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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 31 March 2004**

**Mercredi 31 mars 2004**

Speaker  
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président  
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 31 March 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 31 mars 2004

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

OPTOMETRISTS

**Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I'm pleased to acknowledge Ontario's professional optometrists, who provide critical, front-line primary eye care services. More than three million patients visit an optometrist for primary eye and vision care every year in our province, yet optometric fees have remained unchanged since 1989. In fact, during the NDP's social contract, funding for optometric services were clawed back and reduced a further 15% from 1989 levels. In 1991, the government broadened the profession's scope of practice and gave optometrists the responsibility to diagnose eye disease and disorders, but they failed to provide the funding required for the profession to invest in new testing technologies.

When you take inflation into account, optometric fees in Ontario not just been declining; they are now the lowest in all of Canada. The current fee no longer comes close to covering the cost of services provided. The lack of a fee increase for over 16 years has resulted in a crisis situation for Ontario's optometrists as they struggle to acquire and maintain the equipment necessary to provide quality eye care.

The Ontario Association of Optometrists has asked the government to appoint a mediator to resolve this. The government has flatly refused to respond. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Health to ensure healthier outcomes for our citizens and meet with Ontario's optometrists immediately or face breaking yet another health care promise to Ontarians.

KIDNEY DISEASE

**Mr Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North):** I rise today on the occasion of Kidney Health Month to congratulate the Kidney Foundation of Canada on celebrating 40 years as the only national health charity dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of people living with kidney disease. As a physician, I have witnessed first-hand the positive impact that the Kidney Foundation has had on Canadian patients.

Each March holds a special significance for those whose lives have been affected by kidney disease. The

Kidney Foundation of Canada and its thousands of dedicated volunteers in Ontario head out door-to-door to raise funds for research, education and patient services. Thanks to the \$67 million in research that the foundation has funded since 1964, people with kidney disease have access to better therapies and expanded treatment options. Yet the numbers continue to grow steadily. An aging population and increasing incidence of diabetes are among the many factors. At the end of the year 2000, 10,000 Ontarians were living with kidney disease or had dialysis. The rate is increasing by approximately 15% annually.

The Kidney Foundation has successfully advocated for the expansion of dialysis services across Ontario. Currently, 1,300 Ontarians are on the waiting list for kidney transplants. On behalf of all the members here, I'd like to salute the important work that the Kidney Foundation of Canada does for Ontario's patients.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Ms Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** I rise today to bring forward an issue in the House that is of great concern to students and administrators at colleges and universities across Ontario. Although this government has moved to freeze tuition, there has been no word about how colleges and universities ought to deal with the shortfall they now face because expected funds are no longer available.

During the election, the promises flew fast and furious and the McGuinty Liberals promised they would "expand our post-secondary capacity by at least 10% over five years," that they would "enhance the quality of our institutions," that they would "recruit new faculty for colleges and universities."

Are these just pipe dreams? Right now, colleges and universities are worse off than they were when you came to power. They now have less money to provide quality education to our students. You're forcing them to make choices that could very well impact the quality of education our students receive. Our colleges outlined their financial plight to your government several months ago and called for additional funding. So far, they have heard nothing.

This is the Premier who styles himself the education Premier. Mr McGuinty, colleges and universities are part of the education system. It is time you made sure that our colleges and universities have the funding they need to continue to provide the excellent education Ontarians deserve.

### AROUND THE BAY RACE

**Ms Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I rise in the House today to celebrate and share with this House and my colleagues another successful Around the Bay Road Race that occurred in the city of Hamilton this past Sunday, March 28.

Did you know that this was the first marathon ever held in North America, and not only that, that it is the longest continuous road race in the history of North American running? It started, actually, in 1894 in Hamilton, and today there are two races: a five-kilometre race and a 30-kilometre race for the more ambitious athletes.

At this year's 110th road race, there were 6,200 runners from all over the country. The annual Around the Bay race is a special event with participants not just from Hamilton but from every possible community around the country. I'd like to take this time to acknowledge and thank the race director, Mr Zajczenko, for his great effort and commitment to another successful race, as well as all the participants in the race—all the runners—all the volunteers, and the support of community members in Hamilton.

What a great race this was, and every year this race continues to grow. I invite you and all the members of this House to join us next year. This is an opportunity to witness Hamilton at its best, to see us for what we are, the strength as a city, and a city that is committed to maintaining tradition and fostering community spirit.

### OPTOMETRISTS

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Hundreds of optometrists came to Queen's Park today to call on the Liberal government to provide adequate funding for eye care in the upcoming budget.

Three million Ontarians visit optometrists every year to get their eyes examined. With the passage of the Regulated Health Professions Act in 1991, optometrists assumed additional responsibilities to diagnose diseases and disorders of the eye, but increases in funding to reflect these new responsibilities and the increased cost to buy up-to-date technology have not followed suit.

It's been 15 years, since 1989, since optometrists last had an increase in OHIP fees. The current fee schedule doesn't cover the true cost of eye exams in Ontario. This is creating a crisis for optometrists who are trying to buy and maintain specialized equipment. The crisis is reinforced with increased overhead and electricity costs.

Last year, negotiations began between the Ministry of Health and the Ontario Association of Optometrists. The purpose was to develop a new funding agreement for OHIP-insured eye services. Regrettably, these broke down in July 2003. The association has asked the Liberal government to bring in a mediator to help. There has been no response from the government, and negotiations have not resumed.

Ontarians want high-quality eye care. They want to know their optometrists are using the best specialized

equipment for eye exams. They expect their optometrists to be adequately paid for their medical expertise. An increase in funding for eye care is required, and we call on the Liberal government to include this in the budget.

1340

### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** I rise to reaffirm the importance of promoting energy conservation in our schools. The blackout in the year 2003 was a punctuation mark on how reliant we are on electricity. Our government is committed to building a reliable, sustainable and diverse supply of energy. In doing so, we will also make conservation a cornerstone of our energy future.

A conservation ethic starts by changing behaviours in our workplace, in our homes, in our communities and in our schools. To ensure a lasting effect, however, we must reach our young people.

Today I pay tribute to two initiatives that are making this happen. There is the EarthCARE Canada program, a partnership project with the Ottawa-Carleton and greater Essex district school boards that teaches savings and conservation in schools, but it also gets students to act as ambassadors for increasing community understanding about conservation.

The second initiative is the ecoschools program developed by the Toronto District School Board in cooperation with the Durham, Halton, Waterloo and York school boards. It focuses on offering tools that teachers and students can use to conserve energy in schools. It also chronicles ideas that students can use at home and in the community to reduce energy consumption.

This government believes firmly that creating a conservation culture will be critical if we are to achieve a sustainable energy future and a cleaner environment. But this work in our schools and our youth will make this happen for the future, because they carry home these ideas to their families, friends and parents.

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** I arise today to inform the House of a potentially deadly situation at Six Nations in my riding. Last night, Six Nations Chief Roberta Jamieson held a public meeting advising citizens not to drink well water until they are sure it is safe. Random testing of 312 wells found 82% contained coliform bacteria and 27% of those tested had dangerous levels of E coli. This is worrisome. There are nearly 1,400 wells in the community.

We know the Mike Harris and Ernie Eves governments brought in the toughest legislation and regulations to ensure Ontario had the cleanest, safest water in the world.

The current provincial government crows about the steps it has taken to ensure quality drinking water for everyone in Ontario. Just last month the white paper on

watershed-based source protection planning was released. But under this government's watch, the largest native community in Canada has turned up some of the dirtiest well water in Canada.

In a post-Walkerton Ontario, native communities are falling between the cracks. Where is the provincial-federal coordination on drinking water? Are both levels of government talking to each other? Quite honestly, does the left hand know what the right hand is doing? The people at Six Nations feel that neither the provincial nor the federal governments appreciate the urgency of this problem. In fact, much of rural Ontario drinks from wells. The question is: Is their water safe?

#### GIFT TO UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

**Ms Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** It is great pleasure for me to inform the members of the assembly that an announcement of great importance was made this morning at the University of Western Ontario in my riding of London North Centre. Dr Paul Davenport, president of the university, announced a donation of \$26 million from Mr Seymour Schulich to the university's faculty of medicine and dentistry.

Through Mr Schulich's generosity, every year, for generations to come, 60 medical students will receive \$20,000 in support of their tuition and education expenses and 50 graduate students in medical sciences will receive yearly scholarships of \$15,000.

This endowed gift recognizes the tremendous importance of accessible higher education, a view that this government enthusiastically shares. Mr Schulich's donation will also provide enhanced support for two Canada research chairs and create the Tanna Schulich chair in neuroscience and mental health. This gift, when combined with matching funds from the Ontario student opportunity trust fund for undergraduate student awards, the Ontario graduate scholarship program and the federal research chairs program, will bring the total impact of Mr Schulich's donation to \$50 million.

In recognition of Mr Schulich's exceptional gift, the school of medicine will be named in his honour pending university senate approval and will be known as the Schulich School of Medicine.

#### WILBERT KEON

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** It's a great privilege for me to rise to honour Dr Wilbert Keon, who founded the University of Ottawa Heart Institute 35 years ago and who today marks his last day on the job from which he will retire.

Thirty-five years ago today, Dr Wilbert Keon became known as a doctor, a surgeon, an administrator, a professor, a researcher, a fundraiser and a parliamentarian. Most important, though, around Ottawa and eastern Ontario he's known as a humanitarian. He's made an enormous difference in the lives of so many families, not

just in Ottawa and eastern Ontario but indeed across Canada.

Over the past 35 years, the heart institute has become a world-renowned centre of cardiac excellence, with prevention, surgery, rehabilitation and research. Over Dr Keon's tenure, he has helped raise more than \$50 million for the heart institute from our community. It speaks volumes that Dr Keon has had a phenomenally positive relationship with eight Premiers of Ontario and worked tremendously well with all three political parties in government.

Dr Keon and Dr Don Beanlands, who built the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, could have done that anywhere, could have brought their expertise and perhaps been more well rewarded financially, but they did it here in Ontario.

I see the member for Ottawa Centre and the member for Ottawa-Vanier here. I know all of my colleagues, including Norm Sterling, the member for Lanark-Carleton, our caucus and the entire House want to congratulate Dr Keon for a job well done.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### OPTOMETRY AMENDMENT ACT, 2004

##### LOI DE 2004 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES OPTOMÉTRISTES

Mr Kormos moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to amend the Optometry Act, 1991 /  
Projet de loi 45, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1991 sur les optométristes.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** This bill amends the Optometry Act of 1991 to allow optometrists to prescribe therapeutic pharmaceutical agents for the treatment of certain eye diseases.

#### MOTIONS

##### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Wednesday, March 31, 2004, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those against, say "nay."

I think the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1350 to 1355.*

**The Speaker:** Mr Duncan has moved government notice of motion number 19. All those in favour, please rise to be counted.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Eves, Ernie	Peters, Steve
Arthurs, Wayne	Fonseca, Peter	Peterson, Tim
Baird, John R.	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Barrett, Toby	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Bartolucci, Rick	Hardeman, Ernie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bentley, Christopher	Hoy, Pat	Racco, Mario G.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hudak, Tim	Ramsay, David
Bountrogiani, Marie	Jackson, Cameron	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Runciman, Robert W.
Broten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldip	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Scott, Laurie
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Smitherman, George
Caplan, David	Martiniuk, Gerry	Takhar, Harinder S.
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Matthews, Deborah	Van Bommel, Maria
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Watson, Jim
Cordiano, Joseph	McNeely, Phil	Wilkinson, John
Craitor, Kim	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilson, Jim
Crozier, Bruce	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Delaney, Bob	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wong, Tony C.
Di Cocco, Caroline	O'Toole, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Orazietti, David	Yakubuski, John
Duguid, Brad	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Zimmer, David
Duncan, Dwight	Parsons, Ernie	
Dunlop, Garfield	Patten, Richard	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed, will you please rise.

#### Nays

Churley, Marilyn	Marchese, Rosario	Murdoch, Bill
Hampton, Howard	Martel, Shelley	Prue, Michael
Kormos, Peter		

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 73; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** On a point of order, Speaker: It's appropriate to the motion the House just passed. This evening you, the Premier and the Lieutenant Governor are hosting the Order of Ontario Awards. I was hopeful that perhaps in these circumstances the House leader and Speaker's office would be a little more sensitive to that and maybe have the timing of the House—when I've attended these ceremonies, and I know all members who have honourees here this evening find it most disturbing when the bells are ringing for up to five minutes while we're trying to have the Lieutenant Governor present the Order of Ontario. I just offer it as a suggestion. I would encourage the government House leader and the Speaker's office to consider that in future occasions, if not this evening, out of respect.

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** Speaker, you'll be aware that up until the Harris-Eves government that was the practice of the House. It is disturbing. I've sat through a number of these ceremonies, and will endeavour to speak with the other House leaders to see if we can avoid bells going off at those times today.

**The Speaker:** Thank you for raising the point. It is in the standing orders that if we need that, we'd have to

have unanimous consent of the House, because it is a part of the standing orders here.

Having heard no motion to that effect—

**Mr Jackson:** Mr Speaker, I move that unanimous consent be granted that the House reconvene this evening at 7 o'clock instead of 6:45. I believe the ceremony will be concluded at that time.

**The Speaker:** I heard a "no."

1400

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### HYDRO GENERATION

**Hon David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources):** I'm very pleased to stand in my place today to make an announcement about Ontario's energy supply. As a society, we have a tremendous dependence upon electricity. The buildings we live and work in depend upon it. The subway, the streetcars, the street lights require it. The computer technology that we use for work and fun won't function without it. In one form or another, it is a key part of our very infrastructure.

With this growing dependence has come recognition of the need to produce power in environmentally safe, clean and responsible fashion. At the same time, last August's blackout brought home to us in a very dramatic way the importance of an adequate supply of reliable power, not to mention that a reliable, sustainable, competitively priced supply of electricity also means a strong and prosperous economy, an enhanced quality of life. It is these conditions that have required us to seek creative and innovative solutions.

In January of this year my colleague Dwight Duncan, the Minister of Energy, announced our intention to seek up to 300 megawatts of new renewable energy capacity as soon as possible. One of the components of meeting that goal is wind power. The wind turbine, for example, at Exhibition Place can produce enough electricity each year to light 250 homes. Since it produces no pollution, it displaces up to 380 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually. This is a proven technology that works, and they will increase our supply of renewable energy.

Another component of meeting our goal is expanding water power. Water power has always been a key part of the electricity mix. Right now, it provides 27% of the province's generating capacity. I'm convinced we can do more in both of these areas.

That is why I am pleased to announce today that our government will be making crown land available for wind and water development, and seeking ways to expand our water power capacity. Today, the Ministry of Natural Resources is posting the decision to open up crown land to wind power development on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry and is inviting interested parties to apply for crown land sites for wind farms. We're also posting a draft water power strategy that

outlines how we'll work with aboriginal communities, businesses and individuals to explore water power opportunities on crown land. By allowing wind farms on crown land and looking at ways to expand water power, we're contributing to a healthier and more prosperous Ontario for all.

Wind power is one of fastest-growing forms of energy in the world. As I've said, it does not produce greenhouse gas or other airborne emissions. It is founded upon a reliable, renewable resource that is abundant in nature and that humanity has harnessed for millennia. It is based on technology that is quite simple and has been around for centuries.

You may be wondering where and how this is going to take place. Commercial wind farms must have a consistent supply of wind in order to be viable. Wind farms will not be viable all over this province. Most crown land is located in areas with few people, such as off-shore or in remote parts of province. Areas with the most potential include the North Shore of Lake Superior and some off-shore areas in the other Great Lakes.

Any proposed turbines will be required to meet location and design criteria that reduce their visual impact and noise. Wind farm proponents will have to follow an environmental screening process to identify potential concerns, including any effects on wildlife and fish. Our intention is to provide successful applicants with a commercial wind energy lease that will be valid for a term of 25 years.

Water power has been harnessed for ages. Much of our current capacity was in place in the 1970s. Again, you may be wondering where and how we'll proceed. We're looking both to redevelop existing sites and to consider the potential of future sites. How about dams and run-of-the-river projects? There is significant potential to redevelop existing sites, potentially as much as 3,000 megawatts. In some cases it will simply involve updating aging technology.

There is still a variety of development opportunities available on crown land, including opportunities that could be developed to supplement or replace diesel generation in Ontario's remote north.

As well, the proposed strategy gives preference to the development of projects that will benefit local aboriginal communities. It encourages local aboriginal participation in new water power development.

Of course, there is also a thorough environmental review process to follow for water power that includes public consultation.

With these important safeguards in place, we are confident that we can encourage the development of renewable energy while ensuring Ontario's natural heritage is protected for future generations. We are doing our part to ensure a healthy and prosperous Ontario with a growing supply of renewable energy.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Responses?

**Mr Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I am glad to see that the minister has moved forward with this file. I know that the energy community was very concerned that it

was being shut down. I know, for example, that the Sault Ste Marie site has been in process for about four years.

One of the areas that the previous government was able to implement was wind power mapping, and I hope that's completed. Throughout Ontario, the ministry undertook to find out which sites would be best available for the communities out there to produce the energy in certain areas. Of course, though, today's announcement has nothing to do with the fact that tomorrow's price increase in electricity will be reflected within the populace at large.

