



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

Third Session, 37th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 16 October 2002

Mercredi 16 octobre 2002

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 16 October 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 16 octobre 2002

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CROP INSURANCE

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I rise today to bring to the attention of this Legislature an issue of extreme importance and concern to the cash croppers of this province, in particular, the soybean growers of Ontario.

For three straight years, Ontario has seen adverse weather conditions for growing grains and oilseeds. This crop year, 2002, we have witnessed an extreme lack of rainfall, particularly in the southwest, the grain basket of this province.

Soybeans presently being harvested out of the fields are discoloured green. This is a result of the plant shutting itself down prematurely due to a lack of moisture, trapping the chlorophyll in the seed. This is a weather-related issue.

Crop insurance, administered by Agricorp, is supposed to be a safety net that insures yields due to weather-related factors. Farmers attempting to sell these beans are being discounted, though, up to \$80 a tonne, with no coverage or compensation. Agricorp is dancing on this issue. They are insisting the farmers sell these beans at exorbitant discounts. At an \$80-per-tonne penalty, the crushers are stealing these beans.

In its press release last week, Agricorp continues to use the doublespeak that they cover insured perils. They refuse to recognize that the supposed grade discount is not classified as an insurable peril.

I am calling on this government, and in particular the Minister of Agriculture, to recognize that this is solely due to adverse weather conditions. The minister must demand that Agricorp act in the best interests of the farmers of this province who in good faith paid their crop insurance premiums, believing they had coverage for adverse crop results due to weather.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): Every year children's aid societies in Ontario provide substitute care to 29,000 abused and/or neglected children. As well, over 7,000 foster families in Ontario

have stepped forward to provide care. Just last year, the Children's Aid Society of Haldimand-Norfolk served 1,900 families, while 138 children were in care. In Brant, 260 children were under CAS care in the year 2001.

Protection of children has long been a concern in my area, as with other members of this assembly. The Children's Aid Society of Haldimand-Norfolk is a product of the unification of both the Norfolk CAS and the Haldimand county CAS, drawing on a proud history dating back over 100 years. The Children's Aid Society of Brant celebrated its 109th year of operation recently, while the native services branch of the children's aid society was established in 1977 to serve both the Six Nations and the New Credit communities.

October has been designated as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, and Canadian Foster Family Week begins on the 20th. At this time, it would serve us well to look to the motto of this year's 10th annual campaign, "It Shouldn't Hurt to be a Child." I ask all in the Legislature here and across the province to recognize the selfless efforts of our children's aid societies.

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): "Drug fights blindness but Ontario won't pay." So screamed the headline of the Kingston Whig-Standard this past Saturday.

Last May, health minister Tony Clement announced that the government would fund a new treatment for macular degeneration called Visudyne. Visudyne is very costly. It costs \$3,000 per treatment, but most people need about five treatments, so the cost is closer to \$15,000.

What the minister failed to mention in his announcement was that a new Visudyne policy included strict eligibility criteria that effectively exclude 80% to 90% of the patients who were candidates for treatment. As Gordon Currie found out: "It sounded so good on TV when Clement came out and said the government was going to cover it. It made them look pretty good—and it's a lie." That's a quote.

Sally Barnes, a former Harris Conservative candidate who's 88-year-old mother has received three treatments, at a cost of \$9,000 to her, stated: "If you're going blind and you don't have the money, you're screwed."

Dr Alan Cruess, a leading Kingston ophthalmologist actively involved in vision and seniors' organizations,

says, "It's a real two-tier question. There's a group of people who are falling through the cracks absolutely."

Sally Barnes summed it up when she said, "I don't go out of my way to embarrass the government, but the Visudyne policy is morally and politically stupid."

This is no way to treat our elderly, who are mainly struck with this condition. Minister, do the right thing and cover the treatment for all who need it. Surely it's inexcusable for people to lose their vision because of your inadequate health care provisions.

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): I'm happy to report to this Legislature and Ontarians watching at home that the facts are finally emerging about Kyoto. According to the federal government's own estimates released last week on their Web site, www.climatechange.gc.ca, the Liberals have finally admitted that Kyoto will hurt Ontario families and kill jobs.

How many jobs, you ask? Well, according to the federal government's Web site, we will have between 61,000 and 244,000 fewer jobs because of Kyoto. Let there be no doubt, Kyoto is a flawed accord. In addition to killing nearly a quarter of a million jobs, the federal government admitted that the Kyoto Protocol will cause our economy to shrink between 0.4% and 0.7%.

As if killing jobs and shrinking the economy was not enough, last week we were told that hard-working families will have to bear the burden of Kyoto through increased home heating bills. The government also acknowledged on their Web site that every household in Canada will have to pay between \$1,300 and \$1,700 in taxes each and every year to cover the cost of implementing Kyoto.

The true impact of Kyoto is difficult and nearly impossible to accurately measure. This is compounded by a federal government that has shown itself incapable of accurately projecting program costs.

I urge our members on both sides of this House to review the facts on Kyoto and join with me in working toward a made-in-Canada solution which will keep our taxes low and our jobs right here in Ontario.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): It is one of the great frustrations of all northwestern Ontario residents that the Harris-Eves government shows such a lack of support for desperately needed highway improvements in our part of the province.

Despite a huge increase in traffic volume, much of it commercial, and increased road closures that halt all traffic going across the country, we have seen no commitment to moving forward on the four-laning of Highway 11/17 between Thunder Bay and Nipigon.

In the past week, we've experienced a number of serious accidents on that stretch of road, one that resulted in a fatality. I echo the comments of many of my con-

stituents when I wonder aloud how many tragedies it will take before the government recognizes the need to move ahead with this vital project.

What we do know is that the government continues to shortchange northwestern Ontario when funding allocations are announced each year. We simply do not get our fair share of the capital funds for highway improvement that should be coming our way. As a result, even vital rehabilitation projects like the upgrading of Highway 584 between Geraldton and Nakina, as well as crucially needed passing lanes, are being put on the back burner.

I say to the Premier, who publicly spoke about the importance of four-laning during his most recent visit to Thunder Bay, and to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, who we expect to advocate on our behalf, that our needs cannot continue to be ignored. By providing a fair share of the highways budget to our region we can move forward on the four-laning, as well as our other vital needs. People in northwestern Ontario deserve a safe, first-class highway system, and it's a legitimately achievable goal if the province provides us with our fair share of funds. We will not give up as we deserve nothing less than that.

1340

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): The government's recent decision to fully fund the operating deficit of the Sensenbrenner Hospital in Kapuskasing is one that now must clearly apply to all other Ontario hospitals with operating deficits.

This includes the operating deficit of the Sudbury Regional Hospital. Our hospital has recently undergone an operating and capital review, and the report of the steering committee is now in the hands of the government. It's important to note that the hospital board itself requested the operating review many months ago.

Our operating deficit is significant, and has been for some time, because we are not funded as we need to be to offer important health care services to residents from Sudbury and across northeastern Ontario. The government must accept this fact and commit to increasing the operating budget of the Sudbury Regional Hospital from now on, but the government also has a clear obligation to pay off the current operating deficit, just as the government has done in Kapuskasing.

Further, this obligation extends beyond northern hospitals because the money used to assist Sensenbrenner comes from the Ministry of Health. This means that the 119 other Ontario hospitals that currently have operating deficits must have these covered too. The Ontario Hospital Association says that the current deficits of these hospitals is in the order of \$500 million. They are waiting for relief too.

Given that the government made its announcement in Kapuskasing in mid-September, other Ontario hospitals

should demand the Ministry of Health come to their aid now. There is no excuse for the ministry not to.

CLEAN WATER PROJECT

Mr Bob Wood (London West): I rise today to tell the members of the House about the Clean Water Project tour in which I recently participated. It was sponsored by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

The Clean Water Project offers technical and financial assistance to improve and protect water quality on farms and other rural lands throughout Middlesex, Oxford and Perth counties, the cities of London and Stratford, and the town of St Marys. These local municipalities, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's healthy futures for Ontario agriculture program, are offering cost-sharing grants to qualified landowners for best management practices that improve ground and surface water quality. Financial assistance ranges from 50% to 70% depending on the project.

Farmers must have an approved environmental farm plan in place in order to receive Clean Water Project funding. The farm plan helps landowners to assess their farms' environmental strengths, identify areas of environmental concern and set realistic goals to improve conditions.

Since the Clean Water Project's launch in September 2001, over 400 projects have been approved. The project has so far been funded to 2004. The Clean Water Project's investment of \$1.4 million has generated \$3.25 million worth of work in the local farming community. Applications have been received for each project area, but the greatest interest has been in manure spreading equipment modification, septic system upgrades, fragile land retirement—tree planting—and clean water diversions. The healthy futures program is on track to achieve the 10-year goal set out in their healthy future's submission.

I know all members will join with me in congratulating the authority, its steering committee and the administrative staff of the Clean Water Project for a job being done well.

DOCTOR SHORTAGE

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): Medical students from across the province came to Queen's Park last week with a strong message: Ontario needs 1,600 more physicians and yet this government is making it very difficult for students, particularly those from low and middle incomes, to attend medical school.

This is especially true for students from rural areas. Let me tell you about Anne Conlin. She is from the town of Ailsa Craig. There are no doctors in Anne's town. Her family is not wealthy. Anne worked two full-time jobs to pay for her undergraduate tuition. At the same time, she achieved the competitive marks to get into medical school. She was prepared to pay for her medical tuition until the Harris and Eves government came to power and

deregulated tuition. It went up 175%. It is now \$15,000 a year, and that's just tuition; room and board, of course, are extra. Anne and other medical students now have excessive bank loans.

Other potential medical students in Anne's town ignored medical school altogether because of these high costs and went into other fields—a town that has no doctors. OSAP only allows for \$4,500 a year for tuition even though tuition is now up to \$15,000.

As well, medical students wanted me to correct a misperception about free tuition announced in this government's budget. There is no free tuition for medical students agreeing to practise in rural and other underserved areas. The government offers a fraction of the cost of becoming a doctor. We need 1,600 more doctors in the province, particularly in the rural areas. Instead of making it easier for students to go to medical school, this government is making it easy only for the rich to go to medical school.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): We'll wait until the government House leader is done.

VISITORS

Hon David Turnbull (Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation): On a point of order: I would like everybody to welcome visitors from Gordon A. Brown school who are in the gallery today. One of our pages, Rachel Stark, is from that school.

EVENTS IN NIPISSING

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): Today I would like to bring to the attention of the Legislature a couple of events that took place in my riding of Nipissing this past Thanksgiving weekend. The Krause Equestrian Centre and Sweet Hope therapeutic riding program had their official grand opening this past weekend and were very well received by many people in Powassan, in particular the children.

The owners of this organization, Alvin and Ellen Krause, are truly amazing people. They mortgaged their farm to help children in need. This is truly a selfless act. I was very impressed with the services that were offered to children in need and would like to congratulate Alvin and Ellen Krause.

Also, the Jocko Point volunteer fire department had its open house this past Saturday and it proved to be a very worthwhile event. It completed Fire Prevention Week. Adults and children were invited to the fire station to meet the fire team, tour the facility, and watch films on fire safety.

This fire station has come a long way from when it first began. At one time all the firefighters had to work with was a portable pump and a trailer. They were outfitted with used coats, boots and helmets. A pumper was loaned to their department courtesy of the First Nation band in return for fire protection of the native home on

Jocko Point Road and Margaret Drive. Currently the department has its own tanker and pumper and is outfitted with new uniforms.

I'd like to say hello to all those who volunteer at the Jocko Point fire department. They are: Norm, Barry, Ken, Leo, Chris, Andy, Joan, Pudge, Tom, Noreen, Pat, Denise, Ed, Doug, Karen, Terry and Sharon. Well done.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Could I ask just the government benches, where there are a number of meetings going on with members standing, to please take your seat or take the discussion outside. It would be much appreciated.

At the Speaker's discretion, I'll recognize the member for Ottawa-Vanier for a statement.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES

Mrs Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): Three weeks ago Stats Canada published recent statistics concerning violence toward women. In spite of the fact that the crime rate in general has decreased, the number of homicides committed on women by men has increased considerably, especially in Ontario.

Je trouve que c'est une tache à la réputation de l'Ontario.

Violence towards women is still a major concern of those who strive to assist them. While it is true that this government recently announced \$21.4 million in this respect, that money is earmarked mostly for cosmetic uses, such as building repairs, ramps and many other things, for the too few existing shelters.

Real service is required. Women who leave violent spouses suffer from a lack of specialized services: no affordable housing, difficulty in obtaining legal aid and ridiculously low social assistance. Consequently, they and their unfortunate children sink further and further into poverty and misery.

It is high time that this government takes appropriate measures in the prevention of violence towards women and gives real assistance to victims of violence by adopting the recommendations of the coroner's reports following the horrible and preventable deaths of Arlene May and Gillian Hadley.

1350

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the sixth report of the standing committee on government agencies.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

STALKERS REGISTRY ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR LE REGISTRE DES HARCELEURS

Mr Bartolucci moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 190, An Act to provide greater protection to victims of stalking by providing for a stalkers registry / *Projet de loi 190, Loi visant à mieux protéger les victimes de harcèlement en prévoyant un registre des harceleurs.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Mr Bartolucci for a short statement.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This bill is modelled on Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry), 2000. It establishes a registry containing the names of persons who have been convicted of a stalking offence. Stalking offences are offences under section 264 of the Criminal Code of Canada, under criminal harassment; subsection 35(2) of the Children's Law Reform Act; and subsection 46(2) of the Family Law Act, which is contravening restraining orders.

This is a huge problem across the province. This bill will go a long way toward protecting those who are stalked.

VISITORS

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: With your indulgence, I'd like to introduce Stan and Bernice Baker, who are the parents of Philip, one of the pages here, and to share with the House the fact that their other three children, Jared, Seth and Ava, have all been pages at this House. I'd like to welcome them here today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Welcome—and that's not a point of order.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (EMERGENCY VEHICLE SAFETY), 2002

LOI DE 2002 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (SÉCURITÉ DES VÉHICULES DE SECOURS)

Mr Runciman moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 191, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to ensure the safety of emergency vehicles stopped on a highway and people who are outside a stopped emergency vehicle / *Projet de loi 191, Loi modifiant le Code de la route afin de garantir la sécurité des véhicules de secours arrêtés sur une voie publique et celle des personnes qui se trouvent à l'extérieur de tels véhicules.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The minister for a short statement?

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): I'll defer until ministerial statements.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): I believe I have consent to move that notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice for ballot item 63 be waived.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Is there agreement? Agreed.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

EMERGENCY VEHICLE SAFETY

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): Moments ago, I introduced the Highway Traffic Amendment Act, 2002, legislation that is designed to enhance the safety of emergency personnel and to modify driver behaviour. The legislation, if passed, will require drivers to reduce their speed and move over when approaching a stopped emergency or law enforcement vehicle with its red lights flashing.

Many of us don't recognize the high risk that front-line police officers and others can face during routine traffic stops. When an officer has pulled his or her cruiser off to the side of the highway to issue a speeding ticket or warning, to provide help or to investigate an accident, we don't necessarily think of this as a dangerous part of a police officer's job, but it is a deadly, dangerous part of the job.

In the past five years, four OPP officers have died in the line of duty because of collisions when their cruisers were stopped on the side of the road. Many others have narrowly missed being run down. In the United States, more than 200 police officers have lost their lives in a similar fashion. This is clearly a dangerous, high-risk part of a front-line officer's job, and the legislation tabled today is an initiative to lessen that risk.

Many of the people who actually take these risks, who put their lives on the line as part of their job, are with us today: front-line OPP officers from across the province, representatives of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association and the Police Association of Ontario. Welcome all.

Applause.

Hon Mr Runciman: I think it's fair to say that the people who have to wear the shoes, the people who actually step out of a cruiser in close proximity to vehicles travelling at extremely high speeds, support this legislation. They want this legislation. They believe it will improve their on-the-job safety, and this government agrees. Similar legislation has been enacted in 16 US states and one province in Canada. The legislation tabled today, if passed, will see Ontario at the forefront of jurisdictions that make officer safety a priority.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the support and assistance of several people involved in the development of the legislation: Frank Mazzilli, MPP for London-Fanshawe, a former police officer whose private member's bill was the catalyst for this legislation; my predecessor the Honourable David Turnbull, who laid the groundwork for the legislation during his time as Solicitor General; and finally, Brian Adkin, president of the Ontario Provincial Police Association, for his persistence in fighting for what's right—the safety of the men and women he so ably represents.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I know you and all members of this assembly recognize that we are living in a time when our police, firefighters and other professionals who routinely respond to emergency situations have taken on a new and profound significance. We all stand to benefit if they do their job efficiently and safely. Because of the very nature of what they do, they're often placed in harm's way, but there's no need to subject them to additional risk. They believe we can help their cause if this bill is passed. That's a view the Eves government shares, and I urge all members to support this legislation and ensure its speedy passage.

1400

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals obviously support this bill. It is, frankly, revolting to think that the men and women who at the very moment they are engaging in an act to protect us and enforce the law would find themselves imperilled, not by someone they have pulled over, but by our neighbours, by the people driving by them on the streets. Surely there's a duty upon all Ontarians to go out of their way to ensure that our police officers, who are engaging in an act to protect and to serve, are not in danger themselves, and so we will be supporting this bill.

We will also be fighting for, in this chamber and outside this chamber, the resources from this government to ensure that this bill is not a paper tiger, which I know the minister wishes it not to be, but rather that the resources are provided to enforce this very important new law.

I would be remiss if I did not say, in the time that I have remaining, that there are many other areas in which, unlike this bill, on the matter of crime and victims of crime, we have disagreements with this government. Right now across this province there are universities handing out amateur date rape drug tests. Date rape drugs are on the rise in this province. In some areas, one in four sexual assaults involves date rape drugs, and yet, unbelievably, you can go into a hospital to get a chole-

terol test, but a victim of sexual assault cannot go into a hospital to get a date rape drug test.

We on this side of the House say that is wrong, and we believe in the right of Ontarians to have access to a date rape drug.

Identity theft: we say that the fastest growing crime in North America must not only see some consumer protections but must see protections for victims of crime, victims of identity theft, who find themselves needing assistance from their government to get their identity back. In the midst of this horrific crime, we want to help victims of identity theft, and we'll be fighting for that on this side of the House.

