problems such as overpayments on invoices and alterations to the original terms of the contract without the necessary approvals. We hope the ministry will take these into consideration and that they will follow the 13 recommendations contained in the report.

With that, I move adjournment of the debate.

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

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Mr Gerretsen: I have another one, Speaker. We were a very, very busy committee this summer.

I beg leave to present a report on emergency health services from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker: Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr Gerretsen: Yes, Speaker. Again, in this report there are 14 recommendations which we hope the ministry will not only take into consideration but will implement.

Two of the main highlights of the report are that the ministry's assessment of the realignment of land ambulance services should include such matters as the maintenance of standards, the financial impact for municipalities and the province, and the determination whether this initiative is providing seamless, accessible, accountable, integrated and responsive services; and furthermore, that the ministry should complete a report on emergency room activity which would include but is not limited to the following: a review of the patient priority system at the end of the initial year of the operation to determine whether the problems experienced under the redirection consideration and critical care bypass model have been resolved.

Again, it is the committee's hope and wish that all of these recommendations will be followed.

With that, I move adjournment of the debate.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PUPPY MILL BAN AND ANIMAL CRUELTY PREVENTION ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR L'INTERDICTION DES USINES À CHIOTS ET LA PROTECTION DES ANIMAUX

Mr Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to ban puppy mills and other cruel animal-breeding activities and to protect animals bred for commercial sale from abuse by amending the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act / Projet de loi 100, Loi visant à interdire les usines à chiots et autres activités relatives à l'élevage qui sont cruelles et à protéger des mauvais traitements les animaux élevés à des fins commerciales en modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario.

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

The member for a short statement.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): This bill would require the licensing of all pet breeders and kennels in Ontario; allow full inspections of breeders and kennels who operate in Ontario; make it a provincial offence to operate a puppy mill, with fines up to \$50,000 and/or two years in jail; allow for the imposition of a lifetime ban on individuals found operating puppy mills; impose fines on pet store owners who knowingly and willingly buy or sell pets from pet mills; and establish a publicly accessible provincial registry of pet breeders and kennels for the public to access.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): I move that the following amendments be made to the membership of certain committees:

Mr Colle replaces Mrs Bountrogianni on the standing committee on general government; Mr Crozier replaces Mr Cleary on the standing committee on public accounts; Mr Gravelle replaces Mr Crozier on the standing committee on government agencies; Mrs Munro replaces Mr Stewart on the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly; and Mr Marchese replaces Ms Lankin on the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

Hon Mrs Ecker: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot items 19, 20, 21 and 22.

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

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES

GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): When we formed the government, we had a bold vision for the people of Ontario. We believed that Ontario was indeed a great province, but it was a great province that could offer its citizens a great deal more. We knew that a strong economy was the key to improving people's lives. We knew that Ontario families should be able to do more than just pay the bills. They should be able to save for the things that matter to them, like a family vacation, or new hockey equipment for their kids. We knew that a strong economy means that our government will have the resources we need to invest in priorities like health care and education.

As we begin this fall sitting of the House, we remain more committed than ever to our vision of a province that offers all citizens good jobs, prosperity and the promise of a better life; quality health care close to home; an education system that teaches children reading, writing and math; a clean environment; and communities where people feel safe in their homes and on the streets.

One of the challenges facing all countries is the changing global competitive economy. The events of the past two weeks have indeed been traumatic and they have affected many areas of our lives, including the economy. But we believe these effects will be short-lived. Just as Mayor Giuliani said of New York, we believe that Ontario will be even stronger in the future.

Here in Ontario our economy is stronger than many others. But despite the jobs we have helped create and the lives we have helped turn around, we must do more to protect jobs and the financial security of our hard-working Ontario families.

This fall we will begin phasing in literacy testing for welfare recipients. Tests will identify those who need extra help so they can get the skills required to get a job and to get their lives back on track.

Ontario's entrepreneurs and small business owners are an important part of our competitive edge. During Small

Business Month we will recognize the important role they play in our economy.

In October we'll launch a new task force on competitiveness, productivity and economic progress. Headed by Roger Martin, one of Canada's leading experts in the field, it will monitor Ontario's competitiveness compared to other provinces and to the United States. By moving ahead with the task force recommendations, our government will help protect existing jobs, create new jobs and build a stronger province.

As we open the fall sitting of the 37th Parliament, we're reminded of the recent start of the school year. As parents we expect big things from our education system. We expect that when they graduate, our children will have the skills they need to succeed, not just in a job but in life.

Ontario's teachers are professionals, and we believe that, just like lawyers and dentists, they should continue to develop their professional skills. On June 29 the Stability and Excellence in Education Act became law, allowing us to phase in teacher testing. This legislation provides existing teachers with the opportunity to update their skills through ongoing skills enhancement, training and mandatory recertification.

Later this fall our government will introduce legislation to move forward with our teacher testing plan. If passed, our legislation would introduce a qualifying test for new teachers that would help them with the province's curriculum and ensure that their knowledge and their skills are sound before they start teaching. It would also create clear performance appraisal standards for all our teachers. Every parent knows that one great teacher can make a big difference in a child's life. That's why this government will encourage excellence in every teacher in the province.

1400

A strong economy will help ensure we have the resources needed to continue improving Ontario's education system. But it will take more than money. It will take excellent teachers, committed students and new approaches. We believe that parents can help us meet those goals. That's why we have promised to consult them on the future of our education system. Starting in November, we will send out our first-ever parent satisfaction survey. We are proud to be the first government in Ontario to reach out to every parent, every student, every teacher and taxpayer and ask, "What can we do to make our education system better?"

We also have a responsibility to protect our children, to keep them safe from abuse, including in our schools. Ontario has many excellent teachers who are devoted to their students and who hold themselves to the highest ethical standards. Unfortunately, there have been a few cases where teachers have abused their position of trust, and all parents agree that even one case is one too many.

In 1999 we asked the Honourable Sydney Robins to make recommendations to prevent sexual abuse in our schools. We have already addressed many of his recommendations. Later this week we will introduce legislation

to help protect students from sexual abuse by teachers. If passed, this legislation would help eliminate loopholes that allow these criminals to hide their actions and to escape punishment. It would establish tough new reporting requirements. It would streamline the steps teachers must take to report suspected abuse. Our children deserve to be safe. This government will do everything it can to protect them.

All of our citizens deserve to live in safety. This fall we will introduce legislation that, if passed, would help our police to do an even better job of protecting Ontario communities by cracking down on biker gangs and others who use fortified buildings for criminal purposes.

On September 11, the world watched in horror as tragedy unfolded in Pennsylvania, Washington and New York. In the wake of those events we will review ways to help the OPP fight terrorism more effectively and determine what additional resources may be required to keep Ontario safe. As a first step, I have directed an ongoing review of Ontario's emergency measures capacity. We will do everything we can to protect Ontario's citizens, and we will co-operate with other jurisdictions and countries to safeguard their citizens and the citizens of the world.

We want Ontario to be a province where all citizens are offered opportunities and can participate freely in society. We must build on what has already been done and continue taking steps toward our goal of making Ontario as barrier-free as possible. This fall we will introduce legislation that would continue to tear down the barriers faced by those with disabilities in our province.

Ensuring that our citizens continue to enjoy a high quality of life means tackling the complex and complicated issues of the day. We must do a better job of reducing gridlock in our cities and between our regions. We need to do more to ensure that highways and transit are meeting the needs of our rapidly growing communities. We need to do more to ensure that Ontario's tremendous economic potential is not compromised by clogged highways and crowded transit. That's why, this fall, we will move forward with initiatives to address these issues. Part of that will be achieved through our Smart Growth vision. We have completed consultations in 17 communities across Ontario and a full report is expected shortly.

Following the consultation process on the Oak Ridges moraine, we will introduce new legislation to help protect this important area this fall. If passed, this legislation would balance the need to protect certain sensitive areas while allowing responsible development in others.

Also this fall, we hope to pass the Nutrient Management Act, the next step in our clean water strategy. We're creating consistent, clear standards governing the way materials containing nutrients are applied on Ontario's farms. Many farmers are already meeting these expectations, but this legislation would ensure that all farmers follow high standards.

We're working hard to ensure our health care system stays strong and viable today and in the years to come.

It's an enormous challenge, one requiring the resources that a strong economy will provide, and one requiring adequate support as well from the federal government. Our strong economy has allowed us to invest record amounts in health care. We will spend close to \$24 billion this year alone. But at the moment, Ottawa contributes only 14 cents of every dollar that provincial and territorial governments spend on health care in this country. Ottawa must pay its fair share of health care costs.

That's the message that I took with me this summer when I met one on one with many Premiers before the annual Premiers' conference in Victoria. I'm proud to say that at the conference we unanimously called on the federal government to restore health care funding to where it was before Ottawa started its cuts. We were united in asking the federal government to fund at least the 18% share of health care that they funded before this Liberal government came to office in Ottawa. As well, we asked the federal government to have an appropriate escalator to deal with new costs so that Canadians can enjoy the benefits of new technologies, new research, new therapies and an improved quality of life so that each year in the future the federal government doesn't fall further and further and further behind.

This summer, we launched our own province-wide dialogue on health care. We're asking the general public and health care professionals to work with us to help identify the best ways to spend health care dollars and sustain our system over the long term. I encourage everyone to participate, because we want to hear from every doctor, from every nurse, from every caregiver and from every patient.

Two weeks ago, we took another step toward our commitment to create 20,000 new long-term-care beds in this province. Our \$1.2-billion investment is unprecedented, and it signals our commitment to ensuring Ontario's health care system is prepared to meet the needs of our aging population. In Windsor, in Waterloo, in Alliston, in Ajax, all across Ontario, we opened and broke ground for 1,500 new and redeveloped long-term-care beds. Through a strong economy, this government will open thousands more.

We remain committed to ensuring families can get the professional health advice they need, when they need it. In the next few months, our Telehealth service will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all across the province. We will continue to encourage doctors and specialists to join family health networks, and this fall we'll also introduce privacy legislation designed to protect personal information, including health information. We're committed to developing privacy rules that ensure consumer and patient information remains private and remains confidential.

As I look back, I can see how much has been accomplished. Ontario has come a long way in a few short years. But as I look ahead, I can see there is still a long way to go. In today's competitive, constantly changing global economy, we cannot afford to be content with past

accomplishments, as great as those accomplishments are. So the hard work will continue this fall. We'll provide the strong leadership to continue moving forward with our 21-step action plan, a plan introduced in the throne speech last spring, which lays out our priorities for this session of Parliament. We'll address any new challenges that come our way. We'll be guided by our bold vision of a strong and prosperous province, where hard-working people can make their dreams and their children's dreams come true. We will continue striving to improve the lives of people in every corner of Ontario, striving to make our great province even stronger, more prosperous and more generous toward those who need our help, and striving to create a future that we will be proud to see our children inherit.

1410

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

These are challenging times, and we're going to have to meet those challenges head-on. Tragically, one of the greatest challenges became clear on September 11, and we're going to have to act to support our American friends and neighbours. But we must also act to secure the physical safety of Ontarians, and we are committed to working together on this particular crucial issue.

I propose an all-party committee of the Legislature to assess our security here at home, and I await the government's response.

We also face a new economic challenge. Our economy was already slowing before September 11, and now the uncertainty is even greater. Working families want to keep working. They are concerned about layoffs. Families who have worked hard to save for the future are seeing their savings slip away. This Legislature is going to have to do everything within its power to secure Ontario's economic future. I can tell you on this particular front, simplistic slogans will no longer cut it, not when the problems are this complicated.

We all want a secure border, but what, for example, might increased security mean to our auto sector and its reliance on just-in-time delivery? What will the impact be on our export-driven economy? No jurisdiction on the face of the earth is more export-dependent than we are here in Ontario. We need a comprehensive plan to secure our economic future.

It seems to me that the first steps are clear: we need an updated economic and fiscal statement that spells out where we stand. I've had the opportunity to meet with many representatives of business in recent days, weeks and months. They are telling me that the financial projections made at the beginning of this fiscal year are not at all in keeping with reality, so they are busy scrambling to revisit their proposals, their economic projections, and drafting new plans. It is time for us in Ontario at the level of our government to do the same kind of thing.

By the way, that new economic plan should feature bold new ideas instead of the same old ideology. While new challenges have come sharply into focus, other challenges simply have not gone away. If anything, their importance has grown.

We on this side of the House will continue to fight for quality health care. The value of top medical care, the preciousness of life itself, these things have never been more obvious.

We on this side of the House will continue to fight for improvements in public education. The importance of the public school classroom, especially given that that is where tolerance is taught and job skills are gained, has never been clearer. We will campaign for our plan as well for smaller class sizes, for turnaround teams to help our struggling schools and for choice, but choice within the public school system. I recommit my party to fighting with all our might this government's plan to take money out of public schools and invest that money in private schools.

We also remain firmly committed to fighting for clean air and safe drinking water. The terrible events of September 11 will not erase from our memory our own tragedy in Walkerton. In fact, these things steel our resolve to protect people from tragedy in all its forms.

Ontario families still seek security from physical danger, yes, from economic uncertainty, without a doubt, but they want security from illness and disease, they want it from environmental threats and they want it from a short-sighted approach to education that limits their children's future. Those are the kinds of things from which they seek protection, and they demand from this government that it provide some security to them.

I want to tell you we're back and we're on the job. Those things may have happened down south, and that is tragic, and we will do whatever we can to support this government in lending a hand to the people of the United States of America. But at the same time, we won't abdicate our responsibilities to Ontario's working families.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I'm intrigued by what the Premier had to say about Ontario's economy. Instead of sending out another task force, there are three or four things the Premier and his government could do today to deal with some of the issues in the economy. Number one is to raise the minimum wage, because in fact your government has frozen the minimum wage, frozen the wages of the lowest-paid people in the province, for seven years.

The second thing you could do would be to follow the advice of the Consumer Federation of America. I'll send you over a copy of their report. The Consumer Federation of America says very clearly that the privatization and deregulation of the electricity system makes no sense. It says very clearly that privatization and deregulation of the electricity system drives up the price of electricity, as it has in California, New York, Massachusetts, Montana and Pennsylvania. They point out that 22 states in the United States have now decided they are no longer interested in selling off their electricity system.

Premier, if you really wanted to do something about the economy, you would stop the stupid idea of selling off our electricity system, which everyone now knows is going to result in much higher prices for consumers,

much higher prices for Ontario industry, and is going to kill jobs in this province. You don't have to believe me. You can call Stelco, who wrote you a letter telling you that your price increases so far this year, as you ramp up to selling off the electricity system, have already cost them \$10 million. Or you can talk to Falconbridge, which is already making plans to move jobs out of this province because they will not be able to afford the price of electricity once you've moved to an American system, which charges 50%, 60% and in some cases 100% more for electricity.

Those are two things you could do right now to address some of the economic problems. Oh, by the way, there is Algoma. One of the lessons, I think, of the last few weeks is that government has a role in people's lives, that government has a job to do. Right now your government has a job to do in Sault Ste Marie, unless you consider the loss of 70,000 jobs in Ontario not to be an important issue.

I want to raise the issue of education. Just this week I was in a classroom where there were 29 grade 1 students, one teacher and no teacher's aide, no assistance for the teacher whatsoever. If you would check, that's far beyond what you say the law allows. We have 37,000 children in this province who need access to special education and chronically cannot get it under your government. We have classroom upon classroom without textbooks because the funding formula simply isn't adequate to provide for those textbooks.

Then there's the issue of teachers. While your government continues to attack teachers in Ontario, I simply want to point out to you that Ontario's teachers are being recruited in England, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand and virtually everywhere across the United States. They're happy to have our teachers, the very teachers in Ontario you attack and attack again.

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Then there's the issue of the disabled. How many times has this government said that it is going to address the issues of the disabled? Yet we have seen nothing but failure. Meanwhile, I invite all members of the Conservative government to go out there and talk to someone who is trying to live on the Ontario disability support benefit, which your government has now frozen for so many years. The cost of electricity has gone up by 20%, thanks to your government. The cost of natural gas has gone up. The cost of food has gone up. Thanks to your government's killing of rent controls, rents just in this city alone have gone up by more than 20% in three years. Yet what does your government say? You freeze the benefit. The reality, Premier, of people who are disabled in this province is that because your government doesn't believe they're important, many of them cannot pay the rent and put food on the table. That's what is happening to disabled people around this province because of your government.

Finally, let me just say this: you talk about taking some steps in agriculture in terms of nutrient management. What it's all about is taking away the limited

power that municipalities have left and putting them all in the same situation as Walkerton. That's the reality of what you're doing.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just before we begin question period, I'll remind all members, and for the benefit of the new member who I'm sure wants to know as well, the questions will be about one minute long. If we do that, every member gets more questions on. At about 50 seconds, the same as before, I will yell "Question" or "Answer," depending upon the circumstances, and they'll have about 10 seconds to wrap up. The table keeps track of the time, and if we do that I'd appreciate everybody's co-operation. Everybody can get on, and of course what we have to do is enforce it equally because there are some who tend to go over a little bit and it's not fair to one side or the other. Actually, there are some on both sides who tend to go over. So a quick reminder of our procedures, and if the members would adhere to that it would be much appreciated.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My questions today are for the Premier. We took a look at your budget, and it's based on the assumption that we're going to have growth in 2001 of 2.2%. It's perfectly clear now to all those who paid attention to these matters that the economy is not doing nearly as well as you projected. Economists are telling us that and businesses are telling us that. Working families who are experiencing the pain of job loss are telling us that as well. Then September 11 happened, and we are just beginning to experience the effects of that shock through our economy.