Some of the other areas of concern would be the fees associated with this. If the correct fees aren't allocated, there will be individuals or companies out there that could potentially tie up sites. I would hope the minister has reviewed this so the fees would encourage those individuals who are serious about coming forward with wind power generation, as opposed to taking on the lease for a 25-year period, leasing it to other individuals and getting a fee back and/or stopping the generation from being developed on certain sites.

I believe the 25-year agreement term was something that the energy community at large was looking for. They wanted to make sure that they have a payback time, and I think that will reflect something they were asking for.

As well, I was glad to see that the off-grid communities are being considered. I know, for example, in Fort Severn, where Hudson Bay, Manitoba and Ontario essentially come together, they have diesel power generation there. They have one ship a year coming in. They are very dependent on ice roads to get their winter supplies of diesel coming up, and if there is a late freeze-up, you can't get the diesel in there. They have major restrictions.

The only concern in the off-grid communities—mostly First Nations, as the minister mentioned—would be the cost for those communities to put wind power generation in them. I would hope they would come forward to help those communities provide wind power generation to supplement the diesel power generation in those communities.

Also, the end user on the grid is a key component to this, because wind power generation can supplement, in a major way, end users. The problem there is that when you're trying to get electricity out to communities at the end of the grid, it's very costly. If they're placed in the right positions, it will be very beneficial not only to that community but to the grid as a whole.

The other area of major concern is the water power generation. I know the previous government had begun negotiations, but my understanding is that the Minister of Energy had shut down the negotiations with the MNR for the utilization of the over 600 dams that are currently in the MNR's control. What was taking place there was that these dams could be used for low-flow generation, which will supply large amounts of electricity to the grid. My understanding is that the negotiations had stopped there, but I hope it's back on line with what we are seeing here.

I know the previous government had put in place a policy that any retrofit upgrades or reconstruction of any

MNR-controlled dams would take low-flow generation into consideration. I hope that's once again on the move.

I'm glad the ministry is moving forward. I think that if they take the time to get it right, all of Ontario will benefit.

I know that my colleague Mr O'Toole has some comments regarding this as well.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** Respectfully, I think Minister Ramsay is in fact doing the right thing. In all respect, the best form of flattery is imitation, so I extend my congratulations to the former Minister of Natural Resources, Jerry Ouellette, who led this charge to make crown land an available resource for the production of wind.

For those listening and the viewer, I also commend a copy of the work that was done by an all-party committee of the select committee on alternative fuels. I should name the committee: Jim Bradley, who was on that committee, would know that this is the right move; Steve Gilchrist; Ernie Parsons; Marilyn Churley; Minister Ouellette was also on that committee.

If you want to take a look at this, I think it's an extremely important resource developed by this government as a long-term strategy. I encourage you to look specifically at sections B and B.2 of that report, dealing explicitly with water power and wind power.

**1410**

I should tell those who are interested in this generation issue that each megawatt of energy generated from wind can create 15 to 19 jobs.

Look at the leadership of other jurisdictions in the world, like Denmark and Germany. There is a long way to go, and Ontario is on the right foot under this government to develop a long-term strategy, not just for energy but for renewable energy.

I commend the minister. You are doing the right thing. You are imitating a policy that many of us have participated in, and I commend the work of the members of this select committee. Minister Bountrogianni was on that committee. Do the right thing and listen to what the opposition has to say.

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** On behalf of New Democrats, I look forward to responding to the two or three announcements that are contained in this today.

First, let me deal with the non-announcement. The non-announcement is this: With respect to crown land, the average person knows that you can log it, you can mine it and you can gravel-pit it. So the fact that you can now put up a wind turbine on it—most folks are going to say, "That's a no-brainer," and it is.

The real announcement is this: The Liberal government, whose Premier said during the election campaign that Liberals believed in public power, is now going to implement what the Conservatives were going to do. The Conservatives were going to take the best remaining water power sites and the best wind power sites and turn them over to private, profit-driven corporations. It was not going to be public power; it was going to be more of

the Enron, more of the Brascan. What did the minister say today? The best remaining water power sites are going to be turned over to private, profit-driven companies. The best wind power sites, many of which are on crown land, will be turned over to private, profit-driven companies.

The real impact of this announcement—and I say to the Conservatives once again, you should be happy. They took your energy policy, put a red wrapper on it and now they're trying to say, "This is good and wonderful for the consumers of Ontario."

Let me give one example of how bad this is. The former government sold four hydro sites on the Mississagi River to Brascan for a song. Hydroelectricity produced by falling water is the cheapest way to produce electricity. Those plants on the Mississagi River produce electricity for about half a cent a kilowatt hour. In the private, profit-driven market, Brascan turns around and sells it for six and seven cents a kilowatt hour—10 and 15 times what it costs to produce. And the people of Ontario wonder why their hydro bill is going through the roof.

The interesting thing is that the Liberals complain about what the Conservatives used to do. Not only do you not do anything to change it, but you have adopted it. You're making it your own. Conservative privatization and deregulation have now become Liberal privatization and deregulation.

There are some interesting things in this announcement to make it sound new and different. The minister says, "This will be new and different for aboriginal communities." Minister, I have to tell you, aboriginal communities like Deer Lake and Pic Mobert were developing their water sites in 1990, 1991, 1992. There is nothing new here. You want to pretend that somehow wind power will be new to First Nations. Go to Fort Severn, Big Trout Lake and Kasabonika Lake; the wind turbines are already there. There is nothing new here for First Nations.

What this is about, pure and simple, when you take all of the window dressing and red packaging off it, is that Conservatives were going to sell off the best water power sites in Ontario to their private sector friends, and Liberals are going to do the same. The Conservatives were going to turn over the best wind power potential sites to their private sector friends. Liberals are going to do the same.

The fact that we need green power is a no-brainer. The fact that provinces like Manitoba and Quebec, where they have public, not-for-profit hydro systems, are way ahead of us is evident to everyone. What is interesting is that despite what they said during the election campaign, the Liberals are adopting lock, stock and barrel the Conservative strategy of privatizing our hydro resources.

I just say to people across Ontario, the government's going to now try to tell you that this is good for you, that the hydro bill will continue to go up, that especially low-income Ontarians and modest-income Ontarians will have a hard time paying their hydro bills. The Minister of

Energy will tell you that this is a good thing. He'll even tell small business that this is a good thing. It's not a good thing. These sites should be kept under public control, operated on a not-for-profit basis so they benefit Ontarians, not your private sector friends.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Could I get some order in the House, please. Thank you.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

**Mr Ernie Eves (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr Speaker, perhaps I could get some guidance. Is the member for Thunder Bay-Superior North the new Minister of Finance? Congratulations, Michael.

I guess I'll have to stick with my original question. To the Premier: Yesterday we touched upon the fact that the Minister of Finance was relieved of his responsibilities under the Ontario Securities Commission on February 26, yet he was not relieved of his responsibilities under the three exchange acts until a week later, on March 4. Could you tell us why that was?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** The answer remains the same. Out of an abundance of caution, the ruling that we received from the Integrity Commissioner was that removing the Minister of Finance from his responsibilities for the OSC directly was the appropriate and responsible thing to do, but we thought that we should take an additional step beyond that, although it was not called for, and that's the reason we took that step.

**Mr Eves:** The Minister of Finance was placed in a position of potential conflict for those seven days with respect to his responsibilities under those three exchange acts. Can you explain to us and to the people of Ontario why you left him in that position of conflict for seven days?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** Again, the Integrity Commissioner specifically stated that the Minister of Finance was not in a position of conflict, that he did not contravene the Members' Integrity Act. Again, all I can say, notwithstanding the recurring interest on the part of the leader of the official opposition, is that the Integrity Commissioner has spoken on this matter very, very clearly and said that the Minister of Finance has acted responsibly.

**Mr Eves:** The Integrity Commissioner said that with respect to the facts supplied to him, in his opinion, up until the date the Minister of Finance actually was relieved of his responsibilities on February 26, he was not technically in a conflict position. Did the Integrity Commissioner or anyone advise you, your staff, the Minister of Finance, his staff, that he in fact was in a conflict position with respect to those three exchange acts and that's why on March 4, an order in council was

passed to relieve him of his responsibility under those three acts?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** Again, I say to the leader of the official opposition that we acted out of an abundance of caution. We went beyond the bounds, I would argue, of what was absolutely essential and made sure that the Minister of Finance was removed from any possible appearance of conflict. That's why we did that.

1420

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** New question.

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** Your stand and your standard of ethics seem to have changed from when you sat on this side of the House into the long walk on that side of the House. You promised open, transparent and, most importantly, accountable government. Yet throughout this entire Sorbara affair, day after day, members of this House, members of the opposition representing the people of the province of Ontario, have come in here to ask you questions and I don't think you've answered one of them a single time. Do you not think you have any responsibility to come into this place and answer our questions?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** I am more than pleased to entertain any questions put forward by members of the opposition, but I would think the opposition also has a corresponding responsibility to speak to those issues that weigh heavily on the minds of Ontarians. For example, they might be wondering today, asking why it is that, notwithstanding the fact we have produced information pursuant to the Salary Disclosure Act, OPG and Hydro One employees are not found on that list. They're not on that list because that previous government removed them from that transparency.

**Mr Baird:** The essence of our entire system is that the people of Ontario can hold the government of the day accountable through their elected representatives, who come here and for an hour a day have the opportunity to hold you accountable. You've said you'll entertain questions, but you're certainly not answering them. Do you not feel you have any responsibility whatsoever to have a corresponding response to a specific question?

The Minister of Finance kept you in the dark for 66 days about his conflict of interest at the OSC. By your answer to my leader, are you saying it only matters if there is a public appearance of a conflict of interest, but if there's a conflict of interest behind closed doors it's somehow OK?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** Well, it is a little bit rich getting lectured by members opposite when it comes to openness, accountability and transparency. But I will remind the member opposite: He again makes reference to this notion that the Minister of Finance somehow kept something from me, and the Integrity Commissioner addressed that very specifically. He said, "Put bluntly, it would have been manifestly wrong for you to involve yourself or your ministry in any aspect of the OSC's investigation.... In particular it would have been wrong for you to have taken it upon yourself to disclose, or to cause the disclosure of the OSC/Royal investigation."

**Mr Baird:** You have appointed a minister for democratic renewal to try to make this place more relevant, but when the most essential point of holding the government accountable is question period and you continuously, day after day, refuse to answer even the most direct question and you change the subject, I frankly wonder why we're even coming here to this place every day.

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** I didn't detect a question there. At the end of the day, the people of Ontario of course will pass judgment on just how accountable we hold ourselves to them. But I can say to the member opposite and to his colleagues that I will not try to dictate to them when it comes to the questions they put to me. I will do my very best to answer their questions. The answers may not be pleasing to the members opposite, but I will work as hard as I can to ensure they are pleasing to the people of Ontario.

#### NUCLEAR ENERGY

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. A couple weeks ago your good friend and soulmate John Manley said that nuclear power is the way to go for Ontario. When I asked you your views, you said that nuclear power had a real future for Ontario. Yet we see today that your friends at Atomic Energy Canada still can't build nuclear reactors on time and on budget. The new reactors that they're trying to build are \$160 million over budget and over four years late. I know what that means for hydro consumers: The bill keeps going up and power is more and more unreliable. When nuclear power still can't operate on budget and on time, why are you trying to sell Ontarians more nuclear power plants?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** I know the Minister of Energy is anxious to speak to this.

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** There is a range of supply options that Ontario could consider. For instance, our government has decided to phase out coal. We're interested in reducing the SO<sub>x</sub>, the NO<sub>x</sub>, getting down greenhouse gas emissions. We have talked about natural gas and a range of alternatives. I congratulate my colleague today, because for the first time we're going to have renewable power in Ontario in a meaningful way. In addition to wind, there are other renewable sources. My colleague mentioned water, getting the most we can out of our water system. We are moving forward to ensure that we correct the supply crisis. The member will know what the IMO said today, that we'll have a real problem in 10 years. We can't waste any more time in terms of ensuring that Ontarians have adequate and reliable electricity. Our government is looking at all the possible options to ensure that that supply is adequate and moving forward.

**Mr Hampton:** I remember when I used to ask these questions of Conservative cabinet ministers and they'd do anything they could to avoid answering the question. Now we have a Liberal minister, and the specific ques-

tion is, how do you justify your endorsement of nuclear power when we know it costs more and it's unreliable? He refuses to answer the question.

John Manley said you should share the risk in the nukes when moving to private development or private involvement. Imagine, Duncan Hawthorne, head of Bruce Power, said, "Well, if we're going to build any more nuclear power plants, we'd want to be very certain that the project risk is not ours." He wants the consumers, the taxpayers of Ontario, to pick up all the risk while he picks up the profit, yet the Premier's good friend and soulmate says that that would be a good deal for Ontario. Imagine, the people pick up all the risk, the company picks up the profit and this Minister of Energy and this Premier think that's a good deal. Can you tell us why, once again, you're adopting the worst elements of the Conservative hydroelectricity strategy?

**Hon Mr Duncan:** Mr Manley's group provided the government with some advice—advice that we are taking under consideration. One thing we can't do, however, is take under advice anything that member says. This is the member who in January of this year said that coal was bad and last week said that coal should stay. That's what we said. This is the member who campaigned against private school tax credits, and what did he do on one of the first votes in this House? He voted to maintain them.

Today, the member attacked my colleague for moving aggressively on renewables and conservation. I guess we shouldn't be surprised, because in 1992 the party of the member opposite cancelled all conservation initiatives in Ontario. The member opposite has also spoken publicly against private power, but it was his government that introduced private power to Ontario and closed down the public power coming in from Conawapa, a bad decision for—

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Thank you.

1430

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** Again to the Premier—I can see the government continues to fiddle while coal burns—before the election you promised to lower auto insurance rates by 20%, but that hasn't happened. In fact, across the province, drivers are receiving renewal notices with double-digit increases. At the same time, the auto insurance corporations, your private auto insurance friends, have declared an incredible \$2.6-billion profit, a 673% increase over the year before. What is your government's answer? Rates still haven't come down 20%. Rates are still going up. Why have you broken your promise to the drivers of Ontario, while the private companies continue to hike their rates?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** It's hard to understand how the leader of the NDP can ask with a straight face a question about keeping a promise when it comes to auto insurance in Ontario. I am proud to say that we moved within, I

think it was 15 minutes of being sworn in as a government to freeze rates in Ontario. I'm very proud of the fact we moved so quickly in that regard.

All auto insurance companies filed new rates in late January. The superintendent of financial services is in the process of approving those rates and drivers will begin to benefit from the new rates, the new lower rates, starting in mid-April.

**Mr Hampton:** The Premier needs to know that the public spokesperson for the private insurance companies says that after pocketing an extra \$2.6 billion and seeing a profit increase of 673%, he likes your policy but he says to people, "Don't expect any reduction in your rates." You're right: I believe in public, not-for-profit auto insurance because in the province of Manitoba, for example, people haven't seen 50% increases. They haven't seen 20% increases. All they've seen over the last two years is a 7% increase. Rates for most people are about half what they are in Ontario. For many people, they are three and four times less than they are in Ontario.

You said you were going to reduce rates. How do you justify a \$2.6-billion increase in profits and a 673% increase in profits under your watch?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** The member opposite is a fervent and consistent champion of government-run auto insurance in every instance, in every circumstance, except when he's in government. They had five long years to bring in government-run auto insurance and they failed to do so. We acted, again, within 15 minutes of being sworn in as a government. We have committed to reducing rates by an average of 10% and we look forward to delivering on that very shortly.

#### DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

**Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** My question is for the Premier. As you know, this afternoon the standing committee on general government will be debating the member for Toronto-Danforth's motion that will authorize members of the committee to fully review the Sorbara-Royal Group Technologies affair. In your election platform, you promised the people of Ontario, "Your MPP should be free to represent your views, not just parrot the views of his or her party. We will make sure all non-cabinet MPPs are free to criticize and vote against government legislation."

You also promised to give more independence and power to legislative committees and you promised that MPPs would not be manipulated to do the bidding of the Premier and his un-elected advisers. Will you assure this house that you will not whip the government members of the standing committee to vote against Marilyn Churley's motion?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** I am very proud of our caucus. I fully expect that they will, in this circumstance and in other circumstances, vote in keeping with their very best judgment and consideration of the issue.

**Mr Wilson:** This afternoon is the first real test of your promises concerning democratic renewal. You promised openness and transparency in government. Premier, this could even be a banner day for the Liberal Party. You could actually keep a promise today by not whipping your members, doing the right thing and allowing the committee to get to the bottom of this whole mess. Do you support Marilyn Churley's motion to get to the bottom of this mess?

**Mr McGuinty:** The member speaks of this being some kind of a test for our party. I would suggest that it's going to be a test as to whether or not the members opposite can breathe any kind of life into this corpse of an issue which has no bearing whatsoever on those kinds of concerns that weigh heavily on the minds of Ontarians.