Lastly, if we are going to talk about crusaders for crime and the streets of Ontario, I would also be remiss if I did not share my time with a man who has introduced yet another "Bartolucci bill" today, a true crusader on the subject of crime and the streets, the MPP for Sudbury, Rick Bartolucci.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): Thank you very much, Michael, for letting me share some time with you. Listen, Minister of Public Safety, if you are really, really committed to ensuring that our police officers have as safe an environment to operate within as possible, I suggest to you that you pass Bill 119, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act in respect of studded tires, so that in the north our police officers don't have to investigate or worry about being involved in accidents on very, very slippery roads.

I suggest that you pass Bill 47, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalties for driving with a suspended licence. If you talk to these people in the gallery today, they'll tell you that that's a very real problem that your government has ignored. These are two private members' bills that I've introduced over the course of the last several years, and yet here is another one that I challenge you to pass: Bill 128, An Act to permit the naming of highway bridges and other structures on the King's Highway in memory of police officers who have died in the line of duty.

Today you make an announcement which Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals support. We—we here, we in the gallery, those you refer to—challenge you to pass these laws and other laws that we have introduced so that indeed Ontario will be a safer place and, as importantly, so that the police officers who are mandated to serve and protect have a safe environment in which to work.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Order. The government benches, I want to ask you to please bear in mind that you were shown a great deal of respect by the opposition when the minister spoke. Response from the third party, member for Niagara-Centre.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): This is the process wherein the minister and his two critics like three old greying dogs lifting shaky rear legs try to mark out their turf, one as being more law-and-order than the

other. We've seen that demonstrated, however fecklessly, and I'm not going to participate in that. I want to tell the minister and the government that New Democrats accept this legislation in principle, look forward to its prompt debate in the Legislature, are eager to participate in that debate, are eager to hear submissions in some brief but critical public hearings—

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): It's an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act.

Mr Kormos: Of course it's but an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act, but it was important enough for a ministerial statement. It was important enough to invite leadership from our professional firefighters and policing communities in this province, both provincial and municipal. We think it's important enough to have debate and modest committee hearings.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: The next step is that I start naming members. Sorry for the interruption. Please continue.

Mr Kormos: It is somehow some sort of sport in this chamber to accuse opponents of being less interested in the security and welfare of our police and firefighters than they are. Friends, it's naïve to suggest any member of this chamber would not commit themselves to ensuring that our front-line emergency personnel, be they firefighters, medical personnel—paramedics, among others—or police officers—there is no one here who isn't interested in letting those personnel, men and women across this province—and there's no region of this province, certainly not Niagara, that is immune to the tragedy of a police officer being struck. Niagara wasn't immune, nor is any other part of this province, and it's the sort of remedy that's being proposed in this legislation.

There's no discussion, Minister, that ensuring our police officers, our firefighters and our paramedic front-line medical emergency personnel can do their jobs safely and effectively unless it entails and includes a discussion about adequacy of staffing. Whether that's with respect to policing, ambulance and medical personnel, or professional firefighters, it remains the case. No one is going to obstruct legislation like this that makes some modest improvement in ensuring police, firefighters and ambulance personnel can do their jobs a little more safely.

But Minister, please, policing across this province is under stress in terms of personnel and staffing the likes of which haven't been seen. My leader, Howard Hampton, just a couple of days ago raised in this House his serious concerns about the lack of OPP presence on some of the northern highways in the communities that are part of his constituency. Members of this Legislature have raised over the course of literally years, since 1997 and the Bill 84 debate, concern about the adequacy of staffing when it comes to firefighting personnel in communities across this province and the need for this province to participate with those communities.

Those concerns have been expressed by the member for Nickel Belt up in Sudbury. They have been expressed

by far-north members. They have been expressed by Mr Christopherson from Hamilton, by myself from Niagara and by Toronto members as well. Let's use every opportunity we have to advance the well-argued interests of those emergency personnel—police, firefighters and ambulance workers—for the need for some standards that are not just created but reinforced with funding for minimum staffing. That's critical to letting them, permitting them and enabling them to do their job effectively, and ensuring the safety and security not only of the communities they serve but of themselves and their own brothers and sisters.

We build monuments, as we should, to firefighters, as we will, and as we have to police officers whose lives are taken from them in the course of performing their duty and in the pursuit of securing the safety of their communities. But I put to you, sir, that this remains but lip service if we aren't prepared to commit ourselves to the investments that are critical if we're going to staff these forces across this province to adequate levels to let them do their jobs, and to give them the tools and resources that we call upon them to perform their jobs with. I say to you we should not avoid any opportunity to engage in that debate.

1410

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Following these responses, I ask for unanimous consent to move second and third reading of this bill right now.

The Deputy Speaker: There's a request for unanimous consent to allow second and third—I hear a no. Therefore, we'll move on.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The House leader for the official opposition will come to order now.

There being no deferred votes today, it is now time for oral questions.

Mr Bartolucci: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I move unanimous consent for second and third reading of Bill 119, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act in respect of studded tires.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I heard a no.

Mr Bartolucci: On a point of order, Speaker: I move unanimous consent for second and third reading of Bill 47, which is An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalties for driving with a suspended licence.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? Is there a no? Yes, I heard a no. Sorry.

Mr Bartolucci: Speaker, I move unanimous consent for second and third reading of Bill 128, An Act to permit the naming of highway bridges and other structures on the King's Highway in memory of police officers who have died in the line of duty.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I heard a no.

Are there any more points of order? Hearing none, then, we will move on to oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HYDRO RATES

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): My question is for the Premier. During the estimates committee I asked the energy minister about when Ontarians can expect to get their hydro rebate and he said, "I don't have a particular date." He also said, "It could be in August, it could be in April."

Ontarians cannot wait for a hydro rebate pre-election goody. Ontarians can't even wait for a hydro rebate as a Christmas present. Many Ontarians, particularly those on a fixed income, do not just find the hydro rates obscenely high and unfair; they just simply can't afford them. They don't have the cash flow or the revenue stream. They need their hydro rebate now. Will you agree to roll out the rebate to compensate Ontarians for Herculean hydro rates now?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): When the government has a long-term view of what hydro rates have done—as you know, hydro rates were lower than 4.3, which was the average before the free market came into being. They were lower in the months of May and June than they were previously, they were higher in July, August and September, and in the month of October they are again considerably lower. So we will look at a long-term picture. We and OPG have indicated to the public that there will be a rebate forthcoming on amounts over 3.8 cents per kilowatt hour, as the honourable member knows.

Mr Bryant: This is the kind of Ontarian who finds himself in a position where they just cannot pay their hydro bill. It is unaffordable. It's a mom and pop shop, like many mom and pop shops across this province. This one is Marché A&B, in Embrun, Ontario. They saw their bill go up in August of last year \$4,000; this year in August, \$5,700. A \$1,700 hydro hike in one month is unaffordable to a mom and pop shop like this that doesn't have the revenue stream. It's a corner store. It doesn't have the kind of cash flow to permit them to handle this. These stores are imperilled. Jobs will be lost. Businesses will go down. People on fixed incomes are in trouble. They can't wait for forthcoming. They need the hydro rebate now. Why will you not agree to roll out the hydro rebate now?

Hon Mr Eves: It's important to get the entire picture before you decide what a rebate is going to be. You can't do it on the basis of a week or a month or even a three-month period of time. So far, the market has been open for five months. For two of those months the average price was down, for three of those months the average price was up, and now that we're into the sixth month, the average price is down again. So it will be important to look at this in a long-term perspective, and then I'm sure the Minister of Energy and OPG will do the appropriate thing with respect to a rebate.

Mr Bryant: You want them to wait for the big picture, the whole picture. They're getting the picture: they're seeing hydro rates go up. They're not just getting the picture, they're also getting the bill. They can't wait for that rebate. They can't wait until April; they can't wait until August; they can't wait for a pre-election goodie. They can't afford their hydro bills now. We have people calling up our constituency offices saying that they cannot afford their hydro rates now. That's why they need their hydro rebate now. Why won't you roll out the rebate to compensate Ontarians for this government's Herculean hydro rate hikes now?

Hon Mr Eves: Is the honourable member suggesting that if an individual's hydro bill is up three months and down for the other nine months, that we give them a rebate because the cost of hydro was less for nine months of the year and more for three months of the year? Is that what he's suggesting? That wouldn't make any sense whatsoever. You have to look at the long-term picture on what people are paying for hydro. If, in fact, they are paying more than what the average price was before deregulation came into effect, then they will receive the rebate in a timely fashion.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): I have a question for the Premier. Over the last seven years Floyd Laughren, Murray Elston and about seven former opposition members have received government appointments from the Harris-Eves government. Like Brian Mulroney appointing Stephen Lewis to the United Nations, these appointments have served as cover while your Tory friends sneak up to the Eves trough.

I hold in my hand a list of 55 Conservative candidates from the last two elections. That's one half of the 111 Conservatives defeated or retired in those elections. Each received at least one patronage appointment or government job from the Harris-Eves government. Some are justices of the peace, some are on the rent tribunal and others are on the alcohol and gaming commission.

Premier, can you tell me how giving half your defeated and retired candidates cushy government appointments isn't patronage of an unprecedented level?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): There are appointments made from time to time of people of all political stripes and many more, I might add, of no political stripe whatsoever. I think the important thing is to have a qualified individual appointed to any appropriate position. I think he probably does a disservice to some of the former opposition members whose names he rhymed off in the House by suggesting that they didn't have any credentials for the appointment, they were merely a cover for Conservative appointments. You might want to think about retracting that.

Mr Duncan: In 1995 you promised you would be different. In the Common Sense Revolution you promised fewer politicians. The only reason there are fewer

politicians now is because there is more patronage. The Tories are out of the Legislature but are at the Eves trough. Instead of MPPs, now they are justices of the peace and chairs of boards.

Some of them get very good remuneration. Defeated Tory Frank Sheehan gets \$500 a day. Defeated Tory Lynn Beyak has had four separate appointments, including the supposedly impartial Rozanski commission. We're aren't talking about one or two appointments; we're talking about half your defeated candidates at the Eves trough. We're not talking about qualified individuals; we're talking about blatant patronage.

In light of the conditions in our hospitals, in our schools and in our environment, how can you justify patronage of this level at this time for these people?

Hon Mr Eves: I repeat what I said in response to his first question. He certainly is doing disservice to a number of former members of this Legislative Assembly of all three political stripes. Is he suggesting that they have no qualifications for their jobs other than the political party that they happen to have belonged to when they were in this place?

He knows full well that the commitment with respect to reduction in number of members in the Legislature in the Common Sense Revolution refers to adopting the federal boundaries, which we have done, and taking the number of members in this Legislature from 130, then to 127, down to 103. They will henceforth always be identical to the ridings that the federal government decides so that people will know which riding they are in, it will save on expenses, and people will be able to know which riding they vote in from election to election, whether it's provincial or federal. I might point out that your federal colleagues in Ottawa are the ones who actually determine those boundaries and the number of seats.

1420

Mr Duncan: Peter Preston, Jack Carroll, Lillian Ross, Gary Leadston, Leo Jordan, Frank Sheehan, Dave Johnson, Annamarie Castrilli, Bill Saunderson, Terence Young, Joyce Foster, Keith Currie, Jeff Slater, Keith Clingen, Gord Miller—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Take your seat, please. Sorry. The majority government members will not drown out questions. Sorry for the interruption. Please continue.

Mr Duncan: —Rick Brassard, Greg Reid, Michael Rohrer, Blaine Tyndall, David McCamon, Don Sheppard, Malcolm Mansfield, Pat O'Neil, George Kennedy, Evelyn Dodds, Alain Lalonde, Paul Sutherland, Chris Thompson, Linda Thom, Lynn Beyak, Dan Callaghan, Rob Davis, Joyce Frustaglio and Mike Harris. I don't even have time to list them all, and we haven't even begun to talk about former staff members like David Lindsay, Deb Hutton, Bill Farlinger and Bev Hammond, who you just recently appointed to the board of the LCBO.

Why is it that, like Brian Mulroney, you've been able to look after your friends but not our schools, not our hospitals and certainly not our environment?

Hon Mr Eves: I repeat what I said in response to the first two questions. He left out a few names, of course: Murray Elston, Bob Rae, Tony Silipo, Frank Miclash, Bernard Grandmaître, Gilles Morin, Floyd Laughren, David Cooke, Marion Boyd and on and on. You could have read those out. I'm sure you just forgot to put those in your list of former MPPs.

COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. Your government is in denial when it comes to your hydro disaster. Last week we told you the hydro Independent Market Operator's surveillance section was investigating Enron-style manipulation of hydro rates this summer, and your government denied it.

Now it turns out one week later that the director of compliance at the Independent Market Operator is conducting not one investigation, not two investigations, but a half-dozen investigations of potential price-fixing, which drove hydro rates through the roof this summer. This looks exactly like the price-fixing that happened in California.

Premier, how much consumer pain do you need before your government admits that your scheme of hydro privatization and deregulation isn't working very well?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): What the honourable member is talking about of course is what the IMO's job and responsibility is. They are to look into anything that might even remotely be improper so that they can assure themselves that we are, in fact, getting an upfront, honest, open and transparent price for electricity and power in the province of Ontario. That's what their function is.

Mr Hampton: Premier, it's not about their function, it's about your government's function: to protect the hydro consumers of this province.

The IMO is saying very clearly that there's enough evidence here to warrant over six detailed investigations. Yet, when I listen to you and your Minister of Energy, you would have the hydro consumers of this province believe that everything is working wonderfully, that a doubling of hydro bills is just a natural thing and people shouldn't worry about it, that people and businesses not being able to pay their hydro bills is all fine and wonderful under your scheme of hydro privatization and deregulation.

My question is, and I'll say it again: how much pain do people have to endure out there? How many senior citizens have to phone in and say, "I can't afford to pay the hydro bills," before your government admits something is wrong?

Hon Mr Eves: The IMO is doing its job. The honourable member over there is suggesting that because the IMO looks into a particular price or a particular circum-

stance, therefore, guilty as charged. I certainly hope you're not planning a career in the judiciary when you leave this place.

Mr Hampton: Premier, do I need to remind you that what happened in California resulted in brownouts, blackouts and consumers being gauged out of billions of dollars? These market surveillance people, the surveillance section at the IMO, are concerned that exactly that kind of scenario can be happening here in Ontario. When you combine that with the other report indicating we face further electricity shortages and the potential for more manipulation of the market, I think that ought to send out a warning bell if you care about consumers.

Premier, we know how much your friends on Bay Street are benefiting from hydro privatization and deregulation, but when are you going to start worrying about the consumers and do something to protect them from sky-high bills and from a situation that is not financially sustainable for them? When do you show some concern for consumers?

Hon Mr Eves: The very fact the government put in place upfront a rebate program to protect consumers from rises in future prices that might be above—

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): But you're not paying.

Hon Mr Eves: Do you want them done on a minute's basis or an hourly basis? Don't be so ridiculous over there. You do have to take a long-term point of view.

I would point out to the honourable member opposite that in the most recent report of the market surveillance panel, dated October 7, "The market assessment unit did not report any instances of abuse of market power in the sense of collusive or predatory conduct or any other type of behaviour designed to restrain or prevent competition."

Mr Hampton: My next question is for the Premier—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): That's fine. New question. Go ahead.

Mr Hampton: Premier, one week after that statement was made, they indicate that investigations are now underway to ascertain why on so many occasions transactions failed and the price of hydro went up by over 50%.

But my next question is about all those agricultural workers across this province—

The Deputy Speaker: The leader of the third party take his seat, please.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: You're allowed one question, one train of thought, one process, in question period. The supplementary must follow the question.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The government House leader is making a point of order.

Hon Mr Stockwell: My point of order, Mr Speaker, is he started his question off with respect to a hydro issue and completely shifted gears. I ask you to place the standing orders and put them in place. Either you put a

question about an issue or you don't, but you can't ask two ministries in one specific question.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Take your seat, please.

I agree with the government House leader. The point of order is in order. It's not unusual for there to be one quick sentence upon standing up, but I actually thought you were getting on to the next question too. So I would ask you in the future to please ensure that when you rise for a new question, you go directly to the minister for that question.

With that, I look to the leader of the third party for a new question.

AGRICULTURAL LABOUR POLICY

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): Premier, I'll put this as simply as I can for you. I wouldn't want you to get lost in the preamble.

There are thousands of workers who work in agricultural processing plants across this province. They work in very dangerous jobs. In fact, over the last six or seven years many of them have been killed. The Supreme Court of Canada said they should have the right to form unions and to bargain collectively, but you have put legislation before this House that would not allow them to form a union, would not allow them to bargain over issues like health and safety, job security or anything else.

Can you tell those farm workers why they shouldn't have the right to form a union to bargain to protect their health and safety when, after all, they just work in a different kind of factory than someone who works in a steel factory or an auto factory? Why shouldn't they have the right to bargain for their health and safety and protect themselves?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I am sure the Minister of Agriculture and Food would like to respond.

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I'd like to say that the Supreme Court was very clear. They said that agricultural workers across the province had the right to associate. They did not say that they had the right to collectively bargain. We have talked to constitutional lawyers. We have worked with lawyers across the province, and we have responded to the results of the Supreme Court decision. We have ensured that there is a right to associate. We have assured the people of the province that we will protect the family farms across the province, because we believe on this side of the House that agriculture is an important part of Ontario. It's the second-largest business in the province, and we need to make sure that we have the ability to allow that business to thrive in the province. We are very supportive of agriculture on this side of the House.

1430

Mr Hampton: The question to the Premier was, why shouldn't these workers who work under very dangerous conditions have the right bargain collectively to protect

their health and safety? For workers who work in those factories, what's the difference between working in a mushroom-packing factory and working in an auto factory? Last year the greenhouse industry in the Leamington-Kingsville area produced \$300 million in crops, but the average annual income for workers there was \$5,000.

You and the Liberals may think this is fair, but we believe that men and women who work in those greenhouses and packing plants deserve the same protection as other workers. Will you amend your legislation so that these workers can be treated equally and they can bargain to protect their health and safety and for fairer wages just like other workers?

Hon Mrs Johns: Let me say that this government has been very clear since 1995 that we are here to protect agriculture and to protect the family farms in Ontario. We are very clear that we are going to answer the Supreme Court. We are going to ensure that family farms are competitive, that they can bring their product into marketplace, because they have a very small window to get it there. We all know in this House and we all know across the province that we need to have product that is made in Ontario. We need food that is made in Ontario, good quality food, and we are going to make sure that we protect agriculture in the province of Ontario.