My point is that things have changed. I would suggest to you that things have changed substantially since you prepared your budget. Businesses are scrambling to review their economic growth projections and to revise and prepare new plans. My question to you, Premier, is this: in light of these dramatically changed circumstances, what specific measures will you take to help our weakening economy and protect our working families?

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

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Very difficult decisions were made in 1995-96 and subsequently led by Premier Harris and his team to put the Ontario economy on a solid footing. Those were difficult decisions, tough decisions, but the result of those difficult decisions taken over the course of six years is that we have a solid foundation in Ontario to resist an economic slowdown.

We also anticipated, of course, as part of prudent fiscal planning, that there would be some slowdown in

the Ontario economy this year. Indeed, there is a slow-down in the global economy. Those things were taken into consideration as part of responsible choices, prudent fiscal planning in drafting the budget of the province of Ontario this year. We are on track in the budget of Ontario for the year 2001.

Mr McGuinty: Let me tell you, Minister, about some of the impact of your budget being on track to this point in time. This summer we lost a net 17,000 jobs in Ontario. In Owen Sound, AFL closed its plant, putting 200 people out of work. In my community of Ottawa, we've lost 7,000 jobs. In Sudbury they've lost 400 jobs. In Windsor this August, they saw more than 3,600 auto workers forced on to temporary layoff.

I'm telling you, Minister, business is revising its economic projections and preparing new plans, not only in light of the way the economy was slowing down prior to September 11, but of course because of what happened on September 11.

I put forward a couple of suggestions here in this House to you yesterday. I'll put those to you again and I'd like you to respond to them.

I think we should have an economic and fiscal update and I think we should host an economic summit and call upon business and labour leaders so that we can get an assessment from them as to their expectations and their very best advice in terms of how we should work together and address these matters. What do you think about those two specific, positive proposals?

Hon Mr Flaherty: There is no question that the tragedies of September 11 are cause for concern in terms of the economic impact. Indeed, we are monitoring the preliminary data very closely in that regard. That is uncharted territory, as I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition would recognize, and, yes, there are some significant short-term economic impacts to the province of Ontario.

As I indicated to the member, we have planned for some economic slowdown in Ontario this year. Assuming the impacts of September 11 are relatively short-lived, and there's reason to anticipate that they ought to be, then as I indicated to him, we are on track. But we must be prudent. We must be strict in our monitoring of the economic impacts.

In terms of stimuli, I regret again that the Leader of the Opposition disagrees with the federal Liberal Minister of Finance, who has made it clear that the tax cuts that Ontario started in 1995, leading the nation, finally joined by the federal government last year in October, are the key stimuli to the Canadian and the Ontario economies.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, one of the things that you said in your budget document was that your budget was based on the assumption that the economy is expected to gain strength later this year. You said that you expected stronger household spending and you expected specifically stronger US growth to boost demand for Ontario's exports. In fact, we are witnessing the opposite, the beginning of a slowdown in the retail sector. Tourism has been hit hard. Everyone knows what's been happening

when it comes to our airlines. We know what's starting to happen now with respect to our auto sector.

Do you not think that it would be wise and prudent and responsible in the circumstances here, these new developments which are significant, do you not think it would be appropriate, sooner rather than later, that you table in this House a new economic and fiscal update?

Hon Mr Flaherty: This from a Liberal opposition with their Liberal cousins in Ottawa, where there has not been a full budget in 18 months. If they wait till next spring, it will have been two years since there has been a federal budget. Every municipality in the province of Ontario has a budget every year.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The Minister of Finance take his seat. Order. I can't hear. Sorry, Minister of Finance.

Hon Mr Flaherty: In terms of prudent fiscal management, from 1985 to 1990, the Liberals raised sales taxes in Ontario from 7% to 8%. They raised the fuel tax twice. They had record revenues but they increased the deficit year after year. They increased the public debt year after year. They spent at twice the rate of inflation. That's what Liberals consider to be prudent fiscal management. That's what they left for the NDP in 1990. We don't need any lectures from the Liberals about how to manage an economy.

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IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): This question is for the Premier, on the very serious matter of Ipperwash, a matter where, for the first time in over 100 years, a member of the First Nations was killed in a land claims dispute.

For six years now, you have claimed that you left this matter entirely in the hands of the OPP. For six years, you have ignored calls for a public inquiry into this tragedy. But I suggest to you, Premier, that the truth will not be silenced. Today in the Legislature are Sam and Reg George, Dudley George's brothers. They're here to seek one thing and one thing alone: they only want the truth. There's only one person in Ontario today, Premier, who can institute a process to get at the truth: that is you. Will you now agree to hold a public inquiry into the Ipperwash matter?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): In your preamble, you allude to the fact that I have ignored the call for a public inquiry, and that is certainly not true. I have heard the call for a public inquiry; I have indicated very clearly that the time for that consideration is when all matters dealing with this before the courts have been dealt with. As you know, there is a matter that is still currently before the courts which does ask the very questions that seem to be the same questions that you and the George family and others have asked to be asked. That process is underway and we have been very co-operative with that process.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, nobody believes that you have been co-operative when it comes to getting to the bottom of what happened at Ipperwash. That simply stretches credibility.

I want to read to you from one of the documents submitted in the civil court case. It's the minute which quotes Deb Hutton, one of your closest advisers. She says, "Premier feels the longer they occupy it, the more support they'll get. He wants them out in a day or two." Another quotes one of your staff saying the following: "Premier's office doesn't want to be seen working with Indians at all." Another note states, "Deb, has MNR asked OPP to remove them? They could be formally requested to do so, but how and when they do it is up to the Premier."

Premier, how can you continue to maintain that you did not in any way influence police action in the Ipperwash matter?

Hon Mr Harris: I know you enjoy quoting little dribs and drabs from documents that are a matter of the court case. The heart of the court case as I understand it is, was there any direction given to the OPP? The same court case has documents very clearly and the evidence is there—including the former commissioner, the incident commander at Ipperwash—that there was no interference into the police action. These are sworn affidavits that are also a part of this court case.

Mr McGuinty: Well, Premier, if that is the case, then I'm sure you would have no objections whatsoever to holding a full public inquiry in order to get to the bottom of this. After all, there are a number of cases before the courts arising from Walkerton, so I don't understand how you can draw a distinction between that particular public inquiry and the one that the George family has been pressing you for for six years.

Here's another quote: "AG instructed by Premier that he desires removal within 24 hours. Instruction to seek injunction." Another quotes Deb Hutton as saying, "Premier will be pleased to take the lead." Another quote: "Premier is hawkish on this issue. Feels that we are being tested."

Premier, with the greatest respect, you are less than objective when it comes to deciding what is important to do on this matter. So we are offering you the best possible advice that we can, advice that is in keeping with the legitimate wishes of the George family. You know what that is, Premier? Hold a public inquiry so we can, once and for all, do justice to Dudley George, do justice to his family, and do justice to the people of Ontario.

Hon Mr Harris: The whole matter of the inquiry is one we say we'll consider at the appropriate time, and we of course will do that. But what you are quoting from are not affidavits, they are court documents. What I am quoting from are sworn affidavits. It's clear from the evidence of those affidavits that there was no input from me, Ministers Runciman, Harnick or Hodgson, or any other member of the government in the command decisions of the OPP at Ipperwash. The OPP was never directed by

any government official to remove the occupiers from the park by force. The OPP had no communication with anyone from the government prior to the death of Dudley George. Ron Fox and Scott Patrick were seconded to the Ministry of the Solicitor General as bureaucrats and had no role in any way in directing command decisions at Ipperwash. Those are actually sworn affidavits.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): New question. The leader of the third party.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier and it concerns the accountability that a Premier must show the citizens of Ontario.

Premier, you said in this Legislature, "I gave no direction to the police on how to deal with the occupation at Ipperwash Park," yet documents you were forced to disclose in court show that you will "take the lead"; you wanted the protesters out of the park and you were hawkish on the point; your MNR minister wanted no negotiations; and you rejected legal and police advice on how to deal peacefully with the occupation. How do you square your words, "I gave no direction," with the documents that now show otherwise?

Hon Mr Harris: Those are not affidavits you are quoting from, they are court documents. There are also affidavits before the judge. Indeed, you are confirming to me that these are exactly the documents and the information that will be decided by the judge, and this court case will resolve that question for you.

Mr Hampton: The fact of the matter in the court case is that you've tried over and over again through manoeuvres in court to either have the civil case stopped or to have the civil case limited such that many of the questions that need to be answered you would not be forced to respond to, or to limit the documents that you are forced to disclose.

If we go back over the last five years, first you said that you did not meet with OPP officers about the Ipperwash occupation. Documents show you did. Then you claimed to have met them at a cabinet committee meeting, but the records of the cabinet committee meeting show you weren't there. In fact, you met with them afterwards at a meeting where no records were kept, or at least so far you haven't disclosed whatever record was kept.

Premier, the question is this: how can people across Ontario believe you today when over the last six years you have been forced to change your story as the evidence has emerged?

Hon Mr Harris: The evidence before the court deals to the matter, and the evidence that people seem to be seeking answers to is my statement that from the beginning neither I nor our ministers nor our government interfered in the way police responded to the Ipperwash situation. I stand by that. This is a matter before the court case. This is exactly as supported by the statements that are actually sworn affidavits that are before the court case. Since these affidavits are there and the little snippets of documents that you quote from are there, surely you would not object, then, to an impartial judge

adjudicating this. I certainly have absolutely no hesitation in appearing, giving my testimony and letting the judge decide, because all the evidence supports everything that I have said.

Mr Hampton: Premier, maybe you can explain to the people of Ontario why your government has brought motion after motion to in effect have the civil case shut down; why your government has brought motion after motion to have documents sealed and not made available to the public; why your government has brought motion after motion to avoid having to answer a number of the questions. Maybe you can explain to the people of the province how it is that after an innocent, unarmed man was killed, your government doesn't want to inquire into what happened. What is it that stops you from having a full inquiry and answering the question: how and why was an innocent, unarmed man killed? Why is that, Premier?

Hon Mr Harris: The very question you seek answers to is a matter before the court case. The sworn affidavits are there. I don't know whether you are challenging the validity of the OPP sworn affidavits or not. It seems to me that perhaps you are. The evidence as I see it is very clear and I stand by that. The court will decide.

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COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): Another question for the Premier: Premier, today you had a lot of rhetoric about the economy but there is something very important you could do about the economy. Earlier this summer a document was released by the Consumer Federation of America. It's called *Electricity Deregulation and Consumers: Lessons from a Hot Spring and a Cool Summer*. You might call it *Lessons from the USA*. They look at electricity deregulation in California; they say it was a failure. They look at New York; it was a failure. Massachusetts: a failure. Pennsylvania: a failure. In each case, prices were substantially higher and the stability of supply went down.

Premier, we acknowledge that Ontario's economy is now in difficult straits. Why under those circumstances would you press ahead with the sell-off and deregulation of our electricity system when all of the evidence from the United States suggests it's only going to force prices higher and kill jobs?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Clearly, I think it's important that we do learn from other jurisdictions. There are jurisdictions where prices have gone down or are lower as a result of the market forces and the market competition. So we made it very clear the conditions for opening the market in Ontario and the conditions that we laid out. We made it very clear that the market would not open unless we could meet those conditions, like ample supply that you referenced, as appropriate competition to ensure that we're getting the competitive forces.

If you look, for example, at long-distance rates, once competition was brought in, long-distance rates have

plunged dramatically. And so we are looking at other jurisdictions, mistakes that have been made, situations there. We want to ensure that we have absolutely a functioning market that will provide the best deal we possibly can for Ontarians.

Mr Hampton: Premier, I'm going to send a copy of this report over to you. You ought to look at it, because the report refutes just about everything you've said. Your Minister of Energy used to talk about California and how deregulation and privatization of electricity in California was a wonderful thing. It's been a disaster: California, after losing billions of dollars, is now buying back their electricity system; in the United Kingdom, the report shows that consumers are now paying 25% more under a deregulated system; in Pennsylvania, since the price caps came off, prices have increased significantly; Alberta.

Please point to a jurisdiction in North America, in Canada, where electricity deregulation has resulted in lower prices and a more stable supply of electricity. There isn't one. Twenty-two states in the United States are now abandoning any plan they had to privatize and deregulate electricity.

Premier, you said that you wouldn't do it if the conditions weren't right. Take a lesson from those who've tried it in the United States. Stop the sell-off and deregulation of Ontario's electricity system now. Save jobs. Save consumers' money. Will you do that?

Hon Mr Harris: As always, I appreciate the advice of the member. I will take it all under advisement and into consideration.

We do look at other jurisdictions and examples from there. If I followed every piece of advice you have, our taxes would be dramatically higher, we'd have double-digit unemployment, we'd have over 1.3 million still on welfare, and the economy in Ontario would be a disaster. So you would understand why I don't take every piece of advice from the leader of the New Democratic Party or every policy that you've initiated.

I fully admit you inherited a disastrous mess from the Liberals. It should have taken you about five years to correct the damage of the five years, but in fact you contributed to it rather than helping. But I appreciate very much your advice. Every once in a while, you know, you come up with a good idea, and when you do, we adopt it.

IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Premier, and it is on Ipperwash. On September 6, the key meeting was held on Ipperwash. We are aware there were at least six people at that meeting, perhaps more. You were there; Minister Hodgson; two OPP officers, Fox and Patrick; two deputy ministers, Todres and Taman.

The only note that we've been able to secure is from Deputy Minister Taman, and it says this: "The Attorney General was instructed by the Premier that he desires removal within 24 hours."

Was that what you told the meeting, Premier?

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

Hon David Young (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): As the member opposite is undoubtedly aware, there is a fair and impartial court process underway.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Member, take your seat. The member for Hamilton East, come to order.

Hon Mr Young: As I was saying, as the member opposite is undoubtedly aware, there is a fair and impartial court process underway. Our system of justice demands that we in this chamber respect that process. Respecting the process means that we don't try to adjudicate the case in this assembly.

I heard my friend a moment ago say he has only one document and can he get other ones. Frankly, all the relevant documents are in front of the court. The government has co-operated fully from day one and will continue to co-operate. We have confidence in the judiciary of this province and we have confidence in the court system. If the member opposite does not have confidence in the courts of this province, which are the envy of the world, I might add, he should stand up and he should say so.

Mr Phillips: I have confidence in the truth, and the only way we will get the truth is through an inquiry.

I go back to the Premier: this was the key meeting. You were at it, along with Minister Hodgson. Two senior deputy ministers were there and two senior OPP officers. I will say to you, Premier, that if in fact you said that at that meeting—and I'll quote again, "The Attorney General was instructed by the Premier that he desires removal within 24 hours."

Again, Premier, I want you to answer this question: is that what you told that meeting, that you desired removal of the First Nations within 24 hours? The people of Ontario deserve an answer to that question.

Hon Mr Young: It's interesting to hear the member opposite go on and on. I guess he believes he is judge and jury. What he is saying quite clearly is that he does not have confidence in the Ontario Provincial Police force.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Attorney General, take a seat. Attorney General.

Hon Mr Young: What he is saying is that he does not have confidence in the Ontario Provincial Police force. Then he goes further and he says that he has no confidence that the courts of this province can resolve a complicated dispute. In fact, last night on Michael Coren, the member for Scarborough-Agincourt said that the Premier should "call a public inquiry headed by a respected individual and let the truth speak."

Is he saying that a Superior Court judge—

Interjections.

The Speaker: You didn't lose any time on that.

Hon Mr Young: Is he saying that a senior Superior Court judge does not have the ability to resolve this matter? Is he saying that that individual is not able to allow the truth to speak—his words? If that's what he's

saying, he should stand in his place and make it very clear, once and for all.

EMERGENCY MEASURES

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question today is for the Solicitor General. The events of September 11, 2001, shocked people all over the world, but particularly here in the province of Ontario. We were all horrified by the pictures and stories of those people directly affected by this tragedy.

Many people aren't aware that while most of us watch events like this in disbelief, it is the job of some to assemble and deal with tragedies like this. Even though a provincial emergency was never declared, would you share with this House some of the things that Emergency Measures Ontario did on that day?

Hon David Turnbull (Solicitor General): There is nothing more important to this government than the safety and security of our population. Ontario is prepared to respond to acts of terrorism. At 8:50 am on September 11, EMO began to monitor events. At 11:08, EMO fully activated the provincial operations committee for 24-hour status. All provincial ministries were put on alert and donation lines were implemented. Web sites were continually updated regarding border safety and crossing delays. Dr Jim Young, Ontario's chief coroner, went to New York City to assist Canadian families and link with local officials. The Premier announced \$3 million to aid Ontario victims and families. After the tragic events in the US, all jurisdictions will be reviewing emergency measures.

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Mr Dunlop: The Premier was very strong in his commitment yesterday about the safety of the people of Ontario. Would you outline some of the initiatives the government will be undertaking over the next while to ensure Ontario and Ontarians are kept safe.

Hon Mr Turnbull: Since September 11 we've had a clear review starting of all emergency measures in Ontario. The Premier announced steps to ensure the safety and security of Ontario families, an ongoing review of Ontario's emergency measures. He also asked the OPP commissioner to review ways the OPP could fight terrorism. We'll consult with the OPP and indeed all police forces in Ontario on what additional resources may be required to keep Ontario safe. We'll review ways that federal, provincial and municipal governments, and indeed other agencies, can better share intelligence information. We look forward to strengthening any provincial legislation that could be used to prevent terrorist acts, including possible changes to the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act to cut terrorists off financially.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): New question.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. A survey recently conducted by Emergency Measures Ontario revealed that many of Ontario's municipalities are not ready for an

emergency. Specifically, the survey revealed that although many of our municipalities have plans, 72% have not reviewed their plans within the last year, and 62% do not have a training program for staff that manage emergencies. On top of that, it turns out that we are one of only two provinces in Canada which do not have a law on the books requiring that all municipalities have in place an emergency plan as well as a requirement that they practise that plan.