#### CAREER COLLEGES

**Mr Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I have been following an issue in the newspapers that I find quite alarming. Reports say there is a case before the Superior Court of Justice regarding alleged OSAP fraud in 1998 and 1999 involving a private career college. The newspapers are calling this case Canada's largest-ever student loan scam. What I find most alarming is the allegation that under the previous Tory government's watch, several million in student loan assistance may have flowed to bogus students enrolled in an alleged illegitimate private career college.

Minister, what is our government doing to ensure that our registered private career colleges are operating as credible institutions?

**Hon Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I'd like to thank my colleague the member representing Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale for his question. I must tell him, however, that I am unable to comment on any matter that's before the court.

I can say that the private career college sector does provide a very viable and valuable service to students in Ontario. There are some very strong colleges out there that are providing programs in business, technology, health—a variety of areas. I can also tell the member that within a few days after being appointed Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, I directed my ministry to perform detailed reviews—visits to every single one of the colleges. Those visits are almost complete now. My interest is in protecting the students and also in strong colleges.

**Mr Kular:** I understand that private career colleges are governed by the Private Career Colleges Act. Do we have any plans to review this legislation to ensure that the legislation best serves students attending these institutions?

**Hon Mrs Chambers:** The Private Career Colleges Act is 30 years old. It's time to revisit it, and I have in fact launched a review of that act. It's a significant

sector. There are almost 500 schools registered. Between 2000 and 2003, some 237 of those schools closed. On an annual basis, between 40 and 50 new schools are registered. I think we need to make sure that the act protects students and protects the good colleges.

1440

#### PHOTO RADAR

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** My question today is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, your Liberal party in its campaign document, Growing Strong Communities, never once promised Ontarians a tax grab in the form of photo radar, if elected. Yet the Premier and the Minister of Transportation seem determined to reintroduce this NDP tax grab to line the provincial coffers. We know that you believe it's a tax grab. On December 17, 1994, you actually said in the Toronto Sun, "All it's really done has made the coffers of the treasury swell with amounts of money that are starting to verge on the obscene."

Now your government is considering granting permission to municipalities to use photo radar. Can you stand in the House today in the name of community safety and give municipalities a choice on photo radar, that they can keep the money they collect from fines and, further, only direct it to front-line policing?

**Hon Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** The member should know that the responsibility for the implementation of photo radar will be that of the Minister of Transportation. I refer to the question to him.

**Hon Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** We are always interested in any measures that will improve safety on the highways and on the roads. If we ever consider photo radar, it will only be considered for safety reasons on the highways and the roads.

**Mr Dunlop:** Just for the record, I am disappointed Minister Kwinter wouldn't answer that question, because there is a clear connection between photo radar and community policing. There is no question about that. I think that at the cabinet table you have to make that distinction.

Mr Takhar, if your government foolishly ends up allowing municipalities to implement the photo radar tax grab—and we know it's a tax grab; all you gentlemen over there basically said it in the past. Gerry Phillips, for example, talked about it. Photo radar? "These are just cash machines. They're a gold mine for the province." That's Gerry Phillips on March 2, 1994.

Minister, if you allow the municipalities to implement photo radar, does this mean that this is replacing your promise to put 1,000 new police officers on the streets of our province?

**Hon Mr Takhar:** As I said earlier, we will only consider photo radar for safety reasons. It will not be considered for a cash grab, but we are always interested in any measure that will improve safety on the highways.

I would like to point out, though, that the member from Leeds-Grenville is also in favour of photo radar.

#### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr David Oraziotti (Sault Ste Marie):** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, today you announced that you would be making crown land available for wind power development. In your statement to this House you said that wind power is one of the fastest-growing forms of energy in the world. Aside from the several megawatts that I seem to have next to me here, can you tell me what sense of capacity you think this province has?

**Hon David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources):** I'd like to thank the member for Sault Ste Marie for his question, his interest in renewable energy and his astute observations about some of the members in this House. I appreciate that very much.

That's a very good question, because there is a two-pronged approach that we're taking when it comes to assessing what the wind power potential is in Ontario. First of all, we are completing, in the Ministry of Natural Resources, a wind atlas. Basically, that is an inventory of the capacity in the wind strength of this province to generate electricity. We think there is great potential here, especially, as I mentioned in my statement, around the Great Lakes, especially in the part of world where you live and further north, the North of Superior shore—great potential—but also off Lake Erie, both in the seabed of Lake Erie and also off the shore.

**Mr Oraziotti:** Minister, I am pleased to hear about our province's capacity for energy growth. I would like to address the second part of your statement dealing with the posting of the draft water power strategy. Clearly, the harnessing of water power has the potential of adding new electricity supply for all Ontarians. This could be an excellent opportunity for development in Ontario and especially in northern Ontario. How will the harnessing of hydroelectric of power benefit northern towns, cities and First Nation communities?

**Hon Mr Ramsay:** As the member knows, the generation of electricity through the power of water was one of the original sources of power for this province at Niagara Falls. Even today, we still depend upon 27% of hydro generation for our hydroelectric needs. We think we still have great potential, and as you rightly say, most of that now is in the north.

I wish we had the topography of Quebec or British Columbia, where we had great water power potential—we don't—of those provinces. The north of this province is relatively flat, but in the James Bay lowlands we have tremendous opportunity of small developments, and this is of particular interest to me because of the involvement of First Nations communities. This will be a great potential for not only replacing some of the diesel-generated power that they have in their communities, but also, working with them, the potential of a revenue stream for those communities to enhance their economic development.

## HOME CARE

**Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is for the Premier. For almost a decade, the community support agencies that improve the lives and health of our seniors in this province have been without adequate funding. Our seniors deserve the kind of support that will allow them to remain in their own homes in dignity and in comfort. In fact, you have said in your election document that you want to provide funding “to strengthen home care so that seniors can stay in their homes as long as possible.”

Mr Premier, will you commit right now, right here today to provide these community agencies with the funding that they need in order to keep our seniors healthier, more independent and better able to live in their homes? Will you commit to that, or is this to be yet another broken promise?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** I’ll refer that to the Minister of Health.

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I’d say to the honourable member, as you will know, the Minister of Finance will shortly present the budget for the province of Ontario. I will tell the honourable member that that information will be there that will be helpful, but I would also like to report to him that the talk we’ve had around here as a government is that the transformation we’re working on in health care will ask our hospitals to do only what they’re best built to do: by making investments in those complementary services at the community level, including home care. So I very much would like to support the premise of the member’s question and the language that he used there. We agree that well-functioning home care is essential to good, functioning quality health care in Ontario, and we’ll be working on this.

On one other matter: As a result of some support made available to the provinces as a result of the health accord, we do have some additional resources flowing to the province from the federal government that will enable us to make progress on that issue.

**Mr Prue:** I thank the minister for those kind words, but I’m expecting just a little bit more.

The Premier, on September 17, 2003, in a letter to an umbrella group of community support agencies called VITAL, stated, “Our commitment to home and community care rests on one simple principle—our seniors deserve access to services and supports that will allow them to remain healthy and independent.” Then he goes on to say, most importantly, “We agree that a good start would be to use the first budget to resolve the underfunding of these services by increasing the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care portion of the base funding for community support agencies by 25%.”

I ask the question again: Will you stick to your written promise and include in your first budget the \$700 million to improve the services seniors depend upon, or will seniors suffer another broken promise?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** I’m very pleased to say that the advice and direction there about using our first budget to send our signal about our commitment to home care is exactly the strategy that we’re working on. I’m pleased to say that in addition to the comments the member used about home care as a necessity for the independence of our seniors, we also recognize that for our hospitals to function properly, we need to make sure that those post-acute stays at home are properly supported as well, so that people discharged from hospitals have proper care at home to make sure that the service they received in the hospital takes and that they’re not re-admitted. I agree with the honourable member that this is an important priority for our province, and we’ll demonstrate that.

1450

## HYDRO RATES

**Mr John O’Toole (Durham):** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Tonight, at the stroke of midnight, the Liberals will break yet another promise. This time you will threaten the poor and those least able to afford them while you switch on skyrocketing electricity prices.

Minister, you know full well that back in 2002 our government responded to the needs of Ontario by introducing affordable, sustainable prices over a four-year period—a 10-point plan that capped rates at 4.3%. You will also know that it was your government, then in opposition, that unanimously supported that price cap. You say one thing to get elected and do something else once elected. It is shameful.

What are you doing for those people on fixed incomes, those poor, those small business people who are not expecting this price increase? What are you going to do for those least able to pay these unaffordable prices?

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** The member is quite right: We introduced Bill 4, which will erase the \$850-million charge to the provincial government that your failed energy policy put on the people of Ontario. My colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs had the rent bank announcement, and my colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services has \$2 million to help those low-income families. We expect that bills for the average consumer will go up by about 4% to 5%.

Finally, we’re doing something that that government never considered: conservation. We’ve built into the new price of electricity the incentive to conserve—something they never did. Our plan will create new supply and will address the \$850-million problem that that government’s policy created. Finally, our policy will ensure a reliable supply of electricity going forward into the future.

**Mr O’Toole:** That’s an absolutely shameful answer. I am appalled that you have tried to sham the people of Ontario. In fact, if the truth were known, you know full well that this is only part of an increase in price of between 9% and 27% for those least able to afford it.

I look in detail at your shameful announcement of \$2 million. You know full well that 50,000 people working

in Ontario earn less than \$20,000. Your Minister of Community and Social Services announced 650,000 people on social assistance. If I do the numbers very quickly in the limited time, that works down to less than \$2 per person per year, yet you're passing on, at a very minimum, a \$10-a-month increase. This is a shameful, embarrassing announcement on your part for the very vulnerable in our society in Ontario.

**Hon Mr Duncan:** That member was a member of a government whose first act was to cut welfare rates by 22%. That member voted on umpteen occasions to freeze the minimum wage in Ontario. That member was part of a government that created no new electricity supply in nine years.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Order. This is not a shouting period; this is question-and-answer period. I ask the Minister of Energy to complete his answer.

**Hon Mr Duncan:** That member was part of a government that allowed its backroom boys and girls to bill Ontario Hydro and Ontario Power Generation millions of dollars in untendered contracts, all of which are being paid for by low-income citizens in this province.

#### TOURISM

**Mr Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** Minister Bradley, I'd like to take this time to ask you a few questions regarding tourism in the city of Mississauga. On Friday, March 26, Mississauga released their executive summary on the Mississauga tourism premier ranked destination evaluation, the framework for which I understand was developed by your ministry. Could you please share with all of us here the process that is used to establish the framework in cities such as Mississauga?

**Hon James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism and Recreation):** The member for Mississauga East of course raises a very good question. The premier ranked destination framework is a product developed by my ministry's investment and development office. Members would know that it is a tool to assist regions in identifying the attributes needed for their destinations to be the best that they can be.

The framework is a comprehensive economic planning tool, my colleagues will remember, which assures regions that their municipal resources are being targeted at well-researched, objective and strategic areas identified through the process to enhance their tourism industry.

On top of these tools, my ministry provided funding to the city of Mississauga and its wonderful mayor, Hazel McCallion, in the amount of \$20,000 to assist in the assessment, covering predetermined costs such as production and printing of the final report. I'm pleased the city of Mississauga has completed this report.

**Mr Fonseca:** I have one further question regarding the premier ranked tourist destination evaluation. From the process, the city of Mississauga has come to a number of recommendations that it believes will help take it to the next step in becoming the premier tourist destination.

Could you please explain to myself and the other members from Mississauga how the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation will help cities such as Mississauga implement those recommendations?

**Hon Mr Bradley:** First of all, I want to indicate to the member that my ministry has already assisted the city of Mississauga through a \$100,000 tourism recovery grant to encourage businesses to hold their meetings and conventions in Mississauga.

Furthermore, my ministry will assist Mississauga in the implementation of the recommendations arising out of the tourist destination framework by having a ministry tourism consultant sit on the city's standing committee on advisory capacity. My ministry will also provide market readiness training from local tourism stakeholders and assist in promoting investment opportunities in Mississauga.

My parliamentary assistant, Tim Peterson from Mississauga South, and I look forward to working with the city of Mississauga, its fine mayor, Hazel McCallion, and council—indeed all municipalities—in enhancing their attractiveness as tourist destinations.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, your government stated in the throne speech, "Your new government understands it can only hold others to a higher standard if it subjects itself to the same standard." Do you agree?

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I think that in the days since the election, this government has held itself to a higher standard.

Since the member opposite is unable to ask a real question, I'll use this opportunity to talk. One example would be the way that we're using this legislative chamber and legislative committees to enhance the quality of legislation. In my own responsibilities we've had both Bill 8 and Bill 31 and we've used the legislative process and members from all sides of this House to travel to parts of our province that historically, under that party's government, received no opportunity for input. This is but one apt demonstration of the work that we've already done as a government.

So, yes, obviously we're holding ourselves to a higher standard—a much higher standard, certainly, than that party when they were in government.

**Mrs Witmer:** We've heard a lot of rhetoric, as we continue to hear from that minister. But the question I would put to the minister is, if you do agree, as you seem to think that you do, I ask you, why will you not amend Bill 8 and subject yourself to the higher standard that you ask of others? Why will you not commit to being accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario for ensuring accessibility to health care services, wait time guarantees and ensuring that the system is adequately funded? Why,

I ask the minister, will you not subject yourself to the same higher standards and mutual accountability?

1500

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** I'm pleased to take the opportunity to say that of course we will, in two very significant ways. First, with respect to the accountability agreements, an essential part of Bill 8, these are mutually agreed-upon agreements negotiated between both sides and have the effect of saying that in exchange for these precious resources made available by the people of Ontario, we have a set of expectations from our hospitals about what they'll provide.

Second, with respect to the Ontario Health Quality Council, for the first time in our province a government in this House is prepared to provide information to Ontarians across a broad range of indicators about how our health care system is performing, in an easy-to-read format so people can clearly see where we have room to improve and what improvements we have made.

There's one additional important point: Because each and every Ontarian must be involved in the sustainability of the future of medicare, we're going to begin to report to Ontarians on the state of the health of Ontarians, about how we're doing on priorities like stopping people from smoking, activity rates and obesity.

So yes, on the issue of accountability, this government stands there. Roy Romanow said that accountability is the missing principle of the Canada Health Act; we're delivering it.

#### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. This government has been speaking a lot about the conservation of energy. In this House and in many other places in speeches across the province, you've reiterated our commitment to reach a conservation target of 5% by 2007. Conservation, as we all know, is essential, as it helps curb our need for electricity and reduces, at peak times, the strain on our system, which we seem to need on a regular basis. What has been done by this government to encourage conservation and the demand-side management of our homes and businesses?

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** Thank you to the member for asking that question. First of all, in Bill 4, we ended the irresponsible price cap of the previous government, which gave no incentive to conservation. Secondly, as part of that bill, we incited local distribution companies with the largest investment in Canadian history in conservation: a quarter of a billion dollars will be flowing next year into conservation.

We're leading by example and will reduce our own electricity consumption in government by 10%. I should say that one of my Tory predecessors was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* as saying this about conservation: "The private sector asked us to get out of large-scale government conservation programs. Those efforts may have made the odd person feel good but they had absolutely no

effect." We think Jim Wilson was very wrong about that, as his whole policy was wrong about electricity. We're going to clean up the mess that gang left for us, starting now.

**Mr Levac:** Thank you for that answer. I look forward to your aggressive approach to conservation, as we all know it does indeed have an impact on our communities and it will indeed help us with our energy problems.

Minister, you've said repeatedly that the government would be educating the public on how to conserve energy and reduce their bills. What has been done so far and how have we been able to inform the public on this very important initiative?

**Hon Mr Duncan:** We already have dozens of tips on conservation on the Ministry of Energy's Web site. It's also going to be made available in brochure format.

*Interjection.*

**Hon Mr Duncan:** I want to say that the reaction of my predecessor—

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** The former minister seems to be very excited about this. Could we give the present minister a chance to respond? Thank you.

**Hon Mr Duncan:** I can understand why he's upset. While he veiled crown corporations like OPG and Hydro One, we lifted the veil of secrecy. While they privatized nuclear inspection services, we brought them back into public hands. While they talked about supply, they delivered none; we are. They cancelled all conservation efforts during their time in office. They talked about green energy and did nothing about it. They threw small consumers on to the volatile spot market; we're developing a plan that'll give them reliable prices going forward. Please, keep asking us questions—

**The Speaker:** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. I hope this type of demonstration is not encouraging to anybody else. When I ask you to sit, please do.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Premier, you recently promised that your government would "make it easier to access services at all stages of a child's development." The Northeast Mental Health Centre is being forced to cut services to deal with a \$2.3-million deficit, and the first round of cuts includes children. They are: the end of the district day treatment program, which provides mental health services to secondary school students; the end of mental health services for children in CAS foster homes; a reduction in mental health services for children under the age of six living in Sudbury district east, Espanola and on Manitoulin Island; a reduction in services to children who are dually diagnosed with mental illness and developmental disabilities; a reduction in the preschool speech and language service, so the waiting list for service will grow from eight months to one year.

Premier, these cuts are going to have a devastating impact on children in northeastern Ontario. When will you intervene to keep your promise to make it easier for children to access services versus losing them altogether?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** It's for the Minister of Health.