MINISTER'S EXPENSES

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): My question is for the Premier. Two weeks ago I confronted you with the largesse expenses of your former cabinet minister, Cam Jackson, who is here today. After his lifestyle—
Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Sorry to interrupt you, but I have had enough from the member from London-Fanshawe. You have been interrupting since the moment you got into this place, and if you do it once more you are leaving.

I am sorry for that interruption, member. Please continue.

Mrs Pupatello: My question is for the Premier. Two weeks ago I confronted you with the information on Minister Jackson's expenses. After this was exposed, Mr. Jackson left cabinet. You told the reporters that you fired him because he lied to you, that he didn't provide you with all of the information requested. I find it hard to believe that the Minister of Tourism would supply me with all of the information and not his own Premier.

Yesterday Mr Jackson said that he did give you all the documents and he says you are the one who is not telling the truth. Premier, which is it? Are you telling the truth, or is Mr Jackson?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): First of all, I did not say, nor have I ever said, that Minister Jackson lied to me. I have never used those words. I have never said that. What I said was that my office staff asked for a complete list of all the expenses of Minister Jackson and his staff, as requested

by the freedom of information request from your party, and my staff tell me that they did not receive all the receipts for all of the expenses.

Mrs Pupatello: Premier, this is fairly serious, because your cabinet colleagues don't know what your standard is. Is it the fact of how he spent the money, or is it the fact that you didn't seem to receive all the information and quite frankly must have double standards here?

What we need to know is the truth. Did you fire the cabinet minister because of what he spent the money on or how much he spent, or did you fire him because he didn't give you all of the information? That's what the key is. What your government, and your leadership specifically, needs to be about is, what are the cabinet rules? When people ask you questions about those rules, you have to be in a position to answer them and have that documentation, just like the rest of us.

So, Premier, I ask you again: did he follow those rules? Did you fire him because he lied to you? Did you fire him because of the information that he provided to you?

Hon Mr Eves: First of all, I didn't fire Minister Jackson; he resigned. Second of all, if you want to talk about double standards in this place, I would have presumed that by now your leader would have filed his expenses and all those of his 47 staff members for the last seven years with the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): My question is for the Minister of Energy. During the spring, the select committee on alternative fuel sources released its report on environmentally friendly sustainable alternatives to our existing fossil fuel sources. I had the pleasure of reading that last night in the Legislature. I know we have members on all sides who are keenly interested in it, including Steve Gilchrist, who has been actively involved. I know that many people in Ontario are concerned about finding more clean, renewable sources of energy. Can you tell me what the government is doing to act on the 141 recommendations of this report?

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs): I would indicate that we're very pleased with the work and the tremendous amount of effort that members from all three political parties made in terms of the preparation of the report and have indicated that we'll report back by the end of the year on some strategies we can use to move forward on a number of the recommendations. We have accepted the report. We think we can do more with respect to alternative fuels in the province. The member will recall that on behalf of the government, I have asked our colleague the member for Scarborough East, Steve Gilchrist, to report back on a fuel standard, and we look forward to receiving his work.

We can do an awful lot more than we do. We realize renewable energy is something that's very important and that has got to go beyond the traditional hydroelectric and

nuclear power that we provide in the province. We need to look at more emerging new technologies.

Mr Miller: Thank you, Minister, for that response. I know you will report back on the government's progress by the end of the year, but in the meantime, can you tell us about the government's efforts to encourage and support green energy?

Hon Mr Baird: In the June budget, the government introduced an exemption from the 14.3-cents-per-litre fuel tax for biodiesel fuels. This will create a tax incentive for consumers to buy products that use renewable resources. The budget also extended the sales tax rebate for hybrid electricity automobiles to cover sport utility vehicles and light utility trucks.

I am pleased that in Huron county the first of five massive wind turbines was put in place by Huron Wind, which will be Ontario's first commercial wind power. This initiative is a joint partnership, which is exciting, and will have five 1.8-megawatt wind turbines to produce enough electricity by December to meet the average annual needs of about 3,000 homes in Ontario. Had a company wanted to build a wind farm in the province in years past, the Liberal Party would have made it illegal. Thank goodness we have strong leadership on behalf of this government.

HAMILTON INCINERATOR

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is for the Minister of the Environment. On Saturday morning, residents in the east end of Hamilton woke up with a headline in the Spectator reading, "Toxic Emissions Double; Hamilton's aging waste incinerator worst in Canada in spewing deadly dioxins."

In the last 12 months, highly toxic mercury emissions have increased by 33% at the incinerator. Other hazardous emissions have increased by 44%. I raised this issue in 1999 with your predecessors. I raised it in 2000. The Environmental Commissioner has raised this issue. Clearly, this particular site is now the largest source of toxic compounds in the country, bar none. There isn't a plant of any type in Canada that spews more deadly dioxins than the SWARU incinerator. The time for talking, the time for changing standards, the time for trying to fix it is over. The time has come to shut it down. Shut the SWARU down and ensure you no longer jeopardize the health of my residents of east Hamilton. I ask you today, Minister of the Environment, will you undertake a full and immediate review to examine all options you have to immediately order a shutdown of the SWARU incinerator in Hamilton?

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): I'm surprised at the question because last Friday we issued a new C of A. I don't know if he saw it or not, but that's exactly what we did; we actually did do a full review. The Ministry of the Environment staff did a bang-up job, I might add. Those standards that were expected to be brought in were to be brought in by 2006. Do you realize that this plant is

going to have to meet those standards by 2003? You know what? We did them one better. I can't take much credit for this, I've got to give the credit to the Ministry of the Environment staff. They did that one better. As part of the C of A, they're saying that this incinerator has to close by 2005, the first administration that took a positive step, forcing compliance, by 2003 and shutting that incinerator in 2005. I thought you were going to stand up and applaud this government for that kind of environmental sensitivity.

1440

Mr Agostino: Your screaming and yelling today doesn't really do much to help those residents who for 30 years have had put up with this danger. This is not an issue that is trivial. You introduced standards days before this new information was released to show the seriousness of the problem. We've gone down this route. Previous governments have issued new standards. Your government has issued new standards. This plant does not have the ability to meet these new standards. I'm not alone in this. Your Minister of Labour, who's yapping in the background right now, was on board at a press conference two years ago with me to demand the shutdown of the facility. I wish he would stand up and do the same thing today on behalf of the people of east Hamilton.

The reality is that it can't be fixed. They can't meet these standards. It's an incinerator that is 30 years old. They can't afford to make the retrofit so they're not going to meet your standards you put in place. It doesn't matter whether it's 2003, 2004 or 2005. The time for this incinerator is over. I want you to work with me, with the city of Hamilton, to find every way possible to immediately shut down this incinerator.

My residents cannot put up with another day of this. You find it humorous; I realize that. I realize you find cancer-causing dioxins in the air for the residents of Hamilton funny. I don't. This is serious. I'm asking you today to demand an immediate shutdown of the incinerator in Hamilton, and to stop putting the health and lives of my residents in jeopardy by these new rules, by these new supposed guidelines that they cannot meet.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Take you seat, please. Minister of the Environment

Hon Mr Stockwell: Let's be clear.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Number one, it's entirely unacceptable to ask a question, especially a passionate one like that, then sit down and start heckling before the minister draws a breath. Secondly, you said something that I know you're going stand up and withdraw.

Mr Agostino: I withdraw. I apologize for that, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Thank you very much, to the member for Hamilton East, for withdrawing that comment.

There's no humour here. I'm not finding any humour at all, whatsoever in this. The fact of the matter is that it's been operating, you're right, for 30 years. Every adminis-

tration has had a kick at this can and every administration has dropped the ball. We agree. I went to the Ministry of the Environment and said, "We've got to shut this down, we've got to close it." So we had the C of A and we put in tough restrictions that are set for 2006 that every province bought into. But I said, "That's not good enough. They've got to meet these restrictions by 2003," and then I said, "You've got to close this thing." Part of the C of A is that we close it in 2006.

I honestly thought you were going to stand there and say, "Good, that's what should have been done 15 years ago when the Liberals were in office, or 10 years ago when the NDP were in office." I realize it's late, but better late than never. The environmentally conscious Conservatives understood that, and that's why we're shutting it down.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II

AIMING FOR THE TOP SCHOLARSHIPS

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I'm sure we are all very pleased by the recent visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Ontario and Canada. I think everyone in the House will agree about how Premier Eves handled himself and represented the province of Ontario last Wednesday night.

At a luncheon at Seneca College, Premier Eves announced that Ontario would be honouring Her Majesty by dedicating the Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top scholarships program. Helping young people continue their education is a noble cause, and one that is a fitting honour for our special guest.

Minister, can you tell the House about these scholarships and the impact they will have on young people looking to attend college or university next fall?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues): Next fall, the young people who are considering going right now will be applying for the Aiming for the Top scholarship, which has been named the Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top Scholarship.

There is a lot of information that is put out for them. They apply by using the OSAP forms. There is a box that they check off. We have a new publication called Supporting Your Choice for Postsecondary Education that the young people will be able to look at for all programs of financial support. All students who are interested in applying for the Aiming for the Top scholarship, which is as much as \$3,500 for four years, should in fact use the OSAP forms and make sure they meet the deadline sometime in April.

Mr Dunlop: I thank the Minister for that answer. This is another initiative of our government that will support Ontario students in our colleges and universities. There are many talented young people in my constituency who are looking to go on to college or university who will be very interested to know more about this program.

Minister, can you tell the young people in my riding and in other ridings across the province how they can apply for a Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top Scholarship and what they may be eligible to receive?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: The first message I would like to get out to the students who are applying for our colleges and universities next year is that there will be a place for every qualified and motivated student in our colleges and universities.

Their guidance counsellors are helping them in every way they can. There are ambassadors going to our secondary schools to talk to parents and students. Any member of the Legislative Assembly who would like to have a meeting in their own riding, at a school or where they have been requested, please call the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and ask for the ambassador to go out and answer the questions of the students and their parents, along with representatives from the colleges and universities. At that time, I can assure you that this program, the Aiming for the Top Queen Elizabeth scholarship, \$35 million worth of scholarships, \$3,500 for three or four years as long as they keep their marks—I can tell you right now that every single student. These are people who we ought to recognize and be proud of. Go to your high school graduations. Give them out on behalf of the people of Ontario.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question for the Minister of Health. Minister, when you hiked nursing home fees by 15%, you told the elderly and their families that there would be more nurses and personal care aides to care for them.

We've been contacted by workers from three for-profit nursing homes in the Durham region. In one nursing home, a telephone receptionist was hired. In another, a part-time social worker and two part-time personal care aides were hired; the aides are on a contract until the end of December. In the third nursing home, there are no plans to hire new staff at all. You promised more nurses and personal care aides for seniors in nursing homes. Where are they?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): To the associate minister.

Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Our government heard the concerns with respect to the nursing home copayment fee. In fact, all those dollars are going toward more nursing and personal care in the province.

We made an announcement on July 31 of this year for \$100 million in additional nursing and personal care investments across the province. What that translates into for the average facility, a 100-bed facility, is 3.9 full-time-equivalent nurses and personal care workers being added to the system, so those staff are being hired. In some cases, some of the part-time staff are being bumped up to full-time staff, so there are more hours being allocated to those staff members. In many instances,

additional staff are being hired. I can tell you that in each and every one of the long-term-care facilities in this province, there will be more nurses and personal care staff added. In fact, there will be some 2,400 in total: 600 registered nurses and 1,800 practical nursing assistants.

1450

Ms Martel: Minister, I just gave you three examples from three for-profit homes in the Durham area which clearly show that nurses and personal care aides are not being hired with this new money, and this despite your promise that there would be four additional full-time nurses, or personal care aides, for every 100 beds.

We do know that in each of the three nursing homes which contacted us, those monies are being used to buy diapers. They're doing so because those operators have received a memo from your ministry which permits them to do so instead of continuing to pay for this out of their accommodation budget.

Minister, will you reverse the policy which lets operators use these dollars for diapers, and guarantee that this new money will only be used to hire the nurses and personal care aides that you promised would be hired for seniors in long-term-care facilities?

Hon Mr Newman: The fact is that each and every dollar that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care allocates for nursing and personal care, and for programming and for support services and for food, must be spent exactly on those purposes. The money cannot be spent on anything else.

The \$100 million in nursing and personal care that was announced on July 31—and that, I might add, began flowing on August 1 of this year—must be spent on nursing and personal care. That's why we made that decision. There's nothing else that money can be spent on; it must be spent on hiring additional nurses so that the 61,000 people who call a long-term-care facility home can know they are going to have additional time spent with them because there's going to be additional staff hired in each and every one of those homes, whether it's a for-profit home, whether it's a charitable home or whether it's a municipal home for the aged.

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Premier. It is reported that Ralph Klein is seeking a meeting with you, when he comes to Ontario, to try to discredit the Kyoto Protocol. I was Minister of the Environment when Ralph Klein was environment minister in Alberta. No one took the man seriously; he has spent his entire political career fighting every significant environmental program that would benefit our nation. He is considered to be nothing less than an environmental Neanderthal and a shill for business interests who oppose environmental improvement.

You have a choice, Premier: you can either enter a coalition with Ralph Klein and stand side by side with the oil barons and their cohorts who are spending millions of dollars to sabotage an international agreement

that will meet the threat of global warming, or you can lead Ontario toward cleaner air and improved health.

Is it your intention to join Ralph Klein's posse, or do you intend to show bold leadership on behalf of the environment and support the ratification of the Kyoto accord?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I thank the honourable member for that very objective question. In fact, Premier Klein and I are meeting next Wednesday afternoon, in case you're interested. We will be discussing, undoubtedly, many matters of mutual interest and concern with respect to not only the environment but other issues that the Premiers across the provinces are interested in, as I did with Premier Campbell when he was in Toronto two weeks ago.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Order.

Interjections.

Mr Bradley: Last night at a reception—

The Deputy Speaker: Wait just a minute, member for St Catharines.

You may continue.

Mr Bradley: Last night a reception was held at the Legislature by a group called the Canadian Coalition for Responsible Environmental Solutions. The title is always a dead giveaway for an anti-environment coalition. Their gang, or portions of it, have opposed every significant progressive measure that has been proposed, and, along with the Klein government, is spending millions in an attempt to torpedo the Kyoto accord.

The chief organizer of this event was the former chief policy adviser of Mike Harris, Guy Giorno, and the chief government speaker was your energy minister, John Baird. Many of your MPPs are now—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: I'm sorry to interrupt you again. I can't hear the member, and he's right there.

Please continue. Sorry for the interruption.

Mr Bradley: Many of your MPPs are now spouting the line suggested by the anti-environment gang word for word. Is it your intention to toe the line of the Guy Giorno coalition, or are you prepared to show environmental leadership and abandon this anti-environment special interest group?

Hon Mr Eves: I'm going to resist the answer that I could give.

I'm on record in a scrum with Premier Campbell when he visited Toronto two weeks ago and I'm on record, as a matter of fact, for the last six months as saying that the province of Ontario always has been at the forefront of reducing air emissions in several different categories, be they nitrous oxide or sulphur dioxide. We have led the way, we believe, and we will continue to lead the way.

We are not going to sign on, as I said to people then, to any agreement, as Paul Martin is saying these days, unless we know what the effects of signing on to such an agreement would be. There are many ways to effectively reduce emissions in the atmosphere other than just

technically falling within the jurisdiction of the so-called Kyoto accord.

As a matter of fact, I'm sure the honourable member is aware that the Prime Minister of Canada has no intention of strictly following the rules of the Kyoto accord.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): My question is to the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. As every member of this House is aware, Ontario's growing and aging population means that providing quality long-term-care services is becoming even more important for people throughout this province. I'm very pleased to see that our government is working hard to provide even better services and better facilities for Ontario's seniors.

I would appreciate it if the associate minister could update this House on the ongoing developments in the long-term-care sector.

Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I'd like to thank the hard-working member from Scarborough Centre for her question. I've had the opportunity over the past few months to attend several groundbreaking and official opening ceremonies of long-term-care facilities across our province. Each and every one of these facilities is making a real difference in the quality of care for residents and for those who require long-term-care services. None of this would be possible without the Ernie Eves government's unprecedented commitment to the long-term-care sector.

In fact, we've invested \$1.2 billion to construct and to re-develop long-term-care beds in every region of our great province. We've also announced another \$100 million for nursing and personal care services throughout our province, and that's money that must be spent directly on nursing and personal care to hire additional staff in all the facilities.

What this means is that the Ernie Eves government is indeed delivering on its promise to provide better long-term-care services across our great province.

Ms Mushinski: Thank you for that response, Minister. I'm particularly pleased to hear that our government is moving forward in these long-term-care initiatives. I'm sure that this is truly making a big difference for residents of long-term-care facilities and their families and loved ones.

I'd like to follow up by asking the associate minister what the total number of beds in the ground in my riding of Scarborough Centre is and how many more are expected this year. I know that my constituents would appreciate an update.

Hon Mr Newman: I'm pleased to respond to the honourable member for Scarborough Centre. I'm happy to report that in the riding of Scarborough Centre and indeed in Scarborough in general 65 beds have been opened and an additional 1,500 beds are expected to open shortly.

This is an unprecedented feat since both my Liberal and NDP colleagues across the floor lacked the vision and the planning to foresee the future and to realize that an aging and a growing population not only in Scarborough but across our province would obviously put additional demands on the long-term-care system.

The response of the opposition parties when they were in government was to simply put their heads into the sand, and worse, to close hospital beds, not only in Scarborough but across Ontario.

We, the Ernie Eves government, on the other hand, have opened 6,800 new beds and have redeveloped 2,300 older beds. I think it's important to note that we currently have an additional 12,200 beds under construction and scheduled to open in the immediate future.

I'm proud to be a member of a government that has stepped up to the plate and a government that is thinking about our seniors, and I appreciate the positive feedback Ontarians have given us about our vision and our plan for long-term care in Ontario.

1500

ETHANOL PROJECT

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): My question is to the Minister of Energy. On October 8, the Seaway Valley ethanol co-operative had their annual meeting in Kemptville. The local agricultural community has raised \$16,248,000 for this \$48-million project. A commitment was made by former minister Elmer Buchanan that they were going to be a partner in this project when the NDP government was in power. In 1995 the Conservative government came into power and cancelled their partnership in the project, only to re-announce it.