I have two suggestions on this score. First of all, I believe you should meet immediately with our mayors to determine how we can work together to ensure that we're prepared to meet any emergency. Second, we should pass a law in this House requiring that all municipalities have an emergency preparedness plan. Premier, what do you think of those two specific, positive proposals?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): That's exactly what we're doing: reviewing EMO, reviewing the practices and consulting with municipalities, as I indicated yesterday. I appreciate confirmation that we're on the right track there. As part of that review, we certainly will look at whether it is necessary to make it mandatory for all municipalities or whether we can achieve that compliance in other ways. Either way, the goal is the same, and I appreciate the constructive suggestions.

Mr McGuinty: On another matter related to this, a vital component of being able to respond to an emergency is being able to treat the injured quickly, but our hospitals don't have the necessary room and flexibility, don't have the necessary buffer space, to deal with an influx of casualties. For example, hospitals here in Toronto have a 97% occupancy rate. We can barely cope with an outbreak of the flu, let alone imagine what we'd have to contend with if there was a major disaster of some kind.

A year ago, I put forward a plan to ease the pressure in our hospitals. My plan called for a moratorium on ER closures and the reopening of 1,600 acute care beds. This plan would help to reduce occupancy rates and would help to ensure that our hospitals have the flexibility to deal with a sudden influx. Premier, will you implement this plan today?

Hon Mr Harris: I think you are aware we've implemented a number of measures to address the pressures on hospitals' emergency departments and funding other initiatives. I think you are well aware that last year's flu season was dramatically different than the previous two years. Most people are indicating it's working very well.

I don't know how you were able to get a ruling, or a non-ruling, that your question wasn't in fact a supplementary; it's a different issue. I guess your tie-in was by way of emergency services. But let me say this: our hospitals were in fact able to put in place an emergency services plan to assist those in the United States just as if the emergency had taken place here. That plan worked very well. It was effective. The hospitals were cooperative, and they were able to respond.

ATTACK ON THE UNITED STATES

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): My question today is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I am proud knowing the constituents of my riding, Parry Sound-Muskoka, have been actively engaged in supporting the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Of special note, the staff and students of Parry Sound High School erected a memorial to the victims of the attack.

I have also heard from the constituents of my riding that they applaud the efforts of our Premier, who led this House in a resolution and debate in support of our American neighbours yesterday.

Minister, could you tell us what you have seen and heard about northerners and their reaction to this terrible tragedy?

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): I thank my colleague, who I know does an outstanding job of representing his constituents of Parry Sound-Muskoka, for the question.

It is clear that we have all been affected by the events and the chilling aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Families across the province, indeed in the north, were also directly impacted by the loss of life in this horrific event. However, even during times of remembrance, the constant values of caring and compassion are evident every day in the north. Northerners have been pulling together to provide their support to our American neighbours in any way they can.

I am proud of our province's long history of tolerance and diversity. Ours is a land rich in cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity—an attribute to be celebrated by all of us. For those who defy that history through acts or thoughts of intolerance or hatred, I strongly condemn them. Hatred should find no home in the north, or in any other community throughout our province.

Mr Miller: Along with the Premier and all of my colleagues, I strongly condemn any thoughts and acts contrary to our province's tradition of tolerance. Hate crimes will not be tolerated in our province.

As the member for Parry Sound-Muskoka, the support for the victims of this tragedy—whether they be the families directly impacted, neighbours of those still missing or victims of intolerance and hate crimes—is evident in every page of the signing book at my constituency office. Successful blood drives have occurred throughout my riding, and the constituents of Parry Sound-Muskoka have offered their prayers and thoughts for the people of New York and Washington.

Minister, could you give us other examples of how people across the north have offered support for our American neighbours?

Hon Mr Newman: The everyday lives of northerners have been changed forever by the events in the United States on September 11, but what has not changed in the north is the sense of northern spirit and the sense of

community. That spirit remains unshaken. Displays of support were evident in town halls and company boardrooms alike. I'd just like to give you some examples.

It's my understanding that Inco Ltd will donate \$100,000 to the Canadian Red Cross; as well, they will be donating respirators and other emergency supplies and aid to the rescue and relief efforts. I applaud the efforts of Inco Ltd and the other companies that have acted through good acts of corporate citizenship.

In Sault Ste Marie, the entire community responded to host 118 passengers from diverted Air Canada flights. Similar stories have been repeated throughout communities in the north. I know that northerners will continue with that sense of community in the coming days and weeks ahead as we all pull together and provide support.

RENT REGULATION

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): My question is to the Premier. Since August, in Toronto alone 55,000 tenant households have been hit with new landlord applications to raise their rents above the guideline increases. Tenants have been telling me it's not fair to pay rent increases that are almost double the rate of inflation.

Michael Prue, Howard Hampton and I have joined the city of Toronto in calling for rent rollbacks, which would save the average Toronto tenant \$1,000.

Premier, I know you may be happy, and dare I say many Liberals might be happy, to line the pockets of landlords, but I tell you, there are many tenants—dare I say over three million tenants—who need a break and are looking for your help. Isn't it time for a rent rollback?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I know the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing wants to respond, but perhaps I will take the first question and pose this question: during the five years the NDP were in power, the guideline for rent increases went up 4.6%, 5.46%, 4.9% and 3.2%, every one of those higher than the next five years that we took office of 2.9%, 2.8%, 2.8%, 3%, 3% and 2.6%. Clearly, the rent increase guidelines have been far less under our government than they were under your government. I just wonder how you have the audacity to stand up and invite that comparison.

1500

Mr Marchese: Premier, we talk to tenants and you talk to landlords. That's the difference. That's where you get your numbers and this is where we get ours.

Tenants support rent control. They don't support the Tenant Protection Act that doesn't protect them but protects landlords. When I canvassed in the Beaches, one particular individual told me, "I earn good money: \$13 an hour." Poor guy, he says he earns good money. He earns about \$20,006 a year. He says, "If these rent increases continue, I can't stay in my apartment." These are the kinds of people I talk to. Most of these people will not be able to live in their apartments if these rent increases continue.

That's why the city of Toronto, which includes many Liberals and Tories—30 out of the 38 that were there to vote said, "We support rent rollbacks." New Democrats support rent rollbacks because they support tenants. There are over 3.3 million tenants. They need your help. They need government to step in to support them. It's time to stop supporting the landlords that both you and these fine Liberals beside me support. Tenants need your help. Will you support that rent rollback?

Hon Mr Harris: A 4.6% increase, 4.6% increase, 5.4% increase, 6% increase, 4.9% increase—I can only assume that the tenants you're talking to, had you stayed in power, would have been long gone two or three years ago.

Thank God we came into power and the rent increases were much lower than they were when you were in power. Thank goodness as well that the economy improved, and the growth. Thank God they got tax refunds. Thank God they were able to keep more of their money. Thank goodness we were able to keep property taxes in the city of Toronto lower than they've been in the last five years.

Is it perfect? No. Do we need to do more? Of course. But we certainly don't need a lecture or any example from your five years in power.

ELECTION IN VAUGHAN-KING-AURORA

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (Vaughan-King-Aurora): You're going to have to bear with me a little bit. I'm a little rusty at this, although I see not much has changed.

My question is for the Premier. I noticed that the Premier referred in his mini throne speech earlier this afternoon to a dialogue in education and a dialogue in health care; one has been going on and one is coming up. I want to ask him about what is the most important dialogue in a democracy, and that is an election.

In the election in Vaughan-King-Aurora the dialogue was clear and unequivocal, and that is that the Conservative agenda is dead. What the Harris government has done in education is harmful to our children. What the Harris government has done in health is harmful to our own health. What they have done on environmental protection puts our water and our air at risk.

I want to ask the Premier whether the voice of 62% of the population of a riding sends a clear message. I want to ask him whether he heard any of that and whether his views on how to govern in this province have changed one iota from what we heard in this province as a result of the vote in Vaughan-King-Aurora not three months ago.

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Let me first of all congratulate the member on his election in that by-election. I hope, on behalf of the people of Vaughan-King-Aurora, and I'm sure, that the member will represent the people, or at least attempt to, as well as the former member did.

We always take the views of all citizens of Ontario very seriously. I take the views of the residents of Vaughan-King-Aurora seriously. I make great efforts to consult with them directly. Now that you are their legislative voice in this Legislature, I hope your party will give you many opportunities to express those viewpoints, both in the debates and in questioning here in the Legislature. I look forward to that and I look forward to the member's input reflecting those views.

Mr Sorbara: I'm sure as a result of the Premier's plea my leader and my party will give me far more opportunity than they would have otherwise.

I want to say to the Premier that he says he listened very carefully to the results. On election night the Premier said that, notwithstanding the vote, nothing is going to change. I want to tell you what the people in my riding said during that election: over the course of the past six years of economic growth, I say to the Premier, we have seen the single most serious deterioration in public services in the history of this province since the Second World War. We have seen the most deterioration in the quality of health care, education and environmental protection that we've ever seen. I say to the Premier as well—

Interjections.

Mr Sorbara: Boy, it's just the same, isn't it?

I say to the Premier that the failure of this government to actually invest not only in Vaughan-King-Aurora but throughout York region in terms of building new public services has left us choking on our own traffic, has created congestion we have never seen. The Premier ought to make a commitment today to reverse some of those policies and start investing in the people of Vaughan-King-Aurora, York region and the province.

Hon Mr Harris: I think there was an intervention from the Minister of Labour that indicated you ought to put things into perspective. You won a by-election. We acknowledge that. We congratulate you on that. I wouldn't be so presumptuous, though, as to suggest that in this dramatic return to the Legislature, you have any better answers as an individual than the disastrous record when you were in office as a Liberal MPP.

If ever the people of York region had to choke on tax increases, had to choke on a declining economy, had to choke on going into the depths of a recession, it was under your administration. I encourage you to actually go back out and knock on a few more doors than the 29% who voted in the by-election and hear from them whether they liked the tax rates under your government or whether they like the tax rates they're paying under our government, whether they liked the double-digit unemployment under you and the NDP or they like the employment opportunities they have now—I would invite you—whether they like the new schools, the new growth, the new investment.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The events of the past two weeks—

Interjection: Sorbara just walked out of the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I have to keep going. It's your own member doing it.

Mr O'Toole: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Am I to lose my time because the member from Vaughan-King-Aurora walked out—

The Speaker: Don't start with that. The other side is going to start. You know I do not like smart-aleck comments like that. What we're going to end up doing now is having them coming back and forth. Don't start with the points of order during question period. Your time started. Because your own members were yelling, your time's going. I'll give you a little bit of leeway. Ask your question, please. From now on, both sides, no points of order during question period.

1510

Interjection.

The Speaker: Deputy Premier, I can and I will. The member for Oshawa.

Mr O'Toole: That would be Durham. Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Minister, the events of the past two weeks have forever changed our daily lives, not just in Ontario but indeed around the world. Our closest international friend, the United States, was the victim of a senseless, ruthless and criminal attack that has sent all of us into a state of shock, anger and disbelief. As a result of these vicious attacks, we have seen tighter border security than ever before. There is no doubt that there is a need for increased security, while at the same time we have also seen the resulting delays causing problems for some of Ontario's businesses. In my riding of Durham, for instance, truckers, auto workers and agricultural people operate in a just-in-time environment.

Could you update the House on the important—

The Speaker: The member's time is up.

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I thank the member for Durham for the question. In Ontario, the export of goods and services tops \$200 billion annually. Fully 93% of these exports are destined for the United States. That translates into approximately 1.5 million Ontario jobs that depend directly on trade with the United States.

The increased security precautions at the border after the September 11 terrorist attacks had an immediate effect on trade. At some border points, there were 20-kilometre lineups of trucks waiting to cross. Just-in-time delivery meant some businesses in Ontario didn't receive parts and had to cancel shifts, and temporary idle plants. Manufacturing, agriculture and many other sectors suffered financial loss. The impact was significant and drove home just how very important the US economy is to Ontario.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Windsor West.

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): My question is for the Premier of the province. Premier, I'd like to ask you questions about home health care.

The Speaker: I apologize; sorry. There was a supplementary. I apologize to the member; I lost track. The member for Durham, sorry.

Mr O'Toole: Thank you, Minister, for that very thorough answer, and I'd like to thank you for your strong leadership beside our Premier.

One has to wonder what the future holds for decisions that were made before September 11. This is not a situation that any of us has ever dealt with in the past. Things are certainly not ordinary times.

Please share with the House what will happen at our borders. How do we see our future business relationships with our important trading partner, the United States?

Hon Mr Runciman: There is no indication that trading relations will be jeopardized over the long term, but to ensure this remains true, we must clearly raise comfort levels and confidence levels that the border is secure.

I have expressed my own view to federal authorities that Canada must be willing to consider new ways to address increasingly critical delays. Hundreds of thousands of jobs in Ontario depend on continued ease of access at the border. We accept with understanding and compassion the desire of the United States to make it tougher to enter their country. We recognize it is a difficult job, a delicate balance, reducing barriers to trade while erecting barriers to keep terrorists at bay, but it's a job that must be done.

HOME CARE

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): My question is for the Premier of Ontario. I'd like to ask the Premier questions about health care, about home care specifically. Last June, when we were in this House, I was asking you questions about community care access centres. You took that opportunity to insult most of our seniors across the province, and you also offended most of the volunteer boards of directors of the community care access centres right across this province and suggested that they just didn't know how to run their business. We've been able to go home to our constituencies for the balance of the summer and meet people and talk to people who are affected by the cuts that you've made in home care.

I'd like to know if you've changed your mind, if you're going to decide now to bump up the funding that is going to home care. I'd like to ask you specifically if your Minister of Health has told you that by the rollback in home care, you're actually costing the system more.

Premier, will you admit today that you understand that by cutting back in home care you're costing the system of health more, because a hospital bed where the patients are required to stay costs more money than providing for—

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

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think the member is well aware that home care funding has been substantially increased by this government all across the province, in total by some 72%, including in Essex county, where funding is up some 25% or 30%, well in excess of the rate of inflation, since we took office.

I know the Liberals are quick to point out we should spend more, spend more, spend more, and I understand that. In spite of the fact that we have spent far more in home care than the Liberals did or the NDP did, the solution for you always is, "Spend more money."

We have, as you know, undertaken a review of the community care access centres. We are trying to work in partnership with them on behalf of our seniors, whom we both desire to serve to the best of our ability. We are looking at best practices. As you know, some CCACs—

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

Mrs Pupatello: I find it ironic that he wants to talk about spending or not spending, when he's constantly on the feds for more money. I guess it's not about more spending. In fact, home care is about saving money. You realize that when you spend money in home care, you are moving patients out of the hospital and you're getting them home, where they often want to be, and it saves the system money. You're spending less money today in home care than you did last year, but the difference is that our hospitals are not coping with patients like they did even as late as last year.

Premier, are you going to understand what some of your own caucus members are telling you now, that your home care spending has to change? Let's talk to the member from Lambton. What does he say to you about home care? Let's talk to the members from Waterloo. What are they saying to you about home care? I ask you, Premier, today, will you rescind what decisions you've made in home care and take care of our frail and elderly people? Will you do that today, Premier?

Hon Mr Harris: The member from Lambton and the member from Waterloo say to me, "Gee, the Liberals spent \$305 million on home care and we're now spending \$1.1 billion." They also point out to me that the Liberals spent \$647 million on drugs, primarily to the benefit of seniors; we're spending \$1.8 billion on drugs. They say to me that in spite of these massive increases, the demand is still growing and there is a need for more and more services. They do say to me, "Thank goodness it isn't like the Liberals, when they were in power here," and then they point to the Liberals in Ottawa who, while we have increased funding so dramatically, up to \$1.1 billion from \$305 million when you were in office, and \$1.8 billion for drugs, compared to \$600 million when you were in office—in spite of that, the Liberals in Ottawa, who promised pharmacare, have spent not one cent for seniors, for home care, for pharmacare here in the province of Ontario. So we do the best we can without a cent from the Liberals, and we're spending far more than you ever did.

IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SERVICES

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, who has the added responsibility for immigration. In recent years, the criminal justice system has been vigilant in trying to eliminate domestic violence within all sectors of our population. My concern is for the welfare of people coming to this country to make a new life and the victimization of some of those families and their children. How is this government dealing with such cases involving newcomers who are unable to converse in French or English?

Hon Cameron Jackson (Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors): I'd like to thank my honourable colleague for the question and to reassure her that this government is very much committed to removing all forms of violence against women and children, and its \$140-million expenditure is just one example of the commitments that are being made.

We're also very concerned about new Canadians who are living in Ontario, because they can be marginalized by their lack of language skills. That's why our government has developed the cultural interpreter service and training grant programs. Just last month in Thunder Bay I announced about \$2 million for 11 organizations that assist new Canadians in Ontario with all manner of programs: access and interpretation services, from women's shelters to second-stage housing to support services with the police and in our court systems.

The violence against women prevention initiative by the Ontario Women's Directorate and the domestic violence justice strategy of the Ministry of the Attorney General are two examples of outstanding service that we're providing to help make Ontario a safer place for all Ontarians.

1520

Mrs Marland: I want to thank the minister for his response. Ontario has welcomed 100,000 immigrants each year for the past 11 years. In the period of 1990 to 2000, 1.3 million immigrants settled in Ontario. Coming to a new homeland presents some very difficult challenges in adjusting to their new life. What other programs are we providing to help families face these challenges as we welcome them to this great province?