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** This is a question that was raised in the House a week or two ago by my colleague, the member from Algoma-Manitoulin. I undertook at that time to begin to work alongside my colleague who's delivering children's services in this province to see what efforts we can undertake to enhance the quality of services provided for mental health across the province of Ontario.

While I'm not in a position today to tell the member what the outcome of those deliberations are, what I am in a position to say is what I said to the member from Algoma-Manitoulin: that we take this issue seriously, recognize the concern associated with it, and we're working on it.

**Ms Martel:** Minister, if I might, I wrote to you about this issue on February 24. I haven't got a response. The cuts announced were announced last Friday, and they are but the first in a series of cuts. The next round will include adult services and community mental health services.

I remind you that your Premier made a recent promise to ensure that children could get access to services. They are going to lose these services altogether. There will be a dramatic impact on the CAS and its foster care program and a dramatic impact on the school system, because young children will come in with their speech and language skills compromised and older students will drop out because they can't get help with mental illness. You will have emergency departments being affected, because children in rural areas will have nowhere to get service and some of the most vulnerable kids, with mental illness and with developmental disabilities, will have nowhere to go to get service.

The time for discussion is over. You need to give additional funding to the Northeast Mental Health Centre. Will you do that now?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** What the member leaves out is that the problems that face our mental health system in this province started on your government's watch. The reality is—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** You don't want to hear it?

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** No, I just—they were yelling.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Order.

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** The reality, which is well known to all who are providing mental health services across this province, is that community-based mental health services have seen no increase since before Bob Rae's hair turned white. That's 1992. The reality is that our government, as we seek to bring a budget forward

and deliver on our plan for the transformation of health care services, is to enhance the quality of investments at the community level. We're working very hard on this issue.

## NURSES

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Nurse shortages are a problem throughout the north, particularly in remote and rural areas. Many communities are deemed underserved, and ensuring that people in these areas have access to nurses is challenge.

The past government introduced a plan in the 2003 budget to provide free tuition for nurses who agreed to work in underserved areas. I'll quote from the Thunder Bay Chronicle: "Kevin Crigger discovered a program last year that would pay his nursing school tuition if he worked in a community that desperately needed nurses. He liked the idea because it meant he'd be able to work at the hospital in his hometown of Dryden."

This free-tuition program has enormous potential to improve the quality of health care and access to health care in the north. Can you tell me, yes or no, are you planning on cutting this important program?

1510

**Hon Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** I refer that to the Minister of Health.

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I'm pleased to tell the member that here's the scenario: Your party, while in government, announced the program, talked about it, put it up on your Web site and never implemented it. No program was ever created that allowed applicants to file.

I spoke with the young man in Dryden who was referenced in the question and I gave him this commitment, which I repeat to the House: Our party as a government believes very strongly in the idea that we have to offer incentives to enhance service in communities, including communities like Dryden as was referenced in the question. We will align that program with a series of other initiatives to ensure that our plans for family health teams, as an example, are implemented across this province so that the people of Dryden will have the benefit not only of one single nurse but of a combination of health care professionals, working together to deliver on the very significant primary health care challenges that are facing many communities across our province.

**Mr Miller:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. You should have figured out that you're in government now, so it's your job to implement the programs. That's what you're supposed to be doing. In your election platform you promised to hire 8,000 more new nurses in Ontario. Assuming you're not going to break this promise, how then do you intend to attract these nurses to the areas where they're needed, like the underserved communities in remote and northern Ontario?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** I find it passing strange that the man from the party whose Premier said nurses were

like Hula Hoops, that they were as old-fashioned and out of date as Hula Hoops, should now be here talking about them.

On the issue of nurses, we have made extraordinary strides, and 400 or 500 new nurses have already been hired in Ontario toward our commitment to 8,000. Our determination to enhance the quality of nursing, to rebuild the foundation of nursing that was ripped apart by that party while they were in government in Ontario, has already begun. We have begun to do that.

I'm working with the Minister of Labour on health and safety initiatives because too many nurses are experiencing workplace health and safety challenges. I've indicated to the RNAO and the Ontario Nurses' Association that the nursing agenda is a huge priority for us. We've already taken steps, and we will fulfill that commitment because nurses are the heart and soul of health care.

#### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):**

My question is for the Minister of Labour. I have some serious concerns about the number of workplace fatalities reported last year. In 2003 there were 72 workplace fatalities. In the construction sector alone there were 30 workplace fatalities. I would like to know what your ministry plans to do to try to resolve this problem and make Ontario a healthier and safer place.

**Hon Christopher Bentley (Minister of Labour):**

The member for Scarborough Southwest makes some excellent points. We are determined to make our workplaces healthier and safer than they have ever been before. No person who goes to work should have to worry about what will happen in terms of their safety at the workplace.

What have we been doing? We're already hard at work. In construction, we've had 500 proactive inspections of construction sites in the greater Toronto area since mid-December. That's not all. We've hired 25 new inspectors. They'll be starting work after their training, very soon. But that's not all. A few weeks ago, I launched the Minister's Health and Safety Action Group. We will identify through these groups best practices by business and labour and work together with them to make those practices apply in workplaces throughout the province. Because of the very point my friend made with respect to construction, we will start with the action group in construction and make the workplaces on construction sites in Ontario better and safer than they've ever been before.

**Mr Berardinetti:** I thank the minister for his response. I also want to ask about health and safety in other sectors. Last year almost 100,000 people suffered injuries severe enough to force them to miss time at work. There were another 185,000 people who were injured but remained on the job. That's equivalent to almost the entire population of London. Minister, I'd like to ask you, what you are going to try to do to reverse those high numbers?

**Hon Mr Bentley:** Once again, my friend quite graphically places the enormity of the challenge before us. That 300,000 workplace accidents every year is the equivalent of the entire population of my city of London every single year. So with respect to the health and safety action groups, we have launched those. As I've indicated, we've already had the first meeting of the construction group, but there are other sectors. So on Monday last, I had the first meeting of the manufacturing group, bringing experts together from labour and business to share their best practices and make those apply throughout the province of Ontario.

My colleague the Minister of Health mentioned the challenge in health-related sectors. So tomorrow, Thursday, we have the first meeting of the health action group to bring together the people who are working on the front line of health, from the perspective of management, nurses and physicians, to make our health care facilities as safe as they can possibly be.

#### FIREFIGHTERS

**Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** My question is to the minister responsible for community safety. The minister will know, because my colleague Ted Arnott provided him with this information just a short time ago, that last week five members of the Barrie Professional Fire Fighters Association received letters encouraging them to no longer volunteer in the nearby township fire department, the Springwater fire department, which is in my riding.

Of course, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association has been doing this for a long time now, discouraging what they call double-hatting: that is, you're a full-time firefighter in one jurisdiction, and in your spare time, in a free society, you volunteer to help out a community that needs your professionalism and your expertise on their fire department.

Minister, I just ask you, since you're aware of this situation, and it's happening across the province—it has been happening a long time—what are you going to do about it?

**Hon Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I thank the member for the question. Before I give you the response that I've been working on since the day I took on this responsibility, I do not approve of anyone denying their professional experience and not going to a fire. That makes no sense.

Having said that, I have been working with the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, with AMO and with the fire chiefs to make sure that we can come up with a solution that really is fair and equitable. To that event, I have met with the professional firefighters and told them that I would like to have mediation. If we can't do that, then I'm going to bring forward legislation. But the main concern I have is to make sure that the safety of the citizens of Ontario is not put in jeopardy because of some dispute between competing factions.

**Mr Wilson:** I must say, that was a very good answer—

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Thank you. That was a nice try. Petitions.

## PETITIONS

### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I'm pleased to present yet another petition on behalf of seniors from the Black Creek Leisure Homes in Black Creek in the riding of Erie-Lincoln. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas during the election campaign, the Dalton McGuinty Liberals said they would improve the Ontario drug benefit program, but now are considering delisting drugs and imposing higher user fees; and

"Whereas the Liberal government has increased costs to seniors by taking away the seniors' property tax rebate and increased the price of hydro;

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

"The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should keep their campaign promise to improve the Ontario drug benefit program and abandon their plan to delist drugs or increase seniors' drug fees."

Beneath that of my friends Carol Smith and Ron Bathurst, I affix my signature in support.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I have a petition from my constituents in Parry Sound-Muskoka, and it says:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the community of Yearley, Ontario, within the electoral district of Parry Sound-Muskoka experiences frequent and prolonged power outages; and

"Whereas the power outages have become a health and safety issue to the residents of the community and the students who visit the outdoor education centre;

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

"That the Minister of Energy instruct Hydro One to conduct an investigation of the distribution and feeder lines that serve Yearley, and take the necessary steps to ensure reliable energy through ongoing forestry maintenance and required line improvements."

I agree with this and I add my signature.

1520

### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Liberal government was elected after promising in their election platform that they were committed to improving the Ontario drug benefit program for seniors but are now considering delisting drugs and imposing user fees on seniors; and

"Whereas prescription drugs are not covered under the Canada Health Act unless dispensed in a hospital; and

"Whereas the federal Liberal government refuses to acknowledge this as a necessary health service despite the Romanow report's strong support for a national drug program;

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

"To immediately and unequivocally commit to end plans for the delisting of drugs for coverage under the Ontario drug benefit program;

"To immediately commit to ending plans to implement higher user fees for vulnerable seniors and to improve the Ontario drug benefit plan so they can obtain necessary medications; and

"To instruct Premier Dalton McGuinty to demand more health care funding from Ottawa instead of demanding more funding from seniors."

I have signed this.

### OPTOMETRISTS

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

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario will be considering a private member's bill that aims to amend the Optometry Act to give optometrists the authority to prescribe therapeutic pharmaceutical agents for the treatment of certain eye diseases; and

"Whereas optometrists are highly trained and equipped with the knowledge and specialized instrumentation needed to effectively diagnose and treat certain eye problems; and

"Whereas extending the authority to prescribe TPAs to optometrists will help relieve the demands on ophthalmologists and physicians who currently have the exclusive domain for prescribing TPAs to optometry patients; and

"Whereas the bill introduced by New Democrat Peter Kormos (MPP—Niagara Centre) will ensure that patients receive prompt, timely, one-stop care where appropriate;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we support the bill proposing an amendment to the Optometry Act to give optometrists the authority to prescribe therapeutic pharmaceutical agents for the treatment of certain eye diseases and we urge the government of Ontario to ensure speedy passage of the bill."

I agree with the petitioners.

### SERVICES TO DEAF-BLIND PERSONS

**Mr Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** "Whereas the opportunity to communicate is fundamental to the human condition; and

“Whereas deaf-blindness, by its compounding nature, presents extraordinary and compelling human need; and

“Whereas intervention is an essential service which enables deaf-blind people to communicate; and

“Whereas CNIB Deafblind Services delivers intervention services to deaf-blind people in Ontario; and

“Whereas emergency funding by the government of Ontario to CNIB Deafblind Services is due to expire on March 31, 2004;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to:

“(1) Provide emergency funding to CNIB Deafblind Services effective immediately...;

“(2) Provide guaranteed long-term funding to CNIB Deafblind Services to allow for rational planning of services...; and

“(3) Initiate a process with CNIB to: (a) assess the long-term need of deaf-blind people for services; (b) determine an adequate level of services to address those needs; (c) commit adequate long-term funding to address the needs identified; and (d) implement a quality assurance process, with input from deaf-blind consumers, to monitor the delivery of those services.”

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** It's my pleasure to present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Durham riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario's seniors have worked long and hard to build the outstanding quality of life achieved in our province; and

“Whereas seniors' drug benefits enable older persons to lead healthier lives and avoid more extensive and expensive “care in hospitals and nursing homes; and

“Whereas, in addition to their taxes, many seniors already contribute toward their prescription drugs through deductibles and dispensing fees; and

“Whereas many seniors on fixed pensions already face higher costs through property taxes and electricity charges;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario not eliminate or reduce the provincial drug benefits provided to seniors.”

I am pleased to support this on their behalf.

#### LANDFILL

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

“Whereas the county of Simcoe proposes to construct a landfill at site 41 in the township of Tiny; and

“Whereas the county of Simcoe has received, over a period of time, the necessary approvals from the Ministry of the Environment to design and construct a landfill at site 41; and

“Whereas, as part of the landfill planning process, peer reviews of site 41 identified over 200 recommendations for improvements to design, most of which are related to potential groundwater contamination; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has on numerous occasions stated her passion for clean and safe water and the need for water source protection; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has indicated her intention to introduce legislation on water source protection, which is a final and key recommendation to be implemented under Justice Dennis O'Connor's report on the Walkerton inquiry; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has announced expert panels that will make recommendations to the minister on water source protection legislation; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment will now be responsible for policing nutrient management; and

“Whereas the citizens of Ontario will be expecting a standing committee of the Legislature to hold province-wide public hearings on water source protection legislation;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the government of Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment to immediately place a moratorium on the development of site 41 until the water source protection legislation is implemented in Ontario. We believe the legislation will definitely affect the design of site 41 and the nearby water sources.”

I'll sign my name to this as well.

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals by no means campaigned on raising the rates associated with the Ontario drug benefit program; and

“Whereas the majority of seniors, many of which live on a fixed income, cannot meet the expense of higher costs for essential medication; and

“Whereas seniors in Simcoe-Grey and across Ontario should never have to make the choice between eating and filling a prescription;

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

“To cancel any plans to raise costs for prescription drugs for our seniors and to embark on making vital medication more affordable for Ontarians.”

I agree with this petition and put my name on it.

**Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I'm pleased to present a petition with respect to seniors facing higher drug costs. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas during the election campaign the Dalton McGuinty Liberals said they would improve the Ontario drug benefit program but now are considering delisting drugs and imposing higher user fees; and

“Whereas the Liberal government has increased costs to seniors by taking away the seniors’ property tax rebate and increased the price of hydro;

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

“The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should keep their campaign promise to improve the Ontario drug benefit program and abandon their plan to delist drugs or increase seniors’ drug fees.”

Beneath the signatures of the Wagners, Brent Wigner and Judith Todd, I affix my signature in support.

#### LANDFILL

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** “Whereas the county of Simcoe proposes to construct a landfill at site 41 in the township of Tiny; and

“Whereas the county of Simcoe has received, over a period of time, the necessary approvals from the Ministry of the Environment to design and construct a landfill at site 41; and

“Whereas, as part of the landfill planning process, peer reviews of site 41 identified over 200 recommendations for improvements to the design, most of which are related to potential groundwater contamination; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has on numerous occasions stated her passion for clean and safe water and the need for water source protection; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has indicated her intention to introduce legislation on water source protection, which is a final and key recommendation to be implemented under Justice Dennis O’Connor’s report on the Walkerton inquiry; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has announced expert panels that will make recommendations to the minister on water source protection legislation; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment will now be responsible for policing nutrient management; and

“Whereas the citizens of Ontario will be expecting a standing committee of the Legislature to hold province-wide public hearings on water source protection legislation;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the government of Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment to immediately place a moratorium on the development of site 41 until the water source protection legislation is implemented in Ontario. We believe the legislation will definitely affect the design of site 41 and the nearby water sources.”

I’ll sign my name to that.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** I rise to present a petition from some constituents and some folks from greater Ottawa. It concludes:

“Therefore we, the undersigned ... demand that the new Liberal government act immediately to:

“(1) meet Ontario’s obligations under the affordable housing program agreement;

“(2) create sufficient, truly affordable new social housing that meets the needs of all low- and moderate-income Ontarians.”

I’m pleased to give this to Michael.

#### LCBO OUTLET

**Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** A petition that calls for a liquor store in Baxter:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the LCBO agency store program is intended to revitalize our small towns and villages and to provide rural consumers with responsible and convenient access to LCBO services;

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make available to the village of Baxter an LCBO agency store.”

I agree with that petition and have signed it.

1530

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I’m pleased to present yet another petition, signed by the Mulle family and Enid Crozier, as a matter of fact. I don’t know if that’s any relation to our esteemed Deputy Speaker, if he has relatives in Black Creek. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas during the election campaign the Dalton McGuinty Liberals said they would improve the Ontario drug benefit program but now are considering delisting drugs and imposing higher user fees; and

“Whereas the Liberal government has increased costs to seniors by taking away the seniors’ property tax rebate and increased the price of hydro;

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

“The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should keep their campaign promise to improve the Ontario drug benefit program and abandon their plan to delist drugs or increase seniors’ drug fees.”

In support, I affix my signature as well.

#### LANDFILL

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

“Whereas the county of Simcoe proposes to construct a landfill at site 41 in the township of Tiny; and

“Whereas the county of Simcoe has received, over a period of time, the necessary approvals from the Ministry of the Environment to design and construct a landfill at site 41; and

“Whereas, as part of the landfill planning process, peer reviews of site 41 identified over 200 recommendations for improvements to design, most of which are related to potential groundwater contamination; and

"Whereas the Minister of the Environment has on numerous occasions stated her passion for clean and safe water and the need for water source protection; and

"Whereas the Minister of the Environment has indicated her intention to introduce legislation on water source protection which is a final and key recommendation to be implemented by Justice Dennis O'Connor's report on the Walkerton inquiry; and

"Whereas the Minister of the Environment has announced expert panels that will make recommendations to the minister on water source protection legislation; and

"Whereas the Ministry of the Environment will now be responsible for policing nutrient management; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario will be expecting a standing committee of the Legislature to hold province-wide public hearings on water source protection legislation;

"We, the undersigned, call upon the government of Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment to immediately place a moratorium on the development of site 41 until the water source protection legislation is implemented in Ontario. We believe the legislation will definitely affect the design of site 41 and the nearby water sources."

