



**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)**

Tuesday 22 October 2002

Mardi 22 octobre 2002

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 22 October 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 22 octobre 2002

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

KIDNEY DIALYSIS

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): I rise in the House today to highlight a very important issue that affects a large group of people in my riding of Brant. These are kidney dialysis patients in Brant who must travel to Hamilton, usually three or four times a week, to receive life-saving kidney dialysis treatments. The people who use these services in Hamilton are too unstable to utilize the kidney dialysis services that are offered in Brant and are forced to go to the centre of excellence at the St Joseph's hospital in Hamilton. These very ill and elderly patients must pay considerable transportation costs out of their own pockets to make the trip to Hamilton. Should they choose not to pay for these transportation costs, these people will die without their treatments.

I have written to the Minister of Health, I have spoken to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services on this issue several times, and have included personal letters from my constituents affected by this desperate situation. To date, there has been no relief for these people who are spending more than \$300 to travel to and from Hamilton to receive their treatments: \$15,000 annually.

Most of these people are elderly and live on fixed incomes. Some go without food and other medical expenses to afford these treatments, because without their kidney dialysis they will die. Presently, there are approximately 70 patients travelling to Hamilton, 40 of these patients from the riding of Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant. Of the 30 patients from Brantford, 15 can't find treatment any other way.

I implore the government to do the right thing and make some assistance available to these patients.

JOB CREATION

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): Ernie Eves's Ontario stands as a shining light of economic growth and activity among the dim world economy. Today I stand to applaud this government's reforms, which have created 987,000 net new jobs in Ontario since 1995.

The most recent job creation numbers include 32,300 new jobs in September and 42,700 jobs in August. This was Ontario's best monthly job gain since 1989. These statistics are all the more remarkable when one considers that the world economy has been in a slowdown for two years.

In Niagara, according to the labour market bulletin for April-June 2002, the St Catharines-Niagara area posted its largest quarterly employment increase in two years. The area saw a net gain of 10,600 workers in the second quarter, most of them full-time. The Niagara area unemployment rate stands at 7%. This is quite remarkable when one considers that in 1993 the Niagara area unemployment rate was at 15.3%. I was quite encouraged by this information in the labour market bulletin. I also know that since this report I have attended new business openings in Niagara that have contributed to the creation of even more jobs. Niagara has a permanent casino to look forward to, thanks to the Ernie Eves government, with construction on time and on budget for spring 2004.

RALLY FOR ISRAEL

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): Last night in my riding of Eglinton-Lawrence at Shaarei Shomayim synagogue, an overflow crowd of over 600 people, including the member from York Centre, Monte Kwinter, and myself, attended a rally in support of the people of Israel as they suffer terribly from cowardly terrorist acts like yesterday's, when at least 14 innocent civilians were blown up by another suicide attack. The evening's highlight was the awarding of four outstanding journalist awards by B'nai Brith Canada to recognize significant contributions in support of Israel by a journalist. The four journalists recognized were Rosie DiManno of the Star, John Downing of the Sun, Marcus Gee of the Globe, and Stewart Bell of the Post. Also recognized were the outstanding achievements and contributions made by the late Johnny Lombardi promoting multiculturalism, diversity and greater understanding among all people.

At this most difficult time for the people of Israel and their many friends and relatives who are here in Canada, last night helped deal with the pain and suffering of terror. Last night said loudly and clearly to all victims of terrorism, whether in Israel or in Bali, that you are not alone. Together we will defeat the terrorist plague that is the scourge not only of Canada but of the whole world. So together we stand with the people of Israel and all people who are victims of terrorism.

VOLUNTEERS

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): Today I rise before the House to discuss the importance of volunteering. I recently had the privilege of attending my first event as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation, and I saw the value that was gained when youth were recognized for their involvement in business and entrepreneurial initiatives. Ontario continues to grow and prosper and is steadily becoming one of the forefronts of competition in the global economy. And you know what? Within each successful company, within each major business, there are people who go above and beyond the call of duty and all for the betterment of others.

It is the people who volunteer who really deserve praise. They do it because they care. They give to us and to Ontario their precious time and their desire to be kind to those around them. One out of every three people over the age of 15 in Ontario volunteers. This is a noble trait and I believe one that should be recognized.

Volunteers have amazed us with their abilities and their desires to help others. The best thing about volunteering really is the fact that you know they are fulfilling by aiding in the betterment of something bigger than themselves. When you think about it, what does "volunteer" mean? It means that because of you there was a senior citizen who had someone to talk to instead of being lonely. It was because you volunteered that a child scored his first goal, made a big save or enjoyed the feelings of friendship and teamwork. Being a volunteer could mean that a child is looked after and a single parent gets a needed rest. Any way you look at it, volunteering is something you will never forget or regret.

HYDRO RATES

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): Words cannot begin to convey the outrage over the hydro bills in my community. What do we need to do get the message through? Surely your constituents have told you, the media have told you and the Liberals are telling you, what more needs to be done before you give our constituents the rebate to help ease this pain? Government is supposed to act as the public's trustee, not Bay Street's trustee. Seniors living month to month on pensions are being penalized with demands for \$120 security deposits after being unable to pay, for the first time in their lives, their hydro bill.

Does the Premier have any idea how this hydro experiment impacts on families, especially families who have a child with special needs? Denise McKee would like him to know. Denise has two sets of twins. One of her twins is autistic. To make sure that Conlan receives all the attention he needs to succeed in life, the McKees have given up a second income so that Denise could stay at home and help train him. In addition to paying for additional medical services, the McKees, courtesy of Ernie Eves, also have a hydro bill that has doubled.

My constituent Donald Burroughs speaks for all my constituents when he says, and I suggest that you listen, "Please do what you can to express my disdain. I'm afraid that this is another 'created crisis.' I could have never anticipated a 103% increase. My wages have not gone up 103% to support this."

We demand that Ernie Eves introduce consumer protection and tougher regulations, and that he give my constituents the rebate they so desperately need.

1340

VISITING HOMEMAKERS ASSOCIATION
OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): For more than 70 years the Visiting Homemakers Association of Hamilton-Wentworth provided skilled and caring home care services to thousands of clients, including those with disabilities, terminal illnesses and special-needs children.

After more than half a century of cost-effective, high-quality service, the VHA in Hamilton was forced into bankruptcy as a direct result of the home care crisis created by this government. A full-scale community effort to save the VHA was mounted but failed. The Eves government could have intervened but refused to help as more than 400 caregivers lost their jobs and thousands of clients lost services.

Hamiltonians are still in shock that this government refused to act. The loss of the VHA is a major blow to our community and a major embarrassment for a government that is supposed to be facilitating the delivery of home care services across the province.

Your abandonment of the VHA is sending shock waves around the province. One service provider we spoke to said, "There but for the grace of God go any of us."

The Ontario Community Support Association says, "The home care crisis in Hamilton is just the first domino in a long line of vulnerable home and community care providers now threatened with eventual closure. People will be forced out of their homes, where they want to be, and into nursing homes."

Seniors' services around the province are threatened, and your inaction has destroyed an outstanding home care service provider that was in business for more than half a century. The citizens of Hamilton are outraged and they rightfully hold you completely accountable.

FLORENCE KEHL

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I rise today to congratulate a very special individual from my riding of Perth-Middlesex. Florence Kehl of Stratford received the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship at a ceremony held here at the Ontario Legislature last Friday.

The Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship was established in 1973 to recognize people, who through exceptional long-term efforts have made outstanding

contributions to their communities. Florence was one of 12 recipients from across Ontario to receive this prestigious award from Ontario's Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable James K. Bartleman.

Florence, who was nominated by the city of Stratford, is the founder and executive director of the House of Blessing. For more than 19 years, the House of Blessing has been providing programs and services to the people of Stratford and the surrounding communities. The House of Blessing provides food, clothing, toys, furniture, counselling and spiritual advice to several hundred people every month.

In handing Florence her award, the Minister of Citizenship made mention of the fact that Florence mortgaged her house to help fund the establishment of the House of Blessing 20 years ago.

I would ask all members of the Legislature to join me in thanking Florence Kehl for her dedication and in congratulating her and the other 11 recipients on receiving this prestigious citizenship award.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): It's been almost two weeks since Premier Eves ordered a high-level search of government offices to root out any more political bombshells the mean previous PC government left behind.

It was a nasty trick that the previous government's ministers—Ecker, Tsubouchi and Cunningham—played on Premier Eves, leaving him the \$10-million tax break for the sports teams, and deliberately timing it to occur just after he became Premier-elect and before he was sworn in. I don't blame Mr. Eves for being mad.

We're all awaiting the outcome of the Premier's intense office-by-office search for more political bombshells left behind by the "previous government." We're anxious to see if any of the 22 members of the current cabinet who were in the previous government's cabinet left any more political bombshells to deliberately sabotage the new government.

Most importantly, I sure hope the number two guy in the previous government, Mr Ernie Eves, who was the right hand of Mr Harris and Minister of Finance, who proudly did most of the cutting, isn't surprised by any political bombshells he left behind for himself, because I'm certain he'll be very angry with himself.

DOG WALKATHONS IN DURHAM REGION

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): As usual, I'm pleased to rise in the House to congratulate the Lions Club of my riding for two successful dog walkathons that raised over \$20,000 in support of the Lions Foundation. The funds are for a program that trains and equips guide dogs for the blind.

Each October, the Newcastle Lions Club holds a walkathon as part of the Newcastle and District Chamber

of Commerce fall festival. On October 5, the Newcastle Lions raised an estimated \$18,000 for the foundation. This was made possible by more than 100 people with their pets who walked around the community. In particular, I'd like to mention Terry and Jean Graham as well as Murray Paterson, one of the organizers, and all the members of the walkathon committee.

This is a project that includes both the Newcastle Leos Club and the Lions Club. I am sure that club president Hans Verkruijsen and all of the members are pleased with the community support. It's the eighth year for the Newcastle walkathon and the volunteers estimate that over \$100,000 has been raised in that time.

The following day, on Sunday, October 6, the Blackstock and district Lions Club embarked on their first dog walkathon. Again, this was another all-round community effort with a total of 45 walkers and pets included. Organizers estimate that over \$4,000 was raised, with pledges still coming in.

Eleanor Colwell, chair of the Walk for Dog Guides committee, Lions Club president Chris Cliff, the Cartwright Leos Club and the Lions are to be congratulated on a job well done. I'd like to thank them for their contribution to making our community a better place to live and raise your family.

VISITORS

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know I join all members in the House in welcoming in the visitors' gallery opposite students from Father Serra school in Etobicoke.

On behalf of the official opposition, it's so nice to see that many red ties on that side of the House. Welcome.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I wanted to mention that my niece, Rachel Colle, is a student at Father Serra school.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Now we know why they're on that side looking toward this side.

While we're introducing some distinguished guests, we have with us today in the Speaker's gallery the Honourable Firoz Cachalia, Speaker of the Gauteng Legislature in South Africa. He is here with a delegation who have come to our Legislature on a study tour. Please join me in welcoming the Speaker and the honourable guests.

APRIL HOPKIN

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I understand that we have unanimous consent to offer condolences to the family of a fallen firefighter.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Unanimous consent? Agreed.

Hon Mr Runciman: I rise in the House today to recognize the tragic passing in the line of duty of a volunteer firefighter with the Goulais River Fire Department.

April Hopkin was responding to a traffic accident on Highway 17 north on Sunday and died following a collision between her vehicle and another. She was just 22 years old.

April was the mother of two young children and had been a volunteer firefighter with the Goulais River Fire Department since 1999. Her husband is also a volunteer firefighter.

Firefighters are trained to work in burning buildings, to save people trapped in wrecked automobiles, to be there when we need them most. We're privileged in this province to have highly trained and professional men and women in our full-time and volunteer fire services. They do their jobs so well that sometimes we forget how dangerous and vital a role they play. Our volunteer firefighters risk their lives to respond to calls for help from their neighbours.

Firefighter Hopkin was the eighth firefighter in Ontario to die in the line of duty over the past 10 years.

1350

We owe all of our fallen firefighters and their families an enormous debt of gratitude. On behalf of the government of Ontario, I want to offer condolences to the family of April Hopkin. Our thoughts are with the brave men and women who make up this province's fire-fighting community. This is a very sad reminder of the risks they face to protect us.

Mr Speaker, following the comments of other members, I would ask, through you, that all honourable members rise for a minute of silence in memory of the all-too-short life of firefighter April Hopkin.

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): It is with sadness and respect that I rise in my place today, on behalf of Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal caucus, to offer our thoughts and prayers and indeed to pay tribute to April Rose Hopkin.

April died in a two-vehicle collision on Highway 17 north on Sunday, October 20, 2002, ironically the very same month we observe Firefighters' Memorial Day. The 21-year-old wife, mother, sister, daughter and friend was on her way to the Goulais fire department so that she could respond to another accident that happened farther up the highway. As a volunteer firefighter, April gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to her community and others.

This tiny township is just north of Sault Ste Marie. My colleague Mike Brown, the member representing this area, offers his personal and heartfelt sympathies to the family and friends of April, as do we all.

Seven members of the Goulais fire department were called to the scene of the accident to respond to this rescue. The OPP reported that the firefighters performed their duties admirably under these very trying circumstances.

April was a volunteer firefighter for just over four years. It was something she loved to do.

April leaves a loving husband, Colin, and two young children, Teely and Odyssey. To the family of April we offer our deepest sympathies and love as you continue your journey.

We offer our own thoughts and prayers to the members of the Goulais River fire department, led by Chief Bob Menard.

Today let us celebrate the triumph of the special life of April Rose Hopkin. Let us also be reminded of this special and important job that all of our emergency services respond to for us, day in and day out. These stark reminders are all too often.

I too would ask for unanimous consent at the end of these tributes to offer a moment of silence and calm to reflect on all the people in our hearts who have gone before us, especially those in the emergency services and especially April Rose Hopkin.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): April Hopkin was a member of that great sorority and fraternity of women and men who place themselves at risk as a daily part of their routine, as a part of their commitment to their community and to their neighbours. She was a firefighter.

I must tell you that all of us in this caucus were shocked and saddened yesterday morning when our colleague Tony Martin from Sault Ste Marie advised us of this tragedy. We stand once again today paying tribute to a young woman who, as a firefighter, put the welfare of others ahead of her very own, no two ways about it. I am convinced she was rushing to the accident scene that has been described so that she could lend her services in the shortest and briefest possible time to people who were very much at risk. In the course of doing that, she put herself at great risk.

New Democrats join every member of this assembly in expressing our condolences, not only to Ms Hopkin's family but to her colleagues, to her community. We're talking small-town Ontario here, and in small-town Ontario people do things a little bit differently than they do in Toronto and some of the other big cities in this province. There's a sense of community, I tell you, that is pervasive.

All of us in the New Democratic Party hope and pray that Ms Hopkin's family, her friends and her colleagues take some comfort in the acknowledgement—yes, I submit that today we speak on behalf of 11 million Ontarians here in this chamber—by 11 million Ontarians of the courage of Ms Hopkin and of her sister and brother firefighters, her commitment and her sense of duty, as well as her preparedness to sacrifice.

The Speaker: Would all members and our friends in the gallery please join with us in a moment of silence.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker: I thank all members and our friends in the gallery. I will ensure that copies of the statements by the honourable members go to the family.

It is now time for oral questions.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think we were told the Premier would—

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): Speaker, the Premier will be here.

The Speaker: Actually, what we can do is introduce the pages very quickly, which I was going to do.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): As you know, we have a new group of pages, and I'd like to introduce them here.

We have Maureen Balsillie from Essex; Wade Carey from Sarnia-Lambton; Pramita Chakraborty from Beaches-East York, and she was in the parade today; Paige Elder from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound; Grant Gonzales from Davenport, who was also in the parade today; Andrew Green from Parkdale-High Park; Alexander Koehler from Chatham-Kent-Essex; Hin-Hey Lam from Markham; Pierre Le Dreff-Kerwin from Elgin-Middlesex-London; Natalie Lu from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex; Michelle MacKinnon from York North; Kalaneet Malik from Niagara Centre; Matthew Mook Sang from Ottawa Centre; Emma Moore from Simcoe North; Michelle Proietti from Brant; Nazir Shergool from York West; Alexandre Soulodre from Oak Ridges; Alexander Steele from Sault Ste Marie—

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

The Speaker: Formerly Timmins—Adrienne Stockwell from Mississauga West; and Lauren Wilson from Burlington.

Please join me in welcoming this new group of pages.

What we'll do while we're waiting is we can stand down the—

Interjection.

The Speaker: There have got to be questions somewhere down the road.

If that's the case, we can move in rotation to the NDP and their questions.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): With respect, Speaker, I have questions for the Premier as well.

The Speaker: What we can do is then go to the—

Interjection: Let's just all sit around and wait for the Premier.

The Speaker: We can stand the first lead questions down.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Just a quick moment, if we can.

Just for some clarification, we can stand down the lead questions, and if the Liberals want to do that, we would stand down. If the NDP have the lead question as well, they can have their second question that they would like to ask.

With the NDP's second question, the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Kormos: Once again, Speaker, if I may, we're required to wait for the Premier. Can I suggest a five-minute recess, which might resolve this?

The Speaker: I'm afraid we tried that. We got some noes. You need unanimous consent.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Problem solved. We'll just give him time to get settled.

We know you're always ready. Thank goodness.

It is now time for oral questions, and the leader of the official opposition.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): We'll judge that by the quality of his answers.

1400

ORAL QUESTIONS

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My questions are for the Premier. On the matter of the Kyoto accord, you should know that is something we support without reservation. We believe global warming is real. We believe we owe it to our kids to be part of the solution put forward by the Kyoto accord. We also believe there are tremendous economic opportunities for Ontario in a cleaner, more energy-efficient economy. We also know where Ralph Klein stands on this issue. With both feet firmly planted in the 19th century, he's become an advocate for his oil and gas industry.

We know what Ontario families want. They want a cleaner environment and they want the new, clean job opportunities that come through the Kyoto accord. What we want to know today, Premier, is, whose side are you on? Are you on the side of Ralph Klein and the oil and gas industry, or are you on the side of Ontario families?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I'm obviously on the side of Ontario families, and that means not putting 450,000 of them out of a job.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, you should know there will be the usual wailing, gnashing of teeth and rending of garments from the business industry on this thing. Listen to the worst-case scenario described by the National Post in a column written by Andrew Coyne. He says in the National Post, "Those are the latest figures from the federal government: On the most probable set of assumptions, a reduction in economic growth of 0.4%, or about 61,000 jobs. To put the latter figure in perspective, that's about as many jobs as the economy currently spins off every six weeks." They go on to describe that the worst-case scenario talks about a 1.6% smaller economy over the course of eight years.

You will remember, sir, that during Countdown Acid Rain, Inco in particular said, "If we have to abide by these regulations, you're going to put us out of business." Today they are the most cost-effective producer of nickel on the face of the earth, and they're selling their technological know-how to the world. Why don't you stand up for the Kyoto accord, and by so doing stand up for a cleaner environment and lots of job opportunities?

Hon Mr Eves: to the leader of the official opposition, sure there are opportunities for new technologies and we stand fully behind that. Also, with respect to reducing

greenhouse gas emissions, there is nobody I know of who's not in favour of reducing those emissions. But he also knows that the federal government does not have a plan as to how they're going to do it. If they have one, it's well hidden. If you have it, perhaps you'd like to share it with us. The Prime Minister certainly doesn't have one. He does not have a concrete plan as to how he's going to achieve those targets without putting hundreds of thousands of Canadians out of a job. Now, if you're in favour of putting hundreds of thousands of Ontarians out of a job, you should stand up and say so in this Legislature.

Mr McGuinty: The sky is falling, Premier. I guess the sky is falling over there.

Your responsibility is to represent the future to the present. That's what leaders are supposed to do. And you know what? Fossil fuels are on the way out. Our responsibility together is to get our province over there. My clean air plan takes us three quarters of the way toward satisfying our responsibilities under the Kyoto accord. You may think it's acceptable, Premier, to sit on your hands and ask the federal government to come up with their plan. I think that's irresponsible. We put forward a plan. It talks about cleaner electricity generation, cleaner gasoline and greater investment in public transit. Now, that's a plan.

I'm asking you once more: why won't you stand up for the Kyoto accord, and at the same time stand up for cleaner air and more and better job opportunities for Ontario?