Hon Mr Jackson: There are about nine ministers of the government of Ontario who are actively engaged in support programs for new Canadians who come to Ontario. In fact, it's rather significant. Our newcomer settlement program, for example, is spending \$4 million to provide settlement services for new immigrants.

We'd also indicate that although Ontario welcomes 60% of Canada's immigration, we're only receiving about 40% of the federal money. I noticed that our Prime Minister was in Toronto last night for a very important Liberal fundraiser and immigration seemed to be an important part of his theme and his discussions. It's unfortunate that he and his policies continue to marginalize new Canadians who live in Ontario. These people con-

tribute to our economy, they're building this province, they're strengthening our society, but they're not treated equitably by our federal government. Ontario continues to backfill programs—

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

NORTHERN TRANSPORTATION

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): My question is to the Premier. The people of northeastern Ontario want to know what you, their northern Premier, are going to do to save rail passenger service in northeastern Ontario. Seniors, First Nations communities and students, to name a few, all rely on rail services. It's fair to say that the train is one of the driving forces behind economic development in the north.

Premier, we northerners know that the Northlander faces challenges. That's why, this summer, we presented many thoughtful and workable ideas on improving services to an internal solutions group on attracting riders and improving the Northlander's bottom line. I understand that the report will be presented to the ONT Commission soon and that the report makes many suggestions that will go a long way to help save the train.

Premier, the people of the north have done their job. We want to know what our northern Premier is going to do to save the Northlander train.

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

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): Creating a climate for economic growth and prosperity is the number one priority for our government in northern Ontario. We recognize that in order to reach and realize its full economic potential, northeastern Ontario requires access to effective and efficient transportation and telecommunications, and that's why our goal is to improve the transportation and telecommunications services in northeastern Ontario.

This is about better service; it's not about saving dollars. The status quo has not and does not provide the level of service that northerners need, and it doesn't provide the level of service that they deserve. That's why our government is committed to improving the infrastructure in the north. We want to ensure that there's reliable and effective service for communities and businesses, both large and small, who use the ONTC services.

PETITIONS

SOCIAL SERVICES

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the provincial government has damaged public health care by slashing funding and engaged in ill-advised restructuring;

"Whereas the provincial government has slashed funding for social assistance therefore forcing welfare recipients to live in more poverty;

"Whereas the provincial government's refusal to raise minimum wage is forcing low-income workers to live in poverty;

"Whereas the provincial government's removal of the Rent Control Act has forced residents of this province to become homeless;

"Whereas the provincial government's refusal to commit itself to building new affordable housing is forcing people to either live on the street or in the hostel system;

"Whereas the provincial government has shut down schools and instituted Bill 74, causing unrest in the school system;

"We, the undersigned, petition and make the following demands of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"That the government of Ontario repeal Bill 74; reopen schools, hospitals and psychiatric institutions that have been closed; make a commitment to building new social housing; reinstate the Rent Control Act; reinstate all funding to social assistance programs and health care; and raise the minimum wage.

"If the government is not prepared to act on these issues, we, the undersigned, demand that the government resign."

OHIP SERVICES

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I have petitions forwarded to my office and circulated by Gwen Lee, an active senior in Hamilton who spends an awful lot of time and effort working particularly on health care issues. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas the Harris government's decision to delist hearing aid evaluation and re-evaluation from OHIP coverage will lead to untreated hearing loss; and

"Whereas these restrictions will cut off access to diagnostic hearing tests, especially in geographic regions of the province already experiencing difficulties due to shortages of specialty physicians; and

"Whereas OHIP will no longer cover the cost of miscellaneous therapeutic procedures, including physical therapy and therapeutic exercise; and

"Whereas services no longer covered by OHIP may include thermal therapy, ultrasound therapy, hydrotherapy, massage therapy, electrotherapy, magnetotherapy and biofeedback; and

"Whereas one of the few publicly covered alternatives includes hospital outpatient clinics where waiting lists for such services are up to six months long; and

"Whereas delisting these services will have a detrimental effect on the health of all Ontarians, especially seniors, children, hearing-impaired people and industrial workers; and

"Whereas the government has already delisted \$100 million worth of OHIP services,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately restore OHIP coverage for these delisted services."

On behalf of these petitioners and all of my constituents in Hamilton West, I am proud to add my name to this petition.

LORD'S PRAYER

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's my pleasure to read a petition I've received from Betty Greentree, who is the secretary for the official board of the Harmony United Church.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

On behalf of my constituents in the United Church, I would be pleased to sign and submit this petition.

NURSES

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): I am pleased to submit and support a petition from several of my constituents, which petition reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the nurses of Ontario are seeking relief from heavy workloads, which have contributed to unsafe conditions for patients and have increased the risk of injury to nurses; and

"Whereas there is a chronic nursing shortage in Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ontario government has failed to live up to its commitment to provide safe, high-quality care for patients;

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

"We demand the Ontario government take positive action to ensure that our communities have enough nursing staff to provide patients with the care they need.

"Furthermore, we petition the Ontario government accordingly that the government must:

"Ensure wages and benefits are competitive and value all nurses for their dedication and commitment;

“That the Ontario government ensure there are full-time and regular part-time jobs available for nurses in hospitals, nursing homes and the community; and

“Furthermore, that the government of Ontario ensure that government revenues fund health care, not tax cuts; and

“Finally, that the provincial government ensure front-line nurses play a key role in health reform decisions.”

1530

PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I have further petitions from the Hamilton second-level lodging home tenants' task force. The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas individuals who are tenants and residents in facilities such as care homes, nursing homes or domiciliary hostels under certain acts are provided with a personal needs allowance to meet incidental costs other than those provided by the facility; and

“Whereas the personal needs allowance has been fixed by the Ontario government at a rate of \$112 for nearly a decade and has not kept pace with cost-of-living increases, and furthermore is inadequate to meet incidental costs such as clothing, hygiene products and essentials;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately review and amend provincial legislation to increase the personal needs allowance from \$112 a month to \$160 a month for individuals living in care homes, nursing homes or other domiciliary hostels.”

I add my name to these petitioners'.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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

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

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

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

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

I affix my signature.

HOME CARE

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the need for home care services is rapidly growing in Ontario due to the aging of the population and hospital restructuring; and

“Whereas the prices paid by community care access centres to purchase home care services for their clients are rising due to factors beyond their control; and

“Whereas the funding provided by the Ontario government through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is inadequate to meet the growing need for home care services; and

“Whereas the funding shortfall, coupled with the implications of Bill 46, the Public Sector Accountability Act, currently before the Legislature, are forcing CCACs to make deep cuts in home care services without any policy direction from the provincial government;

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

“(1) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to take control of policy-setting for home care services through rational, population-based health care planning rather than simply by underfunding the system; and

“(2) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to provide sufficient funding to CCACs to support the home care services that are the mandate of community care access centres in the volumes needed to meet their communities' rapidly growing needs; and

“(3) That the Legislative Assembly make it necessary for the provincial government to notify its agencies about the amount of funding they will be given by the government in a fiscal year at least three months in advance of that commitment.”

I sign this petition. I am in complete agreement.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): The issue of cancer in the workplace is not going away and neither is the fight to make this an issue the government deals with. To that extent, I still receive petitions from CAW members from all across Ontario. The petitions read as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas this year 130,000 Canadians will contract cancer and there are at minimum 17 funerals every day for Canadian workers who died from cancer caused by workplace exposure to cancer-causing substances known as carcinogens; and

“Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 80% of all cancers have environmental causes and the International Labour Organization estimates that one million workers globally have cancer because of exposure at work to carcinogens; and

“Whereas most cancers can be beaten if government had the political will to make industry replace toxic substances with non-toxic substances; and

“Whereas very few health organizations study the link between occupations and cancer, even though more study of this link is an important step to defeating this dreadful disease;

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

“That it become a legal requirement that occupational history be recorded on a standard form when a patient presents at a physician for diagnosis or treatment of cancer; and

“That the diagnosis and occupational history be forwarded to a central cancer registry for analysis as to the link between cancer and occupation.”

On behalf of my constituents and NDP colleagues, I add my name to this petition.

LORD’S PRAYER

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

As I am in agreement with this, I will be signing it.

HOME CARE

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a petition signed by literally thousands of people. To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the need for home care services is rapidly growing in Ontario due to the aging of the population and hospital restructuring; and

“Whereas the prices paid by community care access centres to purchase home care services for their clients are rising due to factors beyond the control of CCACs; and

“Whereas the funding model provided by the Ontario government through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is inadequate to meet the growing need for home care services; and

“Whereas the funding shortfall, coupled with the implications of Bill 46, the Public Sector Accountability Act, currently before the Legislature, are forcing CCACs to make deep cuts in home care services without any policy direction from the provincial government;

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

“(1) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to take control of policy-setting for home care services through rational, population-based health planning rather than by simply underfunding the system; and

“(2) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to provide sufficient funding to CCACs to support the home care services that are the mandate of CCACs in the volumes needed to meet their communities’ rapidly growing needs; and

“(3) That the Legislative Assembly make it necessary for the provincial government to notify the agencies it funds of the amount of funding they will be given by the government in a fiscal year at least three (3) months before the commencement of the fiscal year.”

I’m happy to support this petition and affix my signature.

OHIP SERVICES

The Acting Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Further petitions? The Chair recognizes the member for Timmins—

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): James Bay.

The Acting Speaker: —and James Bay.

Mr Bisson: James Bay. It’s the little one underneath Hudson Bay.

I have a petition here signed by a number of people from across the riding, and it reads as follows.

“Whereas the Harris government’s decision to delist hearing aid evaluation and re-evaluations from OHIP coverage will lead to untreated hearing loss; and

“Whereas these restrictions will cut off access to diagnostic hearing tests, especially in geographic regions of the province already experiencing difficulties due to shortages of specialty physicians”—such as in the Timmins-James Bay area—“and

“Whereas OHIP will no longer cover the cost of miscellaneous therapeutic procedures, including physical therapy and therapeutic exercise; and

“Whereas services no longer covered by OHIP may include thermal therapy, ultrasound therapy, hydrotherapy, massage therapy, electrotherapy, magnetotherapy, transcutaneous nerve therapy stimulation and biofeedback; and

“Whereas one of the few publicly covered alternatives includes hospital outpatient clinics where waiting lists for such services are up to six months long; and

“Whereas delisting these services will have a detrimental impact on the health of Ontarians, especially seniors, children, hearing-impaired people and industrial workers; and

“Whereas the government has already delisted \$100 million worth of OHIP services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately restore OHIP coverage for these delisted services.”

I sign the petition on behalf of the constituents.

1540

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RESCUING CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LA DÉLIVRANCE DES ENFANTS DE L'EXPLOITATION SEXUELLE

Mr Young moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 86, An Act to rescue children trapped in the misery of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation and to amend the Highway Traffic Act / Projet de loi 86, Loi visant à délivrer les enfants prisonniers de la prostitution et d'autres formes d'exploitation sexuelle et modifiant le Code de la route.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): The Chair recognizes the Attorney General.

Hon David Young (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): Thank you, Mr Speaker. At the outset, with your permission, I will be sharing my time with the member for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey and the member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford.

I am pleased to stand today to proceed with second reading of this very important piece of legislation entitled Rescuing Children from Sexual Exploitation Act, 2001. It is both distressing and disturbing that we do indeed need this legislation in this great province, but the reality is that every day across Ontario, children, some as young as 12 years of age, are being sold for sex. They are being coerced into using their bodies to make money for adults. It's just that simple.

They are forced to turn tricks on street corners. They are enslaved in massage parlours, strip clubs, and they are made to sell sex on telephone lines and through the Internet. Clearly, these young individuals are victims. They are victims of pimps, johns and other sexual predators who are engaging in a form of sexual abuse.

If these children try to leave these terrible situations, they often find themselves the victims of physical and emotional abuse as well. For many, what this means is a doomed existence. It means that these children, who desperately need protection, are going to be victims forevermore. They need help. They need help to break away from those adults who abuse them and exploit them.

This problem is not unique to Ontario. We are not alone in our desire to help children who are being exploited for commercial purposes. Approximately three years ago, at the annual Premiers' conference, Premier

Harris and other Premiers from across this country agreed to continue to pursue appropriate actions to protect children who are trapped in a life of prostitution. They called on the federal government to join their efforts to stop child prostitution. The Premiers at that point in time, some three years ago, thought it to be imperative that they act together and they act quickly in order to try to diminish what is a very clear and present danger.

In the sexual exploitation of children bill, we have outlined a number of remedies that are required. We know they're required because we have spoken to children's aid society workers from across this province and we have spoken to the police. Both of those groups deal with this problem on a daily basis. It's not theoretical. It's not a bunch of papers in front of them. It's a sad reality of life for many across this province.

A recent study which looked at children in Canada, the United States and Mexico found that sexual exploitation of children had grown to record levels. The estimate from that study, in the review of just the United States of America, found that one in 100 are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. That's one child out of every 100 children is a victim. While Canadian figures are not available, it is anticipated that the percentage would be roughly similar in our country. The author of the study stated that child exploitation is the most hidden form of sexual abuse in North America.

Make no mistake: this is not just a problem for the big cities. It affects children across this province. The police in Toronto tell us, as do police in other parts of this province, that individual children from rural areas come to urban communities and are exploited in just this way. For that reason, no one should turn a blind eye to this epidemic, an epidemic that impacts the most vulnerable individuals in our society.

We must take action. We must take action now to protect these young people.

The proposed act would rescue children under the age of 18 trapped in the misery of prostitution or in other forms of sexual exploitation. It would allow the province to sue sexual predators who target our kids. It would help these children return to a normal life that involves going to school, playing with their friends and playing sports, instead of their current existence, an existence that has them each and every day being abused by adults whose motive is to make money.

The proposed bill would attack this very serious situation in two primary ways. It would provide the tools to allow sexually exploited children to be rescued from dangerous situations. Those are the tools that child care workers and police have asked for, and with our legislation both would be permitted to intervene, as I will explain in a moment. The bill would also allow the government to target abusers in numerous ways.

During the development of this bill, we consulted with many individuals across this province who deal directly with exploited children. They do so on a daily basis, and

they believe this bill responds to what is indeed a very serious and ongoing problem.

The proposed legislation recognizes that time has changed, life has changed, and frankly, as sad as it is to say, exploitation methods have changed. The grim reality of today includes sexual exploitation of children that goes well beyond the scenario of a young person standing on a street corner in an urban centre. Many child victims are being kept underground to avoid detection by the justice system. However, if this legislation is passed, it would empower the authorities to intervene in the case of children exploited by street prostitution, in adult massage parlours, in bawdy houses and through escort services. Whether it be through telephone or Internet sex lines, this legislation would allow the authorities to intervene, and the same is true of situations where young people are being forced to participate in the pornography industry, if one can call it that.

The legislation would allow police and children's aid workers to rescue these young people from dangerous situations, in some instances with a warrant and in some instances without. A child could be rescued without a warrant if obtaining a warrant would jeopardize the ability to remove the child from a dangerous situation.

Without this legislation, the police and child care workers who struggle with these growing problems will continue to be frustrated in the way that they have been frustrated in the past. Police forces have said—in fact, numerous individuals have specifically spoken to me about their frustration. They said they require help. They need help to help these young victims who are being exploited.

This legislation, if passed, would put them on a level playing field with those sexual predators who are making victims of society's most vulnerable. It would help get these young people into a safe environment where they belong.

It is a sad reality that these children who are being sexually exploited for profit are in desperate need of care. If passed, this legislation would address their unique care and treatment needs. Once they are removed from the predator, once they are removed from danger, they would be placed in a safe location for up to 30 days, to be determined by a judge. The judge would receive information regarding the young person and then would make his or her decision as to what service or services are required. The services might include medical services, drug and alcohol counselling, various types of therapy and specialized legal services.

If this legislation is passed, the government would commit \$15 million annually to ensure that appropriate resources are provided to assist these young people.

We must get involved. We must get involved if we are going to help to break the cycle of child prostitution and other forms of youth exploitation.

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The proposed legislation clearly has the interests of children in mind. At the same time, it is also respectful and respectful of their rights. We have built into the

legislation a number of steps to ensure that children are protected throughout the process. For example, within 24 hours, or as soon as possible after a child has been rescued by the police or children's aid, a judge or justice of the peace will be in a position and is obliged to review the legal authority and the validity of the action that was taken by the authorities. A second hearing would take place within five days. At that point in time, the court could do one of a number of things: they could extend the period of placement for up to 30 days; they could, if appropriate, return the child to his or her parents or guardian if appropriate supervision is available—and evidence would be presented to the court to allow the court to determine that; or they could decide that further intervention is warranted. Those are all options available to the trier of fact, the judge or justice of the peace who will review this matter.

We have built on Alberta's experience. It should be acknowledged that the Alberta legislation has existed for a period of time and has, frankly, achieved some very impressive results. While our primary concern, of course, is rescuing sexually exploited children and helping them begin a new life, we are also interested in targeting the sexual predators who prey on these young people. That's why, if our legislation is passed, we would be the first jurisdiction in this country to allow us to sue the pimps who victimize these young people, to get back the costs associated with assisting these young people. Who better, who more appropriate, to pay those expenses than the predator who brought the young person into this despicable situation and who profited as a result of the situation?

The legislation would also permit the suspension of driver's licences of pimps and johns convicted of prostitution under the Criminal Code. With these provisions, we will be sending a very loud and clear message to anyone who is engaging in this exploitive behaviour or is considering that behaviour.