I'd like to sign my name to that.

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberals by no means campaigned on raising the rates associated with the Ontario drug benefit program; and

"Whereas the majority of seniors, many of which live on a fixed income, cannot meet the expense of higher costs for essential medication; and

"Whereas seniors in Simcoe-Grey and across Ontario should never have to make the choice between eating and filling a prescription;

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

"To cancel any plans to raise costs for prescription drugs for our seniors and to embark on making vital medication more affordable for Ontarians."

I agree with this petition and I have signed it.

**Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I am pleased to read yet another petition from the good folks at Black Creek Leisure Homes in the beautiful Niagara Peninsula. Holly Beers and H.W. McKee lead off this petition, which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas during the election campaign the Dalton McGuinty Liberals said they would improve the Ontario drug benefit program but now are considering delisting drugs and imposing higher user fees; and

"Whereas the Liberal government has increased costs to seniors by taking away the seniors' property tax rebate and increased the price of hydro;

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

"The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should keep their campaign promise to improve the Ontario drug benefit program and abandon their plan to delist drugs or increase seniors' drug fees."

In support I add my signature.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### PUBLIC SECTOR SALARY DISCLOSURE

##### AMENDMENT ACT, 2003

##### LOI DE 2003 MODIFIANT LA LOI

##### SUR LA DIVULGATION

##### DES TRAITEMENTS

##### DANS LE SECTEUR PUBLIC

Mr Duncan moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 15, An Act to amend the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996 / Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur la divulgation des traitements dans le secteur public.

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** Mr Speaker, I will be sharing my lead time this afternoon with Khalil Ramal, the member for London-Fanshawe; Shafiq Qadri, the member for Etobicoke North; and my parliamentary assistant, Donna Cansfield, who is doing a remarkable job on energy conservation in her capacity as chair of the conservation action group.

This bill is about providing transparency for Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. The McGuinty government believes transparency and accountability are the best safeguards of our public services. We are making government work better for people by making it more transparent and accountable to the people of Ontario. The passage of this bill would mark another key commitment that our government has delivered to the people of Ontario. We pledged to make OPG and Hydro One subject to freedom of information and privacy as well as salary disclosure laws. Bill 15 is an important step in the delivery of positive change in our energy sector.

We are taking action today to end the secrecy at Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. The provincial government, as all members know, is the sole shareholder of these successor companies of the old Ontario Hydro. As shareholder, we feel that the operations of these companies should not be hidden from public scrutiny. Transparency and accountability are at the core of our priorities. This bill and our change to freedom of information regulations demonstrate our commitment to these key principles.

The lack of transparency and accountability at OPG and Hydro One under the former government led to a serious waste of public funds. We're cleaning up the mess left by the former government and working hard to

fix what's broken. This is just another example of how we're giving Ontarians the straight goods. We are acting decisively to ensure that Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation will be subject to the same salary disclosure rules as all other public servants—we saw those disclosures earlier today. In addition, we're making these provisions retroactive to 1999, because when we applied freedom of information to Hydro One and OPG, we found a lot of things we never imagined we'd find. Again, accountability and transparency are essential to good governance and will prevent the kind of abuse that happened under the Harris-Eves government at both of these large corporations.

The other reason, and in some ways a more important reason, is that we're committed to improving the value Ontarians get for the money they invest in their public services. We have also ensured that Hydro One and OPG are subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as I mentioned a moment ago. These actions ensure that the same rules apply to them as to other crown agencies, corporations and publicly funded organizations. We voted in favour of the original legislation some five or six years ago, and this extends it. This lifts the veil of secrecy that was left by the Tory government, and now we understand why it was left. When we saw the disclosures that have come out under freedom of information and privacy, we saw that they created a little fiefdom for their friends and political fixers to make money on untendered contracts without any opportunity for scrutiny by the public.

The McGuinty government will ensure that provincially held assets—and these are assets. This is Niagara Falls; these are our power generation assets across this great province; it's the dams on the Mattagami River; it is the nuclear assets at Bruce, Pickering and Darlington. We will ensure that those assets are managed in the best interests of the public.

We believe the people of this province have the right to access information about the activity of these two very important companies. Initiatives including aggressive conservation, new and greener sources of supply and accountability at our crown corporations will help us meet our objectives of cleaner air, consumer protection and a sustainable supply of electricity for this province moving forward. Public accountability is a key component of that.

Let me address the act in its specifics for a moment. Unlike other provincially owned companies, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation employees have not been required to disclose salaries under the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. Again, this action was taken by the Harris-Eves government after its 1998 restructuring of Ontario Hydro. Our plan is to ensure that the same rules apply here as elsewhere. We want to ensure that provincially held electricity assets are managed in the best interests of the public, with transparency and accountability being an important part of that.

**1540**

As I mentioned a moment ago, we are committed to improving the value Ontarians get for the dollars invested

in public services. In Ontario, many other provincial organizations providing public services have disclosed this kind of salary information since 1996. Municipalities, colleges, universities, hospitals, to name a few, must provide this information. It was only OPG and Hydro One that were cloaked in a veil of secrecy by the previous government. Ontarians need to know what they are paying for, whether it is through taxes or electricity rates. We are ensuring that salary information for OPG and Hydro One is treated in the same manner as other public sector organizations in the province.

The McGuinty government is proposing to retroactively make public the salaries of those who earned more than \$100,000 a year at Hydro One and OPG, going back to 1999, when those corporations came into existence following the wrap-up of the old Ontario Hydro. We are doing this to ensure consistency with other public sector organizations that have disclosed this kind of salary information since 1996. Disclosure for the years 1999 through 2003 will be required within one month of the bill receiving royal assent. I call on my friends in the Conservative Party and the NDP to give this bill speedy passage so the public can have access to this information.

When this bill, the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, came into force in 1996, all other public sector organizations had to provide, by March 31st of each year, the names, salaries and taxable benefits paid to employees who earned \$100,000 or more in the previous calendar year. The bill authorizes employers to disclose the value of taxable benefits as defined by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. That's a very important thing. We also need to know what we are spending on benefits.

I was quite astounded when, under freedom of information, we found out that OPG, even though it wasn't making money, had a one-third interest in a lease on a private box at the Air Canada Centre. Who was attending the games? Many of the members of the previous government. They were sipping on fine wines and having oysters, all the while running the company into the ground, all the while not providing for new supply. Do you know what our Premier did when we found out about this? Our Premier ordered that we get out of that lease. We are having some difficulty, but in the interim the Premier ordered me to make sure that those tickets went to kids who otherwise wouldn't get to hockey or basketball games. That is a big difference between the Tory government and the Liberal government. That is why this kind of legislation is so important.

While preaching fiscal restraint—a lot of members here are new, but I am sure they followed in the news the daily diatribes against welfare recipients, cutting welfare benefits 22%, taking away pregnant mothers' nutrition supplements on welfare, scolding public servants and unions for being greedy, and all the while millions of dollars in untendered contracts were going to Tory political hacks, veiled so the public couldn't see it. Premier Dalton McGuinty and his government have lifted the veil. Not only can the people of Ontario see what was

going on, they can smell the stench from a party that had become too comfortable in power. They can sense the hypocrisy of members speaking out about restraint and at the same time secretly availing themselves of benefits that many in the public can only ever dream of. As a result of this very progressive legislation which sheds light on these two corporations, that will never happen again.

You should also note that this act gives individuals the statutory right to request access to records in the custody and control of government institutions. This general right of access is subject to narrow and specific exemptions and exclusions contained in the act. Of course, I am now referring to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. This act protects the privacy of individuals by requiring government to follow specific rules regarding the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

It was interesting that the previous government, in shielding these two corporations from public accountability, referenced their ability to operate in the marketplace. As I said earlier, we are committed to improving the value Ontarians get for the dollars invested in public services. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act contains certain exemptions that protect confidential commercial information of corporations if disclosure could cause them harm in the marketplace.

Interestingly, in one of the cases of a former Tory political aide's contract, it had a one-page e-mail. That was the only paper, and there was nothing commercially sensitive; it was just simply giving the government of the day advice on what this or that media member thought of any particular policy. That was clearly an excuse by the previous government to keep that kind of information out of public hands. So we believe we're still protecting the commercial interests and viability of OPG and Hydro One.

I want to speak for a moment about the role of the privacy commissioner here. The Information and Privacy Commissioner has long been an advocate of ensuring transparency and accountability. We will continue to look to the commissioner for comments and suggestions as we work to ensure greater transparency and accountability in the provision of such public goods as electricity.

We also made the freedom of information requests retrospective; that is, we made them apply to years past. Again, that was important. As I indicated earlier, it raised all these issues that have now become well known in the public and have clearly branded the previous Harris-Eves government as hypocritical or certainly being of two minds when it comes to fiscal restraint: on the one hand, publicly preaching restraint; on the other hand, rewarding friends and political cronies with large contracts. As I said earlier, we have to remember that it was the same gang that was giving their friends these untendered contracts that cut social assistance benefits by 22% as one of the first acts of their government.

In conclusion, transparency and accountability are at the core of our priorities. This bill and our change to the

freedom of information regulations demonstrate our commitment to these key principles. Our government is taking action to ensure that the secrecy ends at Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. The provincial government is the sole shareholder of these successor companies to the old Ontario Hydro. As shareholders and as an elected body, we feel the operations of these companies should not be hidden from public scrutiny.

Keeping the lights on is essential to the success and well-being of our hospitals, schools, businesses and homes. If we address energy policy in a responsible way, our economy will prosper and our families will have a stronger Ontario in which to grow. Our initiatives include aggressive conservation, new supply and accountability at our crown corporations. Bill 15 will help us meet our goals on accountability and transparency.

The passage of this bill would mark another key commitment that our government has delivered to the people of Ontario. We pledged to make all provincially owned power companies subject to freedom of information and salary disclosure laws. Bill 15, this bill, is an important step in the delivery of positive change in our energy sector.

Some of the other initiatives we have looked at are aggressive conservation. My parliamentary assistant, Donna Cansfield, is here today. She is the head of our conservation action group. I want to pay special tribute to her today. The electricity conservation supply task force report called for a champion of conservation, and Donna is that champion. We are lucky in Ontario to have her working on our behalf.

As I said earlier in the House, the NDP government in 1993 cancelled all conservation programs in Ontario. The old Ontario Hydro—Maurice Strong was then the chair. Under that Rae government, they cancelled all conservation initiatives. Had the initiatives that had been put in place been followed through on, we would have saved 5,200 megawatts a year. Let me put that into perspective for you. That would have allowed us to close Nanticoke, the largest and dirtiest of our coal-firing plants, as well as some of the other coal plants—a total generation of about 7,500. That would have got us five-sevenths of the way, had the NDP simply not done such a short-sighted thing.

1550

The previous government, the Harris-Eves government—well, I quoted my predecessor, Mr Wilson, when he was the energy minister, saying in the *Globe and Mail*, “Well, the private sector said they wouldn't work. It might make a few people happy if we did this.” But the fact is, conservation does work. It works all over the world. The only place we don't have a great conservation program is in Ontario. Why? Because of the NDP and the Conservatives simply not showing any interest in it. They wanted the old ways, the old practices, where they tried to pretend you could give electricity away or subsidize the price.

I see the leader of the third party, a member of a government that introduced private power into Ontario that's still costing the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp

\$4.5 billion, a member of the third party who in January wanted the coal plants closed and last week wanted them open. In his book, *Public Power*, this member advocates the need for private sector involvement in electricity. He's been all over the board.

He was also part of a government that cancelled a deal with the province of Manitoba that would have provided run-of-the-river hydroelectricity from the Conawapa project on the Upper Churchill River in northern Manitoba, a deal that had been signed, I believe, in 1988. Had they not cancelled that, we would have another 1,250 megawatts of clean, renewable power coming into Ontario that we won't have now. I'm pleased to tell you that I'll be meeting with the energy minister from Manitoba later this week to further discuss if we can get this great project back on.

I hope the third party and the official opposition will allow speedy passage of this legislation so that we can get on to the real problems of undoing what the Conservatives and the NDP before them did, and that is to undermine our economic viability in terms of electricity. We're committed to doing the responsible thing, to bringing on new, reliable supply that will ensure we won't see the same—we had a 40% increase in the price of electricity when Mr Hampton was a member of government. Before they froze the price, it had gone up 40%.

I think that was almost as bad as the increase under the Tory government when they put small consumers on the spot market. The spot market that the Tories created hasn't worked. None of their goals have been achieved. Later this month, we'll be outlining a responsible policy in electricity that will deal with the mess created by the Tories and the NDP in hydro.

I'm proud to be part of a government that's bringing about real change. Here today, we have the opportunity to pass a bill that will allow us to keep yet another promise we made to the people of this province. I urge the Conservatives and the New Democrats to give speedy passage to Bill 15 so that we can shine the light on OPG and Ontario Hydro, so that the people of this province, the ratepayers of this province, will have the knowledge they need to make decisions with respect to the proper management of those very important assets.

I conclude my remarks and will yield the floor to my colleagues by saying that we are committed to fixing the mess we've been left. We're taking responsible steps. I am convinced that when we are finished, this province will be safer, better, have more electricity, favourably priced, and people can be reliably assured that the power will continue to come on for them.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier):** Further debate.

**Mr Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** I always like to stand up in this place to represent my great riding of London-Fanshawe. Today I am pleased to speak—

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** Frank Mazzilli was better.

**Mr Ramal:** That's OK. We're still friends. I think he did a good job in this area, and it's my turn now. Thank you, Mr O'Toole.

I am honoured to speak in support of Bill 15 for many reasons. First, the bill fulfills another Liberal commitment to the people of this province to make sure they know how much money the people who work for the government make, especially when they make over \$100,000. This bill ensures that publicly owned power companies are subject to salary disclosure laws. We are doing this differently than past governments, which tried to hide all the salaries from the people of Ontario and gave high salaries to their friends to please them or help them make more money.

Our government's agenda of positive change will mean that Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One will operate in an atmosphere of transparency and accountability. That's why I'm honoured to speak in support of this bill. We all know this is how Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One were operated by the former Conservative government. It's true, unlike other provincially owned operations, OPG and Hydro One employees have not been required to disclose salaries under the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act since 1999.

In recent months, I have learned about a lot of things going on in these companies, which have taken the hard-earned tax money from the people who work hard in this province and given it to their friends. I just spoke last week on that subject, since I learned information from the *Globe and Mail* about how the past government gave their friends money left and right, without any accountability or transparency. I will give two examples. Mr Paul Rhodes was paid \$15,000 a month to produce a few papers for that company. Also, Michael Gourley was paid \$105,000 to produce a one-page e-mail. Nobody asked him to produce any more.

Also, I have a question to the past government. They complain about that bill and our accountability and transparency, when we're trying to help the people of this province, trying to use their money effectively and wisely, to make sure we have good health care and good energy, to make sure every household in the province receives efficient electricity.

The past government paid \$2 million to the CEO of Hydro One. Before that, when the company was subject to the release of information, the CEO was receiving \$520,000. You see the difference? They want to keep that company closed and hide all the information from the people of this province just to please their friends and keep it as a company owned by the Conservative Party and the past government. That's unacceptable, because the people of this province work hard and pay taxes to enhance our education system, our health care system and our social programs.

I'm glad this government is committed to making sure that Ontarians know what they are paying for hydro and how their money is being managed. Hydro One and OPG are provincially owned assets, and those companies should be controlled and subject to all the information for the public of this province, to enhance them and to invest more money, unlike the other government. For the last eight years, they never invested one penny in order to

update those companies and buy more equipment to serve the people of this province.

**1600**

I was surprised when the honourable member from Durham was speaking about broken promises. He forgot what he was talking about: adjusting the rate to clean the up the mess created by the past government, which affected our government, our province, which we have to clean up: \$850 million, and he's complaining about that.

He was talking about the vulnerable people. He was talking about the people who live on assistance. He forgot they kept all the information secret from the public of this province and they gave their friends money left and right. At the same time he was talking about the vulnerable people of this province, they made sure to cut ODSP and cut the people living on government assistance by 21%. Now he comes today and he is talking in support of those people. When he was in government, he never thought about those people. He thought it was correct and right in order to save money. He forgot about their friends who were taking the money from OPG and Hydro One to support their own agenda.

Our government is going to operate in a different manner and a different fashion because we'll believe in these people and the people of Ontario. Our government is going to make sure that all the money we collect from the province, every penny from the taxpayers, can be invested back in the people of this province, updating hydro and the education system, enhancing health care, while also trying to spend the money wisely and efficiently.