Minister, when you were in our part of Ontario recently and were questioned on this project, you gave the residents a little bit of hope. I was just wondering if you could update the House on the meetings that have taken place and what the position of the provincial government is.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs): This is an important issue throughout the rural part of eastern Ontario, in which part of my riding is located. I did want to correct the record on one part of what the member opposite said. He said that Elmer Buchanan, the NDP Minister of Agriculture, wanted to fund this. Well, many of us on this team showed up in 1995, and Mother Hubbard told us the cupboard was bare; there was no money to meet the commitments the previous NDP government had made.

There is some financial support that the previous Minister of Agriculture, Noble Villeneuve, made when he fought for this area, and that is indeed good news. We on this side of the House have been very supportive of the agricultural industry. We've provided grants of \$5 million and \$3 million for ethanol projects in both Chatham and Cornwall. It's an issue we're all concerned

about, I'm tremendously concerned about, and we are following very closely.

Mr Cleary: I didn't know about Mother Hubbard. I was here. Anyway, my supplementary question: this is a 66-million litre project, 30 full-time jobs, and I'm told that the ethanol is pre-sold for some 10 years once the plant is built.

I've been getting lots of faxes and e-mails. I'm sure the one that I'm going to read here is one the minister also got a copy of. I don't know who these people are, but they say, "As shareholders in Seaway Valley Farmer's Energy Co-operative, it appals us ... that our government officials can remain so ignorant" on this project. It's signed "Sincerely" by Ron Harrison, Margaret Harrison, Ian Harrison and Brian Harrison. I don't know these people. I'd like your comments.

Hon Mr Baird: As I said to the member opposite, I appreciate that he cares about this issue. So do I. I, along with my colleague the Minister of Public Security, Bob Runciman, and my colleague the Minister of the Environment, Chris Stockwell, took the opportunity to sit down with the group this past Friday in Kemptville to learn more about the specific nature of their requests and their concerns.

We made a number inquiries with respect to what kind of help they were needing, given that their financing through a European bank has fallen through. The fact that we had three Conservative ministers come to Cornwall, together with representatives of the staff of the minister without portfolio and the former Chair of the alternative fuels committee, Doug Galt, signalled that this is an important issue.

We had a few representatives from the federal government and we did ask a series of questions, asked for some more information, and the group has committed to get back to Minister Runciman, Minister Galt, Minister Stockwell and I on this important initiative.

I share the interest of the member opposite, and I am certainly happy to work with him on it.

OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. As we all know, the Oak Ridges Moraine Protection Act protects the moraine's natural resources, including the quality and quantity of its water, maintains the integrity of a continuous natural system, fosters innovative ways to support landowners, and encourages private land stewardship. Finally, it supports a clear, defined planning process that provides housing for a growing population.

Recently the Environmental Commissioner awarded the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing with the annual ECO Recognition Award for its work on the legislation and the plan. I am interested in hearing if there have been any further accomplishments since that announcement.

Hon Chris Hodgson (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I appreciate the question from the

member for York North, who has been keenly interested, as all members of the Legislature have been, in the Oak Ridges moraine. Yes, it's true, the Environmental Commissioner awarded his recognition award this year to our ministry. I would like to personally thank the staff of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and also the staff of the Ministry of Natural Resources and of the Ministry of the Environment, who worked very hard to make this legislation come into effect.

I think that Debbe Crandall, the head of Save the Oak Ridges Moraine, known as STORM, said it best when she said, "Ministry staff on the Oak Ridges moraine project have done an outstanding job in meeting the challenges of developing the legislation and plan in such a tight time frame. The phenomenal technical support during last summer's panel deliberations, subsequent panel consultations and development of the final legislative package is quite heartening. The commitment of ministry staff is highly deserving of recognition from the Environmental Commissioner."

Mrs Munro: Thank you, Minister, for your response. I would also like to find out what steps are being taken to continue to protect the Oak Ridges moraine and inform the constituents of my riding and the surrounding ridings of our government's plan.

Hon Mr Hodgson: The member for York North is quite right. This is an historic achievement. We want to make sure that the law is upheld. Inside the law that was passed unanimously by this Legislature are penalties to make sure that enforcement is tough.

We're also bringing in watershed plans to make sure we protect the quality and quantity of the water. The conservation authorities have been given dollars by the Ministry of the Environment to do that.

We've also set up a trust that we've put \$15 million into. There's a panel set up that will be reporting back when they become permanent. We expect that money to be matched by the federal government and environmental groups as we go forward to protect the land base.

We are also having public hearings conducted by David Crombie on the follow-up to the land exchange he recommended to keep the wide, robust corridor through the Richmond Hill area. We're also sending out a householder brochure to all the residents around the moraine which helps explain why it is important to protect this area's natural features and what steps we've taken to ensure that the moraine is protected for future generations to come.

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Transportation. This past weekend on the TransCanada Highway between Dryden and Kenora, more than 40 transport trailers and trucks were involved in highway collisions following the first snowfall of the year. Thankfully, no one was killed, though many people were hurt. This is the same stretch of the TransCanada Highway where 29 people have been

killed in highway traffic accidents over the last three years. This past weekend, the highway was one big sheet of ice because the private highway maintenance contractors hired by your government failed to clear the snow and ice.

Minister, people are angry and they're very upset. Is this how the Conservative government scheme of privatized highway maintenance is supposed to work?

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation): I cannot comment on the particular incident that occurred up north. Of course we're not in control of the weather, and unfortunately, when there is ice on the roads, accidents will occur regardless of how fast maintenance is there.

Our private maintenance contractors have a very, very close monitoring system on them. We can tell when they are out on the road. This is electronically controlled. In fact, the controls over exactly what happens out on the roads are greater today than they were when public servants were providing that maintenance.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Supplementary?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): If you as Minister of Transportation don't know, I guess we have something to be worried about in northern Ontario. We had the exact same situation but a week and a half ago. The community of Hearst had their first snowfall, as did Kapuskasing and the areas around, with the same kind of problem when it came to making sure those highways were kept open. In fact, they weren't, because the contractors didn't do their job.

But what makes the thing worse is that you have in place a program called the MTO road safety hotline, and when our staff called at 2 pm on Tuesday to find out what the condition of the highway was, they were getting recordings about the conditions on the highways from four days earlier. That's not acceptable. People who took to the road and were at risk, because not only did your highway contractors not do their job, but your own hotline was giving information that was four days old. Minister, the question is simply this: privatization doesn't work; are you prepared to reverse it?

1510

Hon Mr Sterling: Well, it is unacceptable, if in fact information is four days old. I will look into that and have it corrected if that's the case.

In spite of the severe weather that we have in our province from time to time, we still have the safest driving records in all of Canada, second in all of North America. So we must be doing some things right in terms of the kinds of roads we are building, the maintenance systems that we are placing and those kinds of things. One accident is one accident too many so we will continue to work on improving the system that we have, but we have a pretty good system here in Ontario. Our Ministry of Transportation closely monitors our private contractors in terms of the services they provide and the maintenance they provide. I will look into the matter and,

of course, this matter is under investigation by the police at this time.

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): My question is for the Minister of Health. In May you held a press conference when you promised to fully fund the Visudyne treatment for individuals with wet-type macular degeneration. You thrived on the applause, and then you betrayed them after. You brought in criteria that effectively prevented the vast majority from having that treatment. Your criteria says they must be at least 50% blind before you will fund it. Don't blame the federal government. You're forcing these people who are 40%, 30% and 20% blind, if they want to save their eyesight, to pay for it themselves. There is no cost savings to you. It's the same cost whether they're 30% or 50%.

Minister, I don't know why you are not funding the treatment after you make the promise, but I am begging you, I am imploring you for the thousands of seniors in this province, to live up to your commitment. Will you fully fund the Visudyne treatment for macular degeneration for everyone who would benefit from that treatment?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Let me assure this House that we are, through that decision of this government, affording a benefit to thousands of senior citizens. The honourable member is correct when he says that this is based on criteria that were developed by Health Canada, criteria that are clinical, criteria that are objective, that are based on the best clinical evidence of efficacy. Those are the criteria that we have adopted, because they are the criteria that are clinical and effective and objective. If the honourable member has a problem with the criteria, I'd be happy to intervene with the federal Minister of Health and perhaps we can get this issue solved from that end.

MEMBER'S COMMENTS

Mr Garry J. Guzzo (Ottawa West-Nepean): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order with regard to the preamble to the question placed earlier today to the Premier by the member for St Catharines. I don't know whether you heard what I heard and I'm not certain that I heard it clearly, but I suggest to you that if that terminology had been used to describe a member of this House, you would have ruled it out of order. Indeed, if it was used to describe a former member of this House, you would have ruled it out of order. It was to describe a Premier of a province in this country, one of the two provinces that contributes financially to the maintenance of this country. It is troubling, to say the least.

I don't honestly know without reference to the Bible whether or not it is out of order, but I do intend to deal with it. I ask you if you heard what I heard and if you heard the comments in the manner in which I heard them and—I also have to say this—the applause that it drew

from the members of his party in support thereof therefore attributes those words to each and every member, including their leader. I don't really think, if they heard what I heard, that would be an appropriate and fair interpretation.

Interjection.

Mr Guzzo: In my submission the comments being applied to a Premier of a province in this country are totally out of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): I don't recall the comment specifically. I will afford the member—was it the member for St Catharines? It's not possible for that to be addressed now. I'll take a look into it and get back to you. That's the best I can offer right now.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY 69

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it deals with the multi-laning of Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound. I will be giving it to Philippe, who is a resident of Sudbury.

“Whereas modern highways are economic lifelines for the north; and

“Whereas the stretch of Highway 69 from Sudbury south to Parry Sound is a treacherous road with a trail of death and destruction; and

“Whereas the carnage on Highway 69 has been staggering; and

“Whereas 46 people have died in the last three years on that stretch of highway; and

“Whereas 10 people have died so far this year on that stretch of highway between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

“Whereas the Harris-Eves government has shown gross irresponsibility in not four-laning the stretch of Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

“Whereas immediate action is needed to prevent more needless loss of life; and

“Whereas it is the responsibility of a government to provide safe roads for its citizens, and the Harris—Eves government has failed to do so;

“Be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to urge the Eves government to begin construction immediately and four-lane Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound so that the carnage on Death Road North will cease.”

Of course, I sign my signature to this petition.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I have a petition in part generated by citizens concerned

about the closure of Delhi District Secondary School. It's entitled "Moratorium on High School Closures."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas one high school has closed and several others are threatened by the Grand Erie District School Board; and

"Whereas the Education Equality Task Force led by Dr Mordechai Rozanski is reviewing the current funding formula for education in Ontario; and

"Whereas the Grand Erie District School Board is expected to issue additional high school closures; and

"Whereas parent groups and community volunteers feel the GEDSB has not set aside adequate time to review and explore all other viable options to keep area high schools open;

"We, the undersigned, request the Grand Erie District School Board and the Ministry of Education declare a moratorium on secondary school closures until such time recommendations from the Education Equality Task Force will have been implemented."

I have worked with this group and on behalf of this high school for a number of years, and it's my pleasure to also sign this petition.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): I have a petition with regard to the increased fees required of seniors and our most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities. It concludes with the words:

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

"Demand that Premier Eves reduce his 15% fee increase on seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities and increase provincial government support for nursing and personal care to adequate levels."

In support of this petition, I sign my signature.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE CENTRES

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

"Whereas Sarnia-Point Edward and area is experiencing a crisis in a shortage of health care professionals, specifically doctors; and

"Whereas community health care centres are a proven primary health care system that can attract professionals and deliver primary health care in a cost-effective, efficient manner;

"Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario approve a community health care centre for Sarnia-Point Edward and area as soon as possible."

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): I have a petition from the people in the community of Bancroft.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the funding for school boards is now based on the student-focused funding legislative grants for the 2001-02 school board fiscal year;

"Whereas the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is in a period of declining enrolment, a trend that is projected to continue over the next five years;

"Whereas application of the student-focused funding model for 2001-02 does not allow sufficient funding to the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board for secretarial support in schools, principals and vice-principals, transportation or school operations;

"Whereas costs in these areas cannot be reduced at the same rate as the enrolment declines;

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

"To reassess the student-focused funding legislative grants and to provide additional funding for those areas where funding is insufficient and to adjust ... student-focused funding legislative grants to address the situation of declining enrolments faced by the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board and other boards in Ontario."

I affix my signature because I support it wholeheartedly, and I will hand it to Rachel to take to the clerk.

1520

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I have yet another set of petitions introducing a number of new ideas with respect to high school closures.

"Whereas the education funding formula applied uniformly across the province of Ontario has forced many consolidated boards of education to move to close schools, especially in rural areas; and

"Whereas the formula is now being reviewed by Dr Mordechai Rozanski, with a report to the provincial government anticipated by November 2002; now

"The undersigned petition Dr Rozanski, the boards of education and the province of Ontario as follows:

"(1) include in any future funding formula recognition of the importance of rural schools to their communities;

"(2) give communities the opportunity to directly support (by taxation, if necessary) their schools to ensure their continued existence; and

"(3) mandate an immediate moratorium on the consideration of the school closures until the new funding formula is in place."

These petitions are generated by people in the Delhi area of Norfolk county. I feel there are some ideas worth exploring, and I affix my signature to these.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

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

"Whereas some motorists are recklessly endangering the lives of children by not obeying the highway traffic

law requiring them to stop for school buses with their warning lights activated;

“Whereas the current law has no teeth to protect the children who ride the school buses of Ontario, and who are at risk and their safety is in jeopardy;

“Whereas the current school bus law is difficult to enforce, since not only is the licence plate number required but positive identification of the driver and vehicle as well, which makes it extremely difficult to obtain a conviction;

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

“That the measures contained in private member’s Bill 112, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to protect children while on school buses, presented by Pat Hoy, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Essex, be immediately enacted. Bill 112 received the unanimous all-party support of the Ontario Legislature at second reading on June 13, 2002.

“Bill 112 imposed liability on the owner of a vehicle that fails to stop for a school bus that has its overhead red signal lights flashing and

“Increased the fines for drivers identified breaking the school bus law to a range from \$500 to \$1,000 on a first conviction and \$1,000 to \$2,000 on a subsequent conviction;

“It established a fine for identified vehicles breaking the school bus law of \$1,000 to \$2,000 on a first conviction and \$2,000 to \$3,000 on a subsequent conviction; and

“We ask for the support of all members of the Legislature.”

This is signed by a number of residents from Chatham and I too have signed it.

NATURAL GAS RATES

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): The petitions, letters and protest continue to come in related to the Ontario Energy Board approval of the Union Gas retroactive delivery charges, and I’m pleased to read some more. To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01 totalling approximately \$150 million; and

“Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship; and

“Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners and new customers to Union Gas;

“Therefore we demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas, and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that

will protect consumers from further retroactive rate increases.”

This was given to me by Robert Gashinski, an inspector with the Thunder Bay fire department. I am of course very pleased he’s done so and I will add my name to the petition.

WATER EXTRACTION

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we, the residents and cottagers of Bob’s Lake, strenuously object to the permit issued by the Ministry of the Environment to OMYA Inc to remove 1.5 million litres of water per day from the Tay River, without adequate assessment of the consequences and without adequate consultation with the public and those people and groups who have expertise and interest; and

“Whereas it is our belief that this water taking will drastically impact the environment and seriously affect the water levels in Bob’s and Christie lakes. This in turn would affect fish spawning beds as well as habitat....

“Whereas Bob’s Lake and the Tay River watershed are already highly stressed by the historic responsibility of Parks Canada to use Bob’s Lake as a reservoir for the Rideau Canal; and

“Whereas the movement of water from the lake through the watershed for navigation purposes in the canal provides sufficient stress and problems for the lake.

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

“We request that this permit be rescinded until a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of water taking by OMYA Inc on the environment, the water levels and the water needs of these communities is complete. An independent non-partisan body should undertake this evaluation.”

I shall affix my signature to this petition because I am in full agreement, and I will hand it to Kyle to take to the Clerk’s table.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% or \$7.02 per diem effective August 1, 2002; and

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and the most vulnerable more than \$200 a month; and

“Whereas this increase is 11.1% above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas the increase in the government’s own contribution to raise the level of long-term-care services this year is less than \$2 per resident per day; and

“Whereas according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario ranks last amongst comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

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

“Demand that Premier Eves reduce his 15% fee increase on seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities and increase provincial government support for nursing and personal care to adequate levels.”

I have also signed the petition.

NATURAL GAS RATES

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01 totalling approximately \$150 million; and

“Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship; and

“Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners and new customers to Union Gas;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas, and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive increases.”

This petition is signed by a number of residents from Ridgetown, Listowel, Tilbury, Blenheim and Chatham.

1530

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Petitions related to the long-term-care increases continue to come in as well. A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% or \$7.02 per diem effective August 1, 2002; and

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month; and

“Whereas this increase is 11.1% above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas the increase in the government’s own contribution to raise the level of long-term-care services this year is less than \$2 per resident per day; and

“Whereas according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario ranks last amongst comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to simply raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

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

“We demand that Premier Eves reduce his 15% fee increase on seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities and increase provincial government support for nursing and personal care to adequate levels.”

I’m happy to sign my name to this and I’ll pass it off to Sam.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon David Turnbull (Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation): I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 151, An Act respecting the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, when Bill 151 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs; and

That the vote on second reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred; and

That the standing committee on finance and economic affairs shall be authorized to meet at its next scheduled time for the purpose of consideration of the bill; and

That two days be allotted to hearings and one day allotted to clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That, no later than 4 pm on the day the committee is scheduled for clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be

deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond its normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than the first sessional day that reports from committees may be received following the completion of clause-by-clause consideration. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called on that same day; and

That when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred; and

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

I believe that we have consent to allow the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex the leadoff.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Mr Turnbull has moved government notice of motion number 43. Minister.

Hon Mr Turnbull: I believe we have consent to allow the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex to lead off debate.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Turnbull has asked that the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex be able to lead off this time for the government. Agreed? Agreed.

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I rise today to support the motion for time allocation on Bill 151, the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation Act. As the members know, this bill provides for the creation of a permanent Toronto waterfront revitalization corporation. This permanent agency would replace the interim corporation that was created last November. This is good legislation, and I believe it merits the support of all members. I would like to take a few minutes of your time here today to outline why Bill 151 will bring significant benefits to the city of Toronto and to both Ontario and Canada.