Earlier this year, the government introduced Bill 30, the civil Remedies for Organized Crime and other Unlawful Activities Act. I mention that because the two bills, the one that we are debating today and the organized crime bill that I referred to a moment ago, both speak to the fact that this government is committed to taking the profit out of crime. We have said we would not allow criminals to profit, and we are acting to prevent that.

I say to you that the organized crime bill, if passed, would allow us to use civil law to freeze, seize and forfeit the proceeds of unlawful activity. It, together with the bill that we are here debating today, if they are passed, would work with yet another piece of legislation that we have come forward to introduce in the last short while. You will undoubtedly recall that Bill 69, the Prohibiting Profiting from Recounting Crimes Act, is also a matter that is in front of this respected Legislature this session. That act, if passed, would permit the government to ask the court to seize assets acquired by convicted criminals through the retelling of their story. In other words, if that

bill passes, no one would be able to profit from the retelling or the recounting of their story to any type of media in relation to serious crimes, whether it be a media interview, a book or a movie. Those criminals will not be able to profit if that legislation is passed.

This government is firmly committed to ensuring that victims in Ontario have access to the support they need and, indeed, they deserve. We have backed our commitment with increased funding for a range of government and community programs that serve victims in various ways throughout this province.

I say to you that I was very proud to be present in this government when the victim/witness assistance program was expanded to 57 sites across Ontario. That announcement was made recently, and it deals with what will happen over the next three years. Our government has also dedicated up to \$50 million to provide more and better services for victims of crime. We're also committed, as you are undoubtedly aware, to enhancing victims' rights. That's why we came forward and passed the Victims' Bill of Rights, and that's why earlier this year, the Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act was proclaimed. I'm very proud to say that it is the very first of its kind in this great country. It's the first permanent office available to assist victims of crime.

One example of how it does so and how much better this province is as a result of that office's existence occurred over the last two weeks. The great tragedy that occurred south of the border affected many Canadians and many Ontarians. The Office for Victims of Crime came forward, together with my ministry and Mr Harris, and announced what was the only provincial project across the country to assist victims of the great tragedy that occurred south of the border. Premier Harris made it very clear that there would be \$3 million available to assist victims who had suffered as a result of the hideous acts that occurred in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington. We have representatives of that office and my ministry who have been in New York to assist those victims. That is one of many ways in which this province is better off as a result of the establishment and the entrenchment of the Office for Victims of Crime.

To return to the bill that is being debated this afternoon in the Legislative Assembly, I want to make it clear that young people sexually exploited for profit are victims. It's important to make it clear that they are victims; they are not the offenders. The offenders are the pimps and others who bring these young people into their clutches and keep them there to exploit these children. They do so for one reason and one reason only, and that's to make money.

Protecting victims—all victims—is a priority for this government. That's why our proposed legislation contains a number of provisions designed to protect child victims of sexual exploitation. Under this bill, if it is passed, information regarding the identity of a child, the child's parents or child witnesses in any court proceeding would not be published or broadcast except as permitted by the court. Furthermore, all hearings would be closed

to the public and they would be closed to the media. We do that not to limit the rights of the media, but to protect the young people, to not allow them to be re-victimized. We will also ensure, if this bill is passed, that all court records of proceedings will be sealed. We will ensure that the child witnesses are protected from abusive or irrelevant cross-examination by the lawyer for the pimp.

The child's right to privacy will be protected in another way, an important way, by restricting access to personal and medical records of the young person. Children who have been rescued from sexual exploitation have a difficult enough journey ahead of them as they attempt to return to a normal life. We need not add to that and we will not add to that in this system. We are committed to ensuring that the transition is as smooth as possible to protect these young people.

I understand that this legislation will not resolve and end all exploitation of young people. I know this is no panacea, but it is indeed another step down the road, a road we must travel. It is an important next step which will be used, together with the criminal laws of this country, to protect young people.

I want to emphasize that police and children's aid workers can only rescue a child from the dangers of sexual exploitation if they are under age 16, as things are now configured. That is a problem. It's a problem because there are many 17- and 18-year-olds who find themselves trapped in this cycle, in the situation where they are being exploited on a daily basis.

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I had an opportunity to meet with a senior officer from the Toronto police force recently. I talked to him about his experience under the current set of laws. I talked to him about what happens when he finds an underage prostitute and tries to help him or her. He talked to me about those first days following the apprehension, the rescuing of that young person. What happens with all too much frequency is that the young person is brought to a safe house by the police officer. But if the child is 17 or 18 years of age, there is nothing to compel that child to stay in that safe house. They are free to go under the current law. That's a problem.

It was a particularly vivid example that this one officer used when I recently spoke to him, because he talked about a very cold winter day when he found a young 17-year-old girl, a girl who had been used and abused and exploited by an adult over an extended period of time. He talked about taking this young person to a safe house. He talked about settling the young girl in the safe house and returning to his police cruiser, and I guess he got on the radio to figure out where he should go next. He looked at the back of this residence and he saw the young person running away, in the middle of the winter with snow on the ground. The young girl left without shoes—without any winter clothing and no shoes, no boots. She ran, presumably, back to a very dangerous situation. We can't let that continue. We simply can't let that continue. This legislation, if it is passed, will compel a young person in that situation to stay if a judge deems it appropriate.

Remember, there is judicial review at various points. There's an initial judicial review by a justice of the peace or a judge within 24 hours of the apprehension or as soon as possible. Within five days a judge will review the matter to ensure that it is appropriate that the child remain confined, that the child get appropriate assistance during that period of time. When I say "confined," I'm talking about confined in a safe house, one that has been chosen and is being monitored by the children's aid society. These are places to get help. These are places to get therapy. These are places to have an opportunity to resume their life, a real life.

So this legislation would allow for review after 24 hours, as I indicated, after five days, and at that point in time the judge can make some decisions as to whether it's appropriate for the young person to be returned to the parents, to be put in a different program or to be ordered to continue to stay in the home they are in where they can get the greatest assistance. They can be confined there for up to 30 days.

The problem, as I indicated earlier, isn't unique to the city of Toronto. I have had an opportunity to travel around this province and was in Thunder Bay recently. I heard police forces talk about how young people from surrounding communities—rural, remote areas, by and large—come to Thunder Bay and engage in a very similar sort of victimization. I should say they are made victims in that way. It isn't something that only cities like Toronto, Hamilton and Windsor have a problem with. It is a problem throughout this province and it's a problem that's going underground, as we indicated earlier. It isn't the traditional sort of streetwalker in every instance. With the advent and the advancement of the Internet, unfortunately all too often we see exploitation through that means as well, and this legislation is designed to combat that and deal with that. The proposed legislation would give police and children's aid workers—and I emphasize that—an additional tool to rescue children under 18 years of age and to combat this very serious problem.

Earlier this afternoon I referenced the legislation that had been passed in Alberta. I did so for a number of reasons. One was to give them credit for what was indeed an innovative and very successful program. But I also did so in order to highlight the fact, in the best way we can within the Canadian experience, that we do have a problem in this country. And we're not talking about one or two individuals, although that would be problem enough. We have a problem that in the case of Alberta, in the first two years of existence, this legislation assisted 545 young people. There were 545 young people who were rescued by similar legislation in the province of Alberta. If one considers the population of Alberta compared to the much greater population within this province, we would estimate—and it is only an estimate—that in excess of 1,000 children a year would be rescued, would be assisted, would be given their life back if this legislation is passed.

When I stood in this Legislature in the spring and introduced this bill for first reading, I took a moment at that point in time to reference the member for Sudbury. Mr Bartolucci deserves to be commended for continuing to bring this issue forward, for his efforts in attempting to help sexually exploited children. I am proud and pleased to once again do so.

I have certainly reviewed the bills he has put forward. There is no doubt in my mind that his intention is to assist young people, and I greatly respect that. There are some aspects of his legislation that are similar to the legislation in Alberta and similar to the legislation we have introduced. I will say to you that in many respects our bill, our proposed legislation, is quite different—I believe more comprehensive; he may have something else to say about that—but I think a reasonable review of it would suggest that indeed this is a far more comprehensive and likely effective tool. Undoubtedly, we will have an opportunity to discuss that in due course. I want to say to you, though, that I think Mr Bartolucci deserves credit for his sincere interest in this serious matter.

By way of conclusion, let me say this: this is a very complex issue. Anyone who thinks otherwise is sadly mistaken. There are no easy, quick-fix, simple answers to resolve this problem that is long-standing but is also one that is growing. Research tells us that many children who are runaways, many of those who are rescued, in Alberta and—given the limited powers in Ontario—even in Ontario are often children who are escaping abusive situations at home. We're aware of that. Some believe that life on the street is a better way, or at least that's what they believe when they set out on this journey. I guess in some instances it's understandable why they have that misconception or belief in the early stages.

But what happens time and time again is that the abuse continues. This time, when they're out on the street, the abuse is at the hands of other adults—pimps, johns and other sexual predators—who prey on these young people; who use them in despicable ways; who use them for commercial purposes; who use them and abuse them and exploit them as though they were objects—these precious young children exploited in that way as though they were objects.

This legislation, if it's passed, would help some of the most vulnerable individuals in our province. I can think of no better use of this Legislature's time than to discuss and debate this issue. I am hopeful that we will hear from the opposition, the Liberals and New Democrats, who will stand and who will support this endeavour, because if there was ever an issue that cried out for an abandonment of partisan, parochial, political behaviour, this is it.

So I invite and I urge the members opposite, the Liberals and the New Democrats, in this Legislature to join us in this endeavour to help young people. I would invite them to put aside any political points they think they might be able to make. I would invite them to do what, as I said a moment ago, is perhaps the most important thing they will ever do while seated in this

Legislature and support this innovative, comprehensive bill that will help some of the most vulnerable people in this province. If it is passed, this bill will give these young people an opportunity to start life anew. It will give them an opportunity to have the care and treatment they need and deserve.

All children are a priority for this government, and we are committed to ensuring that they have the best possible future. Our children deserve nothing less.

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The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey):

I'd like to join with the Attorney General, the member from Willowdale, in the debate on Bill 86. I'm going to read the title. It's a long title, but it does express what I believe is the intent of the bill. It's called An Act to rescue children trapped in the misery of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation and to amend the Highway Traffic Act. I think, as the debate unfolds, you will see why the bill was named in that way.

This legislation, if passed, would help ensure that Ontario's children are safe in their communities and are able to get the services they need to grow up to be healthy, contributing citizens.

The proposed bill will give the police and children's aid society workers in this province more and better tools to help young victims of sexual exploitation. It will also allow the provincial authorities—the lawmakers, the children's aid society people, the social workers—to target the sexual predators who abuse these children. So not only are we trying to save the victims, these young children, but we're trying to target the predators who prey on them.

This proposed legislation would permit police and children's aid society workers to rescue sexually exploited children under the age of 18 and place them in a safe, secure location for up to 30 days. Child victims of sexual exploitation could be rescued from a range of situations, which include street prostitution—perhaps the most common one—adult entertainment facilities, massage parlours, bawdy houses, escort services, locations where telephone or Internet sex lines are being operated and the pornography industry in general. In all of those things, children are victims, and that's what we're trying to stop.

The application of this legislation recognizes that many child victims of sexual exploitation, as the Attorney General has indicated, are being kept underground to avoid detection by the justice system. Under this proposed bill, the child would be rescued with or without a warrant. That may be controversial in the debate ahead, but I will try to explain why we are saying that.

In most circumstances, a warrant would be obtained to enter the premises to rescue the child. However, the proposed legislation would also allow the removal of a child without a warrant if obtaining a warrant jeopardizes the ability to rescue that child from a situation of sexual exploitation.

To ensure due process, a judge or a justice of the peace would review the legal authority and validity to

rescue that child within 24 hours or as soon as possible. Then there would be a second hearing; that would occur within five days, at which time the court would be able to make a number of decisions in the best interests of the child. This would include a number of things. It would include extending the placement up to 30 days. It could return the child to his or her parents or legal guardian, if appropriate care and supervision would be provided, or determine that future intervention is not required in this particular case.

Again, as the Attorney General has indicated in his remarks to the House today, in an effort to further protect the privacy of these child victims, the provisions of the bill include statements to ensure that all such hearings are closed to the public and to the media and that records of proceedings are sealed.

I'd like to say a few words with respect to assisting these victims. Once removed from danger, these children would be placed in a safe, secure location where they could receive appropriate care and assistance.

As a result of being sexually exploited, many child victims suffer significant and long-term impacts to their physical and emotional well-being. This can be compounded by drug addiction, by sexually transmitted diseases and physical abuse.

This bill recognizes that each child has different needs and that flexibility is required when determining what type of care is required. That is why each child's treatment needs would be assessed on an individual basis. A wide range of services would be available to this child, including drug and alcohol counselling, specialized legal services such as witness protection plan and victim witness assistance, medical services such as detoxification and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, mental health services and counselling support services.

If this legislation is passed, the government would commit up to \$15 million annually to ensure that the appropriate services and supports are in place so that these children receive effective and meaningful assistance.

The children's aid society would assume responsibility for managing the child's care while in the safe location. With the help of the children's aid society, some children can be linked to longer-term care and support services to assist the child with ongoing issues and problems.

The sexual exploitation of children is a highly complex problem and, as the Attorney General has stated, has no simple answers. Helping these victims return to a normal life is one step in combatting the problem.

This legislation, if passed, would send a strong message that sexual exploitation of children will not be tolerated in the province of Ontario. It would permit the suspension of drivers' licences of pimps and johns convicted of prostitution-related Criminal Code offences involving the use of a motor vehicle.

The proposed bill would also allow the province to try to recover some of the costs of treating child victims by suing pimps and others who sexually exploit these children for profit. The province of Ontario would be able to

sue for the full amount of taxpayers' dollars that has been spent or that may be spent in the future to provide assistance to a particular victim or identifiable group of victims that has been exploited as a result of the abuser's conduct. To protect children who may be involved in this process, provisions are included in the bill to protect child witnesses from abusive cross-examination or irrelevant questions and to ensure a child's personal information is kept private. Treating child victims of sexual exploitation is costly for the province of Ontario and it's costly, ultimately, to the taxpayers, and because of that we believe it's entirely appropriate to try to recover money from pimps and other sexual predators for services associated with helping these victims.

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I would like, as the Attorney General has done, to acknowledge the member for Sudbury, Mr Bartolucci, for the work he has done in the bills that he has introduced to the House. As the Attorney General has stated, he should be given full credit for his work and his attempt to bring this issue to the public forefront. Because of that, I think it would be appropriate, not to take away from anything that he has done in this place, to compare the legislation that he has introduced and the legislation that's before us today, as introduced by the Attorney General.

His private member's bills dealing with the sexual exploitation of children, no question about it, as the Attorney General has stated, were clearly well intentioned, but the proposed government bill that's before the House today, we believe, is substantially different and goes much further than what his bills did. The government legislation that's here this afternoon, we believe, better protects the rights and interests of these young victims. It includes strong due process for all children, and I emphasize "all children." Regardless of whether they have been apprehended with or without a warrant, every child gets a preliminary hearing before a judge within 24 hours and gets a full hearing within five days. Bill 22, which was one of the member's bills, lacks the constitutional guarantees of due process, in that only children apprehended without a warrant have the right to appear before a judge, and this only has to occur within 72 hours of the child's apprehension. In addition, under the private member's bill, children apprehended with a warrant have no right to appear before a judge.

The government bill before the House today also provides a stronger foundation for meaningful intervention. The government bill, Bill 86, allows both police and social workers, child welfare workers, to apprehend children in a situation of sexual exploitation. The private member's bill, as introduced by the member, empowers only the police to act.

As the Attorney General has indicated in his submissions preceding me, we know from Alberta's experience that both police and child welfare workers are actively involved in these types of cases. It's necessary to provide both with the tools to assist these children. The government bill that is here before us this afternoon has a maximum 30-day intervention period. The private member's

bill provides for a significantly shorter 72-hour detention period. Alberta recognized that 72 hours gave little opportunity to make a meaningful intervention—and that, I assume, is where the member got his 72-hour suggestion—and has since amended its legislation to provide a longer intervention period.

The government bill also better targets the predators who sexually exploit children. The member's bill, Bill 22, attempts to create a provincial offence against pimps and johns which, I would submit, is outside the jurisdiction of this Legislature. It's outside the scope of provincial legislation. We, on this side, have concerns that the key elements of Bill 22 could not successfully withstand the constitutional challenges in a court of law. We are much more confident that the government bill would withstand any constitutional challenge and will target pimps and johns in a manner that more clearly falls within the provincial jurisdiction.

In conclusion, the proposed legislation that's before us for debate today is another example of this government's commitment to holding offenders accountable for their crimes and for taxpayers' dollars. The legislation is another example of our commitment to support all victims of crime.

Those are my comments with respect to this bill and I would urge all members of this House to support this legislation.

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I'm very pleased to join in the debate this afternoon on this second reading. It's an honour today to speak about the Rescuing Children From Sexual Exploitation Act, 2001. This legislation, if passed, will help ensure that Ontario's children are safe in their communities and are able to get the services they need to grow up to be healthy and contributing citizens. The proposed bill would give police and the Children's Aid Society workers more and better tools to help young victims of sexual exploitation. It would also allow the province to target sexual predators who abuse these children.

The focus of this act, in one part, is to rescue the victims. The proposed legislation would permit police and children's aid society workers to rescue sexually exploited children under the age of 18 and place them in a safe and secure location for up to 30 days. Child victims of sexual exploitation could be rescued from a range of situations, including street prostitution, adult entertainment facilities, massage parlours, bawdy houses, escort services, locations where telephone or Internet sex lines are being operated, and the pornography industry.