I believe our honourable Minister of Energy is trying to do the best to protect the people in this province by introducing Bill 15. The bill will make sure every penny is spent wisely. I'm not just talking about the past government; I'm talking about the present government and the future government, because the people of this province have a right to know how their money is being spent. I am honoured to continue to support that bill because it's going to enhance and invest more money in our generation.

Also, I support the Minister of Energy when he was talking about conservation, because all the provinces of this country have that program except this province. As he mentioned, the Conservatives and NDP refused to support this program because they wanted to make sure that only their friends benefit from those corporations. They don't care about the people of this province.

I think we're going in the right direction. The Dalton McGuinty government and the Minister of Energy and his administration are going in the right direction in order to have efficient hydro and to have every penny in this government spent wisely, earnestly, accountably and with transparency, without any problem.

**Mr Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** First of all, I think there are a number of issues that are encompassed with this bill, Bill 15, An Act to amend the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. I think there are a number of aspects that this touches upon: things like access, dis-

closure, accountability, transparency, openness, the full scrutiny of the law, consistency, the public trust, and having an informed citizenry. I believe it's in this mandate of the McGuinty government that there is a new level, a new bar being set for standards of ethics, as well as a protocol of respect for parliamentary democracy. I think that is really the underlying premise of the bill we are seeking to present here.

Through you, Speaker, to the people of Ontario, it's important for them to realize that the manner in which particular successor corporations of the government of Ontario—specifically, Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One—have been funded or contracted, or how some of their consultants had been paid, is really not up to scratch—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Qaadri:** —with due respect to the MPP for Durham, who is perhaps reluctant to have the full light of day shed upon these aspects. I think this is something our government, with its proviso of putting people first, is really seeking to bring forth, again in the spirit of disclosure and full accountability.

To explain to the people of Ontario, there are already provisions that exist in what we call the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act: Individuals who are earning more than \$100,000 a year are required to disclose that fact. Somehow, perhaps for reasons best left unpronounced by the former government, that particular clause—those particular requirements, constraints and protocols—were removed from the successor corporations of Ontario Hydro, specifically Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One. My government, in an effort to bring the full light of day, full scrutiny, and as well maintaining consistency with other realms in the public service, is again imposing the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to the full extent of the law to these private fiefdoms, it seems, Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One.

I speak to you, Speaker, about the secrecy—what I would perhaps call the crony capitalism—that was really practised by the various powers that be at Ontario Power Generation and their paymasters. The honourable Minister of Energy, Dwight Duncan, called it a private fiefdom, or, as my colleague the MPP for London-Fanshawe just said, it seemed to be a private company owned and operated for the exclusive purposes of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario. I think the people of Ontario deserve to know, again in the full light of day, the number of backroom deals that occurred, and the private, untendered, non-arm's-length—not even finger-length—contracts that were awarded really need to be disclosed. Again, this is in an effort to bring consistency and uniformity with other crown agencies, crown corporations and publicly funded corporations run by the government of Ontario.

With your permission, Speaker, I would like to for a moment quote from the January 17, 1961, farewell address by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. I bring this quote to the attention of this House to really highlight the importance of disclosure and also what can go wrong

when powerful individuals reward their own without the full light of day. He said:

“This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every state-house, every office of the federal government,” and no doubt also by the MPP for Durham. “We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications....

“In the councils of government we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex”—a phrase, Speaker, as you will note, that has taken on icon status of its own. “The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

“We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals so that security and liberty may prosper together.”

#### 1610

That was 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower in his farewell address. Even though this was more than a generation ago, it seems that the previous regime, the previous government, the previous Tory-led government has still to ingest that lesson, has still to learn that lesson.

I would like to offer some particular examples of the mismanagement, the crony capitalism, the secret patronage that violated every law, both written and understood, for the government of Ontario to achieve value for its taxpaying dollar.

For example, \$276,000 was allocated for travel expenses for the former chairman of OPG; \$225,000, probably enough for eight trips around the world, was paid for communications material totalling something on the order of 10 pages; \$10,000, Speaker, of your money and mine and that of the people of Ontario, their tax-paying, hard-earned dollars, was paid for ground transportation in no less cities than Paris or Rome for a former cabinet minister, a Tory cabinet minister; and, perhaps especially egregiously, \$30,000 was paid per week—for what?—for strategic advice on the privatization of hydro.

But the great winner in all of this, the crowning achievement of the crony capitalist regime, was one Michael Gourley. He, as you may recall, is currently, first of all, I understand, a resident of the Turks and Caicos Islands, perhaps well spending his \$4.6 million that he was awarded under the crony capitalist department of the previous regime.

I quote from the *Globe and Mail*: “Michael Gourley, a Tory insider who received \$105,000 from Hydro One under an untendered contract for which the utility received only a one-page written record, says he worked hard for his pay because he also presented the company with oral advice....

“Among the records were instructions on how the chairman of Hydro One, Sir Graham Day, should feign

flattery of Mr Harris to encourage the Premier to agree with the sale”—that is, the privatization of Hydro—“as well as advice by Mr Long and Mr Toogood”—truly his works and efforts were too good—“that the utility’s shares should be deliberately underpriced so that investors would make easy money purchasing the stock.”

It is a new day in Ontario, and it is the McGuinty government and the McGuinty vision that seeks to bring access and disclosure and accountability and transparency and renewed trust in the public domain. The successor companies to Ontario Hydro, Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One, are now in a new day of light being held to a higher standard of ethics, one that I might add has been sorely missing in the province of Ontario for years and years past.

**Mrs Donna H. Cansfield (Etobicoke Centre):** It’s my pleasure to rise and speak about Bill 15, the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. This piece of legislation was actually passed in 1996. The Minister of Finance each spring under this act produces a compendium of all public sector employees who are paid \$100,000 or more in the previous year. This disclosure applies to the provincial government and to its crown agencies and corporations and publicly funded organizations such as hospitals, municipalities, school boards, universities and colleges.

I am speaking today about Bill 15 and an accompanying change to freedom of information regulations. These actions demonstrate that a core commitment of the McGuinty government is to transparency and accountability. We pledge to make all provincially owned power companies subject to freedom of information and salary disclosure laws. Bill 15 and changes to freedom of information fulfill another promise of this government.

But I would like this House and the public to see these actions in a much wider context than in those that affect just Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. Yes, there is a need for much more transparency and integrity at Ontario Hydro and at Ontario Power Generation, and Bill 15 and freedom of information changes will bring an end to the secrecy that has been par for the course in these companies. But the broader context of which I speak was outlined in the article last week in the *Toronto Star* that quoted John Kenneth Galbraith.

Mr Galbraith, at 95, has seen it all for almost a century. He says that the current era may very well be remembered for its economic scandals. Mr Galbraith, I hasten to add, was actually speaking about the US accounting scandals, but we all know his comments cannot be confined to our southern neighbours. I think I paraphrase Mr Galbraith accurately when I say corporations, including Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation, have seen the passage of power from the investors and the board of directors to management. As part of the passage, management has been allowed to design and implement “its own set of priorities, including, among other things, compensation for itself.” We, the investors and the public, are only just learning about these things. Galbraith’s view is that, “This compensation often

amounts to 'rewards that verge on larceny.'" Mr Galbraith says the blame really belongs back to the lack of ethics in some of the management, but also to the structure that has evolved within business. He says—

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Is she talking about the Liberal federal sponsorship—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That's not a point of order. The floor goes to Etobicoke Centre.

**Mrs Cansfield:** Maybe if the member from Rainy River would listen, he might learn something. Instead of all the chatting that seems to be going on, if he started to listen, he might in fact learn.

Mr Galbraith says the blame goes back, as I said, not just to the lack of ethics in some management but to the structure that has actually evolved within business. He says that unless the importance of this power shift is recognized by the public, reforms will remain inadequate. When I apply this thinking to our situation in government, I can see the truth in much of what Mr Galbraith has to say. We have allowed a structural change, and the public has not been aware of its consequences until just recently.

The changes we offer to Bill 15 and the freedom of information regulations are not only reforms of the structure but are steps that will ensure that the public does recognize the importance of reversing the errors of the structural change that is in place. They will let the public see the moments when executives and governors do not put first the interests of the company and its customers.

Mr Galbraith offers us all some very good, very sound advice. He says, "There must be surveillance of the reputable enterprise and general attention to managerial self-reward." As he indicates, and as we all know, it will be very difficult to apply that surveillance. He says that directors can't be relied on totally because they have been too willing to rubber-stamp management decisions and actions. Haven't we seen a lot of that? The investing public likewise is unable to deal with the complexity and specialization of the modern corporation and cannot be the ultimate watchdog. So it's obvious that all of must work together as ministers, members of Parliament, consumers, taxpayers, investors and advocates to keep a close watch, and we can only do this if we remove unreasonable secrecy from the corporations themselves.

**1630**

I'm not talking today about scandals. I'm not going to unveil the litany of questionable dealings by Hydro One and OPG. I'm not accusing management of scandalous behaviour. I'm not going to throw rocks. I'm building a foundation for a greater trust in one of our most important corporations. I'm speaking today about ways to apply the surveillance that Mr Galbraith says is so important for effective governance. He spoke of public corporations owned by shareholders. On paper, Hydro One and OPG have only one shareholder, the province of Ontario. In fact, there are about 12,112,000 shareholders, the total population of our province. These 12 million shareholders will find it much more difficult than other share-

holders to understand what is happening at Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation because they don't receive annual reports and, of course, they don't attend stockholder meetings. They must rely on us, members of Parliament, the government, as their only proxy to keep close watch on these companies and to protect their interests, the interests of Ontarians, these 12,112,000 people. Doesn't this give us a much more onerous task than the directors of any other public company? Of course it does. Are we not more responsible for surveillance, not less? Is it not more important then that all of us in government have an absolute duty to be more resolute, more demanding and more ethical than any other shareholder or director?

I, for one, do not want to be counted by Mr Galbraith as one of those directors who took a free lunch and rubber-stamped the decisions of the most public companies of all. This is why I believe so strongly in ending the secrecy and complexity of Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation with measures like Bill 15 and the freedom of information changes. With these measures, the operations of these companies will no longer be hidden and protected from the view of their single shareholder, this government, from all the eyes of the people of Ontario. As we do our utmost to keep the lights on in our hospitals, schools, businesses and homes, we should do our utmost to shine the light of integrity on all the operations of those companies that create and distribute our power.

The Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act was passed in 1996 and, as I indicated, each spring a compendium of public sector employees were paid. Unlike other provincially owned companies, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation employees have not been required to disclose salaries under the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. This decision was taken by the previous government after its 1998 restructuring of Ontario Hydro.

I refer you back, actually, to two comments that I would like to speak to. One was in November 1999, and it was the Premier of this province. As he indicated, "As an additional step towards open and accountable government, I announced last week that we will require full public disclosure of salaries and benefits paid to senior employees in the public sector, starting with salaries for the 1995 calendar year." We had, in fact, a previous government who believed in that disclosure, who felt that that disclosure should be there and should be recognized.

So where are we today? What has changed? Part of that change is that we now need to change what happened with the structure change within Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. Through Bill 15, Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One will be subject to the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, and disclosures will be made retroactive back to 1999. Under the retroactivity of Bill 15, disclosure for the years from 1999 through 2003 will be required within one month of the bill receiving royal assent.

In addition to Bill 15, we have changed regulations pursuant to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to ensure that the activities of Hydro One

and Ontario Power Generation are subject to freedom of information requests. Proper safeguards will be in effect to protect the truly confidential information of the corporations. Freedom of information will apply to Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation and their subsidiaries in a retrospective manner. This means that an individual may make an access request under freedom of information for records within the custody and control of the corporation, even where the records may have been created before freedom of information is applied.

The Information and Privacy Commissioner has long been an advocate of ensuring transparency and accountability. We continue to look to the commissioner for comments and suggestions as we work to ensure greater transparency and accountability.

**Mr Hampton:** I hope you're going to send a copy of this speech to Paul Martin. He probably needs to read it.

**Mrs Cansfield:** Actually, if I have to send one to Mr Martin, I'll also send one across the aisle to my colleague from Rainy River so that he may have an opportunity to read what he's been talking through for the last 15 minutes.

The McGuinty government believes transparency and accountability are the best safeguards of public service. We have a good deal of company. A good Tory by the name of the Honourable Michael Wilson, who is the chairman of the Canadian Coalition for Good Governance, said in a speech in February, "In terms of best practices, we encourage companies to provide complete disclosure on compensation. This would include not only total cash paid and options issued, but other forms of compensation such as restricted share units and any performance criteria."

This is what Bill 15 will require from Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. The executive and the directors should have no fear of the new legislation. Let me repeat that proper standards will be in effect to truly protect confidential information of the corporations. In general terms, we believe corporate planners should have a reasonable right to confidentiality and the expectation of personal privacy when they sit around the table to discuss the directions, policies, processes and practices of the company. They must have reasonable confidentiality attached to negotiations that are in process. They must be allowed to speculate about the future without being second-guessed to distraction. Directors, executives and managers must be allowed to formulate corporate opinions. However, when planning yields decisions, when negotiations become agreements, when speculation and opinion become the roadmap and hallmark of the corporation, these things will be disclosed to the public, and how they came to be should be subject to public scrutiny.

I'm not making accusations today but I can observe that secrecy inevitably creates a dark night that gives strength to those with weak ethics and irresistible temptation to those who are greedy. We cannot allow anyone to come into the night to take what they do not deserve from the homes of children, the elderly, the needy and, for that matter, the rest of us.

First, we will end the secrecy that shrouds compensation. This will help address the structural shift that Mr Galbraith criticizes so vehemently and that has so weakened good governance worldwide. Bill 15 and the freedom-of-information regulation changes will bring more light to the governance of these vital corporations. They will ensure that the same rules apply to Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One as to other crown agencies, corporations and publicly funded organizations. We will make certain that some of the money we will force Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation to spend more wisely will go to initiatives that include aggressive conservation, new and greener sources of supply and an accountability to help us meet our objectives of cleaner air, consumer protection and a sustainable supply of electricity for generations to come.

This bill is an important and integral part of the stand of the Liberal government. It means we'll be able to take the dollars and apply them to health, education, our seniors and long-term care. It will make a difference in terms of the compensation that will come. It will make a difference in terms of what will happen in the future for the children in this province. We will be able to put in place and effect those initiatives that our Minister of Health has spoken about. We will be able to look forward to the issue of new supply, which my minister, Minister Dwight Duncan, has spoken about.

I think what is probably the most important thing of all is to put some trust back into what the people of Ontario have been missing for some period of time. There is no question, when you speak to the people in your riding, that there is a concern about, "Is it true what you say you're going to do, you're going to do?" This government is committed to the comments it has made, to the directions it has taken. It has a Premier who is standing behind its position in terms of what has been committed to the people in this province. In order to do that, we have to deal with the \$5.6-billion deficit. In order to do that, we have to make sure that disclosure is there and that it's transparent and full to the public.

To do that, we must clean up our own house, in order for the people of Ontario to feel that they can have the trust in the members of Parliament who make the decisions for today and for the future of their children. This isn't going to be easy. Nobody ever said it would be. Part of our responsibilities, our obligations and our rights, for that matter, is to ensure that the financial ability of this province is sound, and that people can depend not just on today or tomorrow but on months and years to come. It's an integral part of what each of us wants in our own families and in our own homes: that kind of stability as we move forward. That's the kind of stability we're going to present in this government, and we start with something that brings forward the trust of the people through the disclosure and the transparency of Bill 15.

**1630**

I go back and remind everyone that when this bill first came, in 1995, it was the Deputy Premier of the province who stood in this House—the record is in Hansard—and

so eloquently stated the need for transparency, openness, public disclosure, and in fact included in his comments agencies such as Ontario Hydro. What happened? What happened between 1995 and 1999? What happened was that we put a shroud of secrecy around something that was happening that should have been transparent. Now we're going to open that up and allow people within this province to listen to what a previous Deputy Premier of this province said—I can read you Hansard if you'd like—that he would bring forward a transparent, open process for public disclosure, and included Ontario Hydro. What happened between 1995 and 1999 is up for the scrutiny of the public. I think it came about during an election. Having said that, the fact of the matter is that it can't be all that different for the members across the way to feel any different from the way I do on this side, because they voted for that public disclosure back in 1996. As I read Hansard and I look at the number of people who supported that public disclosure act, I believe it was unanimous on the side of Mr Eves's government.

When you read Hansard, it's interesting, some of the things you come upon. I'm going to quote Mrs Marland, who was speaking to the bill as well, on December 12, 1995: "For you to say that it's too bad you had to force this, you're quite right. It's too bad that you had to reduce yourselves to the kind of behaviour that was demonstrated in this chamber last week. We pray that the lowering of the standards and the absolute, total disrespect for what Parliament and the seat of government in this province has stood for for 200 years, whatever number of years it is—the fact is that we will never see that kind of degradation again in this chamber because we will not permit it. I can assure you of that." That's a quote. Ladies and gentlemen, I think it's time for change.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments.

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon and make a few comments on this particular piece of legislation. It's really interesting to listen to the comments of the Liberal speakers. I guess we want to call them today the perfect people with hydro, listening to Mr Duncan's statements as he tried to deflect some criticism this afternoon. Obviously, your whole policy is an exact duplication of what Jim Wilson, the former minister, had introduced under the Energy Competition Act when it broke up Hydro and looked at privatization etc. Of course, the Liberals all along—and you know it yourself—many of you have supported the trends and the policies of the former government.