Hon Mr Eves: We are standing up for a cleaner environment. For his information, the Prime Minister of Canada and the federal government of Canada are not going to adhere to the Kyoto Protocol. They are going to count credits for all kinds of things they've done since 1990: for exports of natural gas since 1990, for oil since 1990, for planting trees in other countries since 1990. It's a joke. There is no plan. We are prepared to sit down with other provinces and the federal government and hammer out a concrete, made-in-Canada plan that will create hundreds of thousands of jobs and reduce air emissions at the same time.

RURAL EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier. Premier, as I've been travelling around the province, I've been meeting with many groups of people in smaller communities in particular who have a very real concern about what's happening to their schools. You have a funding formula in place, Premier, which is biased against smaller rural schools.

I met with a group of parents. I thought it was going to be 20 people—I asked for a roundtable—in Glencoe. We were going to talk about the pending closure of a high school there. Some 250 people showed up. They told me they were very concerned about the fact that when this high school closes, you're going to rip the very heart and soul out of a small community. You're not just going to

remove educational opportunities from them, but it's going to cause terrible harm to the social and economic fabric of a small town in Ontario.

I'm asking you, Premier, on behalf of the people who are concerned about Glencoe High, and on behalf of so many families right across the province in smaller Ontario communities, what have you got against smaller rural schools which act as the heart and soul of their communities?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): We don't. I have represented a small rural riding for 21 years in the Legislature in Ontario, and I don't need any lectures from the boy from the big city of Ottawa on small rural municipalities.

Mr McGuinty: I never knew the Premier had such a kinship with the small-town folks across the province. You can certainly never tell on the basis of what he's doing to small-town schools.

Premier, I have in my hand today a report funded by your government, by Dr Allan Lauzon of the University of Guelph, and it's called *Rural Schools and Educational Reform: Should We Keep Rural Schools Open? A Review of the Literature*. Here are his conclusions. He says that kids in small rural schools have higher attendance rates, fewer dropouts, fewer behavioural problems, higher participation in extracurricular activities, a greater sense of belonging, less feeling of alienation. He says that students learn more and better in smaller schools, especially disadvantaged schools. He says that you're moving 180 degrees in the wrong direction. He says that instead of closing smaller schools, you should do everything to recognize the special value they hold, not only to their smaller communities but to the educational community.

I ask you again, Premier: why is it that you continue to have in place a funding formula that is biased against rural schools in Ontario?

Hon Mr Eves: It isn't. In fact, the whole purpose of the funding formula is so that every single student in this province, regardless of whether they live in Timmins, Timiskaming or Toronto, gets the same treatment with respect to education and the same opportunity. You are the leader who stood up in this House just a few weeks ago, screaming about how Toronto should be allowed to spend two, three and four times as much per student as a student deserves in Timmins, Timiskaming and other parts of the province of Ontario.

The funding formula for the first time places students across the province on an equal footing, where they deserve to be.

You're talking out of the other side of your mouth today, so whose side are you on? Are you on the side of spending two, three and four times more per student in some schools boards than they do in other school boards, or are you the Dalton McGuinty who today now wants to spend more money on those school boards that it was all right not to spend the money on a few weeks ago?

1410

Mr McGuinty: Premier, I'm sure the people of Ontario are going to want to know the basic difference

between you and me when it comes to school closures. Here is the difference: you took \$2.2 billion out of public education, forcing school closures. We are going to invest \$1.6 billion in public education to enable small communities to keep the rural schools open. That's a fundamental difference.

Here's something else that Dr Lauzon says, and I'm sure you're going to be very interested in this. He says, and I quote from his report prepared for your government, "The alleged savings that can be realized have more to do with rhetoric and ideology than with the empirical realities of what we currently know." He concludes that small schools are worth saving and worth the cost.

As I understand it, Premier, you would argue that the economies of scale simply don't hold true in smaller communities, and maybe we should never have run hydro lines into smaller communities in Ontario; maybe we shouldn't have hospitals in smaller communities in Ontario. But we on this side of the House, in this party, happen to value smaller communities and rural Ontario.

I ask you once again, why is it that you continue to have in place a funding formula that is biased against rural schools in small-town Ontario?

Hon Mr Eves: The leader of the official opposition is talking about a plan that he says he has to spend \$1.6 billion more over the next five years. We're already spending \$1.5 billion more than we were when we were first elected on this side of the House, and this year we're spending \$557 million more, over half a billion more in this year, partway through a school year. That makes your plan, quite frankly, pale in comparison to what we have already done and will continue to do as we go forward and as Dr Rozanski's report comes in on the funding formula.

It is because of those needs of students in different parts of Ontario that we changed the funding formula and that we will continue to change the funding formula so it can address not only boards of education, but individual schools within boards of education, so we can do what's best for each child in the province, regardless of what circumstances or geographical location they happen to be born into in the province of Ontario.

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): A question for the Premier: Premier, Ontario should be the green giant when it comes to Kyoto. We should be leading the way to cleaner air. But you are making the situation worse by selling our public hydro system to private polluters like TransAlta who are fighting tooth and nail against Kyoto, private polluters who want to run dirty coal-fired generating stations full blast because they can make more money. What is the logic of selling Ontario's hydroelectricity system to the very corporate polluters who are fighting tooth and nail against Kyoto?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): If the leader of the third party is talking

about TransAlta's \$400-million investment in a gas-powered plant in Sarnia, then I think he'd better check his facts.

If he's talking about the Bob Rae government that did absolutely nothing about polluting the environment and burning fossil fuels, he was a cabinet minister in that government. Why didn't he stand up and be counted on what is now, he says, a very important issue to him, a matter of principle? Obviously you had no principles or you didn't care about the environment between 1990 and 1995.

Mr Hampton: Premier, you're the government that wants to sell a publicly operated hydro system to the same corporate polluters who have shown their colours in the United States. Deregulated, private hydro there means that coal is king and clean air goes down the drain. That's the historical reality.

Ontarians don't want the American way. Ontarians want cleaner air. They want accountable public power. They want binding smog reduction targets and they want tough enforcement.

So, Premier, will you endorse Kyoto and cleaner air today?

Hon Mr Eves: I will endorse cleaner air today and every day because that is the future of (a) our province and (b) our country. But let me make it clear that the federal government has no intention whatsoever of strictly adhering to the Kyoto Protocol. They are going to come up with their own scheme of credits, things they've already spent money on and things that have already been exported to the States, in some cases 12 years ago, and they're going to count those as part of meeting the Kyoto Protocol, much to the chagrin of those in the international community.

I think we need an honest and transparent objective that we can reach, that is made in Canada by Canadians, that every province can take part in, and there can be realistic goals that we can meet not only to clean up the environment here in Canada but worldwide and to create jobs at the same time.

Mr Hampton: Premier, if your issue is that the Liberals in Ottawa are being wishy-washy on Kyoto, that's probably true, but the real question is, are you prepared to be a leader? Are you prepared to lead the way?

Ralph Klein, the corporate front man for the polluters, is going to be in town today and of course he's going to fearmonger about Kyoto. You know that Ontario has the worst air in Canada and we are the economy that is the least dependent on oil and gas production. Eighty per cent of Ontarians want you to endorse Kyoto and cleaner air. The question for you is this: are you Ralph Klein's poodle or are you going to be the green giant? Will you show some leadership on Kyoto?

Hon Mr Eves: With respect to clean air, the province of Ontario has been at the forefront in leadership with respect to Drive Clean, with respect to phasing out Lakeview by 2005, with respect to not agreeing to sell Thunder Bay and Atikokan this summer to US interests that wanted to continue to burn coal unless they're

prepared to convert them to gas, with respect to continued technological improvements to both Nanticoke and Lambton to reduce emissions there by 80% by next year. That is the commitment on this side of the House. We will continue to drive forward and lead the country with respect to greenhouse gas reductions.

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): Premier, if you want to show some leadership on the issue of dealing with smog and greenhouse gas reduction, there's something very practical you could do today. The TTC has announced that they will have to increase transit fares once again because your government doesn't support public transit. When you don't support public transit financially, it drives more people into their cars, which means more smog and more greenhouse gases. You could show leadership today by announcing that your government is prepared to properly fund public transit. Will you do that today and show leadership?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): TTC has received more than \$1.8 billion from the province of Ontario since 1986. We recently just funded TTC to the tune of \$126 million and we are sharing another project with the federal government with respect to a platform down at Union Station which I believe is another \$56 million. Believe me, we have more than done our part with respect to TTC and our commitment to it since 1996.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Final supplementary.

Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): The Toronto Transit Commission has announced that they are going to have to raise the fares by 10 cents. This will be a total increase in fares to the people who ride the Toronto Transit Commission, the people of the GTA, of 46% since 1995. I voted against it, by the way. In terms of real pocketbook, that is \$438 per year out of the pockets of transit users in Toronto and in the GTA. We have proposed setting up a fund for Toronto and for other cities of some \$113 million to the Toronto Transit Commission under the Ontario transportation trust fund.

Premier, will you assist the people of the GTA, the people of Toronto, who use public transit in Toronto, so they will not be hit in the pocketbook yet again?

Hon Mr Eves: If what the honourable member is asking for is some sort of direct subsidy in place of the TTC reviewing its business practices and doing what they have done in other jurisdictions, for example, in Australia, where lots of places have contracted out certain routes for public transit—in one case, I forget whether it's Adelaide or Melbourne, they actually have 52 different entities contributing to the overall mass transit system in that city, and it functions a heck of a lot better than the TTC does here in Toronto.

There are some things the Toronto Transit Commission can do, I believe, to adopt better business practices, to make themselves more cost-efficient. We will be

there with the federal government, as we have pledged to do, to do our part to ensure transit works properly in Ontario.

1420

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier. Premier, you and the NDP have been talking the usual rhetoric about helping our cities when it comes to public transit. We have a plan. Our plan specifically provides that we are going to transfer two cents of the provincial gas tax over to our municipal partners on condition that they invest that in public transit. There's a real plan.

The TTC is facing a \$78-million shortfall this year and the fallout effects are predictable. Services are going to decline, fares are going to rise, ridership will drop off, gridlock will worsen and so will air quality. You don't have a plan to help out the TTC and other public transit systems around the province, and neither, for that matter, does the NDP. We have a plan. I'm asking you, Premier, why do you not adopt our plan and start helping our municipal partners to provide greater opportunities when it comes to public transit in Ontario?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): Would that two cents a litre be an additional two cents a litre that you're going to charge on our fuel tax or would you take it away from the \$1 billion worth of highway projects in the province that is being spent this year?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Members, come to order. Government benches, it's too loud in here. Keep it down. And the same with the other side. It's starting to get too loud in here. If I have to get up, people are going to have to leave. It's getting too noisy in here. I'll give you some leeway; I know it's caucus day. Enough is enough. If I get up again, people are going out.

The leader of the official opposition had the floor.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, I don't pretend to have any more money than you have, but I will tell you one thing: we have different priorities.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I just got up. I'm naming the member for London-Fanshawe. I'm asking Frank Mazzilli to leave. We are not going to continue with this. You're not going to shout two seconds after I sit down. I ask you to leave.

Mr Mazzilli was escorted from the chamber.

The Speaker: I should probably ask anybody else who wants to shout to leave now on their own and save the Sergeant at Arms the trouble and save the pages from having to stand up, because we're just going to throw people out. I think my record is at 26. We'll just keep adding to it.

Just so you know, in New Brunswick, my Speaker counterpart down there has thrown out one person who's now the official Leader of the Opposition. The next day

he came in and apologized for doing that. I'm at 26. My colleagues, I think, are even higher. We'll just keep setting records here and keep throwing you out if you behave like that.

The leader of the official opposition has the floor.

Mr McGuinty: We have different priorities, Premier. You are going to put another \$2.2 billion into tax breaks for large corporations. We won't do that. We'll make that money available to support our priorities, including health care, better education and better protection for our environment.

One of the things we are going to do is to free up two cents of the provincial gas tax, as it now exists, and turn that over to our cities so that they can invest in public transit, so that we can address the gridlock issues in Ontario, so that we can get more people out of their cars, so that we can clean up our air. That's what we're after here.

We've got a plan to help out public transit. I'm asking you, where's your plan?

Hon Mr Eves: First of all, I might remind him that it's the taxpayers' money, not mine and not his. Second of all, with respect to his supposed plan, he wants to take two cents a litre, which would be about \$300 million—

Mr McGuinty: That's \$312 million.

Hon Mr Eves: That wasn't bad off the top of my head—\$312 million if you insist—away from what's being spent on provincial highways, if I get this right. He wants to take that away, reduce the road budget for municipalities, reduce the budget for provincial highways and spend it on urban transit, or he just wants to make up \$312 million. The \$2.2 billion that he talks about in terms of corporate tax breaks is not being spent today, so you can't take it away from where it doesn't exist. You have to treat reality as it exists. You want to take \$300 million away from roads in this province and spend it on transit. You'll win a lot of seats in rural Ontario with that.

CURRICULUM

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, recently the Liberal education critic has made accusations that this government, in fact your ministry, has failed students across the province. It's because, they suggest, we have implemented a rigorous new curriculum. They are saying that we are abandoning two thirds of the students and they are being left behind. I believe he even shamefully referred to them as curriculum casualties. Can you please enlighten us, and particularly the member from Parkdale-High Park, as to exactly what this government is doing to help students not just to adjust to the new curriculum but to ensure that each and every student succeeds to their individual and optimum potential.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): I thank the member for the question. Since our government was elected in 1995, we have listened to the families and people in the province of Ontario and made sure that our students have the basic

literacy and math skills that they are going to require to be able to find a job and to be successful, productive citizens. I can tell you we have put in place a new curriculum. We are doing the evaluation of how well our students are achieving the curriculum in order that we can give them the appropriate support in order that they can go on to college, to university, into an apprenticeship or into the world of work. I am very pleased to say that, as we take a look at the testing that is being done and the help and remediation that teachers are able to provide, we are seeing an increase in success. We see our plan to help students achieve success working. I want you to know that we've invested \$25 million in annual funding to help students in grades 7 and 10 to get the extra help they need in reading, math and writing. We've introduced early literacy and math programs.

Mr O'Toole: Thank you very much for that response, Minister. I know your personal commitment to education, and I know our government's commitment to education. I know we would not stand by idly and jeopardize the future of our young people. I know that we have a very strong interest in ensuring that all students, once they leave high school, are prepared for whatever path they choose, whether it is post-secondary education or indeed directly to the workplace. Can you elaborate on the kinds of programs and resources available to our students in Ontario who may be challenged by our rigorous new curriculum?

Hon Mrs Witmer: One thing that we are doing as part of our plan to help our students achieve success and their maximum potential is to make sure that our teachers are well prepared. Research demonstrates that in order for teachers to be able to communicate and teach the skills of literacy, science and math, we need to support them. We have provided \$370 million to teachers and students to help implement the new curriculum. We have given \$7 million in the last four years for teacher training and \$80 million for professional resources. We now have early identification and intervention strategies for students at risk. We are moving forward with work-to-school programs, co-op programs, summer programs. We are making sure that every student in this province has that opportunity to achieve success. We appreciate the hard work of our teachers in helping us make sure students achieve success, because that's our plan: that every student achieves success.

1430

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Premier. For several months, you have been dodging any and all opportunities to take a firm position on the Kyoto accord, an environmental agreement which will go a long way to cleaning up Ontario's air and saving lives.

We know that tomorrow you will be meeting with Premier Ralph Klein, who is clearly out to protect the oil patch and the oil industry from any effects that environ-

mental improvements might have on that industry. We know your energy minister last week was a spokesperson on behalf of the anti-Kyoto coalition at a reception here in the Legislature, a coalition that is travelling the country emphasizing its opposition to Kyoto.

You say your government has no position, Mr Premier, but you have within the Ministry of the Environment over 400 pages of documentation related to the Kyoto accord. At a time when you say there isn't sufficient information available, why are you hiding from the public over 400 pages of information that they should have about the Kyoto accord?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I'm sure the Minister of Energy could respond.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The Minister of Energy. Oh, the Minister of the Environment.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): Thank you. That was an old job.

With respect to the 400 pages of documentation, there is no doubt that we are working feverishly, going over as much as we can to try and ascertain what the federal government's position on Kyoto is. We have tried our best to discover exactly what the level of reduction is, what the credits are, what approach they are going to take.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Stockwell: I'm sorry, I can't keep going. I keep getting interrupted, member from Don Valley. It is frustrating.

The Speaker: Answer?

Hon Mr Stockwell: That's it. Thanks.

Mr Bradley: A supplementary to the Premier: I am concerned about the fact that your government has been hiding this information from the public for months. The original freedom-of-information request made by my office was made nearly seven months ago, on March 30, 2002. Two months later, on May 23, 2002, a response was sent stating that the request was received; in another two months, on July 15, a full four months after the original request, another letter from MOE's freedom-of-information office manager stating that after a thorough search of the strategic policy branch, 411 records were located regarding the Kyoto accord. Here we are today, on October 22, over three months since the records were recovered, and not a single document has been produced.

My office has asked the privacy commissioner's office to look into this, because under Ontario's freedom of information laws the documents should have been produced immediately.

Premier, we know you secretly have ordered significant amounts of analysis to be undertaken regarding the Kyoto Protocol. We know that your government is not telling the whole story. Tell us why you are refusing to reveal the policy your government has secretly prepared on the Kyoto accord.

Hon Mr Stockwell: What a load of bunk from the member opposite. Secret? It's FOI-able. You FOI-ed it. You're going to get the information—

Mr Bradley: Seven months later and you won't give it to me.

The Speaker: Order. We've got to be fair. I'm afraid I'm going to have to name the member for St Catharines as well. We can't be shouting out like that. I'm going to have to ask Mr Bradley to leave as well.

Mr Bradley was escorted from the chamber.

The Speaker: The Minister of the Environment?

Hon Mr Stockwell: The information is FOI and it will be provided. You're talking about 400 pages. It could be as simple as a request for a meeting from the federal government. It could be a meeting requested by the ministry staff. There is nothing on the table that we have that is the least bit interesting, because all the information has been sequestered and gathered by the federal government. Only the federal government has the information about how the Kyoto Protocol is going to work, what their plan is going to be, what the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are. They haven't told us, nor have they told Alberta, Nova Scotia or any of the other provinces. If you want to get information, maybe you should FOI your cousins in Ottawa and find out what's going on.

FOODLAND ONTARIO

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Ontario farmers have built a solid reputation for continually producing high-quality food for the domestic and international marketplaces. I'm also aware that food retailers are implementing new and innovative approaches to promote Ontario produce to consumers across the province.

Minister, could you inform the Legislature on a recent announcement by your ministry that recognized the extraordinary efforts of food retailers in Ontario?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food): This morning, I was pleased to attend the Foodland Ontario Retail Awards ceremony at the Toronto Congress Centre. Our government recognized 23 outstanding retailers for their efforts in both promoting and selling Ontario produce. The winners were selected from a slate of 452 entries, who all submitted different photos to show how they had displayed Ontario produce. There were two winners today who have won platinum awards for two years. They were Blaine Turner from Green's IGA in Thornbury and Tyler Allan from Wheeler's Independent in Brockville.

I want to recognize the co-sponsors of these awards. They were the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, the Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers' Association, the Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board, the Ontario Apple Marketers Association and the Ontario Marsh Grown.

Again, I want to thank all the retailers and participants for being involved in this important program to keep Ontario produce in the forefront.

Mr Miller: Thank you for that answer, Minister. It's important that we all support Ontario food growers.

Congratulations to the retailers across Ontario for their efforts. I understand Alexandra Polmateer from Foodland in Port Sydney in the beautiful riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka was at the event to collect her gold medal, so I'd like to congratulate her.

Many Ontarians are very familiar with the green and white Foodland Ontario symbol that appears throughout the retail sector. Can you explain to the Legislature how this important program has evolved and the benefits it offers to all participants in the Ontario agri-food industry?

Hon Mrs Johns: The Foodland program offers significant benefits to the province's agri-food sector. This program was established by OMAF some 25 years ago. In that time, the program has produced innovative partnerships with industry to effectively promote Ontario-grown produce. Retailers partnered with Foodland Ontario and, because of that, it gives them a competitive advantage.