The application of this legislation recognizes that many child victims of sexual exploitation are being kept underground to avoid detection by the justice system. Under the proposed bill, the child could be rescued with or without a warrant. In most circumstances, a warrant would be obtained to enter the premises to rescue the child. However, the proposed legislation would also allow removal of the child without a warrant if obtaining a warrant jeopardizes the ability to rescue the child from a situation of sexual exploitation.

To ensure due process, a judge or justice of the peace would review the legal authority and validity of the action to rescue the child within 24 hours or as soon as possible. A second hearing would occur within five days, at which time the court would be able to make a number of decisions in the best interests of the child. This could include extending the placement for up to 30 days, returning the child to his or her parents or legal guardian if appropriate care and supervision would be provided, or determining that future intervention is not required in that particular case.

In an effort to further protect the privacy of these child victims, the proposed bill includes a provision to ensure that all such hearings are closed to the public and media and that records of proceedings are sealed.

The bill also deals with assisting victims. Once removed from danger, these children will be placed in safe, secure locations where they can receive appropriate care and assistance. As a result of being sexually exploited, many child victims suffer significant and long-term impacts to their physical and emotional well-being. This can be compounded by drug addiction, sexually transmitted diseases and physical abuse. This bill recognizes that each child has different needs and that flexibility is required when determining what type of care is required. That is why each child's treatment needs would be assessed on an individual basis. A wide range of services would be available, including drug and alcohol counselling, specialized legal services such as the witness protection plan and victim witness assistance, medical services such as detoxification and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, mental health services, and counselling support services.

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If this legislation is passed, the government will commit approximately \$15 million annually to ensure that appropriate services and supports are in place so that these children receive effective and meaningful assistance. The children's aid society would assume responsibility for managing the child's care while in the safe location.

With the help of the children's aid society, some children can be linked to longer-term care and support services to assist the child with ongoing issues and problems. The sexual exploitation of children is a highly complex problem with no simple answers. Helping these victims return to normal life is one step in combatting the problem.

Another focus of the legislation is targeting predators. This legislation, if passed, would send a strong message that sexual exploitation of children will not be tolerated in this province. It would permit the suspension of driver's licences of pimps and johns convicted of prostitution-related Criminal Code offences involving the use of a motor vehicle.

The proposed bill would also allow the province to try to recover some of the costs of treating child victims by suing pimps and others who sexually exploit children for profit. The province would be able to sue for the full

amount of taxpayers' dollars that have been spent or that may be spent in the future to provide assistance to a particular victim or identify a group of victims who have been exploited as a result of an abuser's conduct.

To protect children who may be involved in this process, provisions are included in the bill to protect child witnesses from abusive cross-examination or irrelevant questions and to ensure a child's personal information is kept private.

Treating child victims of sexual exploitation is costly for the provincial government and ultimately for its taxpayers. We believe it is entirely appropriate to try to recover money from pimps and other sexual predators for services associated with helping their victims.

I'd like to also speak on the private member's bills that have been dealt with before this legislation was brought into place.

I too wish to acknowledge the member for Sudbury, Mr Rick Bartolucci, for his sincere and heartfelt efforts on this matter. His private member's bills dealing with the sexual exploitation of children were clearly well-intentioned, but the proposed government bill is substantially different and in my opinion goes much further.

Our proposed legislation better protects the rights and interests of these young victims. The proposed government bill includes strong due process provisions for all children regardless of whether they have been apprehended with or without a warrant. Every child gets a preliminary hearing before a judge within 24 hours and gets a full hearing within five days.

Bill 22, the private member's legislation, lacked the constitutional guarantees of due process. Only children apprehended without a warrant have a right to appear before a judge, and this only has to occur within 72 hours of the child's apprehension. Children apprehended with a warrant have no right to appear before a judge.

The proposed government bill also provides a stronger foundation for meaningful intervention. The proposed government bill allows both police and child welfare workers to apprehend children in situations of sexual exploitation. The private member's bill, Bill 22, empowered only the police to act in these situations. We know from Alberta's experience that both police and child welfare workers are actively involved in these types of cases, and it is necessary to provide both with the tools needed to assist these children.

The proposed government bill has a maximum 30-day intervention period. The private member's legislation, Bill 22, provided for a significantly shorter 72-hour detention period. The province of Alberta recognized that 72 hours gave little opportunity to make a meaningful intervention and has since amended its legislation to provide for a longer intervention period.

The proposed government bill also better targets the predators who sexually exploit children. The private member's legislation, Bill 22, attempted to create a provincial offence against pimps and johns which is likely outside the scope of provincial jurisdiction. We have concerns that key elements of the private member's legis-

lation, Bill 22, could not successfully withstand a constitutional challenge. The proposed government bill is constitutional and will target pimps and johns in a manner that more clearly falls within the province's jurisdiction.

As well, Bill 22, the private legislation, is virtually redundant as many municipalities have already acted on their own to establish licensing requirements for adult entertainment parlours. Still, we appreciate the member's work and interest in helping these children. Quite frankly, when I spoke on the private member's legislation, I was very supportive of it as an initial first step in getting to the root of the problem.

This proposed legislation is another example of this government's commitment to holding offenders accountable for their crimes and for taxpayers' dollars. The proposed legislation is another example of the government's commitment to supporting all victims of crime.

As the Attorney General stated, we need this legislation. It is very clear that this type of activity is going on. The records that the Attorney General indicated with respect to the province of Alberta in terms of children who have been helped by their legislation, and the number of 545 extrapolated to the population of Ontario would be in excess of 1,000. That's a very serious problem and it has to be dealt with.

Ontario is not alone in its desire to protect children who are being sexually exploited for commercial purposes. At the recent annual Premiers' conference, Premier Harris and Canada's other Premiers agreed unanimously to continue pursuing appropriate actions to protect children involved in prostitution. They also called on the federal government to join their efforts to stop child prostitution. The Premiers of this country recognize that it is imperative to act together to protect our children from danger.

The sexual exploitation of children is more widespread than one might imagine. A recent study which looked at children in Canada, the United States and Mexico found that sexual exploitation of children has grown to record levels. It estimates that 326,000 children in the United States, or one in 100, are the victims of commercial sexual exploitation. While Canadian figures are not available, it is anticipated that the situation is much the same in our country. The author of the study stated that child exploitation is the most hidden form of child abuse in the United States and North America today.

And make no mistake. This is not just a big city problem; it affects children from right across this province. Police in Toronto tell us children come to the city from rural and urban communities throughout Ontario. For that reason, no one can, or should, turn a blind eye to what some are calling an epidemic.

In these times of the technological revolution, the ability to access young children has been increased more than ever before. As I said earlier, some of the methods to get children involved in these situations where they become very vulnerable are the telephone or Internet sex lines which are being operated. The police have to be

very vigilant with respect to this particular activity. You've all heard of situations where children who are using the Internet are taken advantage of by adults who use the Internet to try to get face-to-face meetings with these young children, and that can lead to no positive purpose or any meaningful reason for meeting.

In conclusion, I would say that I fully support this legislation. I think it covers all the angles and all the bases in terms of trying to deal with rescuing the victims, providing assistance and also targeting the predators.

1640

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I'm pleased to say that I'll be sharing my time with the member for St Paul's and the member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

I stand here with mixed emotions. The predominant emotion is one of relief—relief that finally this government is acting in a positive way. So I'm happy to be able to speak to Bill 86. I'm relieved that this bill finally made it to debate at second reading, because the history of this government would indicate that they like to introduce bills that they deem to be tough bills, law-and-order bills, but never carry them through.

Before I bring you back three years in time, I'd like to thank a few people.

First of all I'd like to thank my leader, Dalton McGuinty, for his continuing commitment to the children of working families in Ontario; his devotion and dedication to ensuring that we safeguard our children; his continuing encouragement to pursue this bill by encouraging me not to give up in the face of a government that was very slow to react.

I want to thank our justice critic, Michael Bryant, for his guidance, for his legal opinion, for his ongoing commitment to an agenda of law and order that makes sense, that is meaningful, that is workable, that is directed to protecting the working families of Ontario.

I'd like to thank our children's critic, Leona Dombrowsky, for her continuing commitment to the children in this province, for her support of my private member's bill to ensure that children in this province feel safe.

I want to thank also the member for Prince Edward-Hastings—and you'll be hearing from Ernie Parsons a little later on—for his real-life experiences that he shares with our caucus and the people of Ontario on a regular basis. He's going to do that today, and you will see from these real-life experiences why I believe we as Liberals have an opportunity to provide a clear choice for the people of Ontario when it comes to the protection of children.

Imagine this scenario for a second: a 12-year-old at the corner of Elm and John Street in any city. It's 2 o'clock in the morning. A car drives up. The child—we'll call her Mallory—gets in that car. The car is driven by a 27-year-old man. The man fondles the child of 12 years old, encourages her to perform sex acts, demeans her on a continuing basis and then fills her with a drug so that she will have no recourse except to repeat the horrific act which she just took part in.

Imagine, if you were a parent, how terrible that would be. Imagine—to our pages—if you were the brother or sister of that child and you had to live with that family situation, how terrible it would be for you and for your sister. That is a real scenario, my friends. It happens on a daily basis.

Imagine the scenario now where a government is informed that that is happening on a regular basis and chooses to do nothing for three years. Let me bring you back in time. Let me bring you back to May 12, 1998, when I first introduced my private member's bill. As imperfect as you've heard it was today, it was introduced. It received first reading, it received unanimous support on second reading it and was sent to committee. During committee, 50 deputations were made. That means that 50 people spoke either for or against the bill. Some of us who are in the House today were on that committee, so we know that the majority of those deputations were certainly in favour of my private member's bill, as imperfect as you heard it was today.

From those deputations, 32 police forces spoke in favour of the legislation because it provided our police officers with the opportunity to do their job more effectively and it provided police forces across this province with the opportunity to help protect vulnerable children.

One of those deputations was from Mallory, a teenaged prostitute. I'm only going to read a part of what she said to the government committee on Monday, August 17, 1998. Mallory said:

"I didn't prepare a speech ... but I came here for the kids" who are a part of my life. "There were 12-year-olds, when I used to work that corner, standing on the corner," as sad as "it really is...."

"These are little girls who are having grown men who have money and cocaine take over their lives, making them feel wanted. Those are idiots. Those aren't nice people," nice men. I've seen those guys do many horrific things to these young girls. "They have sex with them. They do some pretty disgusting things. They make them feel dirty.... I had a 27-year-old boyfriend when I was but 16.... I've been a cocaine addict since I was basically 15.... I started through prostitution."

She goes on to say that these girls, Mallory being one of them, are being raped by what she refers to as "pedophiles," and I happen to agree with Mallory very much. They are that, and worse. "Those girls, they're selling their bodies and it isn't fair. You've got to help them out."

Mallory goes on to describe how, when she stood at a street corner, a 12-year-old came up beside her and said, "Can I stand with you?" and Mallory said, "No, get out of the way. Find another spot. I have to make a living." The 12-year-old said, "Why?" Mallory said, "Because when a car comes up, they're going to ask me, 'Do you have anyone younger?' and they're going to choose you over me."

1650

My friends, that's only a part of what Mallory said on August 17, 1998. I want to congratulate Mallory. Today I phoned Mallory's family to tell them that we would be debating this, and I hope Mallory is watching. I want to congratulate her for her bravery.

I also want to congratulate her father, who also presented before the committee. In part, he said, "My purpose in coming before you today is to share with you my family's struggle to deal with a bright, spirited, much-loved daughter who fell through the growing cracks" of our social safety net "into a shadowy world we scarcely knew existed" but "a few blocks from our home."

He goes on to describe the tragedy of Mallory from the spring of 1997 to the time he presented before the committee. He asked of the committee at the time, "Please, please do something for my daughter and for the many children in Ontario who are being sexually exploited and abused." He said in conclusion to the committee, "I have three other children who have also been horrifically affected by the whole situation and will be scarred for" their lives because of it, "with the confrontations and the tone of ... the rending of the social fabric of our family. But we still love her. They have high spirits" for her. There is still hope. Yes, Alan, there is still hope. Yes, Alan, today your hope is coming closer to a reality, and I thank you as well for your bravery in coming before that committee.

The bill received hearings across the province of Ontario, certainly in Sudbury and in London and in Toronto, and we had clause-by-clause. I must say that the third party made some excellent recommendations for revision to the bill. Certainly our party made some recommendations for revision. The government made but one recommendation. The bill was ready for third and final reading when, if you remember the history of this Legislature, the House prorogued on December 18 in a cloud of controversy over another issue regarding inappropriate behaviour.

So I introduced the same bill on August 26, 1999, but it too received the same fate when the election was called. Soon after the election, I gave the government the opportunity to redeem itself. I reintroduced the bill for a third time on October 26, 1999. It was then known as Bill 6. Guess what? After second reading, they let the bill die.

The fourth introduction of this bill happened again this past April 26, 2001, and it has been sitting on the order table ever since.

I introduced Bill 22, in conjunction with several other bills, which I still believe protect children on an ongoing basis, that haven't been addressed by this government. I understand the role of government, but the most important role of government, in my estimation, is the protection of the people who elect them to this assembly with sound, good laws. I think Bill 22 is a sound, good law. I believe Bill 23, which called for the revoking of a driver's licence, is a sound, good law. Obviously the government thinks that, because they've adapted that into their legislation.

But I also introduced Bill 24, and I want to spend a few moments only on Bill 24, which is An Act to amend the Municipal Act with respect to adult entertainment parlours, to tell the people of Ontario that the Harris government has taken but one small clause from a bill that I believe will protect children more fully than their Bill 86 will. But they've only chosen to adopt one small section of Bill 24.

I would encourage this government to bring in another bill that mirrors what you didn't touch from my Bill 24, because it is wanted by police officers, it's wanted by municipalities, it's wanted by those people who are charged with protecting children, whatever agency you want to refer to. I offer the challenge to the government today. I challenge them to bring in another bill which will protect children, adults, people of the province of Ontario, ensuring that they take what they haven't touched in this Bill 24 and put it in the form of another bill. I can think of all kinds of creative titles if you'd want. Mine was not a creative title; it was a creative way to ensure that people, children, are not sexually exploited or abused in Ontario. I don't think we need trick titles. If we indeed want to rescue people, we put forward good legislation. That will indeed do that, rescue them.

I'd like to talk about the Alberta experience for a little while. The government will know that our bill received second reading before the Alberta legislation received second reading. It would have been interesting to see, to have us be able to quote statistics from the province of Ontario as opposed to having to go to Alberta. But in Alberta, with some modifications to the bill—absolutely, I don't dispute that; I think we could have addressed those at committee, as the NDP did, as the Liberal caucus did, and the government had but one recommendation—they've had 461 referrals from this program. They've had 563 apprehensions from this program. They've had 84 agreements from this program. The youth have ranged in ages from 12 years old to 17 years old, with the average being 15.6 years old. The Alberta legislation and my legislation were very similar, much more similar than the government's legislation is in comparison with Alberta's. So I think Alberta has a proven track record that, with modifications, the bill works and can work. I believe that we could have put this legislation in place three years ago had we not chosen to play partisan politics with this.

So I'm encouraged when I hear the Attorney General of the province of Ontario say we shouldn't play partisan politics when it comes to the protection of children. I believe that Mr Kormos—who was at the hearings—can confirm that several deputations that were made indicated that this should receive quick passage, because we don't want to play partisan politics with something so important. Indeed, our approach as a governing body on both sides of the House should have been three years ago to protect those vulnerable children.

Bill 86 does have some shortcomings. I would hope that it goes to committee. I don't think it needs extensive committee work, but it needs some committee work. This bill needs some alteration in order for it to be the best

possible legislation we can have in Ontario. There is no mention of the licensing provisions for adult entertainment parlours, massage parlours or Internet chat lines. The Attorney General did allude to it, but let me tell you that children as young as 12 work in these establishments, just as they work in the streets. That's why this bill needs some modifications.

1700

Street outreach services provided this government with a survey they did in 1998 with regard to the youth they service. The statistics back then were frightening. Let me review just a few of them with you.

In dealing with child prostitutes, they found that in terms of the place of origin, 53% came from Toronto, 25% came from other cities in Ontario and 10% from the western provinces. The age at which they first left home: 16 years of age and older, 45%; 11 to 15 years of age, 51%—51% of the people they dealt with were between 11 and 15. Life experiences at home: 63% of them had some serious conflicts at home; 45% of those suffered some form of physical abuse; 48% of them had a children's aid society background. A frightening statistic is that 56% of them performed their first trick between the ages of 16 and 18; 41% of them committed their first trick between the ages of 10 and 15. A frightening statistic is that 56% of them had been prostituting themselves for between one and three years; 24% between four and six years.

I mention those statistics because we have young pages in the House today and I want them to value that strong home environment they come from. Make sure you thank your parents, your brothers and sisters, your teachers and anybody you come in contact with who has a positive influence on your life, because these kids obviously didn't have the good fortune that you have.

I mention these statistics because these were 1998 statistics and I know for a fact that the numbers have not gone down. In fact, police forces from across Ontario will tell you there is a rise in teenage prostitution.

I have to commend the government for finally bringing forward some legislation. Certainly, personally, I'm going to be supporting this legislation at second reading because it goes in the right direction with the protection of vulnerable children.

I guess I would offer a caution to the government in the future. I know there are a number of good ideas from individual members on all sides of the House. I would suggest that if in fact the government chooses to take an idea from an opposition member—and there is nothing wrong with that. There is nothing wrong with borrowing a good idea and making it good legislation, but I think there is a problem when you're slow at doing that. This bill should have been in effect in 1998. There was absolutely no reason for this bill not to be in effect other than the fact that it wasn't introduced by a government member. That's a reality the government is going to have to deal with. My caution to the government is, don't make the same mistake again.