I think what this act today is about is a bit of a deflection. Obviously you're trying to criticize and demonize our government. You still don't understand that you are the government now and you actually have to govern. Instead of trying to demonize us, what you're trying to do is deflect the issues away from your broken promises and away from the Chrétien-Martin Liberals in Ottawa, which of course, has been disgraceful. I haven't heard one of the speakers this afternoon, in the last hour, mention one thing about the corruption and the party policies, the party friends who have been rewarded very

heavily with the Chrétien-Martin Liberals. Now Mr Martin is trying to deflect it. You'd almost think Mr Martin had never been part of the corruption that went on in the last 10 years. Naturally he was part of it. He was the sergeant-at-arms.

So here we are, trying to deflect the problems that this government faces. Six months they've been in power and they're still trying to demonize the former government. The fact of the matter is they have broken numerous promises to the citizens of the province and they're feeling it very much. We know that in their cabinet and we know that in their caucus, members are feeling the pressures of the broken promises.

**Mr Hampton:** On behalf of New Democrats, I really want to respond to the revisionist statements of the Minister of Energy. Every time he speaks he tries to rewrite history. I simply want to quote from Hansard so that I can help him to correct his record.

The Minister of Energy would have us believe that all of the Liberals were oh, so in favour of purchasing electricity from Manitoba. But I have this quote, April 30th, 1992, when the then Liberal energy critic, someone named Dalton McGuinty, said, "We now know it is cheaper to produce this electricity in the province than it is to buy it from Manitoba. We now know that if we cancel the deal today, it's going to cost us \$82 million, but if we wait until the end of the environmental assessment hearing, it's going to cost us over \$200 million."

Who was the most ardent critic of purchasing electricity from Manitoba? None other than Dalton McGuinty, the Liberal energy critic.

The Minister of Energy wants to talk a good game about energy conservation. When the NDP government introduced an aggressive energy efficiency strategy in the early 1990s, what did Dalton McGuinty have to say? He said, "We are struggling under the weight of a recession and the government's policy of conservation is going to cause rates to go up."

Dalton McGuinty was opposed to energy conservation, opposed to energy efficiency. As much as you Liberals try to rewrite history, it's all here in Hansard. We're all in favour of openness, but I remember it was Liberals who were in favour of this policy of privatization, which led down this very road.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Ms Laurel C. Broten (Etobicoke-Lakeshore):** I'm pleased to stand today and speak in support of Bill 15, An Act to amend the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Amendment Act. The bill demonstrates our government's firm commitment to openness, accountability and transparency, because we know that that is the best way to protect our so vital public services. Ontarians, like those in my riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore, have a right to know how their government spends their money. But most importantly, they have a right to be assured that their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent in the wisest way to get the best value for those tax dollars.

The lack of transparency and accountability under the former government at OPG and Hydro One led to a

serious waste of public funds. Hearing what has happened at OPG and Hydro One shocks all of us. It is a topic of discussion in our communities and we are working hard and taking action in this government to clean up the mess that's left behind. We are not going to treat OPG and Hydro One like our own private country club. Gone are the days when our friends will be given contracts simply because they know someone at Queen's Park.

1640

It is crucial that, as we move forward, we acknowledge the importance of keeping the lights on across this province. I recently had an opportunity to speak to the industrial employers' association in my own community, and they are extremely concerned that we will ensure that we have energy in this province, that we have a responsible plan to ensure that the lights stay on in Ontario. If the lights can stay on in Ontario and we can have a sustainable and reliable supply of energy, our economy will prosper and our families will have a stronger Ontario in which to grow. This piece of legislation is a firm step in the government's taking action to ensure the future of our province. We are proud of Bill 15 and look forward to the opposition supporting it as well.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Durham has two minutes.

**Mr O'Toole:** It's going to be a pleasure in the next few minutes to have the opportunity to respond to the Minister of Energy. But in this brief time I have here now, I think it's really important to respond to the member from Kenora-Rainy River, leader of the third party, who has been here for some time. In fact, he just pointed out a few things from history and the record of the absolute contradictions we hear from the present government. When they're in opposition they say one thing, when they're in an election mode they say another thing, and then they do what they want. Talk about accountability. This is not the government of accountability. They're the government that actually set standards that are so low that there is no accountability. That was clear in evidence today, and I'll speak more of that in a couple of minutes.

But I really just want to spend a bit of time to look at the current debate. I did hear from the members from London-Fanshawe, Etobicoke North and Etobicoke Centre. I think the most cogent debate was around the member for Etobicoke Centre, who is the parliamentary assistant to energy and I believe has a very polite and respectful way of dealing with this debate.

In my view, this Bill 15, if you look at it and examine it, has a couple of things in it that are setting the pace. This government is setting a pace that everything is retroactivity. In fact, if you look at the full debate, Mr Speaker, in which you were a member of the opposition at the time, they voted in favour of the public sector disclosure act. And now they're kind of—I don't get the point of it all. In fact, if you look at the full debate and how the commercialization occurred under the Macdonald commission report and the subsequent

reorganization of hydro, and if you now look at the Manley report, you're going to see that once again they're reversing themselves at every corner. There will be more to be said, and I invite those viewing today and listening to stay tuned. I'm going to uncover the mystery of the Liberal government that you can't trust.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Etobicoke Centre has two minutes to respond.

**Mrs Cansfield:** I would like to thank the members from Simcoe North, Rainy River, Etobicoke South and Durham. All of them spoke of the need to learn from the past and move on to the future. I think it's really important that they have acknowledged and recognized that there are changes that need to take place. I think it's important that we learn, as we have heard, about the lessons of the past, because if you don't learn the lessons from the past, you're doomed to repeat them in the future. I think that's an imperative lesson we learn in the House as we listen to the debate across the room. I often wish there were more debate and less rhetoric and definitely less chatter. I'm looking forward to that opportunity to be able to stand and have that type of debate and to listen to and learn from my colleagues across the way, as well as my colleagues who have been seasoned in the House.

So, on behalf of the minister, Bill 15 will move forward. It will in fact be a bill that represents the transparency and the openness that we've made a commitment to in this government. It will in fact deal with the disclosures that need to be made. It will in fact allow the shareholders in Ontario—many of whom, as I said, don't go to annual general meetings or get reports—an opportunity to see and to view as they choose, and in fact they may ask and they may request. That hasn't happened for the last few years. That's the openness, that's the transparency, and ultimately that's the change.

I thank each of you for your comments.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do ask your indulgence to bring forward a point of personal privilege. It is—if I could direct you to explain why I haven't given notice—with respect to section 21:

“(a) Privileges are the rights enjoyed by the House collectively and by members of the House individually conferred by the Legislative Assembly Act and other statutes, or by practice, precedent, usage and custom.” It's on page 18.

“(b) Once the Speaker finds that a prima facie case of privilege exists it shall be taken into consideration immediately.

“(c) Any member proposing to raise a point of privilege,”—this is the important part—“other than one arising out of proceedings in the chamber during the course of a sessional day, shall give the Speaker a written statement of the point at least one hour prior to raising the question” of privilege.

“(d)”—it talks about your ability to rule. This is about a point of privilege arising out of the proceedings in this place.

I refer to another document, the House of Commons Procedure and Practice, edited by Robert Marleau and Camille Montpetit, published in 2000. Chapter 11, with respect to questions and privilege: “The right to seek information from the ministry of the day and the right to hold that ministry accountable are recognized as two of the fundamental principles of parliamentary government.... The importance of questions within the parliamentary system cannot be overemphasized, and the search for or clarification of information ... is a vital aspect of the duties undertaken by individual members.”

Mr Speaker, we have been raising questions in this place for five days.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That’s not a point of order.

**Mr Baird:** It’s not a point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It’s not a point of privilege, in my view.

**Mr Baird:** Can I finish making it?

**The Deputy Speaker:** If you’re referring to question period and questions and answers, I don’t believe it to—

**Mr Baird:** I’m just giving a preface.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I’ll give you a few more minutes.

**Mr Baird:** I appreciate your indulgence. This is a serious issue.

Members of this place come here. One of our primary responsibilities—this legislative branch—is to hold that executive branch accountable. In numerous attempts—I gave you the background of five days’ worth of question periods, of the standing committee on government agencies, on March 1, March 24. Then again today, it was revealed that another member had been “charged with putting the government line on a committee.” We were not able to hold this government of the day accountable, which is a fundamental part of our responsibilities—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member please take his seat? I don’t find what you’ve raised under section 21 a prima facie case of privilege.

We’ll go on with further debate. Further debate?

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I’m calling the member from Nepean-Carleton to order. Further debate?

**Mr O’Toole:** I’m somewhat shocked at the expedient ruling by the Deputy Speaker on the member from Nepean-Carleton.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We’re ready to debate Bill 15. If you’re ready to debate Bill 15, get on with it.

**Mr O’Toole:** Out of respect, I certainly will begin with Bill 15, which you can see for those viewing is really a very minor bill. Its real intent is somewhat an inside issue in terms of what really is afoot.

I really believe that in my remarks the best place to start is to look at the issue of the restructuring of OPG or Hydro One, in fact the whole electricity market—a long-standing debate, I might say, on that. All parties have had a role, everybody from Maurice Strong and the rainforest to the current John Manley.

**Mr Hampton:** John, there never was a rainforest.

**Mr O’Toole:** Well, I know.

The point that I’m making is that all parties have had their spin on this thing, and currently I believe Mr Duncan is charging in under Bill 15 under proper disclosure. You would know, Mr Speaker, because you were a member of the opposition at the time, that this House fully agreed in 1996 with the Public Sector Disclosure Act. You voted for it. You agreed with it. It’s our concept.

**1650**

I can tell you, on this side of the House, public sector disclosure: we agree; end of debate. But if you want to impugn motive and you want to drag this thing through the treachery of the messaging behind this bill, you only have to look at the back section here, section 2 of the bill. In fact, there’s a small clerical error in this bill. In subsection 2(6), it says:

“Hydro One Inc, Ontario Power Generation Inc and their subsidiaries shall do the following things with respect to 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003:

“1. Each employer shall make available for inspection by the public without charge a written record of the amount of salary and benefits paid in each year by the employer to or in respect of an employee to whom the employer paid at least \$100,000 as salary. Subsection (2) applies with respect to the record.”

Here’s the point: “It must be made available on or before the later of March 31, 2004, and the day that is one month after the date on which the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Amendment Act, 2003, receives Royal Assent.” They’ve already missed the date. In fact, on the order paper they’ve spent a lot of time on issues that aren’t—if this is an important fact, they’ve missed the date.

But there’s the retroactivity nature. They did it with the campground association, they’ve done it with private schools and those parents sending their children to religious schools. The whole retroactivity nature of this bill: In their high-mindedness, they think they have the only answer. The people of Ontario know that of 230 promises, you’ll be lucky if they deliver on two of those 230 promises. It’ll just be a bunch of Liberal rhetoric, the same as we get from Ottawa.

What were the first initiatives made by the now government in comparison to their promises? Again, they talk about accountability and they talk about transparency, but the very first thing they did in the energy file was break a promise. All the way along they voted for the price freeze of 4.3 cents, all through the election, to assure the farmers, to assure the people on fixed incomes, “No, we’re not going to do anything.” The very first thing they did was raise taxes. In fact, they raised the price without any consultation with the electorate at all. I find that retroactive, I find it regressive and I find it purely stylized liberalism for saying one thing before the election and something completely different after the election.

What’s the second litany of errors on the energy file? I believe the second litany, as has been pointed out by Mr Hampton today, is that their position on the water power

contract with Manitoba is another example of what I'd call Liberal chicanery—or “obfuscation” is a better word.

In fact, this whole file is riddled with contradictions. The third thing they did was hire their first consultant, Peter Donolo. That consultant was hired despite the fact they promised not to hire consultants.

**Mr Baird:** A Liberal consultant, a Liberal hack.

**Mr O'Toole:** A Liberal consultant. As far as I'm concerned—I won't even get into that part of it.

The fourth thing they did was hire another consultant. Who was that consultant? None other than the guy who's in charge of the whole sponsorship scandal, John Manley, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, who certainly would have known about all of Sheila's audit reports. Guess what? Not only is he the author of their policy called the Manley Report, clearly he's still an MP collecting that salary. Who is he serving? He's serving Dalton, his kissin' cousin.

Honestly, where is the benchmark? Where is the standard? As the member from Nepean-Carleton tried to bring out today, we have relentlessly tried to hold the standards, to find out what the standards of accountability are. What have we done? In questions to the leader, all he does is pull out the Integrity Commissioner's letter day after day. We've all seen it. We've all read it. We know it isn't even related to the question. But for the people at home, the people reading and the media, he's just lulling them to sleep, while at the same time, somebody in the Ontario Securities Commission, the people in the marketplace, are concerned about accountability.

I can only say to you that I honestly think the whole issue and the frustration experienced by the general government committee today, dominated by the Liberals to shut down any further debate on Mr Sorbara, causes me to lose complete confidence in the process itself.

I'm worried, because tomorrow, April Fool's Day, the Liberals are going to skyrocket prices for the senior citizens of this province, a 9% to 27% increase, and that's only the electricity charge. The local distributors are going to be charging more, probably another 10%.

For me—and I take this file extremely seriously on a policy level, not a political level—I honestly feel that what we've got to do is allow this House to talk about ethical standards, accountability and transparency, not under the guise of Bill 15, which is what we're actually talking about, but in the context of what happened today.

It was a sad day for democracy today when they shut down general government from trying to hold Mr Sorbara accountable for his wrongdoings, orchestrated right from the minions in the Premier's office—no question about it. I want to accost Mr Levac, the whip.

When I look at the Liberal election promises, what did Mr McGuinty say? This is the apple pie and corn flakes stuff here; this is in the Liberal election document, which you'd be well aware of—it's a book of conundrums. He said: “MPPs used to be respected representatives of the people. Now they are bit players manipulated to the bidding of the Premier and unelected minions.”

Mr Smitherman, now the Minister of Health, is wrenching all the power from those volunteer boards with Bill 8. Here's a case where the whip today, Mr Levac, told the six members on that committee how to vote. What did they do? They voted against democracy.

So I feel frustrated. I feel exasperated that we can't have a full debate on this thing. I really feel it's disrespectful. Quite honestly, if I reflect on this with any passion, it shows contempt, it shows arrogance, it shows disrespect for the people of Ontario. I'm heartbroken. At least if we made mistakes, we stood there and took our punishment.

Mr Smitherman is wrecking health care, the Minister of Transportation with photo radar—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr O'Toole:** I just don't get it. I look at the promises, and quite honestly, Mr Speaker, I know you to be a man of integrity, but you are ruling in the chair and I hope that you, with your indulgence, would allow me to bring some severe sincerity to this discussion.

*Laughter.*

**Mr O'Toole:** They're laughing. In fact, Mr Quadra, from Etobicoke North, is laughing.

**Mr Tim Peterson (Mississauga South):** Qaadri.

**Mr O'Toole:** Whatever.

I apologize if I mispronounced your name, but honest to God, when he spoke today, he was citing all these American experiences. The citations were all American-based, and I look at some of the people, the minions running the Premier's office. They're all frigging Americans or they're deserting the federal ship. It's starting to concern me, as it should.

**Mr Qaadri:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: There are several infringements: First, the mispronunciation of the name, which you're not actually supposed to take—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Get to the point of order.

**Mr Qaadri:** —and unparliamentary language, with “frigging,” decrying an entire—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member from Nepean-Carleton please quiet down. If the member would like to withdraw, I'll allow him to. I heard the word and I accepted it at the—

**Mr O'Toole:** I apologize. Being from a rural riding, I'm often able to use slang that—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Will the member please take his seat.

The member for Middlesex on a point of order.

**Mrs Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** I take exception to the inference that if we're from rural communities, somehow we have an inability to express ourselves.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Folks, let's get back to the debate and do what we're paid to be here to do. The member for Durham.

**Mr O'Toole:** In the sincere tone I've assumed here today—I don't think of myself as academic in any way; I

just feel that the issue here is integrity, accountability and honesty. Everything I've heard here is to defer the real debate about ethics and accountability.

It's in that vein, Mr Speaker, that I move adjournment of the debate.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'm getting a little impatient with the member for Nepean-Carleton.

The member for Durham has moved adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1701 to 1731.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour will stand and be counted by the table.

All those opposed will stand and be counted by the table.

You can be seated.

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 2; the nays are 57.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

Mr O'Toole, you have the floor.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr O'Toole:** Respectfully, it's difficult—I was so engaged in the debate on Bill 15. I brought up a couple of issues and I understand the Liberal government of the day didn't want to hear it.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr O'Toole:** Again, they will hardly listen to the opposition today. That's the real issue. Not only did it occur in the general government committee, where they shut down any questioning of the Minister of Finance, who is going to present what I call the Sorbara bogus budget—this could have happened in May. It seems to me that being elected on being more democratic and more inclusive just isn't true. It's like the 230 promises. I'm afraid the people of Ontario were hoodwinked. It is absolutely saddening.