I'm sure many of us know that when we see Foodland brochures in stores, we want to reach for that produce. Based on the research findings we've done recently, there is a high degree of consumer trust with the Foodland Ontario insignia. The Foodland Ontario symbol has significant recognition—amazing recognition—and consumers look for this logo when they bring their product home. This is a very productive partnership that happens between producers, retailers and consumers in Ontario—a win-win for everybody in agriculture.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. You will know that specifically Tembec workers and generally the community of Kirkland Lake have been dealt a devastating blow with the announcement by Tembec of the closure of their Kirkland Lake sawmill. This on top of a long litany of job losses that Kirkland Lake has had to suffer over the past years could not come at a worse time. Yesterday, I met with the Tembec workers in Kirkland Lake and spoke to the mayor of Kirkland Lake, Bill Enouy. They've asked me to appeal to you directly for your help.

As you know, your ministry has approved an amendment to Tembec's sustainable forest redevelopment licence that allows crown wood that is destined for the Kirkland Lake mill to bypass that mill and be trucked instead for processing outside of Kirkland Lake, thus killing those jobs in Kirkland Lake. Minister, will you overturn your ministry's decision, stand with Kirkland Lake, redirect that wood back to Kirkland Lake and get those people in to work again?

Hon Jerry J. Ouellette (Minister of Natural Resources): Any job loss in the forestry industry is certainly a concern for small communities in northern Ontario. This is another example of the impact of the softwood lumber duties that have taken place here in Ontario.

Tembec has made business decisions as they relate to the forest industry, and this is a decision they've come forward with. In the short term, we've decided, in the best interests of the logging contractors working in the Tembec area, to allow them to continue to work in the Tembec area, to allow the fibre to move. I have met with the officials of Tembec. They have come forward with some mitigation plans that would allow individuals within that industry to be relocated and also to bring forward some opportunities for new training to reintroduce work opportunities for individuals in the Tembec plants.

1440

Mr Bisson: Minister, that has absolutely nothing to do with what you're talking about. It's your ministry's decision to redirect that wood. The contractors don't want the wood to go outside of Kirkland Lake. They want that wood processed in the Kirkland Lake area. That wood is destined for the benefit of that community.

You're an honourable member; I know you and you work hard at what you do. I'm asking you to stand with the people of Kirkland Lake and say that you will allow that licence to continue with that mill. If Tembec can't operate, too bad. Other people are prepared to take over. Will you work toward a plan that keeps that wood in Kirkland Lake for the benefit of the people of Kirkland Lake?

Hon Mr Ouellette: I met with those individuals in this specific area and not one of those individuals asked for that fibre to be kept in that area. If this is the case, the member should meet with those individuals and discuss that, because those individuals came to me and specifically did not say they had any allocation problems at all. Yesterday, as a result of that meeting, we know that the best interests of keeping those forest workers working at Tembec in the Kirkland Lake area is to allow that fibre to be relocated to mills in Timmins and the Cochrane area.

HYDRO RATES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): A question to the Premier: being a man of the people, I'm sure you're very concerned these days about your hydro bill. You've been telling us that the reason we've had to contend with these skyrocketing hydro bills is that we've had the hottest summer on record, that demand was way up, and that because demand was up, our price was up.

I have two comparable periods, one in the spring and one this fall, one for the period of May 29 to June 4 and one from October 2 to October 8, where the average hourly demand was roughly 16,000 megawatts. But for the period of May-June, the price being charged Ontarians was 3.35 cents per kilowatt hour, whereas in October—remember, it's the same demand now—the price was 5.28 cents per kilowatt hour. It was 60% more at one time for the same demand in comparison to another period. I'm asking you, as the owner of OPG, which produces 70% of our generation in the province, why is it there's a 60% difference during a time when there was the exact same demand?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I'd be happy to take this specific incident and the specifics the leader of the official opposition has talked to me about and look into it. I have a few copies of invoices here myself with respect to hydro from people in the same period, April 12 to June 11 this year, compared to last year. This year their bill for that period of time was \$178; last year it was \$186. I have two or three other examples, if you'd care to go into them in your supplementary.

Mr McGuinty: I want to return to the same issue, Premier, because you're telling us that we had a very hot summer, that demand for electricity was way up, and that the result was it affected our prices, and prices went up. But here is a specific occasion, from October 2 to October 8 and May 29 to June 4, where demand was roughly comparable, roughly 16,000 megawatts, and yet there's a 60% difference in the price being charged to the people of Ontario. What this really comes down to is that this has nothing to do with market forces. It has to do with the fact that your ownership of 70% of the generation capacity in the province is less than competent when it comes to managing Hydro and making sure we're getting the best bang for the buck.

I will be delighted to refer these details to you, but I ask you again on behalf of the people of Ontario, you've been telling us that the reason we're facing these skyrocketing rates is because demand has been going through the roof. I have a specific case where this is not in fact what is happening in Ontario. I'm asking you again, why are Ontarians paying 60% more at one time in comparison to another when demand was the same?

Hon Mr Eves: No, that isn't what I've been saying. What I've been saying is that during the months of May and June the price per kilowatt hour was lower than it was before, that during the months of July, August and September it was higher, and that during the month of October it's back to being about the same. In fact, on half the days it's been lower. That's what I've been saying consistently as we've stood in the House and debated this issue.

ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question today is for the Minister of Public Safety and Security. This government has always held offenders accountable for their actions and put the safety of our communities and the rights of victims above those of offenders.

One of the initiatives of our government has been the electronic monitoring program you started several years ago, which I understand has been working very well. This program is for a select few offenders who are serving an intermittent sentence and have been approved for a temporary absence from the institution. Minister, I understand that you plan to improve the types of electronic systems the ministry uses through an initiative called the electronic surveillance program. Could you

please give the members of this House an update on the electronic surveillance program?

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): I thank the member for Simcoe North for the question. I'm pleased to tell the House that on Friday we announced that JEMTEC Inc has been awarded the contract for the delivery of our electronic surveillance program. As members of the House may know, the ministry has been working with this company since 1996 to monitor selected offenders using a radio frequency anklet. The program has been working well to date, and now new second-generation technology is available that will allow offenders to be kept under much more intrusive electronic surveillance. We've invested an additional \$2.4 million to give our staff the tools they need to help protect the law-abiding citizens of this province. We expect this new and improved program will be up and running in the very near future.

Mr Dunlop: I'm sure that the members of this House are as eager as I am to have this program operational. I know that the residents of my constituency will be eager to hear how this program will work, considering we are host to one of the new correctional centres in the town of Penetanguishene. As you mentioned, the original program is currently limited to those offenders serving intermittent sentences and they are monitored using a radio frequency anklet.

Minister, could you please tell the House how our government's investment and partnership with JEMTEC will expand the electronic surveillance program?

Hon Mr Runciman: I'm pleased to tell the members that the new and improved electronic surveillance program will be able to much more intrusively and intensively keep tabs on a variety of offenders sentenced in the community, and not just those serving intermittent sentences. This new system will include cutting-edge technologies such as global positioning and voice verification, allowing corrections officials to know that an offender is where he or she is supposed to be and, if not, to immediately respond in the interests of safety.

It's important to say that electronic technology is not intended to replace the work that's done by the dedicated front-line correctional staff, nor will it replace incarceration. The program is simply a new, improved tool to help staff keep track of selected community-sentenced offenders, to increase deterrence and, most importantly, enhance the safety and security of our neighbourhoods.

HOME CARE

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): My question is for the Minister of Health. The VON day programs in Middlesex county have enabled countless individuals to live independently and with dignity in their own communities. Seniors and those with developmental and physical disabilities or serious ailments are able to stay in their homes, thanks to the volunteer services in their communities.

VON Middlesex, though, has been forced to cut services for vulnerable because you have refused to significantly increase the base funding over the past five years to meet the increase in need. There is a \$94,000 deficit. The real hurt you are causing includes day programming reduced to one day per week, Meals on Wheels cut to three days per week, and client user fees to increase even to those who are terminally ill and to those with Alzheimer's. Seniors and disabled persons are going to suffer as a result of your refusal to increase the funding.

Minister, will you commit today to increasing the Middlesex county VON's funding so that their most vulnerable citizens do not have to leave their homes?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I can confirm to this House that in fact funding for home care was increased as part of the Ernie Eves budget of this year. Certainly, from our perspective, there has been a more than 72% increase in funding for home care in Ontario since the PC government was first elected in 1995. So this is a priority for us. Clearly we felt that it was necessary to ensure that the money was going to the front-line recipients of this kind of care. It is an integral part of making sure that we deliver quality health care as close to home as possible.

Mr Peters: But, Minister, your numbers are skewed, because a mere 2% of the increase in funding to the Middlesex VON was allocated to program growth. By this time, though, the VON has seen its service increase by over 57%. They are providing, to this date, 20,000 additional units of service.

1450

The VON in Middlesex has maxed out on user fees beyond affordability. They've maxed out on fundraising. They cannot bridge the gap. Without increased funding people in Middlesex county—and you have two representatives, Mr Beaubien and Mr Johnson—are going to suffer. I also represent this county. Seniors will not be able to live in their homes. Developmentally disabled adults are losing the day programs that they enjoyed and looked forward to.

Minister, such services as Meals on Wheels and respite day programs are about dignity and meaningful quality of life. These programs have saved the health care system millions of dollars over the years.

I ask you again, will you commit to increasing the funding to the Middlesex VON so that the most vulnerable are not forced to suffer as a result of your funding shortfalls?

Hon Mr Clement: I can confirm to this House that since 1994-95, Middlesex home care has gone from \$28.7 million worth of funding to \$38.37 million worth of funding from this government. By my thumbnail calculations, that's an over 25% increase, not including the increase from this fiscal year. Globally, in Ontario the amount of funding for home care has gone from \$695 million to \$1.138 billion. This is showing our commitment to this sector. We believe it is important to invest in home care. Incidentally, these are 100% provincial

dollars. Not a penny comes from the federal government in this regard. We certainly are anticipating and hoping that Roy Romanow has something to say about this. But I can tell you it has been a commitment of this government and the Ernie Eves government has continued on that commitment for the right kind of funding to ensure that services are adequate as close to home as possible.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My second question today is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I am really pleased that we had the opportunity to work together at the seniors' information forum that I held last Friday in Midland. Just a little over 500 people attended that informational centre. The event was a tremendous opportunity to get together and discuss the programs and safeguards that are in place for seniors, not only in Simcoe North but right across our province. It was also a great chance to hear what's on the minds of my constituents and talk about the issues that matter most to them. Minister, for the benefit of this House, could you please provide an update on the status of long-term-care redevelopment in Simcoe North?

Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I thank the hard-working member for Simcoe North for his question. I very much enjoyed taking part in his seniors' information forum and I congratulate him on a very successful event held last Friday in Midland.

I'm proud to say that in the Simcoe service area, a total of 665 new long-term-care beds have been allocated for construction; 332 are already in operation, and a further 24 will be opened in November. As well, six existing category D facilities are redeveloping a total of 479 beds, and 213 of those beds have already been completed to date.

Our government's historic \$1.2-billion long-term-care initiative is making a real difference in the lives of seniors and those who require long-term care in Simcoe North and indeed across our great province of Ontario, because it will mean even better care for residents today, better care for residents tomorrow and better care for residents in the years to come.

Mr Dunlop: Thank you very much for that response, Minister. I know our long-term-care initiatives are making a real difference in the lives of my constituents and Ontarians from right across our province. As you know, several of my constituents at the event asked us how far Ontario has come since 1995 in providing quality long-term-care services for our province's seniors. Minister, for the benefit of this House, could you please provide an update on the progress we made as a province in providing quality long-term care over the past seven years?

Hon Mr Newman: I once again thank the member for Simcoe North for his question. There is no question that long-term care in Ontario has come a long way since our government was first elected by the people of Ontario in

1995. Unlike previous provincial governments, we will not compromise when it comes to the health and well-being of our most vulnerable. We will continue to make important investments for today and continue to make important investments for tomorrow.

After all, in 1995, not only did we inherit an \$11-billion deficit after a decade of Liberal and NDP government, but we also inherited a decade of neglect with respect to investments in the long-term-care sector. Ernie Eves's government, however, is taking action where it is needed through investments such as our \$1.2-billion investment toward new and redeveloped long-term-care beds in Ontario, and, I might add, with our \$100 million in new funding for nursing and personal care services.

I say to this House today that we will continue to work hard to improve access to long-term-care services in our province.

HIGHWAY 407

Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Every day people driving on the 407 are encountering problems with the organization that runs it. Today they are being bilked—and I use that word advisedly—and I'm asking what your government is going to do. The problem is that the transponders that many people on the 407 use are getting old. They have batteries inside them, and those batteries are running out. But there's no way of knowing that your battery no longer works. There's no little light that goes on. People don't know. When they find out that their battery no longer works, because they get a bill that says, "You owe \$30 because you don't have a transponder," they phone immediately and they find out that nobody answers the phone. They wait on the phone for an hour, for two hours, and nobody answers. Nobody answers the e-mails. They go to a kiosk, and no one can answer at the kiosk, because the kiosks don't have phones either. They go back to the phone. I ask you, phone 1-888-407-0407 and just stand there and wait yourself. You'll never get through.

What I'm asking is, what are you going to do to improve the service of the travelling public who use this road literally every day—

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

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation): I'm told that when a transponder is not working it doesn't react the same way as it does when it is working. As I understand it, there is a sound and a light which indicates whether or not it is in fact working. That takes care of one of the allegations of the member opposite as to whether a person knows that it is or isn't working.

We have been working with the 407 to ensure that their level of client service does improve, because we believe that in fact their ability to answer phones, to respond to requests was not adequate in the past. I did happen to go out and see their new, enlarged headquarters for dealing with clients' concerns. They have

assured me that the response time has dropped dramatically from what it was before. But I'm glad to look into it for the member and ensure that they continue to improve their record of client service.

Mr Prue: People, quite honestly, do not understand when the batteries are working and when they aren't. I have to tell you that maybe some members opposite might know, but most of the general public does not know when those transponders are working. But there is literally no staff to help them. They stay on the phone for 15 minutes, 20 minutes, sometimes for hours. They are then levied a fine of some \$30. If they refuse to pay the fine, then they are charged even more money. After they are charged more money, their account is sent to a collection agency. Then they are told that they will not be able to renew their licence and that this government stands behind that private corporation to stop legitimate people from renewing their licence because they refuse to pay usurious charges.

Minister, will you ensure that there is adequate staffing to make sure that every person gets to talk to someone in person? Will you ensure that there is less draconian enforcement, that people are not threatened with losing their licence, so that honest citizens can avoid the bureaucratic nightmares of this corporation?

Hon Mr Sterling: The 407 is dealing with millions of people who are using the 407 on a daily basis. Therefore they are attempting in some ways to deal with the tremendous number of questions, concerns, the information which is necessary in order to run a large venture, as this is.

Under the contract which the government has entered into with the 407, there is the provision for licence denial. But we have made it clear to the 407 that we will not use licence denial to deal with administrative charges. We have held tight on that. We are not using licence denial at this time for any—

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

1500

CORPORATE TAX

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Premier. We are the most export-oriented jurisdiction in the world; 95% to the US. We have decided to compete with the US on the basis of, I gather, corporate taxes 25% lower than the US. Corporate taxes are 40%, and in Ontario, the plan is to move them to 30%. In terms of forgone revenue, going from 40% to 30%, it's about \$5 billion of forgone revenue in the province of Ontario.

I watch Pennsylvania, and they advertise, "Come to Pennsylvania because we graduate more engineers, more scientists, more technologists." But we've decided in Ontario that we're going to compete on the basis of corporate taxes 25% below those of our competitors.

How did you make the decision that we needed corporate taxes to be not competitive, but 25% lower than

the US, at a cost of forgone revenue of roughly \$5 billion for Ontario?

Hon Ernie Eves (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): This is the same honourable member who stood in this House at the beginning of the Common Sense personal income tax reduction and said that our 30% reduction would cost us \$5 billion a year in revenue. Not only did it not cost us the \$5 billion a year, but we gained an additional \$17 billion. That calculation of yours was only out by \$22 billion a year, in a budget of \$65 billion. So pardon me if I don't accept your great presumption of another \$5-billion loss, which will probably turn into another \$17-billion gain.

VISITORS

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know that earlier today you introduced and welcomed our new pages. It would be my privilege to tell the members that the grandparents, Mr and Mrs Bill and Betty Wilson, from my riding are here. They are the grandparents of Lauren Wilson, who is a constituent of the member for Burlington, Cam Jackson.

PETITIONS

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I'd like to read a petition which I haven't read for many weeks. The petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"The unreasonable and inhumane restrictions that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) is placing on wildlife rehabilitators with respect to the release of orphaned animals will eliminate their ability to help wildlife; and

"Whereas wildlife rehabilitators provide an essential public service for many thousands of people seeking help on behalf of orphaned and injured wildlife in Ontario; and

"Whereas the unreasonable release restrictions imposed on wildlife rehabilitators by the OMNR will prevent responsible wildlife rehabilitation, not only compromising wildlife and frustrating the public but forcing it underground and jeopardizing public safety; and

"Whereas this will incur significant new costs for local governments with respect to bylaw and public health and safety interventions while creating an emotional and volatile climate because the majority of people in Ontario are simply unwilling to see healthy young animals euthanized;

"We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned that the release restrictions imposed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will eliminate the provision of responsible wildlife services in our community; and

"We petition the government of Ontario to work with wildlife rehabilitators to ensure that progressive, humane and responsible regulations with respect to release criteria for rehabilitated orphaned wildlife are put in place in Ontario."

I sign my name to this petition as well.

CHILD CARE

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): These petitions have been sent to me by Children's Resources on Wheels from Smiths Falls, Carrie Fallon from Courtice, Ontario, Growing Together in Blenheim, Ontario, and residents of Balmertown in northwestern Ontario. They read as follows:

"Whereas 70% of Ontario women with children under age 12 are in the paid workforce;

"Whereas high-quality, safe, affordable child care is critical to them and their families;

"Whereas the Early Years Study done for the Conservative government by Dr Fraser Mustard and the Honourable Margaret McCain concluded quality child care enhances early childhood development;

"Whereas this government has cut funding for regulated child care instead of supporting Ontario families by investing in early learning and care;

"Therefore, be it resolved that the Ontario government adopt the NDP's \$10-a-day child care plan and begin implementation by reducing full child care fees to \$10 a day for children aged two to five currently enrolled in regulated child care by providing capital funds to expand existing child care centres and build new ones, by funding pay equity for staff and by creating new \$10-a-day child care spaces in the province."

I agree with the petitioners. I have affixed my name to this.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I wish to read a petition. It's titled "Honour Emergency Workers Who Lose Their Lives in the Line of Duty." I feel this is especially appropriate given the passing of volunteer firefighter April Hopkin.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Legislature has debated a private member's bill titled the Flags at Half-Mast Act, 2002, requiring flags at all provincial government buildings be flown at half-mast for a period of mourning to honour police officers, correctional service officers, firefighters and ambulance workers in Ontario who lose their lives in the line of duty; and

"Whereas our emergency response personnel deserve our thanks and respect for their efforts to ensure the safety and security of all Ontarians; and

"Whereas MPP Toby Barrett has spoken and voted in favour of this legislation;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

“That the government of Ontario support Halton MPP Chudleigh’s Flags at Half-Mast Act, 2002, and require all Ontario government buildings to lower their flags for a period of mourning to pay respect to dedicated men and women who lose their lives in the line of duty.”

I support this petition and hereby affix my signature.

HIGHWAY 69

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I’ve got several thousand names on this petition. It’s part of the 26,000-name petition we have with regard to multi-laning of Highway 69.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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 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 in the last three years 46 people have been killed on that stretch of highway between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

“Whereas in the last year alone, 10 people have tragically lost their lives on that stretch of highway between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

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

“Therefore, 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 south between Sudbury and Parry Sound so that the carnage on Death Road North will cease.”

I of course affix my signature. I give it to Matthew our new page to bring to the table.

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO SAVINGS OFFICE

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Province of Ontario Savings Office was created in 1922 by United Farmers and labour as a unique banking facility that allowed Ontarians to invest in their province;

“Whereas the Province of Ontario Savings Office enjoys a strong popularity among Ontario residents, with over 100,000 accounts and over \$2.8 billion on deposit; and

“Whereas the Province of Ontario Savings Office offers customers attractive interest rates, generous chequing privileges and personalized efficient service, and every dollar deposited is guaranteed by the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas POSO has 23 branches serving 17 communities across Ontario, including Hamilton, Windsor, Ottawa and small communities in northern Ontario not served by other banks or trust companies. Places like Pickle Lake, Armstrong, Killarney, Gogama and Virginiatown; and

“Whereas the Tory government announced in its latest budget that it will put the Province of Ontario Savings Office on the auction block, even though it is a consistent revenue generator, and even though this revenue could help Ontario’s crumbling infrastructure after years of Tory neglect;

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

“To save the people’s bank, the Province of Ontario Savings Office, so that it can continue its historic role of providing excellent banking services to families in communities across Ontario; so that people in small towns will not be forced to go farther afield for banking services and forced to go to private, for-profit banks.”