I support this bill on second reading. It needs some modification. Indeed, as my Bills 22, 23 and 24 were, it is a step in the right direction.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): It's an honour to follow the member from Sudbury on this particular debate. This is not the first time Rick Bartolucci has been up in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario talking about child prostitution. I'm sure he must feel like this is a telethon, when it comes to this particular legislation. We're hopeful today, right now—aren't we?—that in fact we're going to see the bill pass, but we've been hopeful before. It should go without saying, but I suppose it must be said, that it is critical that this bill not just find its way before this House for second reading debate and votes, but that it go to committee so that some further recommendations that I want to speak about in a moment—that some further action that can be taken is at least considered by the ministry and by the government. Amendments that may be required to make the bill even stronger can be submitted at that time, and perhaps we can actually get this passed. We've certainly been here before, and I hope we don't have to come back again.

I remind the members that this was a bill that was before this House and it died on the order paper when the House prorogued, and of course we're back again with the bill. It's hard to keep up with all the numbers and incarnations that the bill has taken. The member for Sudbury has pointed that out but he has not given up.

I would just like to state the obvious: I think the tributes that have been given to Rick Bartolucci today have been very sincere. I think everybody appreciates the work he's done. It goes without saying that I think the people of Sudbury and the people of this province are well served by this child crusader, Rick Bartolucci.

The point has been raised by the member for Sudbury about the timing of this bill and the delays. You may wonder why we would dwell on this. It is because we cannot have any further delays. Perhaps the government wants to have us shrug our shoulders and say, "Better late than never." But as has been pointed out, based on the Attorney General's own numbers, had this bill been passed expeditiously, had the Bartolucci private member's bill moved beyond committee and gone before this House for third reading debate and passed and become the law of the land, if the Alberta experience is any indication, we could have saved and rescued more than 1,000 children, based on the Alberta numbers. I could do the math, and my math is poor, but you would have saved and rescued more than 1,000 children. Perhaps we should have those 1,000 children, those 1,000 lives, in mind as we move forward with this bill and with this debate and get it to committee and get it before the House for third reading and get it passed.

I suppose I'm delivering this message not only to the Attorney General and members of the House but particularly to the House leader. There are a number of bills that, when the clock is ticking, we know an injustice is served. This is one bill which, again using the Attorney General's own words, is so important that we have to

make sure this one doesn't become expendable, as it has in the past, and if it were not expendable and if it were so important—I think the Attorney General said during debate that it may be the most important matter of business we have ever had before this House. If that was the case, then why didn't it pass in 1998, when it was first introduced? I hope those words of the government are heeded in that regard.

The Attorney General also made reference to what I thought were quite interesting comments about these children going underground. It was interesting for the Attorney General to say that, because the general approach of this government, at least as indicated under the Safe Streets Act, is to push the problem under the rug and throw many kids into the revolving door of the criminal justice system. By the way, I see a lot more squeegee kids on the streets these days. I hope I'm wrong, but I have seen more in the last few weeks than I had seen in the last few months. I hope there's a recognition by this government, and I say this with all sincerity, that we all understand there are people out there who are part of this underground. I almost guarantee you they don't vote; they don't have a fixed residence. They have about four means of earning income, and none of us in this House would approve of them, but for these people it is the way they are earning their income and we ought not to stick our heads into the sand. It's from the drug trade or from the sex trade, it's from petty panhandling and squeegeeing, and it's from theft. As a government, and I can tell you on behalf of the official opposition, we have to do everything we can to enforce the rule of law and let everybody know—yes—that everybody has to obey the law.

1710

At the same time, we also have to recognize that today's squeegee kid may be tomorrow's child prostitute. In this regard, it's stunning—at least from my experience in talking to those who work on the street as social workers, or otherwise, with these kids—the extent to which the sex trade and the drug trade is linked. I don't know if pimps were crackheads first or crackheads were pimps first—I don't know which came before which—but this is a scourge of the worst kind that strikes at the heart of our community. Why? Because these are our children; these are our future. It is incumbent upon us to try and rescue them if we can. Yes, we have laws that must be obeyed, but we have to try and rescue them. The purpose of this bill is to do just that. Surely it is an obligation of government to reach out to those most vulnerable and, in the case of child prostitutes—frankly, living in hell—to pull them out of that. That's the purpose behind this law and for that reason alone it's obviously an important piece of legislation that we want to move through as quickly as possible.

The city that I'm honoured to be a representative in, Toronto, is a place of origin for 53% of the prostitutes in this country. Child prostitution—Rick Bartolucci said this before—is not Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*. Pimps control child prostitutes through battering and drugs and

through alcohol. Child prostitutes are victims of AIDS, of sexually transmitted diseases. They're prey for muggers and rapists and murderers. They've left our society, and it's our job, through this legislation, to give some people out there the tools to bring them back in. They carry the stigma of being prostitutes, the stigma of being outsiders, and I'm thankful to be part of a debate of a bill that's going to bring them back in, I hope, and if the Alberta experience is any indication, bring thousands back into the world that we get to live in.

Private bill imperfections: there's been some discussion of that on the government's side. I would just say, very briefly, that's the purpose of committee. We had the Bartolucci bill before committee, and I would hope with that bill, if that's any experience and if we're going to remember the thousand lives that might have been saved but for the fact that that bill did not forward, we recognize that there are some private member's bills that ought not to be subject to this ongoing political game where you let it pass second reading, let it die and then the government brings it in, because in some cases, and this bill is one of them, that means that lives are lost.

I'd like to make reference to a report from CAVEAT—everybody knows CAVEAT, the victims' group—Vision: Action Today For a Safer Tomorrow. This report was modelled on CAVEAT's nationally acclaimed safety net conference, and in partnership with the Office for Victims of Crime, CAVEAT compiled a final report that was put out this year for discussion on action today with reference to youth strategies and otherwise. I was very privileged and grateful to be a part of a round table discussion that took a day and a half on January 18 of this year. In it we discussed this particular bill. Of course, at the time, Bill 86 was Bill 176, I guess it was. At the time, all the members at the round table, on the recommendation of CAVEAT, were saying, "Hurry, hurry, hurry," with 176. If we'd only known that it was going to die on the books, as Priscilla de Villiers, the president of CAVEAT, said. So the question should not be whether we implement these recommendations but simply when.

By the way, CAVEAT, in its final report, refers to Rick Bartolucci as a children's crusader. These are words that I used, so I'm obviously plagiarizing CAVEAT, as ever.

The first recommendation I'd like to talk about—earlier I made reference to it, and I want to move on to the next. The recommendation from CAVEAT and the Office for Victims of Crime, and this came out of our discussion, was that the government move expeditiously to enact Bill 176. I've spoken to that; I'll move on.

Second, the recommendation was made that the Municipal Amendment Act (Adult Entertainment Parlours), 2000, Bill 146, be brought forward as a companion piece to the bill we're debating today. Again, I think the member for Sudbury made reference to that.

We then talked about the way in which we can try and hit sex trade entrepreneurs where it hurts them the most, that being the pocketbook. Then the following recom-

mendations came forward from that discussion, in particular, in the words of the report, "that the provincial government introduce legislation to amend the Liquor Licence Act to allow for the revocation of a licence to serve liquor where a sex trade entrepreneur has had his adult entertainment parlour licence revoked in relation to that property." I think it's self-evident. The point here is to provide commercial disincentives for a trade that, sadly, is partly driven by enormous greed.

Another recommendation—and, again, I think it's appropriate to read these into the record; I'm not reading them word for word but trying to paraphrase them—is that the government work with the appropriate community stakeholders to "identify the resources, facilities and services required to respond to these children (both during time spent in a secure facility and community aftercare)," and capture those recommendations in regulation by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as set out in section 20 of this bill.

The simple purpose of that is to ensure that this bill is not a dead letter, that in fact we are providing the resources to permit the legal tools to be utilized. If this is just going to sit there and not be used, then it would be the greatest tragedy, giving people the false comfort that something was done about child prostitution when in fact nothing was being done.

Recommendation 2-5 was that resources and services required to respond to the age group particularly at risk, that is, 15-, 16- and 17-year-olds—that the government actively move forward to try and prevent this activity, prevent people from being pulled into the ring of the sex trade, both before and once they are in, through community aftercare, and further, that "these resources and services"—in the words of CAVEAT—"should be strategically and equitably located throughout the province so as to respond to all children at risk in the sex trade."

We then discussed the fact that this bill is going to be applied in communities across the province. This is not an issue that has boundaries. While I've referred to the fact that there are obviously enormous child prostitution figures in the city of Toronto—you know, somebody who may run away from home in Sudbury may find their way down to Toronto—it may start in another city outside of Toronto. There are communities out there that shouldn't have to shoulder the burden, if you like, for fulfilling an obligation placed upon them by the provincial government. In particular, the finding of CAVEAT was that "individual municipal police agencies shouldn't be expected to pick up the tab for things happening beyond their geographical borders. The cost must be borne in such a way as to ensure that no child working in the sex trade in this province will be overlooked."

1720

Therefore, the recommendation was—and it goes without saying that I am strongly supporting these recommendations, not just because I had an opportunity to participate in the round table, but above and beyond that. Obviously, a lot of work happened before that round table that CAVEAT undertook and the Office for Victims

of Crime undertook, which makes these recommendations carry an enormous amount of force. I support them wholeheartedly.

The recommendation was that a provincial child sexual exploitation unit comprised of police officers from the Toronto Police Service and the OPP and assorted regional police services be created. I urge the government to act on this now.

Lastly—and I'm not going to go through the entire set of recommendations—that the child exploitation unit be followed up in turn with the appropriate resources and specialties being invested, if you like, in the Attorney General's office, through prosecutors; in particular, to move forward in conjunction with then Bills 146 and 176, that this child exploitation unit have all child exploitation cases prosecuted either by the existing specialized child abuse prosecution unit or a new specialized unit, the thinking being, "Why on earth should we try to reinvent the wheel in each case when we do have people out there who are experts in the area?"

I'm not going to go through the whole report; I'll stop there. I would recommend that obviously the government and everybody in Ontario review the many recommendations in this report. For those of you who are Internet-inclined and reading Hansard, you can find it on CAVEAT's Web site and download it from there.

I will conclude my comments by saying congratulations again to the member from Sudbury and to all members in this House who have been fighting hard to get this passed. Let's hope this actually becomes the law of the land sooner rather than later.

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): When I first started to serve as a board member of CAS 25 years ago, there was no such thing as sexual abuse of children; at least that's what we thought. When it did happen, everything stopped in the office, because it was so rare. What we now know is that we didn't detect it, people didn't report it. We, civilized society, couldn't believe that was actually going on.

We've gone from one incident in a month to several a day; that has been the change. Are people behaving worse than 25 years ago? No, I think there's better reporting happening on it.

My wife and family and I have fostered for about 15 years, and we have found that a very gratifying experience for all of us but also a very difficult experience because it has made us aware of how part of society lives and what part of society does to children. It has at times made us cynical, because at times there's a very thin veneer on our humanity, and when you remove that veneer, it is not very pretty in some cases. So it has been an unpleasant and an extremely pleasant experience at the same time.

I also would add my compliments to the member from Sudbury for what is probably best called the Bartolucci bill. I appreciate this government putting this one forward. I quite frankly would have preferred that they had gone with the member from Sudbury's private bill, because that private member's bill was a product of

consultation and refinement. Three years of work went into it to make it right.

This moves us back to square one. We're still going in the right direction, but the government has taken a step back by not benefiting from what has happened to this stage in the last three years.

I do struggle a little bit with this government suddenly becoming the guardian of children who have been sexually abused. If we look at this government's treatment of people who have been abused in the institutions in this province, it has been dismal—extremely, extremely uncompassionate treatment of those victims.

On the government side, the member from Ottawa West has attempted to get a bill through asking for an inquiry into an area where the community believes there has been abuse. Now, if there has been abuse and allegations against someone, the best thing that can happen, from that person's viewpoint and the community's viewpoint, is to hold an inquiry and clear the air, and yet for some reason that's not happening. So there are potential predators out there who continue to enjoy immunity. This government says it wants to protect children, yet we've not seen it want to protect children in the Cornwall area.

The sexual abuse of children is not a simple matter to discuss; in fact, it's a matter we as a society don't want to. There is a perception that the abuse is often done by strangers, and it is on occasion. The exploitation may be done by friends, and it is on occasion. We've seen this government introduce a bill to deal with sexual abuse and exploitation by teachers. Do teachers ever abuse? Yes. But I would suggest to you that there has been far more detection and reporting of abuse by teachers than by any other profession. Significant numbers of the reports that come into children's aid societies come from teachers who go out of their way to determine why there's a problem in a child's life and to report it. Rather than hound the teachers in requiring a teacher with 30 years' experience to have a police check, we should be working with the teachers and commending them and educating them on the detection of child abuse. They spend a considerable amount of time with our children and are front-line workers in that area and deserve the recognition for it.

Incredibly, unfortunately, unbelievably, most sexual abuse originates with a family member or caregiver. That's something we don't really want to understand or even talk about.

When we first started to foster, we said, "We will not foster children who have been sexually abused," because we did not want our own children, our birth children, our adopted children, to be exposed to what these victims had been exposed to. Ironically, the majority of children we have fostered have been sexually abused, and we have learned that the children don't want to talk about it. The children recognize that something that happened in their life is wrong and it's not an experience they want to discuss with anyone. It has altered their very fabric, but it is not something they want to talk about.

Statistics tell us that children who are sexually abused have a far increased possibility of being involved in the

sex trade. That is because, I think, they have lost their childhood. There are all kinds of physical and emotional things that happen to these children, but in some sense I think the worst thing is that their childhood is removed forever. You cannot unremember that experience, and so those children, no matter what their age, will never be able to experience what we believe is a normal childhood, and that causes them in too many cases to go down a road in life that's going to be very difficult and unproductive for them.

We have a lot of conversation with other foster parents; we have experience with our own. We are aware of children as young as eight months—and people tend to think I mean eight years, but eight months—who have been sexually abused. We don't understand that. I don't understand that. An animal wouldn't do that to their children, but we have humans doing that to their children. We have worked with children of four and five who have been involved in video productions. Every modern technology all too often is used first of all by the pornographic industry, whether it be the Internet, whether it be video cameras. Video cameras enable the easy production of films that are indescribably evil. We have worked with children of four who have had that. We are familiar with children whose parents have rented them out to friends and to others, parents who have decided that their own needs are paramount and put their needs ahead of their child's needs. These are the children we're talking about protecting in this bill.

We have worked with teenagers who, when you talk to them, you cannot comprehend where their sense of right and wrong came from. But as each of us prides ourselves on parents who have instilled in us what is right and what is the correct and ethical thing to do, if children from birth are raised in an environment that has the wrong ethics, their reaction is to latch on and hold as strong to those wrong ethics as to right ethics.

1730

This bill appears to be written by a lawyer, where I would suggest there would have been advantages to talk to children who have been victims and front-line workers who work with them. This bill talks about taking children and moving them to a place of safety, but who other than this government would call the place of safety a place of confinement and that their stay there will be a "period of confinement," that the victim will be confined? The language in this bill disturbs me a great deal.

We need to think about these actions from the viewpoint of the child. As things stand in Ontario, if a child is a victim in a home, whether it is a natural parent or whether it is a caregiver of another sort, they invariably say to the child, "If anyone ever finds out, if you ever tell anyone what you're doing, they'll come and take you away." You know, that's exactly what happens. If a child discloses to a teacher, the police and children's aid come and take the child away. The predator gets to stay in the house with all their furniture and everything, and the child is removed to a house of strangers, maybe at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. Try to put yourself into that

child's mind on who is being punished. To the child, they're being punished. That child is taken out and leaves all of their clothes, all of their personal possessions. They leave family pets. They may leave brothers and sisters, but they leave their parents. In most cases, they will never see the family pet and they will never see their possessions again. From the child's viewpoint, I can assure you they feel they've been victimized again. We believe we've saved them from the right situation, and we have, but we've handled it in a manner such that we victimize them again. The predator, he or she, gets to stay in the house and enjoy all the fruits that are in that house, while the child is taken away.

We have fostered a large number of children who have had some pretty horrible things done to them, but we've never fostered a child who hasn't loved the parent, even the parent who's done those things to them. Not once have we fostered a child who has hated their parent for what they've done. The child has tried to excuse, has rationalized, has said, "I deserved it," or "She deserved it. She didn't do the dishes, so she deserved it." The children will rationalize a reason to believe that their parents have done the right thing and are good parents, even when they're not.

These children are taken and put in a place of safety. I agree with that. The bill as proposed from the member for Sudbury said that they would be there for 72 hours. The bill proposed from this government is 30 days. I do not believe you should go in and remove children from a house unless you have absolute evidence that it's going on. I would suggest that evidence can be compiled and put together in 72 hours. You be an eight-year-old and yanked out of the house for 30 days to live with strangers. We foster. We know a lot of foster parents. I do not know a bad foster home, but from the children's viewpoint, they've been sentenced to a foster home and they've been sentenced to a place of safety. I would suggest 72 hours is far more humane for the child than 30 days. The priority is either to confirm it happened or return that child to that environment. I believe 72 hours is a much more humane approach. It's too bad we couldn't have built on that other bill.