As my honourable colleagues may know, the re-development of Toronto's waterfront is long overdue. The waterfront area is a sadly underutilized part of the city that has been neglected for many years. One of the

reasons for this neglect was the inability of the many different governments and agencies with responsibility for the waterfront to agree on its future. In addition to the city of Toronto, for example, both the provincial and federal governments have interests and responsibilities in the waterfront area. Other stakeholders include the Toronto Harbour Commission, scores of community and industry organizations, the International Joint Commission, the St Lawrence Seaway—and the list goes on.

When we talk about many years of neglect, there was an article in one of the local newspapers, the Toronto Sun, on October 15. The headline says, "The Selling of Toronto." Then it says, "We're no longer the destination of choice." I quote from this article: "The folks from Tourism Toronto came to last week's economic development committee meeting armed with more depressing news about the city's visitor slump.

"Last year—while city council was busy deluding itself into thinking Toronto is a world-class city and tourist destination—domestic visitors declined by 14%.

"Since visitors from Canada make up 70% of the city's total tourism and 45% of the spending ... that's a serious drop....

"The most significant decline has been in the business visitor market—down a whopping 22% last year, a trend which continues this year. Hotel occupancy rates in the GTA have dropped from an average of nearly 75% in 1998 to barely 65% so far this year.

"The city's own report showed visitors to Ontario from the US dropped 14% from January to June of this year compared to the same period last year. Overseas visitors were down 18%. Since Toronto is Ontario's most visited destination, these decreases impact on the city's hotel occupancies and attraction attendance ... which notes the declines go well beyond the impact of September 11."

I must point out that Toronto is not the only community in the province of Ontario that is probably experiencing these types of difficulties and challenges. I have the St Clair Parkway Commission in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Certainly because of the post-September 11 situation and the decline of US tourists into southwestern Ontario, they are faced with a \$200,000 operational deficit this year.

Consequently, I think it's long overdue, and it certainly is timely that all levels of government realize that we must improve our waterfronts, not only in Toronto but in many communities across the province.

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There is no doubt that we all realize that Toronto may be the economic engine of the province of Ontario, but we have many other smaller communities that attract tourists, that create economic activity for Ontario and for Canada. We must not forget about these communities, communities like Wallaceburg, Sault Ste Marie, Sarnia, Kingston. There are many communities, and I'm sure I could go on naming them—if we were to look in north-western Ontario, for instance, Kenora. These communities must all be looked after by all levels of government.

Fortunately, with Bill 151, we have found a way to break this impasse. We have found an approach that will clear the logjam that has been frustrating the redevelopment of the Toronto waterfront for so long. In short, Bill 151 gives us a way to move forward and to realize our new vision of the future. Strictly speaking, Bill 151 does not propose a new approach to waterfront development. In fact, it is based on a proven approach that has been successfully used in a number of major waterfront revitalization projects in other cities, including the London docklands, the Melbourne docklands and Battery Park City, in New York. These three projects were undertaken in different parts of the world, in different countries, and in cities and regions with different economies. In most of these projects, not only did the public sector play a major role but the private sector also played a major role.

I would like to refer to an article that appeared recently in the *Bluewater Business Magazine*, a magazine in my area. There are successful stories with regard to the private-public sector in smaller communities. This deals with a small—well, it's no longer small, but it certainly is a small to medium-sized corporation in my riding that is managing some properties for the city of Waterloo.

“On June 25, Steeves and Rozema Asset Management, which specializes in contract management services for all types of real estate and investment properties, was honoured to receive the Building Owners and Managers Association International's Office Building of the Year Award. S&R and the Waterloo City Centre, the building with which it won, was recognized for excellence in office building management and operations in the 100,000-square-foot category at the BOMA International's 95th annual convention awards gala in Chicago. With the award comes the claim of top office building in the world for its size.”

I think that speaks volumes. Here we have a small corporation in a mid-sized community in southwestern Ontario—I guess Waterloo could be considered a mid-sized community—managing a facility, yet they have been recognized as the best-managed and -operated facility in the world for a building under 100,000 square feet.

So when we look at the potential for waterfront development, be it in Toronto, Sarnia, Wallaceburg or wherever in the province of Ontario, I think it's important and I think we all realize that the private sector, along with the other levels of government, does have a major role to play.

In every case, the projects were implemented successfully—and I refer to the three projects I just named—and the redevelopment work was faithful to the integrity of the original vision. In retrospect, the key factor in the projects' success was the common approach taken to redevelopment.

Again, it's interesting that an awful lot of items have been written in the newspapers recently. In the October 15 issue of the *Toronto Star*, the headline was “Designers Seek Harbour Views.” If I may quote, it says, “Top urban

design experts from Europe and North America are meeting in Toronto this week for a three-day workshop to generate ideas on revitalizing the city's waterfront.” One individual is quoted as saying, “Our waterfront is considered one of North America's most valued properties.... The design initiative gives us the opportunity to start exploring ideas as the local level about how we might transform this tremendous resource.”

I think it's important that the first step for each project is the creation of an arm's-length development agency. This agency was given the responsibility, authority and resources it required to implement this vision. The same approach to governance that was used so successfully in London, in Melbourne and in New York is the approach proposed in Bill 151 for Toronto's waterfront.

In Bill 151, just as in each of the other three projects I have mentioned, a special-purpose body or corporation would be established right from the start of the redevelopment process. It would provide the project with a businesslike focus. The work would be undertaken through a corporate entity with the responsibilities, authorities and powers needed to achieve the overall objectives.

It is important to note that in each of the three waterfront projects I mentioned, a special agency was deemed necessary to recognize and respect the different interests and players involved. In each case, no single level of government could have succeeded on its own. It was recognized that the work could not proceed without the co-operation and support of all levels of government.

That is why, in Bill 151, the government is proposing an arm's-length corporation that would act in the interests of the three government partners, namely, the city of Toronto, the province of Ontario and the government of Canada. To ensure that this could happen, section 14 of the proposed bill would allow the city of Toronto to participate in the waterfront revitalization process as an equal partner with the federal and provincial governments.

Moreover, Bill 151 provides for each government partner to appoint up to four members of the Toronto waterfront board of directors to ensure that the interests of all three partners are adequately represented.

There are a number of other parallels between the successful approaches used elsewhere and the approach being used in Bill 151. For example, each of the international waterfront projects I have mentioned began with a clear description of the redevelopment corporation's purpose and mandate. Accordingly, section 3 of Bill 151 provides a clear statement of the purpose of the proposed Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corp.

In the other waterfront projects, the corporations also had independent boards to foster private sector discipline and to enable the agencies to retain and supervise the executive staff they needed to plan and implement the initiatives. Accordingly, section 5 of Bill 151 provides that politicians and civil servants would not be eligible to serve on the board of the proposed TWRC.

Another similarity is that the three other international development corporations were given mandates only for a limited time. In Bill 151, the proposed TWRC would be created for a period of 20 years, with the possibility of continuation for another five years. The wind-up requirements of the proposed corporation are spelled out in section 13 of Bill 151. In London, Melbourne and New York the development corporations also had to meet strict requirements for public accountability and transparency. In each case, particular attention was given to the keeping of accounts, to contracting, and to the procedures governing the acquisition and, certainly equally as important, the disposal of lands.

Bill 151 contains numerous provisions for the proposed TWRC's public accountability and transparency. Accounting is addressed in section 9, and auditing requirements are laid out in section 10. As well, section 11 of the proposed legislation makes it a requirement for the TWRC to prepare an annual report and to make this report available to the public.

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The government will be proposing a number of other amendments to Bill 151 that are designed to further strengthen the requirements for the proposed corporation to gather public input and undertake public consultation. I should point out, however, that the draft legislation does not specifically address requirements around contracting and conflict-of-interest policies and procedures, nor does it detail procedures for the acquisition and disposal of lands. The three governments and the TWRC are working to address these issues through a number of other mechanisms such as directions to the board, development protocols and contribution agreements.

Bill 151 reflects another key element of the successful approach to redevelopment that has been used elsewhere. That was to make each waterfront development corporation a legal entity in its own right. In each of the cases I have cited, the corporations were given the ability to acquire, hold and dispose of property. They could also raise financing and enter into legal proceedings in their own name. Bill 151 adopts this model for the proposed TWRC. Section 4 of the bill would provide the proposed TWRC with the powers of a natural person. At the same time, however, the bill places a condition on the corporation's power to raise revenue, borrow money, mortgage its assets and establish subsidiaries. That condition is designed to further protect the public interests, and it states that before exercising any of these corporate powers, the proposed Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corp would first require the consent of its three government partners.

In Bill 151, then, the government is proposing a redevelopment model that has been proven to work, one that is very similar to the approaches used in London, Melbourne and New York. I think it is also worth noting that the approach to governance proposed in Bill 151 is also modeled on the recommendations of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force in its March 2000 report.

Perhaps most importantly, the governance model being proposed in Bill 151 is one that has the support of all three government partners in the Toronto waterfront revitalization initiative. This agreement between the different levels of government has allowed the partners to embrace a common vision of the future. That unanimous approval is unique in the history of the waterfront, and it therefore represents a tremendous opportunity for Toronto, Ontario, and, I may say, Canada.

As I said earlier, the principal stumbling block to redeveloping Toronto's waterfront has always been that no one could agree on the future of the area. With the passage of Bill 151, we would finally have moved beyond that stage, toward the dawn of a new and exciting era.

In crafting the proposed legislation, the province has made good on its commitment to its other government partners to take the lead in creating an arms-length development agency so that we can get on with the business of implementing our shared vision of the waterfront's future. With the passage of Bill 151, new investments would start to flow into the waterfront area to revitalize and transform an underutilized area to one of the jewels in Toronto's crown.

In effect, those members who support this legislation will be helping to strengthen the international competitiveness of Canada's largest city. At the same time, they will be helping our government to create thousands of new jobs, new neighbourhoods and new places for living and working near the city's downtown core.

The proposed legislation would mandate the new TWRC to begin creating an accessible, active waterfront district, a place with exciting new developments for people to live, work and play. I may add, that's what it's all about: a place that would be exciting for people to live, work and play, with housing development, commercial development, recreational facilities—that are always sadly lacking in many municipalities, not only in Toronto's new waterfront development but certainly across many other smaller communities in the province of Ontario that certainly could see some improvement to their waterfront.

This corporation needs that mandate. We have the opportunity to give it that mandate here today. As I said earlier, Bill 151 is good legislation. Its passage will permit good things to happen to the Toronto waterfront. New jobs, new homes, new business opportunities and billions of dollars' worth of new investment depend on the passage of this bill.

I call on all members of this Legislature to vote for a stronger Toronto, a stronger Ontario and a stronger, more competitive Canada. I realize that we do face some challenges, especially when we look at the weakness of our dollar today and some of the concern that it gives to an awful lot of people, including yours truly. Sometimes, I have to ask myself, when I look at what is occurring in my own riding, when I see many Americans—and not that I have anything against Americans or Europeans—but they're buying all the waterfront lands, they're

buying viable businesses, they're buying viable corporations, because of the low dollar.

I know that we don't control the monetary system in this province, but sometimes we have to ask ourselves: is Canada for sale, and is it the right thing for Canada to be for sale? I think there would, certainly, be many different answers from many different people.

I urge all members to support this bill in order to provide for a stronger Toronto, a stronger Ontario, and certainly a more competitive and stronger Canada. By supporting this bill I think we will achieve that goal.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): Our party and my leader Dalton McGuinty indicated all along that we are supporting the bill.

I would just say to the people watching that this bill was introduced almost a year ago now, December 11, 2001, 10 months ago. So here we are dealing with something called time allocation. In other words, this bill has got to get passed right away. I say to the people at home who are watching this: doesn't it strike you as odd that the government introduced this bill in December of last year, more than 10 months ago, and we've just begun debate on this bill a few days ago and now the government is saying, "We've simply got to get this thing passed; we're going to cut off the debate now"? You can't have it both ways. You can't say that this is a matter of extreme urgency and then do nothing about it for 10 months. I hold the government accountable for that. It's mismanagement at its height.

I also say to the public that our party is very supportive of whatever we can do to ensure that Toronto is rejuvenated; that we set our sights high. This was in the 2000 budget. That was introduced two and a half years ago. If you look in the budget, it talked about investment in the waterfront. It put \$200 million in this budget two and a half years ago. I think virtually none of that was spent in that year's budget. The next year's budget, the 2001 budget, had another \$200 million in it, with virtually none of it spent. This year's budget has got a similar amount in it.

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I have a saying about this government, the Harris-Eves government: don't listen to what they say; you've got to watch what they do, because that's the true indicator. To the people in the city of Toronto who are anxious to see our city once again—I represent a riding here in Toronto, so I have a particular interest in the city of Toronto. The people of Toronto are anxious to see what the government is actually going to do. I've watched now for two and a half years, when the talk was relatively cheap and the action has been slow to come.

I want to talk about the board and some of the concerns that we have. I gather from the time allocation motion that this bill will be going to committee, and I look forward to that. The bill does talk about, and I think there's another amendment coming on this, I'm told—although we haven't seen it—that will ensure that this board does its business in public. That's important. I've been very disappointed in what happened to the western

part of the Toronto harbour. I think there's a huge opportunity missed there. I don't know who's to blame for that. It took place, I believe, in the 1970s. But if you go down to the harbour front now, the western portion of it, I think it's an unfortunate development down there.

I would just say to the government, I think we need some definitions on conflict of interest on public boards. I've used this example before. It has to do with the crown jewel in Mr Eves's privatization—that is, the 407 corporation. There's an individual on the board of directors of the 407 corporation called Mr Al Leach. I want to make it very clear to the Legislature and the public that he's an individual of talent; he's well regarded. This is not about Mr Leach and his abilities. But Mr Leach sits on the 407 corporation board. By the way, this is the most lucrative toll road in the world. I was just looking at some financial data from one of the owners of the corporation who recently increased their stake in it. The companies that bought the 407 corporation—it was Mr Eves, by the way, who negotiated the deal. The deal closed May 5, 1999, the day the election was called. They put an equity investment into the 407 of \$750 million. Today that is worth more than four times what they paid. Why? It's the only private toll road in the world where they can take tolls up without limit. In fact, an article I read about one of the owners said they can take it up at a whim, to use the terms in the document.

So here we have the 407 corporation that is now worth four times what the people paid for it and the tolls can be taken up at a whim, and frankly the 407 users have been abused. They have been terribly abused, with tolls going up to where, in some cases, it started at four cents per kilometre and it's now 10.5 cents per kilometre in three years. The owners are just laughing all the way to the bank. This is probably, in the last three years, the best investment any corporation could have made. It's worth four times what they paid. It's worth more than \$3 billion, and their equity investment was \$750 million.

On the board of the 407 corporation is Mr Al Leach—and good for him. He probably is giving them excellent advice. He's knowledgeable in this area. He has probably helped to dramatically increase shareholder value. But the government has also appointed him to be on the GO Transit board. By the way, this wasn't some mysterious plot by Mr Harris. Mr Eves has agreed with it. He sent me a letter agreeing with the appointment.

So there's Mr Leach. As he sits on the 407 board, his goal is to increase shareholder value there, to drive the value up, and he and that board have been successful beyond their wildest imaginations. But now he's sitting on the board of GO Transit—by the way, he's the vice-chair—where every single decision of that corporation will have millions and millions of dollars of impact on the 407 corporation. Every time a GO decision means moving another car on to the 407, that's \$2,500 a year that the 407 corporation picks up.

In my opinion, the conflict could never be more obvious, but it's OK with this government. You can be on the 407 corporation, driving the value of that corporation

up, quadrupling it, and you can still sit over on GO Transit as the vice-chair, where every decision will impact by millions of dollars the 407 corporation. Those are the standards of this government.

It's an issue for me when I look at the appointments by the government of the people to the waterfront commission, three individuals who, again, are well regarded, but one of them is Mr Farlinger, the chairman of Ontario Power Generation, and he's there for a reason. As I say, he's experienced and well regarded. But he's also going to be put on this board—he's already on the board; he'll just continue on. Ontario Power Generation has a huge interest in the waterfront, with huge holdings down there, and they are, I understand from media reports, looking to invest in power generation down there.

My point is this: the government has no real guidelines for conflict of interest. I find the Leach one unacceptable. As I say, it has nothing to do with him as an individual but it has everything to do with him being put into a position where he can't wear both those hats. In my opinion, as long as those are acceptable standards, we're going to have other similar conflicts.

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: Mr Spina is defending the decision to have Mr Leach, and that's your right. It's quite all right, as far as Mr Spina is concerned, to have Mr Leach on the board of the 407 corporation, driving the value of it from \$750 million to \$3 billion in three years, and to sit on GO Transit's board, whose goal it is to reduce congestion. Every time he speaks at the board, I would be saying, "Whose hat is he wearing here?" The reason it's important is, again, on the waterfront revitalization, it's the government's appointees here. I think we have to set some new standards for conflict around here because the example that I have just quoted is unacceptable to our party and, I think, to the public.

I just want to close my remarks on the importance of Toronto revitalization. Toronto is struggling right now; make no mistake about it. One of the reasons they're struggling is downloading.

The government put out a document on the cost of downloading. The difference between the costs they put on to the city of Toronto and the costs that were moved was \$163 million a year. So they're struggling—nowhere more, in my opinion, than in our public school system.

I happen to have been on a school board for 11 years. I was chairman of the Scarborough school board in the mid-1970s and chairman of what was then called the Metro school board in the late 1970s—so in the mid-1970s I was the Scarborough chairman and then chairman of the Metro board in the late 1970s. All my experience there said to me that perhaps the most important reason why Toronto, of all the urban centres in North America, has been able to retain strong communities, particularly in the downtown core, when other major urban areas has not been able to do that, has been the strength of our public schools. Regardless of where you live in Toronto, you had in the past been assured that

your local school had the resources to provide a first-class, quality education.

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Any of us who take the time to visit the schools now and to talk with our educators and parents understand the challenges that our schools are facing. In my opinion it's going to result in the communities of Toronto being far less desirable places to live than they have been in the past. That can't continue. That has to be fixed.

So, as we look at the future of Toronto, I think it's fair to say that in the last several years Toronto unfortunately stood still at best while major urban areas across North America have been advancing. You've only got to look at the success that some of the major urban areas in the US have had. We can't stand still. If you stand still, you go backwards.