I agree with the petitioners and I have affixed my signature to this.

COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): I have a petition which is the first of a series by concerned citizens. There will be thousands and thousands of them coming in every day at my office.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Harris-Eves government deregulated electricity on May 1, 2002, in the province of Ontario, without it being in their election platform in either 1995 or 1999, and without the mandate of the people of Ontario; and

“Whereas the price of the commodity of electricity has reached outrageous levels, having risen at times over 100% since May 1, 2002, causing Ontarians great financial hardship; and

1510

“Whereas Ontario Power Generation (owned by the Ontario government) has applied to the Ontario Energy Board for a 20% reduction in the promised rebate to Ontarians if the commodity price of electricity rose above 3.8 cents per kilowatt hour; and

“Whereas competition in the electricity market has been scared off by the uncertainty of the Harris-Eves government’s attempts to sell off a portion of Hydro One, leaving electricity commodity prices high; and

“Whereas the Harris-Eves government authorized that exorbitant salaries and bonuses in the amount of \$2.2 million per annum be paid to the former president of Hydro One and in excess of \$1.6 million per annum to the vice-president of Ontario Power Generation;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government take immediate action to ensure that Ontarians have fair prices for the necessary commodity of electricity in Ontario, and that the Conservative government and its leader Ernie Eves call a general election on the instability of energy markets so that Ontarians may have a voice on this issue.”

I add my signature with pleasure.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario with regard to the unreasonable and inhumane restrictions that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is placing on wildlife rehabilitators with respect to the release of orphaned animals, which will eliminate their ability to help wildlife.

“Whereas wildlife rehabilitators provide an essential public service for many thousands of people seeking help on behalf of orphaned and injured wildlife in Ontario;

“Whereas the unreasonable release restrictions imposed on wildlife rehabilitators by the OMNR will prevent responsible wildlife rehabilitation, not only compromising wildlife and frustrating the public but forcing it underground and jeopardizing public safety;

“Whereas this will incur significant new costs for local governments with respect to bylaw and public health and safety interventions while creating an emotional and volatile climate because the majority of people in Ontario are simply unwilling to see healthy young animals euthanized;

“We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned that the release restrictions imposed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will eliminate the provision of responsible wildlife services in our community. We petition the government of Ontario to work with wildlife rehabilitators to ensure that progressive, humane and responsible regulations with respect to release criteria for rehabilitated orphaned wildlife are put in place in Ontario.”

I'm pleased to add my signature to the more than 200 names on this petition.

GARDE D'ENFANTS

M^{me} Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): J'ai une pétition qui vient des Services de garde de Rayside-Balfour dans ma circonscription.

« Attendu que 70% des femmes de l'Ontario ayant des enfants de moins de 12 ans sont sur le marché du travail;

« Attendu que, elles et leurs familles ont absolument besoin de services de garde de qualité, sûrs et abordables;

« Attendu que l'étude sur la petite enfance réalisée pour le gouvernement conservateur par le D^r Fraser Mustard et l'honorable Margaret McCain a conclu que les services de garde de qualité favorisent un développement harmonieux des enfants; et

« Attendu que le gouvernement a réduit le financement pour les garderies réglementées plutôt que d'appuyer les familles ontariennes en investissant dans l'apprentissage et les soins offerts aux jeunes enfants;

« Pour ces motifs nous, soussignés, demandons que le gouvernement de l'Ontario adopte le plan du NPD pour des espaces de garderie à 10 \$ par jour, et qu'il commence par réduire la totalité des frais de garde pour les enfants de deux ans à cinq ans actuellement inscrits dans des garderies réglementées; que le gouvernement alloue des capitaux permanents pour agrandir les garderies existantes et pour en construire de nouvelles; que le gouvernement finance l'équité salariale pour le personnel, et qu'il crée de nouveaux espaces de garderies à 10 \$ par jour dans cette province. »

Je suis d'accord avec cette pétition et j'y appose mon nom.

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; ...

“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.”

It is signed by a number of residents from Merlin, and I too have signed this petition.

SERVICES DE SANTÉ POUR ENFANTS

CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

M^{me} Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): « Attendu que le gouvernement conservateur planifie la fermeture du service de chirurgie cardiaque à l'Hôpital pour enfants de l'est de l'Ontario;

“Whereas the Conservative government plans to centralize all cardiac services for children in Toronto;

« Attendu que la chirurgie cardiaque ... est un service essentiel pour les enfants de l'est de l'Ontario et pour ... les enfants francophones de toute la province;

“Whereas the lives of children may be at risk if forced to travel to Toronto for cardiac care;

« Attendu que les enfants et leur famille se verront imposer des dépenses et des soucis inutiles s'ils doivent se rendre à Toronto pour obtenir des services cardiaques;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand that the Conservative government halt immediately its decision to close cardiac surgery services at the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa.”

J’y appose ma signature avec fierté.

CELLULAR TOWER

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario.

“Whereas we wish to object to the building of a Telus Mobility cellular tower in a tile-drained cornfield less than a kilometre south of Avonmore. There are many other choices for the location of this tower which would not interfere with existing homes, farmland and livestock. Please consider the relocation of this unit as the decision was made with no consultation with the community.

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

“To stop the proposed building of the Telus tower and to promote community consultation” in the near future.

I’ve also signed the petition.

COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Harris-Eves government deregulated electricity on May 1, 2002, in the province of Ontario without it being in their election platform in either 1995 or 1999 and without the mandate of the people of Ontario; and

“Whereas the price of the commodity of electricity has reached outrageous levels, having risen at times over 100% since May 1, 2002, causing Ontarians great financial hardship; and

“Whereas Ontario Power Generation (owned by the Ontario government) has applied to the Ontario Energy Board for a 20% reduction in the promised rebate to Ontarians if the commodity price of electricity rose above 3.8 cents per kilowatt hour; and

“Whereas competition in the electricity market has been scared off by the uncertainty of the Harris-Eves government’s attempts to sell off a portion of Hydro One, leaving electricity commodity prices high; and

“Whereas the Harris-Eves government authorized exorbitant salaries and bonuses in the amount of \$2.2 million per annum to be paid to the former president of Hydro One, and in excess of \$1.6 million per annum to the vice-president of Ontario Power Generation;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government take immediate action to ensure that Ontarians have fair prices for the necessary commodity of electricity in Ontario, and that the Conservative government and its leader, Ernie Eves, call a general election on the instability of the energy market so that Ontarians can have a voice on this issue.”

I add my signature to this petition and give it to Adrienne, our new page, to bring it over to you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): I move that the Minister of Finance be authorized to pay the salaries of the civil servants and other necessary payments pending the voting of supply for the period commencing November 1, 2002 and ending April 30, 2003, such payments to be charged to the proper appropriation following the voting of supply.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Debate: I believe whoever moved the motion has to start the debate or else we’ll go in rotation. The Chair recognizes the Chair of Management Board and the Minister of Culture, the member for Markham.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: I’m very pleased to be here on behalf of my colleague the Minister of Finance to commence this debate. This is a motion that, if passed, gives the government the authority to continue its many programs that benefit the people of Ontario and to operate the daily business of government. Approval of this motion for interim supply gives the government permission to send money to municipalities, hospitals and school boards around the province—these are all our funding partners, of course—and also to pay social assistance benefits to those in need. It will also pay the salaries of our Ontario civil service.

1520

The motion for interim supply does not specify a dollar amount, but proposes to grant authority to spend for a specified period of time. As you know, this is normal business routine during the course of the year. The current interim supply motion last approved by the Legislature covered a six-month period from May 1, 2002, and expires October 31, 2002, this year. Without spending authority, statutory payments can continue to be made. These payments include interest on the public debt and all payments from special purpose accounts. However, unlike statutory payments, scheduled and unscheduled payments cannot be made without the passage of an interim supply motion. These include payments to very essential services across the province, including nursing homes, hospitals, doctors, municipalities, general welfare recipients, children’s aid societies and suppliers’ accounts.

The motion for interim supply must also be passed to ensure that all of Ontario’s civil servants continue to receive their salaries. Teachers and health care professionals are just some of the members of the broader public service whose salaries are paid for by our government and through the taxes of the working person in Ontario. Dedicated public servants like teachers and professors prepare our youth for tomorrow, and nurses, doctors and other health care professionals care for the sick and elderly.

Interim supply gives us the authority to spend, but we must make responsible choices to ensure that we stay on

the course of prosperity. We continue to make important contributions to the health of the province by exercising fiscal restraint in government operations, and this I clearly know as Chair of Management Board. We continue to focus on efficient and effective delivery of government programs and services. That's why we've pursued a consistent course of tight fiscal discipline, balanced budgets and debt reduction in order to provide more resources to priority areas. Clearly, in 1999, we indicated to the public of Ontario that unless government spends wisely and we deal with restraint and we deal with measures that will fuel the economy, we would not have money to spend on very essential areas of the province, such as education, environment and health care. As you know, we continue to invest in health care on a large scale.

Our government has an agenda of spending on those priorities that respond to the needs of Ontarians and encourage growth, job creation and prosperity. Just today, you heard the Premier speaking about the prosperity of the province and how important it is, not only to this government and for the people of Ontario but, as you know, the province of Ontario fuels the economy of the entire country. That's how essential the economy of Ontario is.

Our economy continues to grow. Right now 987,700 new jobs have been created since 1995. That's very close to one million net new jobs in this province. I recall back in 1994 how, as we were going through the election period and the run-up to the election period, we talked about creating 720,000 net new jobs in the province of Ontario, and people laughed at us. They said it was impossible to do that. Now, retrospectively I guess, people should be patting us on the back for creating—not us for creating the jobs. We just created the environment for these jobs to be created by industry in this province.

Private sector forecasters expect the Ontario economy to grow by 3.6% in 2002—once again, faster than any of the G7 nations. In July, Moody's Investor's Service improved its rating for Ontario, the first upgrade since 1974.

There are, of course, other indicators that reflect the strength of our economy. There are 613,000 fewer people in Ontario who depend on welfare. As we've always said, this is the key: getting people to work. The unemployment rate is down to 7.3% and consumer confidence is also up 25.7%. That's incredible in today's economy—25.7% consumer confidence in Ontario. As we all know, as we can see the economy building, housing starts are up 116.4%. That's an incredible amount—fuelling this economy, building homes, creating such prosperity in the GTA and across Ontario. Real disposable income has increased by 21.2% since we began cutting taxes. Isn't it funny how that mirrors what we've been doing? We cut taxes; disposable income goes up. I still remember back in 1995 on the election trail with Premier Harris—not Premier Harris at the time, but running for Premier at the time—where we visited a computer company, and before that we visited a family and a retail store. We saw how

this whole trickle-down business of people having disposable income to spend fuelled the economy. Lo and behold, as we look back now, many of the things we were saying during the run-up to that election in 1995 certainly turned out to be quite true.

Since we began cutting taxes, revenue to pay for programs and services has risen by almost \$14 billion, an incredible amount. Ontario's economy has grown almost 28% since 1995, and that's compared to 20% across the rest of Canada. Thanks to our government's prudent fiscal management and sound economic policies, Ontario is back on track and investors are taking notice.

Since 1995, we have continued to make tough decisions and responsible choices. We've focused on creating conditions to increase growth and achieve the highest quality of life for the people of Ontario. Speaker, some of these choices have not been easy, as you know. You've been in government. Certainly as Chair of the Management Board, I've seen a number of choices that we've made. But during the course of making these choices, we decided as a government, in listening to the people of Ontario, what our priorities would be. Our priorities certainly are spending on health care, which has increased exponentially, spending on education, spending on the environment and, of course, spending on making sure our streets are safe. Public safety is a very key part of our platform.

We have stuck to our plan. I must say, too, since the Minister of Agriculture is sitting next to me, that it's very important for us as a government to recognize and see as a priority our support of our agricultural community, the farmers of this community. The farmers of this province deserve to have our support because, as I travel across the province, and even in my own community, and see development going on, we certainly look for a balance out there. We understand the nature of the role of the farmers, how important their roles are to this province. Sometimes when I look and I see farmland, I'm so proud and happy to know that we have farmland that produces agricultural products that we in Ontario can enjoy.

Earlier on today, I had the privilege of listening to the Minister of Agriculture answer a question in terms of Foodland Ontario. Like most Ontarians, when we go to the supermarket and we go through and look through the produce, we see "Foodland Ontario," and we see that the product is created in Ontario. I believe that product is safer and healthier to eat. As you recall, we've had a number of difficulties with some of the agricultural products—not from Ontario but imported into Ontario. I believe we have the checks and balances, and certainly the farmers have the interests of the people of Ontario at heart, and we have one of the finest products in Ontario. I could talk forever on farmers because some of my best friends are farmers who produce products such as corn, certainly in my neck of the woods. We know how popular that is in the Legislature—corn is always around here.

But we have stuck to our plan. Economic growth spurred by tax cuts has enabled this government to invest

in priority programs and services, once again, as I said before, such as health care, education, the environment—and agriculture is very important to us. The passage of the motion for interim supply will permit spending which specifically benefits two of these priority areas: health care and education. We have made significant investments in health care to meet our commitments of improving and modernizing Ontario's hospitals.

If I could just take a moment right now, because I know the associate minister in charge of long-term health care is here in the House with us right now, we've made an incredible investment in long-term health care. For the very first time in this province in many, many years, we've invested in 20,000 new beds in the province of Ontario. I might say—I almost said "Premier," Speaker—that this investment is all on our own. The federal government does not spend one penny to support long-term health care beds. I think that's atrocious, quite frankly. But the people of this province have the comfort of knowing that this government feels it is a very huge priority for us to support our seniors, to make sure that they have a place to go. Long-term health care is quite a priority for this government.

1530

Getting back to my topic here about hospitals, we have made significant investments in health care to meet our commitments of improving and modernizing Ontario's hospitals. Between 1999-2000 and 2002-03, the hospital base funding will have increased at an average annual rate of 8.4%. Health care operating spending will be \$25.5 billion in 2002-03. That's an increase of \$1.7 billion or 7.3% over the 2001-02 operating spending.

If you recall back in 1995 when we were campaigning throughout the province, we made a commitment to the people of this province to ensure that the spending on health care would be at least \$17.4 billion. Health care spending today is \$25.5 billion. That is an incredible commitment to keep to the people of the province of Ontario, that we believe health care is so important.

Ontarians are benefitting from the investments in health care we have made since coming into office in 1995. Capital projects are a tremendous example of how we are encouraging investments. The Ontario government is examining potential for public-private partnerships. There are currently two pilot projects to assist the government and hospitals in understanding how best to apply the partnership models used successfully in other jurisdictions. Both William Osler in Brampton and the Royal Ottawa hospital have issued requests for qualifications and closed the requests in August. Submissions are now being reviewed and requests for proposals to develop those facilities will be issued in the late fall.

It's important for us to look out, particularly with health care, to make sure that we look at the best ways of delivering health care in this province. I applaud the Minister of Health for looking at these public-private partnership areas, because we have scarce dollars. Even though we have increased our spending to \$25.5 billion, money is scarce. It is very important for us to have a

balance throughout. Right now an incredible amount of our budget goes strictly to health care. Health care is a priority, but I think it is incumbent upon us to spend our money in the best way possible, and this may be a way of doing it. That's why we are looking at this in the way of pilot projects. To meet our health care spending commitment, the passage of this motion for interim supply is needed.

We've also made significant commitments to education in Ontario, because the quality of education and lifelong learning are the building blocks of a prosperous tomorrow. I certainly know that as Minister of Culture. This week particularly is Library Week, and I was actually very pleased that the Minister of Colleges and Universities was able to attend an event in London to launch Library Week on my behalf.

As I said in the House earlier on this week, libraries are a tremendous institution of democracy. Libraries don't recognize the fact that someone has wealth or doesn't have wealth. Libraries don't recognize ethnicity, or race, or religion. Libraries provide information free of cost. So you don't have to have money to learn. You don't have to have money to access the libraries. That's very important. That's why I always call it a great institution of democracy, because learning is the key, I think. Learning and education are the key for anyone to better themselves in this province. That's what I believe: not only access to books but certainly to education.

We have tremendous teachers in this province as well, I must say. I look among my colleagues on both sides of the House. I think we can all talk about one teacher who helped us particularly on our way. I look at myself: here I was after the war, a visible minority. If it weren't for teachers who took my interests to heart—even though I was the only oriental or Asian in the entire school, who really stuck out, they were able to help me with my interests. Teachers don't discriminate against different ethnic groups; they are their class, their children. They are there to take care of them. That's why it is so important for us to support education, because once again if you are poor, if you have an education it is a way of opening doors to the future. Good teachers are a very essential part of that educational process. I can tell you that first hand.

We've been making record investments in education and funding new educational initiatives to ensure that all Ontario students have the resources they need to reach their full potential. The Premier was speaking about that earlier today. It doesn't matter where you live in this province, whether it's Thunder Bay, Moosonee, Markham or Thornhill, all children are entitled to the same quality of education and the same access to books, equipment and everything else. That's what our educational program is all about.

Standardized tests at the provincial, national and international levels confirm that our students are improving. The Ontario government remains committed to ensuring that every willing and qualified Ontario student will have a place in the post-secondary educational system during

the double cohort years. That's a commitment we've made. It's a commitment I heard repeated not only by the Premier but also by the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

The 2002 budget increased our multi-year commitment to colleges and universities by an additional \$75 million to support greater-than-anticipated enrolment, raising it to \$368 million by 2003-04.

This government's commitment to fiscal restraint will ensure the delivery of critical priorities like health care and education, not only today but tomorrow as well.

I hope all members will support the motion for interim supply so that we can continue to deliver on our priorities.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I'm pleased to continue the debate on supply, and I'd like to make several points.

I was intrigued by the "spending wisely." I don't mean to take a shot at the minister, but it was he who signed the \$10-million tax break for sports teams that I think most Ontarians think was probably the largest waste of money.

I want to make several points on the finances of the province. I'll start off by saying that the province, in this year's budget, has said they are planning to sell off about \$2 billion worth of assets of the province. That really was one of the major changes in the budget. By the way, we're awaiting word on what that \$2 billion of asset sales will be.

The public should be aware that it was exactly four years ago that the government also announced the huge sale of an asset, and that was Highway 407. The 407 deal was the biggest sale of an asset in Canadian history. It sold for \$800 million more than CN Rail, our national rail, and Air Canada combined. The deal closed the day the election was called and the government used that money at that time to essentially have an election slush fund.

The reason I raise it is because in this budget, once again, four years later, leading up to an election, we have another huge sale of assets. The reason I raise it is because, firstly, the government hasn't announced what it will be. At one time, they said it was going to be Hydro One. That seems to be somewhat off the table. We still don't know where the government plans to get that roughly \$2 billion in asset sales, but I warn the public to be very wary of this.

The 407 was perhaps the worst deal made by any government in North America ever, and it was Mr Eves who put the deal together. What we found was that the government essentially completely abandoned the 407 users. The investors, the people who bought that road, in three years saw their investment quadruple. SNC-Lavalin owns a fairly substantial chunk of the highway and they said the company's stake in Highway 407 corresponds to nearly four times its initial investment of \$175 million.

This is the most desired toll road in the world. That's a fact. Nope, there's no toll road that is more sought after

by investors than the 407. There's an Australian company that says the reason they want it is because you can take the tolls up—they said—at a whim, without restriction. By the way, I would say to the public that when the 407 was sold we were told there were some controls on it. The owners say there are absolutely no controls on it. The tolls can go up at a whim.

1540

I raised this issue yesterday in the Legislature and the government, frankly, dismissed it. The Premier dismissed my concerns. It's this: Mr Al Leach is on the board of SNC-Lavalin and the 407, and I will say that Mr Leach is a well-regarded individual. This is not about Mr Leach. But he's on the board of SNC-Lavalin. They pay him \$100,000 a year retainer. They pay him \$25,000 a year as a director. He has 6,000 shares in SNC-Lavalin. He's on the board of the 407 corporation. All that is fine. He's been there since 1999. He used to be a cabinet minister here, and after he left the government he went on the board. He's been full value for them. The value of SNC-Lavalin's investment went from \$175 million when he came on the board to \$700 million today, so he's been great value for them.