What happens from the child's viewpoint? The child has to go to court. First of all, the child may go for a medical. We hear mention on the government side of the medical services that are available. There are some outstanding people working in the medical system who are trained to work with these child victims, but there are others who in fact, from the child's viewpoint, commit another assault on them—not a pleasant experience. Not many of us enjoy going to a doctor, and I can assure you that for a child who's been yanked out of a place and taken to a hospital, it's a pretty cold, scary experience. We need far better services to deal with these child victims when they're at the medical examination.

The court system itself is extremely frustrating and nerve-racking for children. If in fact it is a parent who has committed this offence, there will also rightfully be a trial for that parent. It is extremely difficult for these

children to sit in a courtroom and testify against their parent, whether it be a mother or father. In our experience, we have seen abuse by both. The court systems are struggling to deal with that. We have talked to children who have refused to testify because their hope is to go back home. They want to do what they have to do to bring their family fabric back together, even though you and I know it's not in their best interests. I agree that they should not go home, but the children want to return home. We need to allow the court system to recognize that these children are not comfortable, are not prepared to testify against a parent, because they want the family to get better and they want to go back home.

The court systems still have a ways to go. I can give you some outstanding examples of judges and crown attorneys in this province who have modified the system to deal with it. There are still loopholes. I'm aware of cases where the predator in fact fired the lawyer and handled his own case, forcing the victim to be questioned by the predator; and the victim refused to answer the questions, refused to testify. We still have a long way to go to make that system work so that the children can testify in comfort.

When all of this is going on, what that child needs is counselling and advice, and that does not exist in this province. The services are not there. These victims may wait a year before they get their first appointment to talk to a counsellor about what they've experienced.

As I go back to the beginning, it is the tearing away of the childhood of that child. We need to strive as much as we can to put that child back in the position they were in beforehand. And that quite frankly needs better counselling than most foster parents, than most caregivers, can provide. There is an urgent, vital need for increased mental health services for children in this province.

I look at this bill—and, again, I have a great deal of respect for lawyers, but I would be delighted if a group of victims could sit down and read through it.

“Notice to child.

“(2) The society shall ensure that the child is informed in writing before the show cause hearing of,

“(a) the reasons for the apprehension;

“(b) the time and place” etc.

We're talking about victims of four and five years old. We need advocates within the legal system that may be lawyers but talk as child care workers. These children need an advocate to work them through the system. What we're seeing happen in this province, if I read the paper correctly, is that a large number of lawyers are saying that they will no longer serve as children's lawyers because this government has not increased the funding in years and years and years. What they're paying now per hour won't even cover office expenses. So a bill that sounds good works only if the resources are going to be in place to make it happen. This government has no track record of making the resources available for these children.

I tell you again and again that there needs to be a viewpoint presented in this bill that represents the

children. When we look at the schools for the deaf in this province and the abuse that has taken place there—absolutely nothing. I know this government likes to talk money. These children want to become productive citizens in Ontario. They do not want to follow the sex trade.

1740

There is a certain craziness in our experiences in that the children know it's wrong and the adults don't. I don't understand that. When a four-year-old explains to us what is wrong—they know what the parent did is wrong and the parent doesn't know it's wrong—there is something sadly wrong with our society. It clearly needs a bill.

I am pleased to support this bill because I believe that when it gets to committee, there will be an opportunity to make it into a good bill. There's an excellent foundation here; it's not inherently bad. But I believe it needs to go to public hearings. It needs to go to public consultation so that a bill is produced that doesn't victimize victims but helps to cure victims.

The Acting Speaker: Comments and questions?

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I will be speaking to this bill upon the completion of comments and questions. I am going to be using all of the one hour that's available to me, but I want to make it very clear that there are other New Democrats who want to address the bill as well. New Democrats have expressed great concern about the issue that the bill addresses. In fact, New Democrats were very involved in the private member's bill that went to committee and were eager to participate in that committee process and the public process around the bill.

At the same time, I want you to know that New Democrats here at Queen's Park have carefully read this bill and analyzed and debated it. We are not uncritical of the bill. We have already made it quite clear, in response to the introduction of this bill, that on second reading we would not be opposing it, that we look forward to it going to committee. But I'm going to tell you now that there are issues around the bill that I and my colleagues want to address in a critical way. There are things we're going to say, I suggest to you, about the bill and about the issues that the bill relates to that may not be very popular in the context of the incredible tragedy of young people being assaulted, being victimized as sex workers, as prostitutes, and as exotic dancers, if that's not the inappropriate word in reference to young women and men working in adult entertainment parlours.

We're looking forward to the debate. It obviously won't be until tomorrow when the bill is called again that the bulk of my comments will be made. I tell you as well that not all of them will be received with 100% enthusiasm but—

The Acting Speaker: The member's time has expired. Comments and questions?

Mr Tilson: I would like to comment with respect to the three members of the Liberal Party who spoke with respect to this bill.

I'm pleased that the New Democratic Party will be supporting this bill. I understand they will have some comments on it, because it is complicated. It's complicated legally, it's complicated socially. We found that out. This has been discussed in the past.

The Liberals spent much time talking about who wrote the bill. Was it a social worker? Was it a lawyer? Is Mr Bartolucci's bill better than the government's bill? All these are fine questions. The problem is we've got social issues that go right across this province. We could all tell stories from our own ridings where there are runaway children. They've run away from their homes for different reasons. Maybe it's abuse, maybe it's something else, and that's yet a whole other issue that needs to be dealt with.

The fact is that we've got a complicated issue where children have been forced into the sex trade and all the different types of sordid things that some of us have talked about in the debates that they are literally forced into. So we are not talking about people who are committing crimes. We're talking about victims, and that's what these children are.

There is no question that in our presentation to the House we've talked about a myriad of services that I think the state, the government of Ontario, is going to have to look at. We've talked about drug and alcohol counselling. In other words, once these children are detained—to use the words of the member from Prince Edward-Hastings; I believe that's his riding—we do have to talk about a number of things. Children who have drug and alcohol counselling, we need to deal with that. We've got to talk about the specialized legal services such as the witness protection program. We've got to talk about mental health services. All of these things I know will come forward in the debates and the committee hearings as they proceed.

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I'm delighted to make a few comments on the previous speaker from Sudbury, who has initiated a lot of the work and over years has put forward passionately, clearly and convincingly the need for this kind of legislation. So I'm delighted to see that the government in fact acknowledges that and is picking this up and, I hope, will listen very carefully to what has been said by the member from St Paul's and the member from Prince Edward-Hastings, who, I thought, spoke with conviction, from his heart and from his experience.

I was fortunate enough to spend almost five years working for Children's Hospital as the president of a foundation. It would break your heart, believe me, to see some of the situations in which some youngsters find themselves. I want to underline what the member from Prince Edward-Hastings said: that the little kids are still there to protect their abusers, because often it is a relative, an uncle or a parent, or an older brother or sister, whatever it may be, because their little hearts are looking for harmony. They don't like discord. They tend to think that they did something wrong because some parent or some adult has told them, "You're a bad boy" or,

"You're a bad little girl" or whatever it may be. So this bill is extremely important. I hope to speak to this when it comes forward again. I believe it's the kind of issue that crosses all party lines and that it is incumbent upon us as adults to help protect children. I'm sure that's what we will do at the end of the day, and I hope we do it in the very finest tradition of this House.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I'll be speaking further to this bill when it comes up for debate again. I don't think it's any surprise to this House or anybody watching—everybody's aware by now—that I, along with many members of this House, have a particular interest in this issue. I was pleased to hear three Liberal members stand today and talk about their concern. I congratulate all of the members who are working together to try to not only help these children—in my view, what we have to do is work together to try to eradicate child prostitution not just here, but across the world.

When you read the heartbreaking stories of the impact child prostitution has on those children who are either forced into prostitution, or—because they are trying to survive in situations where they are starving and their families are starving—feel forced into prostitution to be able to eat and feed their families, that is the reality, here and in other parts of the world. This is an opportunity for us to work together to try to deal with this, not just in a piecemeal fashion, but to look at the conditions that are created that force children into prostitution; to look at what we need to do, the kinds of programs that we need to put in place to help these children. Again, I would say, not just here in Ontario, but let us open our hearts and our minds to the conditions in the world that create the situations that we're talking about here today.

The Acting Speaker: The member's time has expired. The member for Sudbury has two minutes to respond.

Mr Bartolucci: I'd like to thank all the members who took part in the discussion today over the course of the last hour and eight minutes. Thank you very much for the input we've received. It's very, very important to understand that this truly is a non-partisan political issue and it has to be addressed as such. Let's not make the mistakes of the past again. Let's in fact work in a non-partisan way to quickly get this bill to committee, to make the modifications that we on this side of the House believe it needs so it will become a workable, meaningful bill, a bill we can all be committed to.

1750

It disturbs me, when I remember the government in the 2000 budget committing \$8 million to work with Save the Children Canada, to find out that nothing happened on the part of the government with the exception of some planning meetings. It never moved beyond the planning stage. For too long, too many children have been sexually exploited and abused. The time has come for that to stop. You certainly have the commitment of the Liberal caucus today that we will work with the government to make the bill a stronger bill, a more meaningful bill, a workable bill and a practical bill, but a

bill that understands that those who choose to exploit children through sex deserve to be punished in a meaningful way and in a severe way. One part of that punishment is the revoking of the driver's licence. But I say to the government that we must be much tougher on pimps and johns than this bill spells out. I know when it gets to committee, we will have full debate on those ideas which need recommendations.

The Acting Speaker: At about 20 to five, this person forgot that there should be comments and questions after the government's leadoff. I will think of a proper punishment for myself, but I won't tell anybody what it is. But I'd like to rectify that, so we will go back and pretend that the member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford has just finished the government's hour and we will have comments and questions. We'll start with, of course, the Liberal caucus.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane): Thank you very much for correcting that previous error. It gives more of us an opportunity to stand in our place and speak in support of this bill. I think I'd like to start, anyway, on a bit of a personal note and re-thank the member for Sudbury, Rick Bartolucci, who brought this concern to all of our attention, for working very, very hard at promoting the goals of this bill to protect children from sexual exploitation and for working very diligently in showing the value that, when you get elected here—and even if you don't make it to be on the government side, even as an opposition member, if you work very hard and pursue something you feel very strongly about, you can make things happen. You can work co-operatively with your government colleagues. Maybe sometimes you've got to do a little bit of hard cajoling and some convincing in the beginning, but when you've got a good, sound idea that would make good, sound law, a government of any stripe would listen to that and work with the opposition of any stripe and come together to form a bill that really has to happen and is long overdue in this province.

I hope the government members are listening to the member from Sudbury. He still sees this as a co-operative effort, and we would hope the government members in that committee would work co-operatively among all the members in the committee to do an even better job, to put all our ideas together to make this the very best bill and the very best law we could make it in this province in order to protect our children.

I think all of us in this House have worked in various areas to protect children, and certainly protecting children from sexual exploitation has got to be a very laudable goal.

The Acting Speaker: The member's time has expired. The Chair recognizes the member for—

Mr Kormos: Down there in Niagara. The heart of the Niagara region.

The Acting Speaker: Niagara Centre.

Mr Kormos: I appreciate the opportunity given to us by the Speaker for some brief questions and, I suppose more significantly, comments. I have to correct myself

again, I suppose, because it's not going to be today that I'm commencing my comments on this; it will probably be tomorrow. As we understand, the bill is going to be called again.

I understand the call for speedy passage of the bill. I understand that. But at the same time, let's understand that that tendency for speedy passage has become increasingly prevalent around here. I'm telling you, and I ask the members of this assembly to bear with me, that this bill warrants some serious discussion, and I'm not talking about partisan debate, please. I think people know when I'm going to be partisan. I'll make the indication loud and clear. But I'm saying that the bill purports to address a very serious social ill, and I suggest to you it goes far beyond—and this is where the debate has to spread—the mere phenomenon of children and very young people prostituting themselves and being victimized by predators out there on the streets of Toronto—yes, not only Toronto but across the province.

Ms Churley points out the phenomenon of sex tourism. There are places in the world that are being promoted, in however clandestine a way, as a destination of choice for people who want to exploit, assault and sexually abuse youngsters. The number of those places is increasing. They're no longer just the Third World. But that bears some considerable comment as well as to why and who is—

The Acting Speaker: The member's time has expired. The member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): It is an honour for me to speak on this bill. It's a very important bill, and I'm very pleased that the Attorney General brought it forward. Even though every member is saying that we want to do our due diligence, it's a very important bill and we certainly want to bring it to a speedy implementation.

I know we are looking forward to some kind of hearings on it. I believe we must look at the root cause of this social evil, where children are pushed into prostitution. I believe very much, like most of the members believe and most of the public believes, that children should be allowed to enjoy their childhood. All these people who exploit them, the pimps or the johns or whatever you want to call them, certainly should be dealt with by the full force of the law.

Like I said, in the hearings we want to look at the root cause: kids running away and coming to the big cities, not having—I don't know whether you need more social programs, I do not have the answers, but we certainly want to have laws that are strong enough to make sure there's a deterrent, that these things are not allowed to happen. We should perhaps have more—I don't know—social programs, more schooling, more whatever. Those children should be in schools, enjoying their careers rather than getting into this program.

I certainly want to support this bill. I know that everybody on this side of the House, and I believe everybody on the other side of the House, is going to be sup-

porting it as well. It's indeed an honour for me to speak on this. I'm looking forward to the debate.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Like many members of the Legislature, I think the opportunity we have to comment on this important piece of legislation is something we want to take advantage of. If I may, I want to just once again thank Rick Bartolucci, our member from Sudbury, who has been absolutely instrumental in making this legislation come forward. Certainly he has been working for many, many years to bring this issue forward. There are many amendments that he thinks must be brought forward. I think it's becoming very clear to all of us that indeed we want to pursue this in the most serious way, but it's crucial that we have public hearings attached to this piece of legislation. Everyone who has spoken has acknowledged the seriousness of it.

I was impressed listening to my colleagues previously, in particular Mr Parsons from Prince Edward-Hastings in terms of his personal experience in being a foster parent and his understanding of how children really are, and obviously the member from St Paul's as well, who spoke as part of our leadoff. I think it's terribly important that legislation such as this be properly put forward. There need to be amendments; there needs to be an understanding.

My colleague Mr Bartolucci is the one who has been fighting this battle, working with the right people from the very beginning. I know he worked with the authorities in Sudbury and has the kind of insight that is going to very much help us make sure this legislation is properly put forward.

All I can tell you is that this is an issue that makes us all sit back and think very seriously about how our society is formed and how we act in our society. It's hard to imagine that there is a situation as common as this where children are sexually exploited. It's something we like to imagine doesn't really happen, but the truth is it

does happen. I think it's extraordinarily important that we do the right thing and bring forward legislation that really is going to be helpful and make a real difference.

I would implore the government to listen to my colleague from Sudbury and those who want to have public hearings and those who want to bring the appropriate amendments forward.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey has two minutes to respond.

Mr Tilson: I would like to respond on behalf of the Attorney General and the member from Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford to the comments that were made by the various members from the opposition side. Unless I've misinterpreted what is being said, it now appears there is going to be unanimity as far as this bill is concerned, although many members have some concerns with some of the specifics in the bill, and these will be revealed as the debate unfolds.

I think we are all concerned with the issue of sexual exploitation of children, and that's basically what we're trying to resolve in this bill. The bill is essentially the same as the Alberta legislation, although there are some differences which have been indicated, but again, we're talking about the issue of children in need and how we need to break them away from the people who use and exploit them. That's what we're trying to do, to get at the predators—the johns and the pimps—who are after these young children.

As the opening volley from the government members with respect to the debate, I look forward to hearing more comments from all sides of the House, for and against this bill, but I'm pleased that there appears to be unanimity as to the general principles of this bill.

The Acting Speaker: I thank you for your indulgence. It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 1803.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
39	2063	1	37	purpose, of strength of heart and of spirit.
39	2070	2	22	will add no deeper darkness to a night already devoid

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Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		
Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)		

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

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

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

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

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Gerard Kennedy
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Alvin Curling
Gilles Bisson, Alvin Curling, Gerard Kennedy,
Frank Mazzilli, Norm Miller, John R. O'Toole,
Steve Peters, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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

Chair / Président: Marcel Beaubien
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Doug Galt
Marcel Beaubien, David Christopherson,
Doug Galt, Ernie Hardeman, Monte Kwinter,
John O'Toole, Gerry Phillips, Joseph Spina
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

General government / Affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Steve Gilchrist
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller
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Steve Gilchrist, Dave Levac, Rosario Marchese,
Norm Miller, Marilyn Mushinski
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: James J. Bradley
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vacant
James J. Bradley, Leona Dombrowsky, Michael Gravelle,
Bert Johnson, Tony Martin, Frank Mazzilli,
Jerry J. Ouellette, Bob Wood
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales

Chair / Présidente: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Carl DeFaria
Toby Barrett, Marcel Beaubien, Michael Bryant,
Carl DeFaria, Garry J. Guzzo, Peter Kormos,
Lyn McLeod, Tina R. Molinari
Clerk / Greffier: Tom Prins

Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative

Chair / Présidente: Margaret Marland
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vacant
Ted Arnott, Marilyn Churley, Caroline Di Cocco,
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Margaret Marland, Julia Munro,
Jerry J. Ouellette, Joseph N. Tascona
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Public accounts / Comptes publics

Chair / Président: John Gerretsen
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John Hastings, Shelley Martel, Bart Maves,
Julia Munro, Richard Patten
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**Regulations and private bills /
Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Sources de carburants de remplacement**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Marie Bountrogianni
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Galt, Steve Gilchrist, John Hastings,
John R. O'Toole, Jerry J. Ouellette, Ernie Parsons
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

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