The waterfront bill is helpful and we will support it, but a lot more is going to have to be done to assist the city of Toronto to regain its momentum. It's partially resources, but it's partially an attitude, saying that Ontario depends on all communities being strong and we can't allow the city of Toronto to weaken. In my opinion, that's what's been happening. We see it in our schools, we see it in our infrastructure, we see it in social programs and we see it in the challenges that the city of Toronto is facing right now.

The harbourfront requires a couple of things: it requires an assurance that the planning is open to the public view and it's done in the open and that the people we all appoint to those boards are there without being put in any position of conflict.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): The NDP caucus and this House supports provincial and federal action to redevelop Toronto's waterfront. We think that we should have been moving on it a long time ago. In particular, we support a vision of mixed-income housing, offices, public space and cultural facilities on the waterfront. I say that to highlight my next comment.

I don't think this government is interested in developing the waterfront. I don't think this government is interested in anything other than getting to the next election, doing whatever it takes to make sure they're successful at the next election so that they can continue to provide their friends and benefactors all kinds of advantage and profit that is at the expense of the rest of us in Ontario and the public good.

Here we have a piece of legislation that all three parties could support but agree that we need full and complete debate on. Speaking about a time allocation motion—I've said in jest here over the last four or five years that whenever I'm on duty, and it's usually a Wednesday afternoon, it's a time allocation motion. I can almost automatically assume that when I come in the House and it's Wednesday afternoon, it's another time allocation motion. Or, if I'm speaking to a time allocation motion, I don't have to look in my calendar to see what day it is—it's a Wednesday.

This government time allocates almost everything that it brings before the House, because it doesn't really

believe in democracy. It doesn't really believe in due process. It doesn't really believe in involving people in discussion about things that affect all of us very directly. It simply believes in driving an agenda that delivers a benefit to a very small and elite group in this jurisdiction. That's what we have here this afternoon.

This bill, as the member before indicated, was tabled in the House on December 11, 2001, and wasn't brought back to the Legislature until a couple of weeks ago when the House resumed in September.

We've had some seven and a half hours of debate now; that's about three days of debate in the Legislature on this very important bill. When you talk about developing waterfront, particularly in the city of Toronto, anybody who's looking at this or has been involved in any of this kind of activity has to understand that this is very serious public business. This is a huge undertaking and will have long-term ramifications that will affect absolutely everybody in the province.

We've had a sum total of some seven-and-a-half hours of discussion and debate on second reading on this bill and the government has now brought in time allocation, but people shouldn't be surprised because there isn't a piece of legislation that has been brought forward to this House since we came back on September 23 that hasn't now been time-allocated, which confirms for me, as I said in my opening comments, that this government is focused on nothing other than getting to an election, lining up the ducks, lining up the stars so there will be a positive result for them, and doing absolutely whatever it takes to get them there.

I would guess that this session of the House won't last the full time period that is allocated, that there are some housekeeping things the government needs to get done that it will then take and wave in front of everybody come an election and say, "Vote for me and we'll move on this."

The question people out there should be asking is, "Why didn't you move on it when you were government, when you had the opportunity, when you had the time?" December 11, 2001, is a long time ago. A lot of work could have been done between then and now had this government been serious about the redevelopment of the waterfront in this city.

But here we are, with another in a series of time allocation motions that indicate to me the government is railroading, is ramrodding stuff through this place at a speed we've not seen in my 12 years here that will in no way contribute to public understanding and support for the projects and initiatives that this bill represents and that actually deserve all our support.

If people were to take the time to look at each of the time allocation motions that come before this House, I think they'd be disappointed at best, shocked at worst, to see the kind of railroading that's going on. For example, it says here that "when Bill 151," which is what we're debating here this afternoon, "is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary"—in seven-and-a-half hours, it's done, it's

over—"to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs...." So it's over as far as public debate in this place is concerned, as far as anybody putting on the record thoughts on behalf of their constituents is concerned, as far as making amendments to this very important legislation is concerned. It's over.

Then it goes to committee. We're thankful that at least that is being considered. I don't think they could have got away with it otherwise. But in going to committee, it gets two days. Now people might say that's a long time, but in this place two days is about an hour and a half to a maximum of two-and-a-half hours a day, which is probably, at max, about five hours allocated to hearings, but also allocated for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill, which seriously reduces the amount of time we will actually have

Then it gets really bizarre and weird because it says here that on that committee, "That, no later than 4 pm on the day the committee is scheduled for clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved"—and let's understand here what we mean by this: amendments that are brought forward by the government, and apparently there is one amendment being considered, not amendments that are being brought forward by the opposition because they'll be automatically voted down—"shall be deemed to have been moved"—that means you don't even have to put them on the table, you don't have to move them; they will be deemed to have been moved—"and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill."

Without even putting them on the table, they will have been deemed to have been moved, without any debate or back-and-forth between the various constituents in this assembly. The question will be put without debate and that's it. We're done.

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"The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond its normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration." In other words, if they should happen to, because they haven't managed the time properly, go beyond 4 o'clock or the time allocated for that committee on that day, which is usually 6 o'clock here, then all the clause-by-clause consideration will be complete, but without any debate.

"Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a)."

Then once that's done and we've whipped this piece of legislation very quickly through committee—we've had this mockery of consideration of amendment, clause-by-clause and vote so that anybody who has been here and sat in on those wonders why they are there or why their valuable time is being taken up—it's brought back to the House for third reading. Then it goes on to say:

“That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than the first sessional day that reports from committees may be received following the completion of clause-by-clause consideration. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed....” This is the second time that we come across this issue of being deemed to be passed by the committee. In other words, it doesn't have to be brought in here at all. If they skip a day or miss a day or for some reason or other have to wait a day, perhaps for a translation or whatever, the bill is “deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

“That, upon receiving the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith”—right away. No more debate; no debate after third reading.

Remember the process that this House works under when important public business is brought before it, and in this instance very important business which will see us moving aggressively forward to revitalize the Toronto waterfront.

It used to be in the old days—and that's seven years ago; not that far away, but it seems that far away often in this place—that you would bring a bill forward for first reading and it would usually be automatically passed. It would come to the floor of the House for second reading and then there would be extended debate where parties or individual members could, if they wanted to, bring forward amendments and place them on the floor and they would be debated as well. Once we were finished debating the amendments, we'd go back to the original bill again and would debate that until people were finished, until people had exhausted everything that they wanted to say on behalf of their constituents, on their own behalf and on behalf of their party on a particular bill, and then it would be voted on and would move out to committee.

I remember that when I first got here 12 years ago, when a piece of legislation was sent to committee, that committee then would sit down and decide how it was going to get the fullest input from all of the constituencies out there that had an interest in a particular bill. Travel: it would go from one end of the province to the other to make sure we didn't miss anybody, to make sure that the people of this province were involved in a meaningful and significant way in a democratic process in this place so that when we made decisions of public interest, everybody's fingerprints were all over it, and at the very least people could say, “I had an opportunity to participate, and either I did or I didn't.”

Then after that fulsome input from constituencies out there and back and forth between the various opposition parties and the government, again another set of amendments would be tabled from everybody. There would be due consideration of those amendments. There would be debate and discussion about those amendments.

Those were the days when committees were meaningful in this place, when committees meant something, when people lined up to be on committees because they knew they could make a difference at committees.

That's just not the case any more. Committees are simply another way for this government to say, “Well, we did due process. We went to committee, we heard from people, and now here we are. There you go.” No consideration or openness to amendments that would improve a piece of legislation going through this place; no consideration or concern.

You would think that after the experience of this government over the last seven years and the mistakes they have made that they've had to bring back in here and correct because they've rushed legislation through, they'd be anxious to hear from everybody and be challenged and listen to how some of these things will play out and be wanting to bring forward, in co-operation with the opposition, amendments that would make this legislation better.

But no, these folks across the way, the Conservative Party and government at the moment, think they have the answers to everything and that everything they do is correct, and if it's not correct, it was somebody else's fault and we'll bring it back and correct it tout de suite and move forward.

So the committees become a joke. You get two days. Those two days are taken up with clause-by-clause and voting. Then when it's brought back in here—in the old days, when a bill was duly processed and amendments voted on and people were satisfied they had something that warranted the support of the House or the support of the public out there, it would be brought forward then for third reading, where each party, government members, opposition members, had a chance then to put on the record some of their contributions so that people understood some of the debate that went on out there across the province, either support for or objection to the bill finally at third reading, so that the people of this province could be satisfied that public policy, public agenda, public initiative, legislation coming forward out of this place was in their best interests and got due process and would, when it played out, deliver what it is suggested it would deliver in the title of the bill.

You see this government being quite cute in the way they title bills that they bring forward before the House here only to find out later that in fact that the title was facetious or some other thing that the government thought was either funny or self-serving or politically a correct thing to do for them but really had nothing to do with the actual content of the bill and how we found it played out.

If we do due diligence, if we do participate in fulsome public process here as it was laid out that we would according to the rules and regulations of this place, that in fact at the end of the day is, in most instances, what happens. But that's not the case here. We have a government that, as I have said, has time-allocated every piece of business that is brought before the Legislature since

we returned on September 23, including this piece of work that we have before us here today, which is in its own right very important and something that we should be doing, that we should be spending significant time going over, making sure that all of the framework is in place that will support the very excellent intention that is there and those who will pick it up and run with it from here, but we know, and anybody out there who is politically tuned in or astute knows, that this government is not about developing the Toronto waterfront.

At this particular point in time, this government is about getting ready for an election, getting all the stars lined up, getting all the ducks in a row, getting stuff like this bill passed through the House here so they can wave it at people and say, "Look what we did. Aren't we wonderful? We're going to develop the Toronto waterfront for the people of Toronto and Ontario," when in fact we don't know whether they will do that or not, and if they do, at the end of the day, in whose best interests it will work out to be in.

We think it's about time that the government got on with this. They waited for two years after the announcement to then table the legislation on December 11, 2001, and now to have this very brief and limited debate reflects, I think, their commitment to this very important project.

We'll be watching as it plays out, and I suggest that others should watch as well in terms of both time and effort and actual money, to make sure public assets are not given away and that there is sufficient public accountability; that even though there wasn't much accountability in here in terms of debate on this bill, debate in committee on this bill, including people in the discussion about how it might move forward, as it moves forward out there and as the good people who will be appointed to the various positions of responsibility are held accountable to we, the public.

Our critic, Michael Prue, has put forward a comprehensive urban vision document himself on behalf of our caucus. If we were government, we would provide \$300 million per year for a fund for dynamic downtowns, not just for Toronto's downtown—we know that's important; it's the industrial heartland of the province—but for every downtown across this province. Every community we represent in this place should have an opportunity to tap into some money from the province to develop their downtown. This fund would help fund the waterfront project we have in front of us. It would help with the fix-up of heritage buildings, it would help with the cleanup of brownfield sites and a variety of other things to improve our city centres throughout the province.

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Our vision also involves affordable housing and an Ontario transportation trust fund to fund transit and roads, which is really important, where the ordinary man and woman working in places of work across this province will be affected and interested. We believe a big, significant portion of this waterfront development, and any downtown development across this province,

needs to include some affordable housing for people and transportation for those folks, so they can get to school and to work and participate in the communities where they live.

Our leader, Howard Hampton, as he looks forward to being the Premier of this province after the next election, brought forward a private member's bill himself called the Toronto Waterfront Fair Housing Act. We want to ensure affordable housing is part of this vision so that we aren't just building an enclave for the rich.

There was the inaction of this government, around the date a couple of weeks ago when they introduced this bill, around the evacuation of the most needy and poor of this city and province, the homeless people who were in tent city, and the way they were summarily dismissed and thrown off property owned by Home Depot so it could conceivably, once this development and revitalization starts, develop their property and make significant profit out of it. Absolutely no consideration whatsoever was given to what was going to happen to those people.

There was no indication by this government that it was going to move in tandem with that to work with Home Depot, the federal government or anybody else to make sure there was affordable housing on that waterfront, that these folks would be served and that all people who consider Toronto home will find a place on that waterfront that will be friendly, comfortable and supportive of them as they try to live, work or recreate.

I'll be turning over the rest of the time for our caucus on this to the member for Nickel Belt, who is also here on Wednesday afternoons to talk to these time allocation motions, the same as I have. She will of course have some interesting things to put on the record. I would encourage people out there to pay attention in, I'd say, probably about another half an hour to 40 minutes.

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): I am pleased to rise today in support of the motion for time allocation on Bill 151, which is called the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation Act.

As my colleague from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex has already stated, I think it's important to know that this bill will, if passed, create a permanent Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, or TWRC for short.

With this new corporation, once it's up and running, the redevelopment and revitalization of Toronto's waterfront would, we believe, really begin to take off. It's something that's much needed. In fact, the revitalization of the waterfront area will mark a very important new phase for the city of Toronto.

As members know, the lands within the central waterfront area played an extremely vital role in the city's earlier economic development. The development and renewal of these lands will help to ensure that they play an equally vital role in the city's future.

I think if one analyzes the history of the great cities of the world—my colleague from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex alluded to these great cities of Sydney and Melbourne and New York, but there are other great cities. There's Paris and Venice, and all of them have a very interesting

history attached to them. I think it's interesting to compare the development of those waterfronts with the development of Toronto's waterfront to see what I believe forges greatness in cities.

At one time, Toronto's waterfront was the preferred location for numerous factories, warehouses and other retail, commercial and industrial concerns. As these enterprises evolved, they helped to pave the way for the prosperous city that we know today. Indeed, even before the city's industrialization, Toronto's earliest settlers arrived here by water. The city's earliest beginnings can be traced to the shore of the lake. In fact, Scarborough was so named because it was Lord Simcoe who spotted the bluffs when he was sailing up Lake Ontario and actually began to see the development of what now is a truly exciting and vibrant city.

In 1750, French fur traders established a post at the foot of Dufferin Street near the grounds of today's CNE. In 1787 Britain negotiated what's called the Toronto Purchase, which was the acquisition of a huge parcel of land that measured 14 miles along the lakeshore and about 30 miles to the north. It was in 1793 that John Graves Simcoe established Fort York, and not long after that his soldiers began the construction of Yonge Street, beginning at the shore of the lake. Toronto was incorporated as a city in 1834. Its name, of course, as most members of this House know, is taken from the aboriginal word for meeting place.

By historical standards, we know that Toronto is a fairly young city. But it's interesting to also note that in just 168 years, Toronto's reputation has spread, not just across this great nation of ours, Canada, but throughout North America and around the world. Its reputation is that of a successful, livable, vibrant city and one of the most multicultural centres in the world.

With the passage of Bill 151 and the creation of a permanent waterfront development corporation, this legislation has the opportunity to strengthen Ontario's capital city and make it what I believe to be a much more prosperous and successful one in the 21st century.

By way of background, the honourable members will be aware that the province has formed a partnership to revitalize the Toronto waterfront with two other levels of government: the government of Canada and the city of Toronto. Together, these three government partners have pledged to invest \$500 million each, for a total of \$1.5 billion in the city's future, something I think that the member for Scarborough-Agincourt should take note of, because that's a considerable investment. It's a great deal of money but it's also what we believe to be an appropriate amount of investment, considering the massive scale of the undertaking that we envision.

The proposed TWRC would have a mandate to oversee an estimated \$12 billion worth of redevelopment projects on the Toronto waterfront. Simply put, this is quite possibly the single largest project of its kind in Canadian history.

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As Mr Robert Fung, who chairs the interim waterfront corporation, has pointed out, we could be looking at a series of major projects that would include up to 10 million square feet of new commercial and industrial space, an amount equal to the floor space of five SkyDomes. We could also see a total of 500 acres of new parkland, up to 30,000 new permanent jobs and an estimated 194,000 person-years of employment during construction. We could see new homes for 68,000 people and \$100 million in new annual property tax revenue, based on current tax rates. We could see attractions that would bring an estimated two million additional visitors to Toronto each year, which would represent an increase of 10%, \$800 million in transit improvements and an additional 100,000 TTC trips per day, which would represent an 8% increase in overall TTC ridership.

To coordinate the public's considerable investment in these major projects, as well as the billions in private sector capital that we hope it would attract, we need a permanent waterfront revitalization corporation. That is the purpose of Bill 151 and that's the reason we need to get on with it.

The proposed legislation fulfills Ontario's pledge to show leadership on waterfront redevelopment issues, and the process begins with the creation of a permanent waterfront revitalization corporation. Our government attaches a high priority to getting this corporation up and running. Accordingly, we would like to see the bill approved by the Legislature before the end of this session. It makes sense to us.

I'd like to just take a few minutes to outline some of the important provisions that are actually contained in Bill 151. As I have said, the proposed legislation would establish the TWRC. That corporation would assume responsibility for the development of business plans, development strategies and implementing projects on the city's waterfront and it would encourage the use of innovative approaches in the way that these projects would be carried out.

Under the proposed legislation, the corporation would be empowered to leverage the initial investment provided by the three governments, with the goal of becoming financially self-sustaining and attracting private sector investment, something that we happen to think, contrary to some members on the other side of this House, to be a valuable thing.

The proposed bill would also ensure the new corporation's accountability by requiring the corporation to obtain approval from all three governments before borrowing funds, mortgaging its assets, generating revenues or establishing subsidiaries. I would suggest that that maximizes the whole accountability aspect of this particular bill, something that clearly members from the Liberal opposition have not read about in this bill.

The bill would give the corporation a mandate to encourage private sector involvement in waterfront projects. We believe, on this side of the House, in creating good partnerships. At the same time, it would ensure that

the corporation involves the public. That may be a strange notion to some members of the House on the opposition benches but it actually would involve the public in waterfront planning and development.

Bill 151 outlines the proposed corporation's purpose, powers and mandate and it gives the corporation a framework to guide it in matters of business planning, financial accountability and annual reporting. The bill would also provide the corporation with a board of directors of up to 13 members, comprising representative interests from the three government partners. If the legislation is passed by the Legislature, Robert Fung would be appointed to chair the permanent corporation.

Bill 151 is designed to ensure a smooth transition from the interim waterfront development corporation we have today to a permanent entity that will be active, we envision, for the next 20 to 25 years. However, the proposed legislation also includes a process for conducting a sunset review—another accountability measure, I might add—of the corporation and developing a wind-down plan once the TWRC has completed its mandate. The proposed legislation aims to balance corporate independence with the need for public accountability, and it is consistent with the major tenet of the governance model recommended by the report of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force that was led by Robert Fung.