But my problem is this: the government has decided to put him on the board of GO Transit, so he is now the vice-chair of GO Transit. In my opinion, he's in a conflict. Every single time he sits at GO Transit making a decision, it has a direct financial impact on the 407. I would say to the public, every time another 500 cars a day go on the 407 it's \$1 million a year in increased revenue for the 407 corporation. I don't think it's appropriate.

Yesterday I raised it with the Minister of Transportation and he said—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Phillips: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I know Mr Guzzo doesn't like to hear this, but I think it's important that the public does.

The Minister of Transportation said, "Well, you raised all these problems at the committee," when there was the appointment of Mr Leach, "and you lost there and you're going to lose again. So just go away."

But I say to the public, it is outrageous—by the way, SNC-Lavalin I believe is part of the consortium redeveloping Union Station, and if you look in GO Transit's annual report they say, "The refurbishment of Union Station is one of our major projects."

The reason I raise this is that if the government can't see a conflict there between an individual who has an enormous interest in a private sector company also sitting on GO Transit's board as vice-chair—if they don't see any problem with that, if that is just completely all right, I think the government's got a problem.

Mr Garry J. Guzzo (Ottawa West-Nepean): Take it to court.

Mr Phillips: Mr Guzzo, when he responds later, may choose to comment on that. But as far as I'm concerned, there's a problem there. As I say, the reason I spend the

time on it is because in this budget you're going to find another roughly \$2 billion of asset sales.

I wanted to comment on the question I raised with the Premier today too, which is that it is the government's plan to have corporate taxes in Ontario 25% below the US. They're going to be 30% in Ontario, 40% in all our competing jurisdictions.

Mr Guzzo: At least.

Mr Phillips: At least 25% lower. Again, Mr Guzzo is very supportive of that. I would just say to the public, here's the challenge with this: it means that in Ontario we forgo revenue of roughly \$5 billion. If I look at our competitors—and we have to recognize this; we are the most export-oriented jurisdiction in the world and virtually all of it goes to the US—our competitors now are the states of Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and Ohio. I watch how Pennsylvania advertises to attract business to go there. It's all about the quality of their universities. This is on TV right now. Frequently Pennsylvania is advertising on Ontario TV, "Locate in Pennsylvania because of the quality of our post-secondary education."

We've decided here in Ontario to compete on the basis of corporate taxes 25% lower than the US. I don't think that's sustainable, recognizing, by the way, that for companies in Ontario, it costs \$2,500 per employee less for health coverage than it does in the US.

This is a big decision. Premier Eves today said, "I am committed to this; 25% lower corporate taxes." I say that's an enormous amount of revenue—

Mr Guzzo: At least.

Mr Phillips: At least 25% lower. In fact, Mr Guzzo will recognize that they're telling the federal government, "Cut corporate taxes more. Get them down to where they're 40% below the US." Then they also say, "Give us money for health care." It's not that easy.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Phillips: Mr Guzzo doesn't like to hear this, but I want to talk a little bit about the point the minister of government services raised on investments in long-term care, hospitals and schools.

Let's recognize this: of the \$1.2 billion in long-term-care beds, not a penny of that has been spent. All of that is money organizations have gone out and borrowed on the understanding that over the next 20 years, the government will pay them \$10 a day per person who is occupying those facilities. So the government is saying that \$1.2 billion has been spent, but no, it's a commitment over 20 years to repay those people that other people have gone and borrowed \$1.2 billion from.

Frankly, it's the same with schools. The school boards are running up increased debt of \$500 to \$600 million every year. It's piling up off our books. If you look in the budget, you'll see that education capital used to be \$500 million a year. You can see it's down to \$4 million, \$15 million, \$10 million. How does that happen? It's because the province has said to the school boards, "You go

borrow all the money, and we will undertake to pay the principal and interest over 20 years."

By the way, it's the same with the hospitals. The two proposals for private sector hospitals are another way of getting somebody else to borrow the money, and the province will pay the principal and interest. But it is, by any other name, the province's debt. It's just simply on somebody else's books. You don't like to throw the term Enron around, because that has all sorts of connotations to it, but this is off-book debt financing that has to be accounted for by the province.

I want to close by saying that the public accounts still aren't out for last year. Normally, they're out in September or early October. I only raise this because I've been assuming the government was ready to table them at any moment. Whenever the public accounts are late, you start to raise questions. I'm looking for what's called the second quarter report, which is normally out shortly after the quarter ends at the end of September. It's not out yet.

The government acknowledged that we still have two sets of books in this province. They said they're going to get rid of them next year. I would remind the people of Ontario that we've got two sets of books. When Mr Eves became the Minister of Finance in the fall of 1995, I remember him very clearly saying, "We are going to get rid of the two sets of books," but the government has acknowledged that almost eight years later, we still have these two sets of books.

I assume that this week we will see the public accounts, but one can only start to have one's suspicions raised when they are this late.

The government tells the public that they are managing the finances well. The year ended March 31, seven months ago, and we still don't have our audited financial statements yet. In my opinion, that's no way to run a major organization responsibly, on a financial basis.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I'm happy to have this opportunity to speak today. It's almost 4 o'clock on October 22. It's a good political program. A whole lot of people are watching this program every day, wanting to listen to so many of us—I don't know about so many of us, but wanting to watch the proceedings of this place because a whole lot goes on.

1550

I want to start with the comments the minister made. He made reference to post-secondary. Just to begin with that, there is so much to say and so little time. And of course I have to share my time with my friend from Hamilton West, and I'm happy to do this. But the minister who read his speech just a couple of minutes ago was talking about how, at the post-secondary level, every qualified student will have a place in a university or college. He seemed so sure of himself, just like the minister of post-secondary education. They say it with certainty: "Everyone who is qualified will go. You just have to believe us."

What does this mean, Speaker, for your benefit? I know you're keenly interested in these issues. What it means is that because universities do not have room for

every qualified student, they're going to have to make it work somehow. What do you think some institutions are going to do? They're going to have to increase that which qualifies you to get into university by who knows what percentage. As an example, if you needed 75% or 80% to get into York, all you've got to do is increase that threshold and make it just a little harder for some of those students who normally would get in and make them not able to get in. That's one little trick that universities are going to use.

What's the other one? Well, those students who don't get into university or college are going to have to find a job. Many will end up having to work whether they like it or not. Neither the minister of post-secondary education nor the other Minister of Education, with their combined staff of 22 or 25, is going to have a little survey that they send out saying, "How many of you didn't get in this year? Could you please let us know, because we're keeping track. We want to let the people of Ontario know how many didn't get in." They're not going to have a survey saying, "How many of you were not able to make it?" But more students, men and women, are going to be working this coming year than ever before because there will not be a place for them in our post-secondary educational systems. Many of them will have to go out of this province to be able to find a university or college. But do you think your Ministers of Education—elementary, secondary and post-secondary—with a combined staff of 25 or 30 people, are going to do a little form that says, "How many of you have had to go out of the province to find a place?" They're not going to do that. Many students are going to have to go out of the country to find a university or college because they couldn't get into our institutions in this province. But do you think, with a combined staff of 30 or so between elementary, secondary and post-secondary ministers, that they could do a little survey saying, "How many of you left the country? We want to know?" They're not going to do that.

At the end of the year, both my friend Ms Witmer, the Minister of Education, and Madame Cunningham from the post-secondary educational level are going to say, "Every qualified person did get in. We've got no problem here." But there is a big problem, because the guy they hired, Professor King, told them a while ago that approximately 7,000 students will not find a place in a post-secondary educational system. This is Mr King. From time to time they do their own little studies.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): We asked him to do it.

Mr Marchese: I know you asked him to do it, and you kept it away from my little hands.

Hon Mrs Witmer: I just got it myself.

Mr Marchese: Oh, come on, Elizabeth. She says she just got it. Please, Speaker, she said she just got it. Do you believe that? I don't believe that. We hear that Elizabeth Witmer, the Minister of Education, got this document from Mr King in August. Do you think between their combined staff, post-secondary and elementary, all

30 of them, they couldn't find the time to read that report? Do you believe for a moment that they haven't received this report yet or just got it, when it was written a long time ago and was in their hands in August?

King says 7,000 people won't make it. The People for Education did a study and say 20,000 students are not going to make it. Whom do you believe? It doesn't matter. Between King's study of 7,000 not making it and the study done by the People For Education saying 20,000, what we know is certain, that many students will not have a place in our post-secondary educational systems. But the ministers continue to deny they've got a problem.

The minister of post-secondary education continues to say, "We have factored those numbers in. They will have a place." Mr King says no. Whom do you believe, Speaker? Of course I believe Mr King. Of course I believe the People For Education, who have done this study too. I don't believe the minister. It's the minister's job to make it appear to the public that we don't have a problem in Ontario, and everyone knows we do. But they have to continue to dissemble in a manner that it will appear they do not have a problem, but they do. Speaker, you understand that's one little problem I'm talking about. There are so many other problems in this field alone. In this area alone one could talk for hours.

Tuition fees have more than doubled since you people came into government. My daughter Stephanie, on the Mississauga campus, will be paying 4,500 bucks for a general program, excluding every other cost associated with post-secondary education—almost \$5,000. And some of the Tories say, "Yeah, but in the States it's even more." That's a great comparison. They usually compare us to the Americans when they want to talk about how low our tuition fees are—5,000 bucks. If you are in a deregulated program, Monsieur Guzzo, a former judge, here in Toronto, soon students in law will be paying almost 20,000 bucks a year. U of T is so proud, so proud to say, "Soon students will pay \$20,000 to get into our institution to become a lawyer and eventually, those who so aspire, to become judges."

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: That's a different issue.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Ottawa West-Nepean, come to order.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Ottawa West-Nepean, come to order.

Mr Marchese: No doubt, Monsieur Guzzo. But the big problem, the big barrier, before you can even pay those fees, assuming you like them or don't, is to have to pay close to 20,000 bucks, soon, to get into law. The government said the university is proud because they'll have an institution that will be able to compete with all those famous universities in the US where they pay oh so extravagant fees. This government is not unhappy that U of T is deregulating ad infinitum to wherever it wants. They've got no problem with that.

But I've got to tell you, if you come from a modest-income home, whether that be someone working in a

factory, someone working in a plant, someone working in construction, maybe cleaners, in the retail sector, in the service sector—you can relate to that, Speaker—some small farmer from some small town, which there are fewer and fewer of these days, because they're all big farm operations now—that's how they survive, I guess—all these people who come from modest-income homes, should they be lucky to want to go to U of T and become a lawyer, would need, in a couple of years, \$20,000 a year for tuition to get into law. This would exclude Monsieur Guzzo. If you have to come from somewhere beyond the borders of Toronto to come to U of T and you've got to reside here, it's \$15,000 to \$20,000; let's just say at the moment it's \$12,000, soon to be \$20,000. If you need a place to stay you've got to pay for that too. Factor that into it.

Conservative members say that's OK, because when you become a lawyer you will be well off, I'm assuming, unless you are working in legal aid, where it's only 78 bucks or so that you're paid. But it's OK; you should be able to make enough money to pay back your debt.

1600

I've got to tell you, if you want to become a lawyer or a doctor it is going to cost you a whole lot of money. I come from a modest home. I'm sure many of our members come from modest homes too, but if you are lucky that you come from a home where there is a whole lot of money, paying \$10,000, \$12,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 a year is not a big deal. If you are rich it is not a big deal at all, but if you come from a modest home, which includes a whole lot of families in this province, many of whom don't earn more than \$50,000 a year—in some cases, in most cases, combined income—they wouldn't be able to help a daughter or a son who wants to go to university or college in these deregulated fields like law or medicine or dentistry, because they wouldn't be able to afford it.

The Conservative members say, "That's OK," because that's what it's about: it's about an ideology. Speaker, you understand. It's about what you believe and what you value, and you guys—you are included too, Speaker—hold the view of the world as being a Darwinian one.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: I know it's a big word. But it's a Darwinian society that you all aspire to, a dog-eat-dog kind of society where you make it if you are tough, where you make it if you are rich, and if you don't, tough bananas for you. That's the ideology you Conservatives have. Whether you understand it or not is a different matter, but that is the ideology you people aspire to and for. Some of you know it and some of you happily shaking your heads don't even understand that. That's the ideology you people support, unbeknownst to you, I suspect. I suspect that most of you don't even realize that's what is happening and what you are leading to because you believe you are doing the right thing, many of you.

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food): All of us.

Mr Marchese: All of you believe in that. The Minister of Agriculture says, "We all believe in it." You all believe in a Darwinian society where it is dog-eat-dog and you take care of yourself in this kind of society that you value. If you don't make it, "Tough luck. Not my problem." It's a sad world we are living in, but that's the kind of world we are confronting these days.

I was thinking of all the beautiful things, the good things we do. Do your remember, David, the Ontario savings office? These people want to sell it. It's called POSO; that's the acronym. It's a little example of something this province does well that we control. POSO was founded in 1922 to provide capital to fund our public infrastructure, including our highways. That's what it was founded for in the early period.

Now the government is talking about funding highway-building through the private sector. How ludicrous, when we have \$2.8 billion on deposit with the Province of Ontario Savings Office that we could use, profit we could use. The Minister of Agriculture doesn't agree with me.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: She says it's an understatement that she doesn't agree with me. But I put this case to you, people of Ontario, when I speak. I certainly don't speak to the Minister of Agriculture when I am speaking directly to you. I put the case to you. We deposit \$2.8 billion and we make money out of this. I understand that the recent figure is about \$11 million that we make by way of profit out of this.

By the way, we provide a service to many communities that otherwise would never be able to have any other institution in which to put your deposit. POSO serves 70 Ontario communities with 23 branches, more than 100,000 accounts. Why would this Ontario Conservative government wish to divest itself of something that, first of all, makes money and, second, works for so many of our communities where they have no other bank? No other bank wants to get into some of these other areas, because they don't make enough money? They've been trying to sell it for the last year and can't find a banker. I guess they're stuck with having to have a profitable institution that makes money.

It must be hard on this government which wants to privatize everything it can. Just like the 407, which was making money and would have become public in 20 years or so, I think it was, under the NDP government, we would have taken that back after 20 years. This government comes into power—and the Minister of Agriculture who doesn't agree with me—

Hon Mrs Johns: Oh, that would be an understatement.

Mr Marchese: And it would be an understatement to say it, she says—sells the 407 to corporations who milk you Ontarians day in and day out. They squeeze you day in and day out, every day.

You drive on the 407 and you can see that the rates you've got to pay start at one point and they just never end. Prices on the 407 have risen over 100% in a short

period of time. Why? Because they can. That's the beauty of power. They privatized it so the corporations that are connected to that nice, little highway can milk you Ontarians day in and day out. That's OK with the Tories. That's OK with every Conservative member, because that's just the way it is.

They didn't like the idea that the 407 would revert to public hands. They detest the public sector. They want to diminish the public sector. They are reaching out to a little population out there that wants desperately to squeeze everything that the Ontario government does. Anything that is good, they want to squeeze it out of this province so that those few who own so much can have so much more.

It reminds me of what they want to do in health where they're privatizing health more and more. The government is proud to say, "Oh, many of our services are already privatized," as if to suggest in so doing they can continue to privatize more and more. It used to be 25% you would have to pay out of your own pocket; now it's close to 35% under this government. More and more is being privatized. These Conservatives hate the public sector. They love the private sector and, you know, the private sector pays them back in so many ways. Let me tell you how.

I want to give you a list, good listeners.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Hold on. You'll be right back? OK. I don't want you to miss these numbers.

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): What paper?

Mr Marchese: "What paper?" he asks. It's the Toronto Star. They hate the Toronto Star these days. I don't know why they are so hard on the Toronto Star.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): They like the Sun.

Mr Marchese: They do like the Sun.

Mr Guzzo: Remember what they said about you when you were in government.

Mr Marchese: Yes.

Mr Christopherson: It's no different than anybody else.

Mr Marchese: "CPL REIT gave more than \$22,000 to the Tories and received contracts to build 1,667 beds, with a potential of \$1.3 billion in government subsidies over 20 years." Not bad. "Smart investing. The same was true of nursing home giant Extencare"—they contributed \$36,727—"which got contracts worth \$700 million in the long run." God bless.

1610

Dynacare health group, the largest private laboratory company in Ontario, gave Eves 25,000 bucks. RBC Dominion Securities' Tony Fell, the privatization chair of the University Health Network, coughed up \$10,000. God bless. Canadian Medical Laboratories Ltd, which provides lab tests and medical imaging services—private MRI clinics?—gave 10,000 bucks. KMH Cardiology and Diagnostic Centres—this is the private testing lab work—gave 11,000 bucks. Gamma-Dynacare Medical Laboratories covered all its bases by giving \$10,000 to

Clement on top of the money it gave to Eves. God bless. A very handsome \$43,000 came from Olympia and York properties, a major shareholder in retirement residences and real estate investments, and has 185 facilities. Central Park Lodges and Versa-Care kicked in a separate 5,000 bucks. They're divisions of the same trust. A list of pharmaceutical companies that donated to Clement's campaign is headed by GlaxoSmithKline, for 11,000 bucks. The cash total from pharmaceutical and drug store chains was 70,000 bucks. God bless.

And the list goes on. I just don't have the time to list. We're talking about bucks here. We're not talking about ordinary Joes, not the kind of bucks that would normally come from construction workers.

Mr Christopherson: They're paying hydro bills.

Mr Marchese: Yes, we're paying higher hydro bills than ever before. They're too worried about the next hydro bill that's going to come and whack them again and again. We're not talking about construction workers out there who are giving this kind of money to the Tories. We're not talking about cleaners in my riding who are making these kinds of contributions to the Tories. We're not talking about people who work in factories who are able to make these kinds of contributions to the Tories. No, we're not. We're talking about companies, Speaker, to your buddies, big institutions with a whole lot of money, and they want to give you as much as they possibly can. Do you know something? They don't give for nothing. When they give, they know something comes back in return. It's, "Scratch my back and I'll scratch your back," kind of politics.

Mr Christopherson: More than a thank you note?

Mr Marchese: More than a thank you note.

Hon Mrs Johns: Unbelievable, you guys. Unbelievable.

Mr Marchese: And when they make that kind of contribution, they come calling—to the Minister of Agriculture, who finds this an unbelievable kind of discussion—and the ministers are there, genuflecting, saying, "How much do you want? It's a small price to pay." You understand—

Mr Christopherson: The minister of shovelling it.

Mr Marchese: Yes, the shovels are long, and they keep on coming. "How much do you want? What do you want us to sell today? What do you want us to give you today?"

Mr Christopherson: "We'll change the law, raise the limits, and you can give us more," which they did.

Mr Marchese: You're going to have to speak to that, David.

This is a party that serves the wealthy so very well, all the while saying, "Oh no, we like the little guy too. We do it for the little guy because we love the little guy. Yes, the big guys come and they have the money, but oh, good God, we're not influenced by the big guys who give us loads of money. We care about the little person," akin to my friend John Snobelen, who cares about the little person he serves. I've got to tell you, John, you've got to retire. You've got to do the right thing. You have to tell

the Premier that you've got to have a by-election, that you're tired of this place. It's too tiring, I know. And listen, by the way, don't tell people about your ability to serve people through a fax. I don't think it works. It's not very smart.

Mr Christopherson: I hear he wants a horse stable out back.

Mr Marchese: I suppose Ernie Eves could put up a little stable in the yards. We could do that. I just want to advise John it's not smart. Have a by-election, John. Get out. Tell Ernie that's what you've got to do because it's not smart, it's not wise, it's not saving anybody any money.

By the way, that 10 million bucks you guys gave to those sports institutions: a dumb idea. It was pretty dumb. A lot of people believe it's dumb too. By the way, Madame Ecker, the minister, didn't want to share her knowledge of the problem. Mr Tsubouchi didn't want to share his knowledge of the problem. It was just a little roundabout kind of walk: "What do you think about giving sports companies a couple of bucks because they're so desperate? They really are so desperate."

Ecker probably said, "OK, all right. Did we talk to Mike?" "Yes, Mike told us we should do it." "Well, OK, if he said we should give them \$10 million, let's give them \$10 million."

Isn't it amazing how cabinet works? I don't know, it's just not the way I would do things.

But this government is so smart. They're smart. They wouldn't waste a penny of your money because, as Ernie Eves said today, "This is not your money, it's taxpayers' money." Thank God Ernie got on top of that agenda and said, "Enough of that." And Ecker was quick to fix it, God bless her little soul.

I don't know, there's so much to say. I do want to say, though, that I am happy that this government has deferred or delayed the tax cuts in the last budget: the personal income tax cut, the general corporate and manufacturing processing rate cut, the private school tax credit, the residential and business education tax cut. I've got to say to this government, thank God they deferred that; otherwise we would have been completely broke.

It's an interesting, dumb thing that is going on because the government says, "Tax cuts work." On the other hand, they say we've got to defer them, which they did. You did that in the last budget. It obviously exposes the contradictions, but I say thank God you did that because otherwise this province would have been truly broke.

I've got to obviously end this discussion because I know that the member for Hamilton West wants to speak to this, and there's so much to add. I'm so happy to have this opportunity to raise a couple of issues with the public, and I thank you, Speaker, for that opportunity.

Mr Maves: Just imagine what a pleasure it is for me to follow my good friend Marchese from Trinity-Spadina. They were very interesting comments he had today, especially when he quotes from his favourite paper, the Toronto Star, and takes an old clipping and talks about people's donations. Very interesting.

Interjection.

Mr Maves: It's always been the Toronto Star, I say to the member from Hamilton. It's always been the same opinion of that paper.

It's very interesting, though, that the member opposite complains and says this government professes to be for the little people. He was for the little people and he considered himself a little person, I think, one time when he gave himself a 45% pay increase when he was a trustee at a school board.

Mr Guzzo: Not him. He didn't vote for that. No, no.

Mr Maves: Sure he did.

Mr Guzzo: He voted for that?

Mr Maves: I say to the members, he voted for that when he was one of the little people, when he was a school board trustee. So he does in a sense take care of the little people.

But this government also does that and has done so probably better than any government in the province's history. One of the reasons why I can say that with a good deal of surety is that today I happened to mention in a statement to the Legislature that since 1995 Ontario has increased the number of net new jobs by 987,000 new positions. Some 987,000 net new jobs have been created in the province of Ontario since we were elected and started to implement our economic policies, which include a whole variety of tax cuts: provincial income tax cuts for all the citizens of Ontario; employer health tax reductions, which have a big impact on small businesses and create about 85% of the employment across Ontario.

I remember when I got elected in 1995, the Niagara region did a study asking what were the three biggest concerns business had, what were the three things that stifled them the most in creating jobs in this economy. The first was high taxes. High taxes robbed them of the revenue they made from their businesses and stopped them from reinvesting in their businesses to create jobs.

Mr Guzzo: Phillips didn't mention jobs today.

Mr Maves: He doesn't mention jobs any more.

Mr Guzzo: That was his number one issue.

Mr Maves: Sure, you're right, I say to the member for Ottawa West. You're right. Mr Phillips used to stand up probably six weeks after we took office and complained that we haven't created 750,000 jobs yet. He doesn't do that any more, because we surpassed that mark and we've been very effective in creating jobs.

1620

In fact, what's really amazing right now, I say to the members opposite, is the way the Ontario economy—the Canadian economy is going quite well also—is once again the leading engine of the Canadian economy. We created thousands and thousands of jobs this past year, despite the worldwide slowdown. The members opposite always like to say, "Oh, well, you can't take credit for economic growth; it's the American economy that's providing that economic growth." Maybe they haven't noticed, but the American economy hasn't been doing that well the last couple of years.

But Ontario chugs along. There's a great deal of investment in Ontario. A great deal of business people have stopped me and said, "You know what?" I had a

conversation with one gentleman who owns a business of about 60 employees. He said, "I used to dread going to my mailbox between 1990 and 1995 because invariably I'd get something from the government of Ontario, and it would be another piece of red tape that I had to deal with. It would be another tax that they were informing me of, that would rob me of the opportunity to employ another person here in Ontario."

You hear that from business after business after business. So I return to my good friend Mr Marchese opposite, who talks about people and businesses that contributed to campaigns. Well, you know, some people are awfully busy, and they choose different ways to be involved in the political process. Some people choose to take a placard and walk up and down in front of an office or a parliamentary building and protest; some people choose to work in campaigns; some people choose to be members of associations. Other people choose to donate money to different campaigns. People donate money to the NDP, people donate money to the Liberal Party, people donate to the Conservative Party, people donate money to the Green Party.

Now, why would businesses be interested in donating to members of the Conservative Party? Well, off the top, I just explained that this economy has created nearly one million jobs, net new jobs, since 1995. No longer do they go to their mailboxes with dread. No longer do they worry, "What new piece of red tape am I going to find out about? What new tax am I going to find out about?" No, they're not worried any more. When we surveyed businesses in the region of Niagara, that was a big problem; workers' compensation was one of the top three. No longer do they dread that system. We reformed that system. Rates are down across the province on average about 25%. Satisfaction surveys with injured workers show a high level of satisfaction now with the workers' compensation system, the WSIB.

So businesses will obviously say, "Look, these guys came in. First of all, they told us what they were going to do in 1995 in the Common Sense Revolution, told everybody right up front the different things that they were going to do to turn this province around, and then they did them." It was the first time in history in Canada that the government actually ran on a campaign platform and then did what it said it would do. Even the critics of Mike Harris and his Conservative Party, in 1999 and 2000 and 2001, said, "They did what they said they would do."

So why do people support the government? Well, their businesses are doing better. The businesses in Ontario are doing better than the businesses almost anywhere else in the world. Our economy is one of the few shining lights in the developed world right now. That is no accident.

They've gone to great lengths for the past five or six years. It's a constant refrain—that we haven't heard in a while—from Mr Hampton, "Oh, you've done nothing; it's all the Americans." We don't hear it any more, since the American economy has been in a real big slowdown for two years and ours is still booming. So it doesn't hold true anymore.

That's why, Mr Marchese, you should understand, these guys were going out of business. People were moving their businesses to Buffalo. They were getting out of Ontario in the early 1990s. They didn't want to be here. They couldn't create jobs here.

I'll give you another example. There's a truck-parts manufacturing company in my riding of Niagara Falls, organized by the CAW, good union jobs, as my friends in the NDP would say, good wages. In 1992 and 1993, the gentleman actually wanted to expand his business, but no way would he expand it in Ontario. That's a tragedy. Those were good, high-paying manufacturing jobs that would have accrued to my community. Over that time period, he ended up starting two plants in Buffalo. Those are two plants that could have been in my riding.

Now when that gentleman decides he doesn't have time to carry a placard in front of somebody's office, but he wants to indicate his support for a party and for the policies the party implements, because they've been good for his business and good for his employees, he writes a cheque. A lot of people write cheques to the Liberal Party—the same people—but maybe not as much because maybe they don't believe in what the Liberals stand for, but they believe in what we stand for.

The member opposite implies something, of course, that when someone gives you a donation, wink, wink, nudge, nudge, they're buying something. Then he has a low threshold, I'll tell you that. If he really believes people can write a cheque and get some particular policy they want, then he has a low threshold, because that isn't the way it works.

I've known this group of people in the government for seven and a half, almost eight years now, and I know that about each and every one of them. Maybe he's different. But I know the people on this side of the aisle. We have principles. We have policies that are developed on those principles. We implement those policies. The Canadian and Ontario economies have boomed over the years, and I'm proud of that.

Today we are here to talk about a motion for interim supply. The motion for interim supply actually covers a six-month period, from November 1, 2002, to April 30, 2003. We obviously have motions of interim supply all the time. What they basically do is allow the government to spend the money it needs to flow to hospitals, doctors, school boards, colleges, universities and so on. Without this motion for supply, we can't pay people who are in the employ of the government of Ontario. We can't transfer money to people. That's why we need this motion and why we come here and debate it.

I want to give some examples of some of the funding that will flow because of this. We've announced that we're going to start spending \$3 billion over the next 10 years on public transit. This year's money for that will flow out of this motion for interim supply. By the way, we're waiting to see if the federal government will match us on that. They always talked a good game about public transit and how important it was. Now we've said, "OK, here's provincial government money, \$3 billion, \$300

million a year. Where are the feds?" We don't know yet. We'll see if it comes.

Some other things: cultural facilities. We all have museums in our ridings. The member for Kingston and the Islands sits back and thinks fondly about the museums in his riding. Without this motion for supply, we can't flow them their money, the grants they have to operate their museums.

We've got SuperBuild funds. I know a lot of members of the Legislature have received SuperBuild grants in their ridings for a variety of different things. We've received a grant for \$3 million out of the tourism and recreation fund for a new community centre in Niagara Falls, which I'm extremely pleased about. It's a partnership with the city, the YMCA and some seniors' organizations. The federal government has decided they'll match that grant, and I'm delighted to see that in the city. We'll raise some money and the YMCA and the city will also put in a contribution. We look forward to that in my community of Niagara Falls.

We've also flowed a lot of money and made announcements in the past in health care in my region of Niagara. We've flowed it in the past, but we need to move forward and construct and use operational dollars that a motion of supply provides for a new emergency ward in Niagara Falls. We've flowed \$7.7 million for that emergency ward, and we're looking forward to breaking ground and getting that completed.

A new regional cancer treatment centre: that's huge for the people in Niagara. In Niagara, most people have to go to Hamilton for cancer treatment. We are building a new cancer centre in St Catharines to serve the Niagara region. We've already started on that, so we're delighted with that.

For the first time in over a decade, probably in about 18 years now, we started to build long-term-care facilities around the province of Ontario. In my riding, Casa Bella, it's going to be called, is being built in Chippewa, a 160-bed facility. I drive by it quite often. It's a very nice-looking facility that's going to be completed soon. We'll have 160 new residents, and a lot of new employees in Niagara will be working there.

1630

We have also rebuilt Dorchester Manor as part of this government's program to rebuild 16,000 old long-term-care beds. It's a beautiful facility on Kalar Road and McLeod Road in Niagara Falls that's being built along with the region of Niagara. I think we're going to be moving residents into that in about three weeks—a beautiful, sprawling facility—again, an investment made by this government.

There are other important investments that this motion of supply helps us with. For instance, in the Ministry of Transportation, Highway 420 in Niagara Falls is being totally redeveloped now, a \$22-million project. I'm absolutely delighted that it's moving forward. So this will free the money for that.

I don't want to just talk about the NDP because quite frankly, the NDP in the Legislature—we always know

where they stand on things. With all of the positive economic development that has happened, with all of the tax cuts that we've implemented, our revenues are actually up. Most people in Ontario don't understand and realize that, and sometimes I think the members opposite don't. As we've cut taxes, every time we've cut taxes, our revenues have increased. Why? Because there's been economic development that it spurred, more people hired, more people paying taxes. They're paying less taxes than they were, but there's more people working and paying those taxes. We've got more revenue coming in. As a result of that we've increased health care spending, for example, from \$17.5 billion to over \$25 billion.

The members opposite in the NDP will always say, in education and in health and in every other facet of government, that we should spend more money—even though we are spending more money throughout government, quite frankly. They want to spend more and more money. However, I have to give the NDP credit. The NDP is clear about saying where they're going to get more money. They want to increase taxes. They want to increase income taxes, and then they want to take that money and invest it in education and health and a variety of other things—all well and good. The people of Ontario know their philosophy. They've been through their recipe before, and if they want to choose it again, at least they know what they're getting. Even though the NDP and the Conservatives are on different sides of the political spectrum, the one thing that we can agree on is that we don't have a clue where the Liberal Party of Ontario is on a whole bunch of issues.

We know they want to spend, spend, spend, but a lot of the times we don't know where they're going to get the money from. One of the more interesting things that they've started to do lately—and my friend Mr Marchese from Trinity-Spadina has been very good at criticizing them for this—they talk about cancelling this corporate tax cut that this government has proposed to phase in over a five-year period. When we introduced it a couple of years ago, based on the economic and profit growth at the time for companies, it would have meant about \$2 billion, once it was totally phased in, that those corporations would have kept, reinvested and created more jobs. The Liberals have been quite clear that they are going to cancel that, but they wrongly believe that the day they cancel it they're all of a sudden going to get \$2 billion to fall from the sky and into their pockets that they can spend. Spend it, they have. They have spent this money so many times, we are losing track.

Here's one. They've got a \$1.6-billion education program, a bunch of add-ons to the current system of education in Ontario. They've been saying for about two years now that we've taken \$2.2 billion out of base funding for education. So one would assume that if they really believe that is the case—and it isn't, but if they really believe that's the case, first and foremost they've got to put \$2.2 billion into just the base funding to get it up to where they think it should be. Then on top of that they've got to add this \$1.6 billion in new spending

programs. So already, even if they did get rid of the corporate tax cut and realized \$2 billion, they've already spent it twice.

They're in here every day, every single one of them, telling us how we should spend all kinds of money, more money on home care and on hospitals and in every different area. As I say, my friend Marchese has done a wonderful job. He gets up every now and then and starts to list all the promises, all the different places where these guys go and tell the public they're going to spend this money. They have spent it 10 times over already.

We kind of look forward—when we eventually get into June 2004, when we go to the polls, it'll be fun to keep track of all of these promises these ladies and gentlemen in the Liberal Party make, add them all up and see how many times they're actually going to spend this corporate tax cut. It's already kind of funny, but it's also kind of sad, because Mr Kennedy, the education critic from Parkdale-High Park, will go into high schools and elementary schools around the province and promise all kinds of things. Then they'll tell their friends, Earl Manners and some other union leaders, all kinds of promises about money that they're going to give to them. Then their health critic will meet with some nurses' unions and some doctors and hospitals and promise billions of dollars to them.

Every time they go out, each one of their critics, they go to the municipalities and they promise the municipalities, "Oh, you'll be swimming in money; we're going to take care of you. We're going to take 2% of the gas tax and we're going to commit it to something." That has already been spent, and they don't talk about that. Each one of their critics goes around the province promising over and over to spend this corporate tax cut. So it will be interesting when we go to the polls in 2004, once we've totalled up all of these promises, to see how many times they're going to spend this money.

I'm getting to the motion here. I have to leave some time. I have a colleague who is going to speak and wants some time. I could go on and on. I could talk about the \$8 million for the new high school in Niagara Falls, St Michael's high school that's being built on that same McLeod Road, right near the new Dorchester Manor. I could talk about the \$40 million we've used to expand Niagara College to help tourism in Niagara Falls. We have a new tourism/culinary institute I'm very proud of. A \$20-million Brock University expansion is another thing that I'm very proud of that's part of the 79,000 new student spaces that we've created over the years. But I need to sit down and I need to save some time for my colleague. Mrs Munro from York North I believe is going to speak later, so I'm leaving her 10 or 11 minutes.

I thank you, Speaker, for letting me join in this debate on this motion.

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): I wonder what the parents of the special-needs kids in my community think when they hear the member opposite from Niagara Falls say that things have never been so great, that the economy's booming, because their children are at home right now. Their children are at

home right now because there isn't enough money to pay decent wages to the educational assistants who take care of them.

I'm wondering what Mr and Mrs McQuhae think. They live on the west Mountain. Mr Christopherson and I share the Mountain. They're the parents of a six-year-old child with Smith-Magenis syndrome. The child attends Beverly Central School in the developmentally delayed class there. They have to keep her home, they write, since Thursday, and have been closely following the articles on the strike. "My daughter is developmentally delayed, uses sign language"—and I do have permission, Mr Speaker, to use this name and letter—"and will sometimes go into a sudden tantrum where she'll bang her head on the floor, wall or sometimes even another child. An EA is an absolute necessity with Sydney. So, although I am in favour of these professionals getting adequate pay and benefits, I am having a difficult time making Sydney understand why she cannot go to school and the days are long and difficult for her and myself.

"I don't understand how or why Dr Jim Murray"—the supervisor appointed by this government—"is getting paid \$1,000 a day during ratification of the strike. I don't understand how the government can just expect parents to drop their jobs to stay at home with a child that should be in school because it is both too hard and too expensive to get adequate daycare for special children such as these and I don't understand why we continue to pay taxes to have our child in school when in fact our child is not in school. We would love to see these concerns addressed."

This letter was written to the member from Hamilton West and cc'd to some of the other members.

1640

I'm wondering what Mark feels today. He sent me a note, but I did not have enough time to get permission to use his name, although I'm pretty sure he would let me. But I'll be safe and not use his son's name or his last name. This child has cerebral palsy and also needs an educational assistant. Mark feels very strongly that his child is being discriminated against because he's not at school with the other students, very strongly.

I remember when I got elected the very first issue I dealt with in my community was the fact that 23 special-needs children were at home because the board of education for the city of Hamilton did not have enough money for educational assistants. They finally found some money, and the kids were back in school in a month. This was in September 1999. Here we are again.

I know many of these kids personally from my work at the board. I have tested some of them myself; some of them, my department tested. I know many of the parents and I know many of the educational assistants.

I just want to give you a picture of what it's like to be an educational assistant. It's not just a helper; it's not just a babysitter. That's so wrong if that's the perception people hold, because they say, "Oh, they make \$22,000 or \$24,000 a year. That's enough for what they do." These people put their lives on the line quite often—their lives.

I remember one case—and she's a very vocal member of the local in Hamilton—was actually stabbed by a student. This was a severely behaviourally disordered autistic student who, by the way, is doing just fine now, after years of work in the system. This was a few years back. Part of my job was to do risk assessments. Every once in a while I would go in, and every once in a while I would recommend to the board, "This student is far too dangerous for this class" or for the board in general and, "This teacher should not be alone," and so forth. For this one case, I did recommend to the educational assistant that she may perhaps want to change her assignment. Because of the student being autistic, because they tend to repeat actions, I was really afraid for her safety. She loved this kid. She said, "No, I'm going to go back. I'll be more careful. You teach me strategies to be more careful, but I want to go back." She's there on the picket lines today, fighting for better wages for herself and her colleagues, and we're there with her; the opposition in Hamilton-Wentworth are there with them.

I'm just wondering how they feel as well when they hear about this booming economy and they're living on \$22,000 a year—very difficult work. As well, some of the educational assistants work with the younger kids. Early childhood education is very important. Some of them are out now as well—what few remain in those classes. Unless there's a special-needs child in those classes, there are very few left in early childhood programs now. That used to be a given 10 years ago. If you had a kindergarten or a JK class, you had an educational assistant in that class to assist the teacher. In the daycare act, the same-age children had many more adults with them than in the school system. That was something I could never really understand: why it has to be different in the school system when they are children of the same age and have fewer adults taking care of them and teaching them.

I also wonder how high school students are feeling today when they hear the member for Niagara Falls saying that everything is great and we have a booming economy. Mr Marchese spoke about the double cohort review. It was last Thursday when we asked the question in the House with the document, Dr King's research, that showed that perhaps 6,000 to 7,000 students will be without a space and that 75% of the grade 12s are graduating—not 60% of the grade 12s are graduating, as the government funded. The government knew this was a low estimate and yet that's what they chose. The estimates were anywhere between 60% and 90%. I believe the responsible thing would have been to pick the average, which was 75%, and fund on that, which turns out to be the number.

What's really interesting here is that years ago, when Premier Eves was finance minister, his policy adviser correctly predicted the double cohort numbers. He correctly predicted that 75% would graduate at the same time as our last OAC class graduated. This gentleman is also working in the Premier's office today, obviously a bright guy who obviously used the right equations; he

knew exactly. Yet you did not prepare for the double cohort. Yes, we can argue about money, but we can definitely say for sure—and this is a fact—that this was a very poorly planned endeavour, this preparation, or lack of preparation, for the double cohort.

I talked last week, Mr Speaker, about a wonderful young woman from your riding of Perth-Middlesex, Anne Conlin, a medical student. She comes from a town that has no doctors at all. I know you know about these needs. She worked two full-time jobs to pay for her tuition at McMaster as an undergraduate and she was quite prepared to do the same for medical school. In fact, I can't even begin to believe that this young woman worked two full-time jobs and still got the competitive marks to get into medical school. It is so difficult to get into medical school. You have to be top-notch. For her to do that means she's a remarkable young woman. She was quite willing to continue to do that. She did not qualify for OSAP but she did not come from a wealthy family either.