I will conclude by saying that I believe all the partners in this great enterprise are anxious to see this proposed legislation proclaimed so we can start implementing the projects that will lead, not only to a revitalized Toronto waterfront but what I consider to be one of the most exciting, vibrant cities in the world. I urge all members of the Legislature to take action with me here today by supporting the motion on Bill 151.

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): It's Wednesday, so it must be another time allocation motion. For viewers at home or in our galleries here, time allocation is just a fancy form of closing debate. It is language that says there will be more no debate and things will proceed further through committee, possibly, or on to third reading, even more so.

Before I get into my comments. I heard my colleague from the third party, the member from Sault Ste Marie, complain bitterly about time allocation. It was his House leader when he was in government, Dave Cooke, who introduced this section into the standing orders to allow a government to easily move time allocation, to choke off debate and to not allow members of the Ontario Legislative Assembly to be able to speak to bills like 151 or many of the others that are being time allocated. I thought it was important to put that on the record.

I've heard a number of government members—two today but also in earlier debate on Bill 151—say that there is an urgency about this, that we have to get on with the job. But as my colleague from Scarborough-Agincourt said, don't listen to what the Harris-Eves government says; look at what they do. The Fung report on the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront came out some two and a half to three years ago. The government

hemmed and hawed, made some very vague promises, made some very large promises—yet unfulfilled, I might add—and then about a year ago introduced this particular bill. Now they come to this House and say, "We need urgent passage of Bill 151." Their words say that, but their actions say something entirely different. For an entire year, almost, languishing on the order paper, we had Bill 151, and now government members say we have an urgent commitment to see this into law and to see the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront. It's a load of hogwash, Speaker, and you and I both know that. If it was so urgent to require time allocation, why weren't we debating this sooner?

I have heard from government members that we have a need to amend the bill, so once again it was rushed into the House without much thought, obviously, and we're going to have to spend valuable committee time correcting yet another sloppily drafted bill by the Harris-Eves government. I hope that in future, when a bill is this urgent, according to the government, it's going to be treated urgently and will be complete upon its presentation to the House.

1650

Bill 151, on the face of it, isn't a contentious bill. All members of this Legislature ought to be supportive of the revitalization, the rejuvenation, the redevelopment of Toronto's waterfront. We know the redevelopment is going to be critical to the growth of our capital city and to the evolution and maintenance of our status as a world-class city. What's a little bit hard to take, though, is the government lauding themselves for this bill as some kind of magnificent contribution to Toronto.

A key part to rejuvenating our city is the development of housing, especially the development of affordable housing. When we started debating Bill 151 a few short weeks ago, it was ironic that it was the very same day that tent city, down at the lakeshore, was dismantled with the assistance of the city of Toronto and the police department.

To hear the government speak about how they've spent so much money, about how they've made such a difference in the city—that just is not true. Where they could have made a difference, in fact they've been very harmful, especially when it comes to creating and supporting affordable housing.

The Harris-Eves government claims it does so much to help people who cannot afford basic items such as rent. I think the government should be ashamed of itself. In this debate we've heard about this so-called partnership between the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, but in the case where the federal government has offered some \$250 million for the support and creation of affordable housing, is the Harris-Eves government willing to match it? No. They are going to put up less than 10% of what the federal government has committed. That shows you what the Harris-Eves government does when it comes to being a true partner with the federal government. When it goes for the city, we all know what provincial downloading has meant to the city of

Toronto. Even Erik Peters, the auditor for the province of Ontario, has said that downloading has cost the city of Toronto some \$140 million. So much for a partnership with the Harris-Eves government.

I'm embarrassed when I think about the way the government lauds itself and what their actions really are. How they think they can provide for the creation of adequate, affordable housing on the pittance they have offered as their share of a federal-provincial program is beyond me.

Let me clarify what tenants in Ontario, certainly in Toronto, in my riding of Don Valley East, are facing. Vacancy rates are at an all-time low. Rent increases are far beyond the rate of inflation. Evictions are being generated by the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal at a record pace. Affordable accommodation is scarce, if not non-existent, in many of our communities across Ontario. To add insult to injury, the Harris-Eves government just raised the fees to ensure it was even more expensive for tenants to pursue an action against their landlord.

When you look at the bottom line of what people who are looking for much needed shelter are facing, what tenants are facing, the picture becomes even more disturbing. Study after study has shown that half of Ontario's tenants pay more than 30% of their gross household income on rent. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing says that its accepted level is 30% of combined gross household income. If more than half are paying above that threshold, what does that say about the failure of this government's policies? What does that say about the abdication of their responsibilities? It gets even worse. One out of every four tenants, 25%, pay more than 50% of their combined household income on their shelter costs. That's borderline with homelessness. That's the real crisis we have in housing in Ontario.

Those are the kind of issues the government should be addressing instead of this self-congratulatory comment we're hearing from the members from Scarborough Centre and Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. The problem is that tenants have been hit for the past several years with above-guideline increases for capital repair and utility costs. Currently, there are over 80,000 tenant households facing rent increases above the guideline, based on extraordinary utility costs alone. The problem, Speaker, as you well know, is that these increases are forever. There's no relief, even when a landlord's bills go down, as they have, or when they're paid off. I don't know how many people could afford an increase in their home ownership costs of 6% to 12% per year over the number of years, yet that is what thousands of Ontario tenants are facing here in the province today.

Of course, when I introduced a remedy to rectify this situation, government members sitting here today were more than pleased to vote against Bill 134, which would have rolled back those kinds of increases and prevented them from becoming permanent. In my opinion, it's yet another shameful exercise by the Harris-Eves government in their attack on people who are very vulnerable.

I'm pleased, Speaker, to let you and all members of the Legislature know that the Ontario Ombudsman has recently announced that he will be initiating his own inquiry into the matters and the way that rents are raised at the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal. I look forward to that report, because I believe it will be another damning indictment of the Harris-Eves government. So it's interesting that one of the keys to revitalizing and rejuvenating our city is in the area of creating and supporting affordable housing.

The waterfront is also part of that. It is our front yard, so to speak, and many examples have been listed here today and on other days of governments—cities, provinces, states, federal governments—getting together to help spur, to help support revitalization. When that has happened, however, it is not because of some framework that is put in place or a waterfront revitalization corporation. No. What has motivated, what has ensured success has been true leadership.

I'm not a great fan of Margaret Thatcher. She certainly has a different view than I do. But she was down at the Canary Wharf redevelopment project every six months. She took an active interest in it. I don't think Premier Eves would ever go down there except to cut a ribbon or make some kind of announcement. I don't think there's that kind of leadership, that kind of drive, that kind of person in the provincial government today who would champion the waterfront being redeveloped.

So I see very much that you can put all the frameworks you want in place, and you can write all of the terms of reference you want, but until and unless there is that leadership role—and it should rightfully be by the Premier of the province. I know that when Dalton McGuinty is the Premier of the province of Ontario—and it cannot come too soon for my liking—we will in fact have that champion for waterfront redevelopment in the province.

It's interesting, when you look back, that \$500 million has been committed by the government in budgets dating back to the year 2000. How much of that money has been spent? How much has been committed or allocated or directed to any kind of meaningful project? Virtually nothing. Of course, you won't hear any government member tell you that. They'll tell you about their grand vision, they'll tell you about their commitment. But don't listen to their words, look at their actions.

I would note for you as well, Speaker, that while this conversation is taking place, while this inertia has set in, we've seen parts and parcels of the waterfront committed by the city of Toronto for such things as a movie sound stage. That may well be a worthwhile project, but it is a completely piecemeal approach to what should be a smart kind of redevelopment where it is thoughtfully, meticulously, effectively planned and executed, not a part and a parcel for one group. Then of course we have Mr Farlinger, chair of Ontario Power Generation Inc, or OPG as they call it, who is a member of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corp, having an interest in

creating more generating capacity on the harbour lands as well.

1700

So as we can see, parts and parcels are being committed outside of a complete and comprehensive vision. It is this kind of piecemeal development which is going to be the bane of a good, planned, effective—and the new jewel for the city of Toronto and I would say a gateway for Canada's view on the world as well. It is not going to happen, because the Harris-Eves government has not shown the leadership, has not been a good partner in other endeavours with the federal government or municipal governments.

Real leadership, in my opinion, would have passed this bill months ago, years ago. You could have empowered the board to take some real action and not wait until we develop parking lots or condos or film studios. There is no planning authority without this bill. How about some real leadership when it comes to the disposition of provincial lands? How about some real leadership? Instead of building thousands of homes on the Oak Ridges moraine and issuing a minister's order, how about some real action on brownfields and some real money for transit?

Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals have offered some hope to municipalities and a real vision for liveable communities. I'm proud of the role that Dalton McGuinty has played, that our party has played, and I want to assure the people of Toronto, the people of Ontario, our partners at the municipal level of government and the federal level of government, that there is a leader in Ontario; it is Dalton McGuinty. You can be assured that Toronto's waterfront will be developed in a planned, managed and sustainable way.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Another time allocation motion. Once again, this government shows its entire disregard for debate in this chamber, shows its disdain for not only the opposition but its own backbenches. Let me explain to you very clearly, the government is silencing its own backbenchers as much as it's silencing members of the opposition—it is—as it rams yet another bill through with but two days. What that means is two afternoons of hearings, let's make that perfectly clear, with perhaps as little as two hours each day.

In so-called clause-by-clause, take a look at what the time allocation motion says: that at 4 o'clock on the day that the committee shall hear clause-by-clause, every motion tabled shall be deemed to have been moved. No more debate, and then vote after vote after vote, and of course the majority of government members, following marching orders, will be whipped into shape, will be doing as they're told, won't be applying any thought whatsoever to what they're voting on. I predict they won't even have read the amendments.

Then, oh, but we have third reading? No. When the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment. That's nuts, it's undemocratic and it's the clear pattern that has been

established by this government. When I say it's a pattern—every bill is disposed of by way of time allocation.

I remember a time here, so does Ms McLeod, so does Ms Martel, when bills around which there was general agreement in principle would receive a day or two of debate and would then have healthy committee hearings, because the committee would be allowed to determine the length of those hearings based on the number of people who wanted to make representations to the committee. If committee hearings required only one day, they only took one day. But if there were sufficient persons out there in the community interested in commenting on the bill in an effort to critique the bill, to support the bill, perhaps to propose amendments that would make the bill a better piece of legislation, the committee took control of its own business and sat a few days longer. Then once amendments were moved and dealt with, the bill came back again for third reading and members of this Legislature would have an opportunity to debate that bill, to express their support or their opposition to that bill, as amended or as not amended. And that would happen in a relatively short period of time.

Of course, when matters that were far more contentious came before the Legislature, instead of but two afternoons of debate, there would be—yes, I acknowledge—four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10 days of debate, sometimes even more. But at the end of the day, I tell you, I'm confident that more legislation passed certainly with more thorough consideration when the House was permitted to have what is almost a self-regulating function because of the disinclination to use time allocation.

Is there a point in time where I would have to concede, notwithstanding that I'd never support the government's time allocation motion, that, yes, a time allocation motion—because you see, even before time allocation motions became part of the standing orders by virtue of presenting a notice of motion after a mere three days of debate on second reading, there was always the closure motion, where a member of this House could call upon the Speaker to determine whether or not there had been sufficient debate and whether or not any further debate would merely be dilatory. Yes, there were occasions where the Speaker held, not inappropriately, I have to agree, that yes, it was time to put the question, that the debate had been exhausted, that more than sufficient members of the chamber from all three parties had an opportunity to express views, that all the viewpoints had been canvassed and that any further debate wasn't going to serve any meaningful purpose. It's always been part of—oh, what's it called?—the common law, if you will, of this and other Parliaments.

My colleague the member for Nickel Belt, Ms Martel, is going to be speaking to this time allocation motion in just a few minutes. I pleaded with her for a chance to speak to it for the few minutes I've taken and she has been considerate enough to let me take the floor. But I am appalled—appalled—at the willingness of govern-

ment members to participate in this time allocation regime. I'm shocked that government members wouldn't be voting against these time allocation motions, because it means they won't have a chance to express their views on this or other pieces of legislation. I'm extremely disturbed that government backbenchers would allow themselves to be whipped into line so readily. Good grief, the cumulative salary over there—can we begin to speculate?—is quite a few hundreds of millions of dollars a year, and what we hear from them are the proverbial sounds of silence. I say to these government backbenchers, stand up, fight back. Speak up and speak out. Impress your constituents. Please your voters. Let them know that you're standing on your feet here at Queen's Park debating the issues that the government is putting forward in this legislative chamber.

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): Let them know you're here.

Mr Kormos: Yes, as Ms Martel says, let your constituents know you're here. Let them know that life at Queen's Park is about more than blacking out hotel receipts and tabs picked up in upscale, elegant, tony restaurants. Let your constituents know that you're alive, alert, active and vocal. I'll bet you that folks watching this legislative channel are calling somebody's constituency office now, pleading for their Conservative backbench member to stand up and be heard in this chamber.

And what do I hear? Silence. I hear Tory backbenchers ready to support another time allocation motion, which means the denial of any further debate and, most importantly, the denial of debate at third reading, a time allocation motion that will permit at most four, maybe four and a half or five—certainly no more than five—hours of public submissions.

1710

If it were isolated to this one bill, perhaps my complaint wouldn't be as valid, certainly not as strong, but it has been a long time since a piece of legislation has worked its way through the process here without time allocation—and time allocation immediately. Third reading: no debate. Committee hearings: zip, none.

Why, opposition members have spent two days now prevailing upon the Attorney General to send Bill 181 to committee. The Liberal critic Bryant, myself, Liberal backbenchers speaking to the bill, New Democrats speaking to the bill have been calling upon this government and this Attorney General to please send its Bill 181 to committee. We have by now thousands of letters from people across this province who want to participate in that committee process. I'm not suggesting the committee process would be able to accommodate them all, but surely, in view of the willingness of people across this province to comment on the Attorney General's ill-conceived plan to install an inevitably expensive, inevitably bureaucratic US-style public defender system here in the province of Ontario, surely that's the sort of thing that warrants public hearings, public comment, public scrutiny.

I say to you, if the government is as confident in its legislative endeavours as it would say it is, it would be pleased to have the committee process be the route the bill travels before third reading; it would be pleased to have these bills withstand scrutiny; the Attorney General would be pleased to attend committee hearings and answer questions from members of that committee supporting his, the Attorney General's, US, bureaucratic, high-priced public defender system. One is hard pressed to understand why the Attorney General wouldn't want it. Why, it should be the Attorney General dragging the opposition members, kicking and screaming, into public hearings. The Attorney General should be saying, "No, I insist we have public hearings, because my bill is so good it'll withstand any scrutiny. My scheme to contract out blocks of files to single law firms is so sound," the Attorney General should be claiming, "that it'll withstand any scrutiny you can put it to. I don't care who you bring before the committee," the Attorney General should be saying, "by God, I'm going to put that bill before committee. I don't care if you bring the biggest, toppest dogs in North America, none of them can successfully critique or attack my Bill 181."

But no, the Attorney General, at the end of the day, ooh, he's going to hide behind a time allocation motion. He is. No committee hearings, no third reading debate. Yikes. That's not the tradition of Attorneys General in this province. I've been here long enough to see a few of them with the courage of their convictions. I've been here long enough to see a few Attorneys General who have presented bold ideas and who haven't been afraid to see them go through the committee process, knowing full well that the committee process can only make good legislation better but can expose bad legislation in the course of mere hours.

Why are we so intent on protecting bad legislation from committee scrutiny, from public scrutiny? And why are we so reluctant to expose good legislation, as the Attorney General would have it, or any number of ministers who sponsored their respective bills? This chamber is not some exclusive club where one sits back and reads one's National Post financial section. This chamber should be about debate. This chamber should be, sometimes, about prolonged debate. This chamber should be about criticism and critiquing. This chamber should be about the opportunity for every one of its 102 members—because of course one member is the Speaker, and by virtue of his role as Speaker, he's not permitted to participate in debate. This chamber should be about every one of those 102 MPPs who are permitted to speak to the issues so they can demonstrate that they understand them, so the constituents can know why they're supporting or not supporting them, and the debate should be sufficient enough and protracted enough so that every member of the public here in the province of Ontario understands what is or indeed what isn't going on in here in the legislative chamber.

I'm compelled to end my remarks, because I have left but a few minutes for Ms Martel, and I apologize to her

for that. I do appreciate her indulgence in permitting me this time, because it's important that we condemn this practice of time allocation. It's important that those who have advocated have a chance, at some point in their legislative careers, to endure it, and it's important that those who have endured it, should they have the opportunity to form government, not continue to practise it. Unfortunately, too many lessons are far too hard-learned here or not learned at all.

I relinquish the floor so that Ms Martel from Nickel Belt can participate in this debate, as she has been eager to all afternoon.

Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): I rise today in support of the motion for time allocation on Bill 151, the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Act. Speaker, you will know that this bill was first introduced last December. All the members will recall that passage of the proposed legislation would create a permanent Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corp, or the TWRC.

Since December, we've held a number of consultations with the two other funding partners, the city of Toronto and the federal government, on the amendments that were required to the bill to meet the needs of all three partners, who individually are committing a half-billion dollars each, which of course would be \$1.5 billion invested to upgrade the Toronto waterfront.

We're not reinventing the wheel here. A number of other successful projects on waterfront revitalization, including the London docklands, the Melbourne docklands and Battery Park City in New York, have taken place with similar governance models.

This new corporation will coordinate and look after public investment in waterfront development projects and help attract the billions of dollars' worth of private sector capital that will be needed to achieve our vision. This is not just \$1.5 billion, but many more dollars will be contributed by the private sector.

Under the proposed legislation, the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corp will be responsible for developing business strategies and implementing these projects. Bill 151 would provide the permanent TWRC with a framework to leverage the initial \$1.5-billion investment provided by the three governments. The goal of this measure is to allow the corporation to achieve financial self-sufficiency while encouraging it to forge new partnerships with the private sector.

I think it's important to stress that the three governments are not simply writing the waterfront corporation a blank cheque. While the corporation will have a mandate to encourage private sector involvement in its projects, it will also be obligated to ensure that the views of the public and its government partners are reflected in its plans.