Then former Premier Harris came along and deregulated the program. Her tuition went up from \$5,000 to \$15,000. She then had to scramble to get a bank loan. What she said to me, which was equally disturbing, was, "I had a couple of other friends from my town who also wanted to go to medical school, but when they saw what I was going through, they said, 'Forget it, we're going into another venue. It's not worth it. We would have loved to come back to our town. We would have loved to be doctors in our hometown, but we can't afford it.'" That was the shame. She's making it. Come hell or high water, she's making it, but others have been totally distressed over her experience and are not going to go. It'll be your riding, Mr Speaker, that will suffer for it, because these are wonderful, brilliant young people and we need to encourage them.

The students wanted me to dispose of a myth that medical students who agree to go and work in rural or underserved areas get all their tuition paid. That's not true. They get a fraction of it paid; \$27,000 ends up going to them after they graduate. The average loan now of a medical student can be anywhere from \$75,000 to \$100,000. So that \$27,000, although a help to some families, is not enough incentive for anyone to give up three years of their life going to an area and not having the choice of serving where they want to serve. It's just not enough. They're really insulted at the fact that the public has been told that it's free tuition. It's not free tuition; it's a fraction of the cost.

Some of the students out there are telling me that they're not only afraid of not getting into university because of the double cohort situation but are afraid of not getting into the program of their choice. So maybe there is a spot for someone from southern Ontario in the north or someone from northern Ontario in the south, but it may not be in the program of their choice. They are concerned about that.

Lastly, they're concerned about the quality of education. They're concerned that even if they do get a spot, a

spot in a program that's not of their choice, are they going to be taught by professors or students? Are they going to be taught in classrooms where they have to sit on the floor or in portables, as we have now in McMaster in Hamilton, or are we going to have decent lecture halls?

So those are the concerns. We brought this up last Thursday. The response was, as Mr Marchese so eloquently quoted the minister, "We will fund every interested and motivated"—what is it?

Mr Marchese: Qualified.

Mrs Bontrogianni: "Every qualified and motivated student," the mantra. That's great, but you should have given the money two years ago.

Last week the Minister of the Environment was heckling me when I said it takes \$6,000 on average to interview a professor. But that's the truth. We don't have an abundance of PhDs in this country or anywhere. They're a minority. So we fly them in. And if they're going to relocate to a university town, they usually want their significant other to come along to see if they like the community, what the housing prices are like and if they like the schools. It's a big deal for them to move to another community, and most do that. Most of the professors have to come from somewhere else, especially in some of the other universities outside of the greater Toronto area. McMaster did a study on this. It costs approximately \$6,000 just to interview a professor, and that's with no guarantee the professor will be hired. Again, it's poor planning. If you give the money now, that's great. The universities will have to feverishly begin the hiring process for the extra professors. But it's poor planning to have this done at this point in time. The member from Niagara Falls says the economy is booming, but I really wonder what my constituents feel when their children are not in school because of the educational assistants' strike, when the student groups I talk to and the families I talk to can't afford to send their kids to school, or if they can, are worried if their kids will have a space or not.

1650

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): It is my pleasure to be here to discuss interim supply. This motion gives the government the spending authority it needs to run the province and to operate the many programs Ontarians value. Without the authority provided by this motion, payments to all our funding partners and for government programs cannot be made. The proposed motion for interim supply would cover the six-month period from November 1, 2002, to April 30, 2003.

Sometimes we tend to forget how far-reaching the impact of provincial government really is. With this motion we will be able to sustain our municipal partners and continue to support strong cities, towns and rural communities. These communities are vital to achieving economic prosperity and to ensuring the people of Ontario have the quality of life they deserve. Our economic prosperity and the continued success of our municipalities depends on the measures we take to make it happen.

In the 2002 budget, the Minister of Finance announced a provincial commitment of \$520 million for municipal infrastructure, including investments in clean, safe drinking water, public transit, and community recreational and cultural facilities. Municipalities are counting on the transfer of these funds, as promised. This motion will ensure that.

This government has taken a number of measures to support our communities. Undertaking property tax reform in 1998 has resulted in a fairer and healthier revenue source for municipalities. The current value assessment system now in place provides up-to-date assessments that are a fairer and more reliable assessment base for municipal and education property taxes.

In undertaking reform, the province also committed to providing more than \$1 billion in property tax relief by 2005, with \$500 million going to businesses and \$500 million to residential property owners. To date we have implemented \$650 million of that commitment. In 1998 we also undertook the local services realignment, which changed the way the province and Ontario's municipalities manage and fund key services. Again, we wanted to ensure that the exchange was fair to all municipalities. To this end the province provided municipalities with funding through the community reinvestment fund.

Why is this important today? The interim supply motion will ensure this funding flows to municipalities as required so that they are able to maintain their services without interruption.

This motion will also support the province's Smart Growth initiative to promote and manage growth in ways that sustain a strong economy, build strong communities, and promote a clean and healthy environment. These goals are funded by SuperBuild, the agency created to oversee capital investments throughout Ontario and to ensure we have first-class infrastructure for the 21st century.

The 2002 Ontario budget committed \$20 billion for SuperBuild projects over five years, the largest investment of this kind in Ontario's history. Investments will be made in highways, transit, universities and colleges, hospitals and community facilities. In my riding of York North it is very evident that those investments are being made in highways and transit and in our community hospitals.

Funding will also help municipalities: invest to bring them into compliance with the new Ontario drinking water protection regulation and to make other improvements to their water and waste water systems; improve and modernize cultural, recreational and tourism facilities; and enhance and expand public transit and renewing municipal bus fleets.

The motion for interim supply will also authorize SuperBuild to spend the Millennium Partnerships funding for strategic investments in large urban centres outside the GTA. London, Hamilton, Niagara region, Ottawa, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Waterloo region and Windsor will benefit. These municipalities will be able to use their funds toward various projects, including down-

town revitalization, water and sewer upgrades, environmental remediation and road improvements.

The Ontario budget also announced strategic infrastructure investments in the GTA through SuperBuild to help the area meet its economic and population growth needs. These investments will enable the GTA region to remain among the world's first-class urban centres.

The province has made GTA capital investments in health care, education, transportation, environment, justice and technological innovation. Investments were committed to revitalize the Toronto waterfront, new hospital construction and renovation in the GTA, as well as major projects at colleges and universities to address post-secondary growth needs.

The government believes municipalities must be able to move forward with important infrastructure projects, such as new water treatment facilities, sewers and roads. Interim supply allows them to do just that. In addition, municipalities often need to borrow funds to support their investments in infrastructure. The province wants to ensure that their borrowing costs are as low as possible.

We also understand that municipalities are facing pressing fiscal challenges and they need to be able to address these challenges with new financing tools. That's why the government is proposing the opportunity bonds program. Once legislation is passed, this program will help municipalities raise new funds for capital investments that will help to promote new growth and new jobs. Opportunity bonds are essentially tax-free bonds that provide a low-cost financing tool to help pay for long-term capital projects. To support this program, the province is creating the Ontario Municipal Economic Infrastructure Financing Authority that will manage a pool of capital that municipalities can access. This program is being launched with a \$1-billion capital injection to fund projects at interest rates 50% below what municipalities are currently paying. An additional \$120 million, to be fully dedicated to water and waste water projects, will also be provided through the Ontario Clean Water Agency. Our government is currently consulting with municipalities and other key stakeholders on the overall design of the opportunity bonds program.

To stimulate investment in communities, the province is developing a made-in-Ontario tax incentive zone program. Once legislation is passed, this program will offer tax incentives to stimulate new growth within identified communities. Businesses will be encouraged to invest, locate or expand in tax-incentive zones to help encourage economic growth and job creation. This program will assist communities that are experiencing challenges in attracting investment and creating jobs and help them break down the barriers to growth. We are currently consulting on the design and implementation of the program with community and business leaders.

1700

While we consult with community and business leaders on the overall design of the tax-incentive zone, the government recognizes that many communities have been actively pursuing economic development oppor-

tunities and would welcome the opportunity to use a tax-incentive zone program to further their efforts. That is why we are moving forward with six pilot tax-incentive zone projects. Municipalities had until October 18, 2002, to submit expressions of interest in hosting one of six pilot tax-incentive zones.

The response from municipalities has been overwhelming. Many have told us through the consultation process that this program represents a new tool for Ontario's communities. It is a demonstration of this government's commitment to the belief that strong cities and communities make the largest contribution to the continuing prosperity of the province and of the country. We are committed to working with municipalities, the federal government, the private sector and others to meet the needs of our urban communities.

There are many challenges ahead, but we are certain that we have the right fundamentals in place. Our commitment to the health of our communities and to our quality of life will guide us through.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I'm very pleased to join the debate on interim supply, which gives the members an opportunity to speak on a number of different issues, and there are a great number of issues we could be talking about.

We could be talking about the increase in hydro rates that many Ontarians are suffering from these days, directly contrary to what various ministers who have been in that position have stated over the last year or so: "When the energy markets open, the rates will go down." Of course, we all know now that in a lot of cases that has not happened. As a matter of fact, people are taking up petitions against it to make sure that the Ontario Power Generation corporation doesn't get the 20% reduction in the rebates they've applied for before the energy board.

We could be talking about the double cohort issue, an issue that we in this party have talked about for the last three years. I will never forget. Mrs Dombrowsky and I attended a meeting one day at a high school in Kingston about three years ago, right after the 1999 election. We thought we were going to meet with about 20 or 30 people and there were well over 300 parents and grade 9 and 10 students who were deeply concerned about whether or not the government was prepared to deal with the double cohort situation. A government representative was invited to the same meeting and didn't come. Ever since then we've heard the same mantra: "Yes, we are prepared, we are prepared."

I'll give them credit to some extent. There are buildings going up. In Kingston we are the beneficiary of a major new building that's going up at Queen's University at a cost of \$30 million to \$40 million, and the same thing at St Lawrence College, where they're spending about \$20 million to expand the physical facilities. I know the same thing is happening elsewhere in Ontario. But that's not what we've been talking about. We have been talking about the operational money that is required to make sure that the additional number of students who go to university and college will have the same quality

education that students were getting who have gone to university over the last five, six, 10 years, and they won't.

I had a conversation last week with the principal of Queen's University as well as with the president of St Lawrence College, and they both openly admitted that the class sizes for first-year university and college students this year will be much larger than before, by several thousand if you take that over the number of universities and colleges. You're looking at an additional, I suppose, 500 students per campus who will be coming in in first year. They all admitted that the class sizes will be significantly larger than before. I know the government will say, "Oh, well, it really doesn't matter whether or not somebody takes a first-year lecture in a class of 150 or 200," or maybe it used to be 200 and it's going to be 250 students now. If you use that attitude, then why not let it jump up to 300 or 400 students per first-year class?

Interjection.

Mr Gerretsen: So that's the argument. Then make the argument in here that there are too many teachers in universities, that there's nothing wrong with larger class sizes. You can't have it both ways.

The point is, the people that are teaching in these universities and colleges, that run these places right now, are saying that as a result of your policies, as a result of not giving enough operational money, the effect on the double cohort year—or years; I suppose it may take a couple of years—will be that those class sizes will be much larger. At least have the decency to admit that to the people of Ontario.

Anyway, the issue is that the students that are going into university and college this fall will first of all have to have higher marks than has been the case over the last five to 10 years and will have larger class sizes as well. And, as recently came out in the report from Dr Alan King, there will be about 7,000 students in this province that the government hasn't accounted for at all. That's going to be a major issue.

What I want to talk about, though, is those forgotten souls, many of whom don't have anybody fighting for them, who live in long-term-care facilities.

The Acting Speaker: Order. There are conversations going on. This class is too big and I'm going to make it smaller. Only one at a time and it's the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr Gerretsen: There are 61,000 people that currently live in long-term-care homes, and I like to use the word "homes" and not "facility" because they are homes that these people live in. Over the last three to four months I've had an opportunity to visit a fair number of these homes. I've always been extremely well received. I've always been extremely proud of the many people that work in these homes, that look after the elderly in our society that are probably there until they leave this earth and make life as comfortable for them as possible.

But I find it totally unacceptable as an Ontarian, as somebody who has received quite a bit of the advantages

that Ontario life and Canadian life has to offer, that we in our province provide less nursing and personal care hours for the people that live in our long-term-care homes than they do in Mississippi and Alabama or about 10 other jurisdictions. This government in their own funded study clearly indicated that this was the situation. I find that totally unacceptable, that we provide less nursing and personal care for the elderly, many of whom have absolutely nobody to speak for them.

That's not a reflection at all upon the wonderful people that work in a lot of these homes. The problem is they're simply overworked. They simply cannot keep up with the demands on them. Just go into any nursing home and compare that to a situation that existed 10 years ago as far as the number of people that work there is concerned.

Also, when you take into account that the people who live there are much older and they're in much frailer condition than used to be the situation, we surely owe it to our senior population to make life in these nursing homes as good for them as possible. We should be striving toward the highest possible level and not the lowest common denominator.

Another group of people that are very much affected are the people that are not getting much-needed home care right now. On September 18, 13 different organizations in this province, from the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, to CARP, to the Victorian Order of Nurses, to the Retired Teachers of Ontario, to the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, to the Ontario Health Coalition, the Older Women's Network, and I could just go on and on, wrote a letter to our Premier. Let me just read you some parts of that letter.

It says, "All of us"—namely these 13 organizations—"continue to receive an overwhelming number of cries for help from Ontarians barely surviving without adequate care, especially seniors with long-term-care needs and others of all ages with disabilities whose needs are not being met. Health care workers are forced to leave the sector ... and family caregivers facing emotional, physical and financial bankruptcy." They pleaded with the Premier, "Please live up to the commitment that you made in 1998."

Since it's all the same government, the same group of people—the Premier then was the finance minister, but it's not a different government; it's exactly the same government. You said to the people of Ontario, "We will invest \$551.8 million over the next seven years into community care," and that hasn't happened. What has been put in is \$269 million, and for the last two years the budgets have been frozen. A minimal increase was made just recently. I can't remember the exact amount but it was in the neighbourhood of \$20 million to \$30 million when it should have been \$141 million.

1710

If we all agree that it is better for people to stay in their own homes as long as possible, that it is better for people to recuperate in their own homes after having been discharged from a hospital, then surely we owe it to

those people that we look after them and give them the community and the nursing care they require there, and it's not happening right now. Are some people getting care? Yes. Are the nurses and the personal caregivers doing the best job they possibly can under the circumstances? Absolutely.

But there is a whole group of people that is not getting any services or any care at all. One of the statistics I've asked for—as you may recall, when a number of hospitals and hospital beds were closed in this province, a solemn commitment was made by this government, back in 1996, 1997, that every penny that was going to be saved as a result of a hospital closure or a bed closure was going to be put into community care. I have asked over and over again in estimates, in letters to the minister, “Provide me with those figures. How much did you actually save in the system as a result of the hospital closures?” Of course, they never want to talk about that because literally billions of dollars have been saved and a minuscule amount of that money has gone into community care.

Even a person like Duncan Sinclair, a man for whom I personally have a awful lot of admiration—I've known this gentleman for a number of years—has said, and let me quote to you what he said about the situation, “There is no question that those people right now who need home care and aren't getting it face individual crises.” I just hope and pray—

The Acting Speaker: The members for Etobicoke and Ottawa West-Nepean, if you want to carry on a conversation, get up close beside each other and whisper in your ear. I'll not warn you again.

The Chair recognizes the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr Gerretsen: Duncan Sinclair continues to say, “I just hope and pray that doesn't escalate into a general crisis, as I fear it may.”

To the people of Ontario: if I could just tell them one sort of statistic, the most telling one of all is the fact that, yes, we are spending more money than we did in 1995 by some \$7 billion; I'll grant you that it's gone from \$17.5 billion to \$25 billion. But in terms of the gross domestic product, what we actually produce in this province, in terms of that, we are spending less on health care as a percentage of the gross domestic product now than we did in 1995.

In 1995 we spent something like 5.6% of the gross domestic product. We produced in this province at that point of time \$330 billion worth of goods and services, and \$17.5 billion of that was spent on health care. Today, according to the government's own figures, our gross domestic product is more like \$450 billion, and we're spending \$25 billion in health care, which is less of a percentage that we spend on health care now: 5.3% rather than the 5.6% that we spent there before.

So I say to the people of Ontario, we have a crisis in health care for one reason, and one reason only. The reason that people are not getting the proper kind of long-term care in long-term-care homes or community care

through the community care access centres is for one reason, and one reason only: this government has decided it doesn't want to spend any more money in that particular area. That's the sole reason, not because the system is going broke.

Mr Christopherson: In speaking to this interim supply bill, at the outset let me say that for all the government's propaganda about how wonderful everything is, the immediate context for this discussion today, certainly in my hometown of Hamilton, and I see no reason why it wouldn't be the same in every community across the province, is that there are people right now who don't know how they're going to get through the winter because they can't pay the hydro bill that's in front of them now, let alone the hydro bills that are coming as we get closer to Christmas and as we get further into the winter season. There are people right now in Hamilton who are facing the prospect of having their hydro cut off because there's a new plan in Hamilton, thanks to your deregulation. That plan says that if you're behind in your hydro bill long enough, far enough and for a great amount, the greatest amount of money—

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: Nobody's perfect.

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: I'm not getting out of that one. It's just going to go the way it's going.

The problem is that they owe the money, hundreds and hundreds of dollars above what they normally pay in hydro, that they can't pay. They not only have to pay that, but because they weren't able to pay that, they're expected to come up with \$400 more to go on their account to prevent their hydro from being cut off.

If you're a disabled person in Hamilton or a senior on fixed income and you could barely get by before and now you're falling behind and you're facing the scenario I've just described, you don't exactly see the province of Ontario the way the government backbenchers would like the world to believe the province is. If in Hamilton you're one of the parents of a child with special needs and you couldn't go to work today or yesterday or last Friday or last Thursday because you had to be at home with your special-needs child because you couldn't send that child to the classroom because the educational assistants are out on the picket line fighting for a decent wage for themselves and their families, then I assure you they don't see the rosy kind of Ontario that the government backbenchers want to stand up and talk about today.

I'm going to come back to some local issues in Hamilton, but I want to spend about half of the 18 minutes I have talking about the macroeconomic policies of this government, and then I want to talk further about what those policies mean for my fellow Hamiltonians.

The statement was repeated just a little earlier by the member for Niagara Falls that the wondrous and miraculous beauty of their tax cuts is that they can cut the tax rate—this is the way they put it—and because that spurs so much economic investment and that then spurs

the creation of jobs and then that spurs further economic activity, they've got proof that their tax cuts increased revenue, because of course they cut the taxes, it stimulated the economy and then, although there was less revenue from those tax cuts, the increased economic activity has generated greater revenue. That's the theory, that's the mantra. We've heard it from day one. I remember saying at the time, all through the late 1990s, when they brought the revolution forward, that you can say anything you want when the economy is booming. You could say that the reason—

Interjections.

Mr Christopherson: I haven't even got to my point yet and you're already riled up. Wait till I get to my point.

Mr Bob Wood (London West): You have the wrong premises.

Mr Christopherson: I don't have the wrong premises. You do. I'm just reflecting what you've been telling us and feeding us from that side for so many years now it makes my head spin. You can get away with making the kinds of outrageous statements that you have because, I grant you, you could go to the tax line in the budget book, I make no bones about it, and you're able to show where you cut the tax rate and the revenue had gone up. Absolutely; those two things are facts. You did cut the rates and the revenue did go up.

1720

We argued at the time, and I argue still to this day, that the reason you were able to say that was because there was such an enormous economic boom going on across North America, led by the US economy, not ours; they had the biggest economic boom they'd ever seen in their history. Of course we know what happens to booms and bubbles, but we'll go there in a minute.

When that's happening, with the economy roaring away, led in large part by the auto industry in Ontario—and again it bears repeating: somebody who decides to buy a brand new car who lives in Wisconsin doesn't give a hoot about what the tax rates are in Ontario even though we will benefit from the job stimulation that we get as a result of that demand because we produce those autos with the skilled workers we have and the competitive edge of our public health care system, worth—I should know the number—between \$6 and \$10 an hour, in terms of a competitive advantage that our health care system gives us.

With that kind of dynamic going for you, and I grant you, that's exactly what you had, you could stand up and say anything. You could stand up, as you did, and say your tax cuts created the increased revenue, you could say that it was your policies, you could say it was the fact that you changed the colour of the House in here from blue to green, and it makes no difference because the numbers work. When you're in an economic boom driven by the US economy that at the time, in the late 1990s, showed no sign of slowing down, you can't go wrong. It's actually fairly easy—believe me, I've been there the other times. It's a lot easier to govern in boom times than it is in recessionary times.