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The proposed legislation and future agreements that will be developed under the legislation include specific provisions on how the TWRC must conduct its business. For example, Bill 151 includes provisions for future contribution agreements between the three levels of

government and the corporation, outlining the terms under which the governments will contribute assets and funding. Financial self-sufficiency and risk mitigation are key principles in the corporation's business plan. The usual powers of a corporation will apply, including the ability to issue debt, create subsidiaries, and acquire, sell and lease land. The bill also contains provisions for the distribution of the corporation's assets and liabilities at dissolution, subject to government approvals.

In short, the proposed legislation provides a broad outline of the corporation's purpose, powers and mandate. It also provides a framework to guide the corporation's future decisions in key areas such as business planning, financial accountability and annual reporting requirements.

The proposed legislation sets out the TWRC's corporate structure and provides for a 13-member board, with Robert Fung, who is presently the interim chair, to chair the board. In his view, Toronto has a golden opportunity to create a new economic model for the waterfront, a place where business and technology clusters can coalesce, fuse and prosper together to make this vision possible. We will need to build dynamic new live-work communities. Mr Fung has talked publicly about the vision of transforming a largely derelict part of the city into an innovative new working and living environment. This would be a place where people, homes and businesses are linked electronically, to university research facilities, for example, and to the rest of the world.

Such a community would be revolutionary in terms of Toronto's typical forms of development, and would have the potential to turn the city into a leading supplier of creativity and one of North America's key centres in the emerging knowledge economy.

Under the proposed legislation, this exciting vision, and the important task of transforming Toronto's waterfront, would be managed by the permanent TWRC. This is important legislation, and I believe it deserves unanimous support.

The redevelopment and renewal of Toronto's waterfront will usher in an important new period in our city's history. It will ensure that Ontario's capital city continues to be called The City That Works throughout the 21st century. It will rival such places as London, Paris, Rome, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles as one of the best places in the world to invest, work and raise a family.

Many of those new people will be drawn to Toronto, to the new jobs, the outstanding cultural attractions and the safe neighbourhoods that have played such an important role in the city's past success.

Over the next 25 years, the growth we are expecting in the GTA will represent a significant challenge. There is no doubt that Toronto will need new infrastructure to accommodate its growing population, from roads to public transit to water and sewage treatment facilities.

As the GTA and the city continue to grow, our challenge will be to practise the principles of Ontario's Smart Growth initiative: to build strong communities while maintaining a competitive economy and a safe, healthy

environment. Through Smart Growth, we can manage Ontario's growing population and economy in a sustainable manner, and we can do so while avoiding urban sprawl and the destruction of valuable farm and recreational land.

The revitalization of Toronto's waterfront also represents an outstanding opportunity for Smart Growth as well as incorporating Ontario's brownfields redevelopment initiative. This will enable us to transform derelict and contaminated land into more productive uses.

Renewal of Toronto's waterfront lands will strengthen the city and make its economy, and the economies of Ontario and Canada, more vibrant and competitive in the 21st century. The passage of Bill 151 will help achieve those goals.

I ask my honourable colleagues to join me today in voting to implement this vision of a stronger, more robust Toronto and a brighter future for both the city and the province by supporting the bill that is before us, Bill 151, to revitalize the waterfront in downtown Toronto, the capital city of Ontario and hopefully in the future the capital city of the world.

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): I'm happy once again to comment on this bill, although we are never happy when the government attempts to stifle debate. God knows there's never enough debate around government bills in this House.

We obviously support this initiative. Many of my colleagues have suggested that this is of vital importance to the city of Toronto. I would share in those comments and that sentiment. It is absolutely critical for the city of Toronto to be revitalized. The waterfront agency that is being proposed to be created by this legislation is certainly important, but I would say this: the government allocated half a billion dollars to revitalizing the waterfront. It announced this allocation of funding, this half-billion dollars, in its year 2000 budget, two and a half years ago. Yet none of that money has been spent. Nothing has happened.

So this is long overdue. If this bill initiates and actually speeds up the process for getting the waterfront redevelopment project going, then our hat is off to the government. But it has not happened. Of course, on the eve of an election that this government is anticipating certainly within the next six to 12 months, the government is obviously looking after tidying up all the loose ends that it is leaving around.

I do not want to be that cynical, but I believe this initiative, the waterfront redevelopment for the city of Toronto, is critical to the future of Toronto given what has happened over the recent past, and I'm going to get to that in a moment. But let me just say that recently we've discovered that Toronto as a destination point for tourists is no longer the city of choice. Tourism is way down for the city of Toronto. Tourism is a huge industry employing literally thousands upon thousands of people. I believe the figure is huge. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of 87,000 people are employed by the tourism industry directly, and there are many thousands who are

employed indirectly. But let's just say that it is of vital importance to the city of Toronto. Revitalizing the waterfront could once again bring Toronto to the forefront in terms of tourism as a destination point. It is crucial for the city.

The city of Toronto is hurting right now. The city of Toronto is hurting on a number of fronts. The down-loading that this city has had to suffer as a result of this government's lack of concern for the city of Toronto is causing the city to cut back and to deal with the shortfall in funding for a variety of important areas. The city is also hurting with respect to the lack of infrastructure spending. That's a theme that I will come back to again and again.

Recently there was an economic report by the Toronto-Dominion Bank. It clearly showed that the GTA is a huge generator of wealth for this country, responsible for at least one fifth of gross domestic product. Some 18% of the nation's population lives here, and obviously it's the engine of economic growth for the entire country, let alone the province. We need to ensure that the city of Toronto is not only viable but is achieving success on a world scale. Toronto is a city that is going to compete with other city centres not just in North America, but around the world. But as far as comparisons go, looking at the rest of the North American landscape, particularly as it pertains to the United States, we are falling behind.

This report clearly showed that the city of Toronto is 13th out of 16 jurisdictions in terms of competitiveness. One of the areas that the TD economics report pointed out as being of real concern is the fact that we're falling behind in terms of income growth. I want to quote what was said by the report. This is a direct quote. "Despite reasonably strong population, employment and output growth, incomes in the GTA have been falling further behind those in the United States, opening a 30% gap." A 30% gap is huge. Income levels in the Toronto area are at about US\$25,000, versus an average of US\$35,000 south of the border. That is a real wage gap, and there are a variety of reasons for that. One has to do with the weak productivity performance compared to other cities that we compete with in the United States, but this report points directly at the lack of infrastructure in the GTA area as being a critical reason as to why we're falling behind in terms of competitiveness.

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So we come back to the whole question of the waterfront and why it's important for this government to fund that initiative and to move ahead as quickly as possible. But let me say, as regards SuperBuild, the government's much-touted initiative to build infrastructure, that I have pointed out in the past that in order for it to work properly, it needs greater accountability and transparency. This government suggests that \$13 billion to date has been committed to SuperBuild initiatives, \$13.1 billion, to be exact. I have asked the government to be accountable for that money in terms of the breakdown between public funds and private dollars so that we can ascertain whether SuperBuild is working properly. SuperBuild is

designed so that you take public dollars and private dollars and you leverage the private dollars so you can get more infrastructure built. As it turns out, we do not to this day have an accounting for what private dollars have actually been committed toward SuperBuild initiatives. We know that \$13.1 billion has been committed overall, but we don't know the breakdown as to the amount of private funding that has been put in place. We also don't have audited statements that SuperBuild is to provide as an agency to this Legislative Assembly. We don't have a breakdown for that.

As we've pointed out in the past, if we're going to move forward with these sorts of public-private partnerships, 3Ps, so-called, then we need to develop a model. This government has yet to bring forward a model for transparency and accountability when it comes to dealing with 3Ps kinds of initiatives.

If we are to use the 407 as an example of what's to come, then I say every taxpayer ought to be extremely concerned about the future as it pertains to infrastructure expenditures and the privatization initiatives of this government dealing with the private sector. The sale of the 407 was nothing but a taxpayer rip-off: \$3.1 billion was the price tag for the sale of the 407, but guess what? Any expert we've talked to puts the value of that sale at at least \$10 billion, and some have said it should have been \$12 billion. Since the time the 407 was sold, there have been at least three toll increases. The rates for using the highway, the toll rates, have gone up astronomically. It is a licence to print money for the owners of the 407. So I say to you that the taxpayers did not get good value for the sale of the 407. It should never have been sold for that discounted price.

Now, if we are to move forward, and the private sector certainly has a role to play on the waterfront, has a role to play in developing infrastructure in the future, I say to the government that you're not being accountable, you're not being transparent. There isn't a way for the public to know if in fact it isn't getting ripped off. As I speak, there has yet to be an accounting for what SuperBuild is undertaking in terms of its projects and the type of private sector involvement. We do not have a breakdown of public versus private sector dollars. That, I think, is a real tragedy in this assembly because we're talking about billions of dollars being expended. It's not thousands of dollars, it's not hundreds of dollars; we're talking about billions of dollars being committed by this government, and yet we have no accounting for that.

I would encourage the government to look at what's required. Infrastructure is of critical importance to the vitality and growth of this economic engine we call the GTA. The inner city is where the waterfront lies. The waterfront is vital. There are brownfields down there. There is undeveloped land. Ataratiri was a huge tract of land. That needs to be redeveloped. That should also be included for consideration in the future in terms of revitalizing and re-igniting the economic vitality of this city.

We need job creation. Many more people are coming to live in the GTA, but the inner city overall is losing. According to the TD economics report, there is a trend for out-migration of companies and high-paying jobs to the regions surrounding the city of Toronto. That's a worrisome trend, as pointed out by this report.

Infrastructure is dilapidating in the city. The city needs greater infrastructure expenditures to be made. The city itself cannot fund these infrastructure initiatives. There must be leadership from the provincial government to ensure we have the proper infrastructure for growth to take place. Only governments can make these kinds of investments over a long period of time, and it's incumbent upon this provincial level of government to show leadership on this front. The city of Toronto desperately needs that infrastructure. Without it, we risk losing more businesses to the suburbs; we risk losing more high-paying jobs to the regions around the Toronto area.

So I would say to the government, we need to get on with this initiative along with other initiatives, but we need greater accountability, greater transparency. The sale of the 407 is a stark example of what can go wrong and of how the taxpayers can be completely ripped off. We lost at least \$7 billion the taxpayers should have had in the coffers of the treasury of this province from the sale of the 407. It was a mistake to sell it in the first place. I did not agree with the sale of the 407. It should have remained in public hands. An asset that is generating that kind of revenue should never have been sold into private hands. It's one thing to have the private sector build infrastructure to bring about private sector efficiencies, but it's quite another to give up to the private sector a huge bonanza, a windfall the likes of which has never been seen in this province.

Billions and billions of dollars that should have accrued to the public coffers of this province were simply given away. That's happening on other fronts as well. I say to this government that we need a financial model that will work, that is transparent, that is accountable and that brings value for the taxpayer dollar. Short of that, we have some concerns about proceeding. With this agency that's being created, my colleague from Scarborough-Agincourt pointed out there is the risk of an apparent conflict of interest that would take place, and I believe this government needs to be more accountable for its actions.

1740

Ms Martel: It's a pleasure to participate in this debate. It's Wednesday and it's time allocation day. I say that because I normally have House duty on Wednesday and I can't remember the last time this House was sitting on a Wednesday that we didn't have a time allocation motion. I suspect you could go back 18 months or two years and you would see very clearly that the government has been up to this on Wednesdays. I think there was one again yesterday. Now it's becoming Monday. It's becoming very routine that the way we deal with business now is not to have full and open and honest debate, but to have every piece of legislation introduced by the

government quickly followed by a time allocation motion.

My colleague from Niagara Centre spoke at some length about the motion itself and his concern that it also doesn't allow for government members to participate in the debate and let their constituents know they're here. I was actually surprised the time allocation motion is allowing some time for committee. If you look at some of the motions we've been dealing with, most of those aren't allowing much, if any, time in committee, perhaps an afternoon, perhaps half an afternoon. There certainly is every attempt on the part of the government not to have amendments moved either. I suspect the reason there will be some amendments put in this case is because the government has its own amendments to move and so has to allot itself some time to deal with that process.

Mr Kormos: Did they screw up?

Ms Martel: I wouldn't want to say that, I say to my colleague from Welland-Thorold, but I suspect they have some changes to make.

One of the changes I proposed when I spoke to this bill on second reading on September 25 was one that it appeared the Minister of Finance might actually accept. I want to point out this concern. It came from comments that were made by my colleague Michael Prue when the bill was introduced on December 11, 2001. He said in his remarks on the statement made by the minister at the introduction of this bill that he was concerned there seemed to be no reference to the city of Toronto's official plan in this bill and to how the official plan was to be followed, and whether they were to be paramount and to be followed in terms of the development that goes on at the waterfront.

I raised that issue during my remarks on September 25 and seemed to get an assurance from Mrs Ecker that the government would consider this. She said, "I'd like to thank the honourable colleague from the third party for her suggestion on that amendment. We'll take that back and take a look at it."

I hope she does because at the same time she was saying that, her colleague Mr Stockwell, sitting not far from her on that day, was trying to say that it goes without saying that that's what the bill says, that it goes without saying that of course redevelopment down at the waterfront is going to take into account the city of Toronto's official plan. It doesn't go without saying because it's not in the bill. The government should clarify that position. The government should use the time it has in committee to bring that amendment forward. I hope Madam Ecker will have the Minister of Housing bring that forward and have that done.

I want to repeat some of the concerns I raised on behalf of the New Democrats on second reading. I do so because I heard the government members, again this afternoon, produce a lot of rhetoric around accountability and transparency. In particular the member from Scarborough, but other members as well, talked a great deal about accountability, and went through the mechanisms

in this bill that provide accountability. I'm going to challenge the government, because this bill is going to committee, to put your money where your mouth is and demonstrate some accountability with respect to this bill, because you can do it and should do it in three areas in this bill.

The first has to do with section 2(3) of the bill, where the corporation itself is "deemed not to be a crown agency within the meaning of the Crown Agency Act." That means the corporation now falls outside the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, both the provincial statute and the municipal statute. I don't see a reason for that to occur. I think it leaves people with the sense that the corporation has something to hide, that the corporation has information it doesn't want to share, that the corporation has information it doesn't want to provide to the public, despite the important job it's going to do and despite the massive public investment of funds that it's going to have to do the job.

So if the government really is concerned about accountability and they're not just giving us a lot of rhetoric this afternoon, then I challenge the government to make a change, to repeal that section so that the corporation will in fact be covered by the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. I think that's one thing the government should do.

Second, with respect to the preparation of business plans, if you look on page 5 of the bill, section 8, the business plan process is quite extensive. The business plan must include a number of details:

"1. A description of the major activities and objectives of the corporation for the year and for following years.

"2. A description of the policies and strategies of the corporation to achieve these objectives.

"3. A description of the budget of the corporation for achieving those objectives.

"4. A description of the portions of the designated waterfront area that the corporation plans to develop during that year, the estimated cost of doing so and the funding options available."

Those are pretty important detailed items to be listed in the business plan, yet it's interesting that nowhere in the bill is there a provision for that business plan to be made available for the public. The annual report has to be made available, but there seems to be no provision in the bill for that business plan of the corporation, which really is at the heart of all their operation, at the heart of the work they're going to do, to have those details made available to the public.

I say to the government, if you're interested in transparency, if you're interested in being accountable, put an amendment into the bill that makes it very clear all members of the public have an ability to get all the details of the business plan.

The third area has to do with public meetings. There is no requirement in the bill that I can see for the corporation to hold open meetings, as city agencies are now required to do. I think that's wrong; I think that needs to

be changed. I think there should be no public perception whatsoever that there might be something going on in secret, behind closed doors, in camera etc, with respect to the corporation. As I said earlier, they have a major responsibility, they will have major funding to undertake their responsibility, and their work, their budget and their meetings should be held in public.

What the bill lacks is a very serious reference to the creation of affordable housing down at the waterfront. The Toronto waterfront just can't become the purview, the domain of the rich and famous and fabulous. This city has an enormous crisis with respect to affordable housing that this government has done nothing to address. Frankly, in some of their legislation, like their rent decontrol legislation, the government has really exacerbated the situation with respect to housing. We have so many people who cannot afford their rent; it's 50%, 60% of the income they bring in. The level of homelessness is going up, and we know more and more seniors are having to use food banks. I think that's a direct result of very high rents and an inability of people to find affordable housing. This government should use this legislation to clearly point out that the waterfront will be a centre where there will be affordable housing, and the government should not only put that in legislation, it should provide the funding necessary to make that happen.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? There being none, Mr Turnbull has moved government notice of motion number 43.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1747 to 1757.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Gilchrist, Steve	Newman, Dan
Baird, John R.	Gill, Raminder	O'Toole, John
Barrett, Toby	Guzzo, Garry J.	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Beaubien, Marcel	Hardeman, Ernie	Runciman, Robert W.
Chudleigh, Ted	Hastings, John	Sampson, Rob
Clark, Brad	Hodgson, Chris	Spina, Joseph
Clement, Tony	Hudak, Tim	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Johns, Helen	Stewart, R. Gary
Cunningham, Dianne	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dunlop, Garfield	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.
Ecker, Janet	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Elliott, Brenda	McDonald, AL	Wilson, Jim
Flaherty, Jim	Miller, Norm	Wood, Bob
Galt, Doug	Mushinski, Marilyn	Young, David

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Cordiano, Joseph	McMeekin, Ted
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Parsons, Ernie
Bisson, Gilles	Duncan, Dwight	Peters, Steve
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bryant, Michael	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Caplan, David	Kwinter, Monte	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Martel, Shelley	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Martin, Tony	Smitherman, George
Conway, Sean G.	McGuinty, Dalton	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 42; the nays are 26.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

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

The House adjourned at 1800.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon James K. Bartleman
Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers
Deputy Clerk / sous-greffière: Deborah Deller
Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Education / vice-première ministre, ministre de l'Éducation
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Public Safety and Security / ministre de la Sécurité et de la Sécurité publique
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre associé de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement, ministre de la Culture
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Rob (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Hon / L'hon Carl (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of the Environment, government House leader / ministre de l'Environnement, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, John (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda (PC) Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services / ministre des Services à la collectivité, à la famille et à l'enfance		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (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 Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs, deputy House leader / ministre de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones, leader parlementaire adjoint	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre associé de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
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	McDonald, AL (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	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 Labour / ministre du Travail
Oshawa	Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J. (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	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) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Thornhill	Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R. (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
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, R. Gary (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
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)

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

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

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McMeekin, Bill Murdoch, Wayne Wettlaufer
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