At some point it would be nice if somebody over there, just once, acknowledged that Ontario was not alone in an isolated recession from 1990 to 1995, or 1990 to 1993, the actual recession times. Come on. Everyone knows that it was a worldwide recession; we all know what happened with free trade, the jobs we lost, and the fact that the federal government under Brian Mulroney did not step in and help out the provinces as they'd done in the past. I don't hold my breath, but one lives in hope. You never know; it might happen.

But what's interesting is that now that the artificial bloom is gone, the government, after September 11, again turned to their magic elixir formula and said, "Tax cuts do everything. As long as we cut taxes, it always generates more money, and that always gives us the economic lift that we need." So when we came back here after the tragedy of September 11 last year, one of the first things the government announced was that they were moving up, accelerating the implementation of some of their tax cuts. Why? Because the magic elixir is there to be used. So when we're in a bit of a jam and it looks like things are going to get rough—believe me, far too much has been put on the fact that September 11 has caused the downturn. It accelerated it and exacerbated it but it was happening anyway. But that notwithstanding, the government rolled in and said, "We've got our magic elixir. It worked for us before; it's going to work again. So we're going to move those tax cuts up, and that's going to insulate, inoculate, the province of Ontario from any kind of economic woes or downturn that may happen around us," because of course this government takes credit for every bit of the economic boom that happened in the late 1990s. They take credit for every bit of it. I think they got to the point where they actually started to believe their own advertising. They actually started to believe that they had this kind of omnipotent power.

We had a leadership change. We went from Premier Harris to Premier Eves. As memory serves, that was Premier Harris. Then things weren't so good. The economy in the United States took a sharp negative downward turn. You didn't have the benefit of the roaring economic demand that you had throughout the 1990s. In fact, when your economists did some projections based on the downturn and how that's going to affect Ontario's economy, you had a revenue problem. Given that the new Premier was now on the ramp-up part of a provincial election, the last thing he wanted to do to keep that balanced budget would be to start slashing everything again, as he did before, to pay for those tax cuts which, by the way, were supposed to make us recession-proof.

The mantra was there in 1995, 1996 and 1997: if we as Ontarians just take the hit now, be grown up about this, understand they're providing leadership and tighten our belts; if we do all that, then—which would have been now, at that time—in the future we'd be inoculated, we'd be recession-proof because we'd have these economic foundations; the fundamentals—remember the fundamentals, Speaker—are sound. Whenever you hear a finance minister say, "The fundamentals are sound," worry. That's what the finance minister of the day was

saying: “The fundamentals are sound.” Except that when their experts rolled in and started to show them the numbers, things weren’t looking so pretty any more.

You would think the former finance minister, who had been the fiscal architect of the financial aspect of the Common Sense Revolution, who led the charge with the magic elixir—now that he was the grand pooh-bah of all of Ontario, there shouldn’t have been any doubt that what would happen is that we would see more tax cuts immediately. We would have the House sit 24 hours a day, ram those legislative bills through here and get those tax cuts in place. Why? Because the magic elixir tells us that whenever we do tax cuts, our revenue goes up.

If we’ve suddenly got a revenue problem—which really wasn’t supposed to happen in the first place, but besides that—let’s just use the magic elixir formula. We all waited, because that’s what they told us before: that’s why we did so well in the 1990s; that’s why the revenue went up; that’s why after September 11 they moved up tax cuts. All of these things were because of the magic elixir: tax cuts are everything. They’ve told people they can do all these tax cuts and, “Don’t worry. Everything else is going to be good. You can have both. You can have your cake and eat it too. You can have the tax cuts and everything else will be fine.” They’ve got the magic elixir, you see.

What we should have seen this spring, given the forecasts, was the magic elixir writ large. We should have seen tax-cut bills this deep brought in here. This House should not have slept until every one of those tax-cut bills was enacted, because we were in some trouble, and when you’re in trouble, you go to the elixir.

Mr Guzzo: You learn quickly.

Mr Christopherson: I hear the members opposite saying I learn quickly.

Mr Maves: Now you’re getting it.

Mr Christopherson: Another one’s saying, “Now you get it.” Isn’t that interesting, because—

Interjection.

Mr Christopherson: That’s what you did. You sort of backed off the elixir, because what happened, as we now know, is that they deferred all the tax cuts that were in place.

Mr Maves: No.

Mr Christopherson: Most of them; not all of them, most of them, the big-dollar ones.

This is not something the government wanted to do, because it upset some of their folks, and I’m sure it caused a lot of consternation in the government caucus meetings. I’ll bet it would have been interesting to be a fly on the wall and hear that debate.

Why would they do that? It makes no sense. It’s not like the new Premier doesn’t understand economics. He used to be the finance minister to the master elixir guru, Mike Harris. It’s not that we had a change of party. He still belongs to the same party, same caucus. I look over there—same folks. But they didn’t do it. Why would they do that? Why would they back away, especially after, according to a couple of my friends, people like me are just starting to get it? According to them, I am just

starting to understand, because most of us ordinary mere mortals in Ontario don’t understand high finance. That’s the Tories’ domain.

1730

Government backbenchers say to me, “Finally you’re getting it.” Actually, I’m more confused than ever, because right at the time you say I should get it and I was sitting here in my place waiting for that budget document, waiting for all those tax cuts, the magic elixir that was going to make revenue go up, it didn’t happen. Why? Because when you cut taxes you have less revenue.

Interjections.

Mr Christopherson: See, they don’t like that. Now we’re at the point; now you can get upset; now you’ve got something to be upset about. The only problem is that the facts are getting in the way of your story. The facts are spoiling the elixir. It’s becoming tainted. It’s not doing what it should do any more. More than anything, the fog has cleared.

We’re left in Ontario with all the damage and wreckage you’ve done along the way, telling us it’s all for a better tomorrow. Tomorrow is here and we’re in a hell of a mess. You couldn’t apply the magic elixir because it’s not what worked then and it’s not working now. You’ve got a tough time convincing people that the story is anything different, because given the prospects of what we were facing in terms of the economy at the point of the budget introduction to now and a little further out, you should, according to your Tory thinking, have brought in more massive tax cuts than you have ever brought in, because now we’re in trouble and we really need that revenue increase. You deferred them because you couldn’t afford it. Ontario can’t afford any more of your policies. Certainly Hamilton can’t.

I’m just going to give you a smattering, because I’ve only got a few minutes left, of what all this means in Hamilton. I’ve already talked about the number of special-needs kids who are at home. I also want to make sure I remind everybody that in Hamilton our democratically elected school board trustees were fired in a coup d’état, and we now have a dictator in the name of a supervisor in Hamilton who is making all the decisions, except he’s getting advice from some secret group but we don’t know who it is—he won’t tell us. That’s the dynamic. That’s the result.

Today’s Spectator: “Poor Man’s Choice: Food or Rent.” How many in this House are facing that choice? But you are the ones who took away rent control and rent protection from tenants, especially the disabled.

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): No.

Mr Christopherson: To the government backbencher who is heckling “No”—if I’m wrong, you correct me now and I’ll correct my record—who not only serves here and gets a decent wage but also continues at least part time in his law practice, heckles me when I hold up a clipping from my hometown newspaper, today’s newspaper, that says, “Poor Man’s Choice: Food or Rent,” you want to heckle me?

“A Crisis in Home Care,” September 4. “Lack of Funds Halts Shopping Excursion for Seniors and Disabled”—that’s our local transit system that’s had transfer payments cut by your government as you applied the magic elixir. Thanks a lot. “Elderly and Disabled Big Losers as VHA Closes Doors.” I did a member’s statement on this today about the Visiting Homemakers and the fact they’re gone, we’ve lost them because of your policies. You changed the way the CCHC—yes, it is absolutely true, I say to the minister shaking his head. The CCHC changed the rules and then they wouldn’t apply the same rules to the VHA in Hamilton that they applied elsewhere, and the contract revenue wasn’t enough and they’re gone. To this day, I find it absolutely surreal that the Visiting Homemakers of Hamilton are gone, closed, bankrupt.

“Another Blow for Homecare: VON Buckles under Financial Pressure, Lays off 20% of its Staff.” There are more people than ever who need home care. How can there not be demand at the VON? Why? Because the CCHC changed the criteria so fewer people are eligible for home care services and we get Victorian Order of Nurses being laid off. Thanks a lot.

Double cohort: the lead editorial in the Hamilton Spectator yesterday, October 21.

An editorial by Howard Elliott in the Hamilton Spectator on July 18: “Government Has Failed Ontario’s Most Vulnerable; Long-Term Care: Seniors, Families Won’t Forget.” I only have seconds but I want to get this on the record. In the editorial written by Howard Elliott he quotes Mike Harris: “I would say to seniors in Ontario: “Thank God you live in Ontario, the best province with the best services anywhere I know of in the world.”

“Harris and Eves are wrong. This government has failed Ontario’s elderly and frail, often among our most vulnerable citizens. On health care in general, and especially in long-term, community-based and palliative care, the Tory track record is atrocious. This rent increase is just the latest example.”

I’m down to the dying seconds. I haven’t talked about your environmental record, what you’ve done to people on disability income, what’s happening to our hospitals that so many of them are under deficit—and of course you’re going to say that’s everybody else’s fault. You’ve got no right to stand there and say, “It’s a pretty picture.” Things are ugly and rough out there.

The Acting Speaker: The member’s time has expired. Further debate?

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): In the time remaining, I’d like to join the supply debate and really focus my remarks this afternoon on two subject areas: one is Bill 175, an Act respecting the cost of water and waste water services, and particularly how that legislation is going to affect smaller communities, not just in my part of eastern Ontario but in northern, south-central and southwestern Ontario as well; and of course, since I may not have too many more opportunities, I’d like to make a comment or two about hydro.

About Bill 175: I want to make plain the obvious point that everyone in the Legislature and outside is more than

anxious, I’m sure, to support all reasonable initiatives to ensure that we have the best and safest possible water supply in Ontario. But my concern with Bill 175 and, I must say, some of the other regulations that have been promulgated recently, particularly regulation 459 of the safe drinking water legislation, is simply this: small communities—and in my area those are places like the village of Killaloe, the Haley townsite, trailer parks—these communities and residents in these small centres are being crippled by these costs. We’re going to have to find a way as a Legislature—and I see my friend from Parry Sound-Muskoka nodding in agreement. There’s no member on either side of this aisle from rural or small-town Ontario who will not have heard what I have heard. The member from Peterborough looks knowingly. This is a very critical issue. I don’t know where the cut-off point is. I’m guessing it’s probably someplace at or above 20,000.

I live in Pembroke, a city of over 15,000. We are improving our pollution control plant. I think the cost is in excess of \$20 million. The federal and provincial governments have happily put, I think, \$11.5 million toward that project, but we’ve got 15,000 people or more against whom to apply the local charge. In the Haley townsite it’s just a handful of people. We have a retirement home in the Beachburg area, Country Haven, at RR 1 Beachburg. I’ve got campgrounds: the KOA campground in Horton township, the Pine Cliff Resort in Combermere, the Pleasant View Park in Renfrew, Thompson’s Mobile Home Park in Renfrew. I’ve visited many of these trailer parks or communities like the Haley townsite and sat down with the residents, who might count 100, fewer in most cases, and we just can’t make it work. Yes, we want clean water, we want safe water, but how are we going to do it?

I think the only way we’re going to do it, quite frankly, is to aggregate all these smaller centres into some kind of provincial pool, with the province and perhaps even the federal government playing a role, because I know of no other way to meet a minimum requirement. Otherwise, you are going to just cripple these residents.

1740

I was at the village of Killaloe a few months ago and I think, if memory serves me correctly, there are about 150 or so residences and businesses hooked up to the village of Killaloe communal water system. The new water testing requirements in the village of Killaloe I think add something like \$150 or more to the bill of each of those residences and businesses, and that’s just the new, additional water testing cost. You start adding the operational and capital costs in places like the Haley townsite and it is stratospheric. It can’t be done. I know of no way that those trailer parks, those rest and retirement homes like the Country Haven at RR 1 Beachburg or, quite frankly, the smaller municipal systems in communities like Killaloe, Chalk River, Cobden, Eganville and Barry’s Bay, to name but five or six in my part of rural eastern Ontario, are ever going to meet some of the

operational, testing and capital requirements, to say nothing of full cost recovery.

My friend from Peterborough might remember, because he had a long and distinguished involvement in municipal government, but I remember in the 1970s, when I was first doing business here, that a number of those smaller communities in Ontario were only able to do the communal water and sewage systems because the province, I think on its own or maybe with some federal money, put an average of 75% subsidy to a lot of those smaller centres. I had some communities—Chalk River comes to mind. I think the subsidy there was in excess of 80%. Full cost recovery? Whether it's in rural, small-town Renfrew, Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland or Essex, I don't know how you do it in these centres without breaking the backs of homeowners and businesses.

Yes, we have to change the way we do business; I accept that. But we have to be realistic. I simply want to say as a member from the Ottawa Valley—but I'm no different than a lot of people on both sides of this aisle who represent communities like mine—we've got to find ways of not just imposing new requirements on these smaller centres, but we've got to find ways to provide technical and financial assistance. Otherwise, we're going to have situations—I believe I saw on TVO not too many weeks ago where a small community in north Grey—I think it was Walters Falls, actually. They were so upset by some of the new costs they were actually threatening to abandon, if I remember correctly, and I could stand to be corrected by our friend from Grey-Bruce, or planning to abandon their communal system because, as I remember the program, they were faced with costs that were absolutely crippling.

So I simply say on this supply debate this afternoon on behalf of rural residents, whether they're in small municipalities with communal systems like Killaloe, Beachburg, Chalk River, Cobden or Barry's Bay in my area, for example, or trailer parks, and I've got several in communities like Renfrew and many other communities that I could mention, or special circumstances like the Haley townsite, where we actually have a communal system that was developed 60 or 70 years ago as part of a big industrial development miles away from a municipal system—we can't now say to the 35 or 40 residents at the Haley townsite, "Good luck. You've essentially got a municipal responsibility and you've got to shoulder these costs," because they are in the thousands of dollars operationally on an annual basis. It can't happen.

I don't want to stand here to be unfair to any government but I say seriously, we've got to look at pooling those smaller situations and those special circumstances into some kind of a provincial pool, aggregate those and deal with them in that fashion because I don't know of another way. There may be another way that has been discovered in Perth county or in Middlesex, but Bill 175, good intentions, just like regulation 459 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, very good intentions—but how we

actualize those good intentions, particularly in rural, small-town Ontario, is entirely a different manner. Without the financial and technical assistance of the Ontario government—and, I will add, the federal government to some reasonable degree as well, and we thank the federal government as we thank the Ontario government for the kind of help that's provided to the community in which I live, the city of Pembroke, where both senior governments have provided, I think, about \$5.5 million toward the upgrading of our pollution control plan. Without that province and federal assistance it wouldn't be happening in the city of Pembroke, but these smaller communities face an even more difficult situation.

A final word about hydro. Walter Bagehot in his famous thesis, the English Constitution, said that the monarch in mid-19th-century Britain is really left with three powers, three rights: "the right to be consulted, the right to advise and the right to warn." With Bagehot in mind, as I prepare to take my leave from this place, let me warn this Legislature, all members on both sides, that this hydro tiger is a real tiger. I'm surprised at the number of people I meet in government, in the political and bureaucratic branches of government, who still think hydro is some kind of poodle that can be just manicured and taken out for a nice evening walk. We've got a tiger, and I'm not even sure we've got it by the tail.

Before the snows of the coming winter melt in the spring of 2003, I suspect the electorate is going to be seized of the hydro issue. I see that our good friend the Speaker, the member from Oakville, has himself had some things to say about the kind of pressures he's hearing. We're all hearing them.

Remember the problem we set out to fix. We had a critical problem in the generation part of the electricity business five years ago. To some degree, we were all responsible for that—I, perhaps, more than most people in this chamber today. That's the problem that brought us to our knees five years ago. I believe that problem is more serious today than it was five years ago. Pickering A, which is our reserve capacity, is, I am told on very reliable authority, over a year away from being completed. I'm told that three of those four Pickering A units will not be available until 2004. If that's the case, it's going to be a couple of years and over a couple of billion dollars behind schedule. That, for example, is going to be one very significant upward pressure on prices that are already breaking the backs of residential and business customers. We've got to find some solutions, folks, and they'd better be found soon or the heather and our hides are going to be afire as we head into the next election.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Tsubouchi has moved government notice of motion number 46. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? It is carried.

It being almost 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1748.

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)	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)		
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (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	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)		
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)		Gerretsen, John (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wetlaufer, Wayne (PC)
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	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Education / vice-première ministre, ministre de l'Éducation
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	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)		
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (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
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	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
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of the Environment, government House leader / ministre de l'Environnement, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)	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
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	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Rob (PC)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
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	Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)
Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)	Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)
Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, John (PC)	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
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-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Nipissing	McDonald, AL (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Northumberland	Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	Stoney Creek	Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J. (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thornhill	Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R. (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ottawa-Orléans	Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
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Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
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Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
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Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
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Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

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

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

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McMeekin, Bill Murdoch, Wayne Wettlaufer
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CONTENTS

Tuesday 22 October 2002

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Kidney dialysis	
Mr Levac.....	2301
Job creation	
Mr Maves.....	2301
Rally for Israel	
Mr Colle.....	2301
Volunteers	
Mr McDonald.....	2302
Hydro rates	
Mrs Bountrogianni.....	2302
Visiting Homemakers Association of Hamilton-Wentworth	
Mr Christopherson.....	2302
Florence Kehl	
Mr Johnson.....	2302
Government's record	
Mr Phillips.....	2303
Dog walkathons in Durham region	
Mr O'Toole.....	2303

ORAL QUESTIONS

Kyoto Protocol	
Mr McGuinty.....	2305
Mr Eves.....	2305, 2307
Mr Hampton.....	2307
Mr Bradley.....	2309
Mr Stockwell.....	2310
Rural education funding	
Mr McGuinty.....	2306
Mr Eves.....	2306
Toronto Transit Commission	
Mr Hampton.....	2308
Mr Eves.....	2308
Mr Prue.....	2308
Transit services	
Mr McGuinty.....	2308
Mr Eves.....	2308
Curriculum	
Mr O'Toole.....	2309
Mrs Witmer.....	2309
Foodland Ontario	
Mr Miller.....	2310
Mrs Johns.....	2310

Forest industry

Mr Bisson.....	2311
Mr Ouellette.....	2311

Hydro rates

Mr McGuinty.....	2311
Mr Eves.....	2312

Electronic surveillance program

Mr Dunlop.....	2312
Mr Runciman.....	2312

Home care

Mr Peters.....	2312
Mr Clement.....	2313

Long-term care

Mr Dunlop.....	2313
Mr Newman.....	2313

Highway 407

Mr Prue.....	2314
Mr Sterling.....	2314

Corporate tax

Mr Phillips.....	2314
Mr Eves.....	2315

PETITIONS

Wildlife management

Mr Patten.....	2315
Mr Parsons.....	2317

Child care

Ms Martel.....	2315
----------------	------

Emergency response teams

Mr Barrett.....	2315
-----------------	------

Highway 69

Mr Bartolucci.....	2316
--------------------	------

Province of Ontario Savings Office

Ms Martel.....	2316
----------------	------

Competitive electricity market

Mr Lalonde.....	2316
Mr Agostino.....	2318

Natural gas rates

Mr Hoy.....	2317
-------------	------

Children's health services

Mrs Boyer.....	2317
----------------	------

Cellular tower

Mr Cleary.....	2318
----------------	------

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Interim supply, government notice of motion number 46, *Mr Stockwell*

Mr Tsubouchi.....	2318
Mr Phillips.....	2321
Mr Marchese.....	2322
Mr Maves.....	2326
Mrs Bountrogianni.....	2329
Mrs Munro.....	2331
Mr Gerretsen.....	2332
Mr Christopherson.....	2334
Mr Conway.....	2337
Agreed to.....	2338

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitors

Mr Duncan.....	2303
Mr Colle.....	2303
The Speaker.....	2303
Mrs Marland.....	2315

April Hopkin

Mr Runciman.....	2303
Mr Levac.....	2304
Mr Kormos.....	2304

Legislative pages

The Speaker.....	2305
------------------	------

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mardi 22 octobre 2002

PÉTITIONS

Garde d'enfants

<i>M^{me}</i> Martel.....	2317
-----------------------------------	------

Services de santé pour enfants

<i>M^{me}</i> Boyer.....	2317
----------------------------------	------