I have to go back to the substance of the debate. When I look at Bill 15, the retroactive nature of the bill is clearly one that is troubling. It's one thing to pass legislation going forward—you have every right, in fact you have the responsibility, to do it—but what you don't have is the right to retroactively affect people who are ill-prepared for the promises you made before the election and then for the sudden shift of the wind—to speak of wind power—after the election, when you do something different.

The fact is, under the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, you know full well that in 1996 you, Mr Bradley, and others, who were at that time in opposition—arguably, some would say you should be still—voted for it. You voted for it. I know this is possibly the most important debate of this session, the whole energy debate, because it's about consistency, reliability and

safety of supply. It's about affordability for the economic part of the economy.

Going back to Bill 15, with your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I have to talk for a few moments, and for those who have chosen to stay, and I do appreciate it, I'm going to give you a bit of history that I have read on the whole electricity issue. I just happened to read it. I want the people of Ontario to understand where we are, because at the stroke of midnight tonight, you're going to be paying about 20% more.

Think of the agricultural community, the people on supply management. Think about the dairy farmer. Think about the small delicatessen that has to keep the food safe. Think about the senior citizens. Think about the frail elderly, the people who are—dare I say it?—disabled or on a fixed income. It saddens me, the chicanery that's going on.

Before the election they said 4.3 cents. They voted for it. They ran on it. The very first thing they did was to increase the price of electricity. What was it? It was a tax by another name, a cash grab. They can argue about the cost of the stranded debt, but I think it's important to put some of the history on the record.

From 1906, when Sir Adam Beck began the generation of electricity in the public domain—1906, remember that—he said his big founding principle was power at cost. What he failed to say—in the 1970s and 1980s they made an important decision to go to nuclear, and since then there's never been a project come in on time or on budget. The litany continues today.

If you look today, a very good article was brought up by the member for Kenora-Rainy River. I'm using this as his reference. This article is from the National Post, March 31. The title is "Federal Nuclear Firm \$160 Million Over Budget on New Reactors"—and they're late. In fact, they're late by four years.

Tom Adams is a person I have a great deal of respect for. He wants to do the right thing. Tom Adams, the executive director of Energy Probe "warned taxpayers will still be at risk if Ontario chooses a nuclear solution to the electricity problem and then, to guard against cost overruns, signs guaranteed price contracts for new AECL reactors." Atomic Energy Canada Ltd is a crown corporation. The shareholder of record is the federal government.

I really feel that although my riding is in a heavily nuclear—Darlington and Pickering are within the limits of Durham region. I commend the workers, the front-line people, the workers on the front line. I can tell you that Pickering is a plant that's been fraught with political interference—there's no question of that—right from the beginning of time. If you look at the best example, Bruce Power is basically a partnership, and that partnership has been successful. I think Duncan Hawthorne is doing a good job there, and I think technically that decision is something Manley recommended.

I'm going to have to speak about Manley. I have to. I have the greatest respect. I say this with all respect. It's on the public record. I understand that Mr Manley was the

Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister and was a candidate for the leadership, replacing Jean Chrétien. Then he realized Paul Martin had the thing wrapped up. Dalton McGuinty bailed him out. He offered him another job. So he didn't do the honourable thing and resign. He was hired as a consultant to the current McGuinty government.

**Mr John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I thought they weren't going to have consultants.

**Mr O'Toole:** You're right. That's absolutely right. Mr Yakabuski says the government made another promise, that they wouldn't hire consultants. Arguably that's the whole topic of this bill, Bill 15.

If you go over the history, I think the only government to really look in any serious way at the energy issue, the generation, transmission, distribution and consumption, was the Mike Harris government, difficult although it was. What did he do? I'll tell you just what he did. Yes, he did hire outside independent people to make sure they were at arm's length. Who did he hire? Donald Macdonald. Who was Donald Macdonald? He was Pierre Elliott Trudeau's Liberal finance minister. He was no crony of Mike Harris or anyone else. Macdonald brought his report in in 1996.

1740

The next major event that occurred in the restructuring of this problem was an all-party select committee called the NAOP committee, the nuclear asset optimization plan. On that all-party committee, who was the lead person representing the Liberal caucus? A person whom I have the greatest respect for—and I wouldn't mind if he was hired back as a consultant; in fact, he should be on one of the boards—Sean Conway. Sean Conway was on the committee. I believe the other members on the committee were Monte Kwinter or Gerry Phillips, or both of them, very respectable members.

In fact, Gerry Phillips should be the Minister of Finance and move Greg Sorbara out. Just get over the shadow that has stalled this House procedurally for the last two weeks. There is a shadow of ethical standards and principle. Why doesn't he just step aside? Yet there's a press release that Mr Sorbara actually told the now Premier, Mr McGuinty—Mr Sorbara, the president of the party, the guy with all the power technically, who chose most of these candidates single-handedly, basically told Dalton—Mr McGuinty, the Premier, respectfully—in fact, he waited 60 days to tell him. Talk about transparency. Yeah, right. He basically told him, before he'd done a few other things, that the corporation where he was the chair of the audit committee, that was being questioned, investigated by the Ontario Securities Commission—

**Mrs Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington):** What's this got to do with the bill that we're debating?

**Mr O'Toole:** The member from Guelph-Wellington—

**Mr Baird:** Transparency.

**Mr O'Toole:** Yeah, they don't get it. This demonstrates my issue here, that they still don't get that. They

talked during the election about democracy and accountability, yet it's just like all the 230 promises. They're not keeping one of them.

I really do think that Donald Macdonald did come up with a comprehensive report. Thank goodness at that time—I think Jim Wilson was the minister, and after that was Minister Baird. One of them—

*Interjection.*

**Mr O'Toole:** The youngest, obviously. But I remember he came to my riding and did speak to the main stakeholders of my riding, many knowledgeable people—Henry Sissons, Bob Strickert and others that I could mention—and, just for the sake of the record, did listen to them. The difficult decisions that the Minister of Energy today, Mr Duncan, has to make I think are important. In fact, I should put on the record that I'll be trying to support them, because this is about good policy, not bad politics. I can tell you on the record—I'm saying that now—I'll be supporting much of what's in Manley and your options and choices, whether it's the wind option or renewables in a general sense, to find a portfolio there and a price and a way of having the market not completely distort their economics, because they don't have the economies of scale right now.

The work done by the IIPA where they tried to implement the recovery plan, the current Candu reactor technology, needs to be examined. I say that respectfully, because I know Mr Manley, when he was industry minister, was the very guy trying to sell it. I look at Germany. Did Germany buy it? No. Did France buy it? No. Did any of the sophisticated powers looking at the nuclear option buy it? No. So how come Mr Manley now, the guy who's trying to sell it—he's probably part of the deal. This is the subtext of this debate. Mr Manley, who was the industry minister and very connected to the political elite, and still is, who probably wants to become the leader next time, after Paul does his one-term wonder—

**Mr Baird:** One term?

**Mr O'Toole:** That's what he said. One-term wonder. I'd say that Mr Manley will be back in the race and he'll be trying to sell us the same Candus—or Cannots, maybe. I would say there's almost a conflict of interest, because the submessage here is that the federal regulator, the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada, in fact the designers and architects of the Canadian nuclear option—I believe Mr Manley, in his report, did say that they should consider all manufacturers of the nuclear option.

The next major thing was the white paper, then the Energy Competition Act. Now, under the competition act, you should recognize that under the commercial—what's the name of that act?

**Mr Baird:** Concentration.

**Mr O'Toole:** No, it's not commercial concentration; that's a whole different tax issue. Under commercial tax law, private companies don't have this disclosure part. When they were trying to consider commercialization—which, by the way, is one of Manley's recommendations, having partnerships—there isn't disclosure.

I'm going to refer to the Manley report now, because the readers will get discouraged that I'm not going to make this point in the limited time I have left.

In it, John Manley—I want to get this right. Recommendation number IV.3: “That board members be remunerated in line with remuneration paid to members of boards of comparable private sector entities.” So it's right in there that if it's Direct Energy or some other private sector, publicly traded, blah, blah, blah, shareholders, then it should be disclosed—and they should be paid the same, but he also says it should be disclosed.

I have no problem with disclosure, none whatsoever. I do always want to bring this debate back to: The opposition doesn't want to hear that our Ministers of Energy, Jim Wilson and, latterly, John Baird, had crafted some of the most far-reaching changes stemming back from 1995, as I've tried to point out, and in 1996 with the Macdonald report, latterly the white paper, the competition act, the opening of the market, and Bill 210, which capped the prices, which is really what we're talking about today and which you promised to do. You voted for it because everybody was getting swamped, as you will tomorrow. Actually, it probably won't get called till May, because people won't get their energy bills until a month later. When they get the bill, this is going to be long past. You'll be on to other things and you hope the voters are going to forget.

I'll tell you, I consider that people who are working in small business, and included in that is agriculture, and people on fixed incomes, whether they're seniors or other people who have a very low income, are being exposed here. That, to me, is probably the main message I want to say in light of the market opening up tomorrow at these newer, higher prices of 10% to 25% increases. That's the essence of today's discussion.

I have to commend the EDA, who are the voice of the local distribution companies. The EDA has got some serious restructuring costs as well. They want, and Minister Dwight Duncan has allowed, rate into the system under the distributor side. The local distribution company is going to allow rate into the system. You've allowed higher prices for the electrons into the system. That goes up, the more electricity you use.

There are very few tools. The consumer today is a price-taker. At your home, I do encourage conservation. I always have; I think we always should. Conservation is an important part of the solution, no question about it.

Today the consumer has no control—none. In fact, the last thing I read was that the Minister of Energy said they're going to allow consumers to buy an interval or time-of-rate meter. Those are available today. In fact, I think they should be allowed, because the consumer today—the person who's putting your bill in your house has no idea when you use electrons, if you use them at 8 o'clock in the morning or 8 at night, or 7 o'clock at night or 7 in the morning; they have no idea when you use electrons. So how can you charge them different prices unless there's a mechanism for determining when they use them? A time-of-rate meter is a solution I will support.

The solution I have a problem with is who's going to pay for them. Is that yet another cost to consumers who are already straining under the 10% to 30% increase in the price of electricity, and you're going to whack it to them again? What you've done here, and what you've done right from the beginning, since October 2, is increased taxes, increased fees. Now you've got photo radar. Pretty soon you're going to have red-light cameras. You're going to have Big Brother watching you and cleaning you out.

Where's the money going? I agree totally with accountability and transparency. I just think that if you really want to get to it—and no criticism intended here, of course, of Mr Manley because, as I said, in many regards I've completely read his report. In fact, I'm going to go through in the few minutes left what the readers should know.

There's recommendation III.6, “That OPG as a regulated company has a capital structure similar to other regulated commercial utilities.” That's subtext for privatization. I don't have a problem with that as long as they're regulated. As long as they're fully accountable, no problem.

#### 1750

“Recommendation III.7: That as soon as practical the OPG board present a plan, with time frames, to the shareholder”—that's the taxpayers—“for reorganizing the company into two principal operating divisions and winding down non-core business units.”

There's another one here that's very important, IV.1: “That the OPG board consist of up to 12,” politically appointed, “directors ... by the province and that the directors”—what would be the names? I think it's just going to be another series of people—I encourage the backbench members and I encourage the parliamentary assistant to watch these appointments. There's got to be balance. I'll be watching it like a little hawk. I'm telling you, I don't care what political affiliation, as long as their principles and ethics are transparent. I have no problem with that at all, none at all, zero. In fact, I think you'll find me a friend for the most part. As I said earlier, this to me is about good policy. I don't believe you can have that without full public input, not just on prices but on all the changes. I'd like to serve in a constructive way on any committee that's trying to bring forward real public principles where the public comes first, the consumer of Ontario comes first.

“Recommendation IV.2: That the chair serve part-time.” I have no problem with that.

Recommendation IV.3 is that the board are paid like private companies. Yeah, right. That means they're going to have to be more like private companies, which is what this bill is about. What the heck is the problem?

“Recommendation IV.4: That when new directors are needed, a committee of the board of OPG develop for shareholder consideration a list of board needs and skills.” In fact, it's going to be—hopefully not—a political donor list.

“Recommendation IV.6: That OPG each year certify and disclose senior officer employment terms, compensation, benefits and expenses.” I have no problem with that at all, but if the public sector does it, the question becomes, why doesn’t the private sector do it? Is the private partner going to disclose? Are they going to be considered in other ways for compensating these members?

This is one I have a bit of a problem with. Maybe if the minister’s here, and he’s listening—“Recommendation IV.15: That a corporate ‘governance officer’”—this is an interesting one—“be designated to assist OPG in managing governance related issues.” That could be Mr Manley’s future role. I have no idea. Since he’s not running federally, he’s sort of on leave with pay as an MP while he’s engaged to write this very comprehensive report. Some would call that double-dipping. I shouldn’t be so hard on him because I have the greatest respect for these guys who serve at great length.

“Recommendation 4.18: That the head office of OPG be reduced in size as much as possible as functions are moved to the two key operating divisions and, subject to cost-benefit analysis, be moved away from 700 University Avenue.”

That’s the complete dismantling of Sir Adam Beck’s dream. If we had done it, there would be outrage in the streets. It’s just like today. It’s a sad day for democracy. It’s this evening that’s striking me, because the Orders of Ontario are being delivered downstairs. I have three people who I know very well who have served their community and I’d like to be there to respect that—Avis Glaze, the director of education for the Pine Ridge District School Board, and others who are very deserving.

I guess, technically, there’s probably not going to be enough time to resolve a full debate on this. What I’m trying to establish here is that there’s a long history. In summation, Donald Macdonald concluded that there was \$38 million in accumulated debt. If you look at the whole complex discussion on energy and generation and all this investment issue, you’re going to find that Sir Adam Beck said power at cost. We have a \$38-billion debt. My conclusion is that it was never power at cost. It’s been subsidized since the beginning of time.

It’s probably good policy, because people, those on fixed incomes and those who have been accustomed to the strategy, need time, a transitional time, to adjust. But no, tomorrow morning the prices are going up, no question. I think they need accountability in pricing, they need transparency in prices and they need time to adjust, and we have to find a way to protect the most vulnerable.

Why do I say that? When I look at persons on fixed incomes—how are they going to manage this? It’s a question you and I are going to have to ask as elected people. We’re going to have to answer to those people. I’m concerned that there’s nothing that I’ve heard from the Ministry of Energy that’s going to give anything more than this paltry \$2-million fund, which amounts to

about two dollars per person below \$20,000 a year, to address this issue.

We all know that people need electricity to heat or cool their homes. They need electricity to cook their food and to manoeuvre with lights on. It’s conceivable that as the price goes up, consumption will go down, with no discretion. In fact, it will be shutting people off, putting them in the dark so they won’t be able to cook their food or have any quality of life.

Do those people have no voice? That’s my question here. This debate on Bill 15 is more about democracy than it appears at first glance. It’s about the lack of accountability. Their top ministerial official, Mr Sorbara, has been questioned for five days. Mr Runciman and our leader, Mr Eves, have tried to hold the government accountable. They’ve ducked it.

Today Ms Churley tried to introduce that the general government committee would actually try and have Mr Sorbara come and account before committee. It’s clear that they aren’t accountable. Bill 15 won’t change one thing in that. It’s more about embarrassing people. It’s more about doing things that are politically motivated, which is contradictory to their whole election platform. That’s why I’m discouraged—“It’s time for change,” and all this kind of stuff. I believe it is a time for change. It’s too bad, but unless they change their ways, the people of Ontario are going to turn on them.

What happened at the general government committee today is that the Liberal-dominated committee would not listen to the opposition, would not listen to the point of view of the people of Ontario. They were whipped to a vote of 6 to 2 to protect Mr Sorbara and Mr McGuinty and the minions who are running it in those offices.

There’s a whole litany that I could recount for the next hour if I were permitted. It’s in that frustration—I have no real choice. I’d like to speak as long as possible, as long as I get the Minister of Energy to listen to the people of Ontario. In my view, I have no choice but to move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr O’Toole has moved adjournment of the House.

All those in favour will say “aye.”

All those opposed will say “nay.”

In my opinion the nays have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1759 to 1829.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour will stand and remain standing.

You may be seated.

All those opposed will stand and remain standing.

You may sit down.

**Clerk of the House:** The ayes are 3; the nays are 45.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

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

*The House adjourned at 1830.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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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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Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

# CONTENTS

Wednesday 31 March 2004

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Optometrists</b>	
Mr Jackson .....	1145
Ms Martel .....	1146
<b>Kidney disease</b>	
Mr Qaadri .....	1145
<b>Post-secondary education</b>	
Ms Scott .....	1145
<b>Around the Bay race</b>	
Ms Marsales .....	1146
<b>Energy conservation</b>	
Mr Patten .....	1146
<b>Water quality</b>	
Mr Barrett .....	1146
<b>Gift to University of Western Ontario</b>	
Ms Matthews .....	1147
<b>Wilbert Keon</b>	
Mr Baird .....	1147

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Optometry Amendment Act, 2004,</b> <i>Bill 45, Mr Kormos</i>	
Agreed to .....	1147
Mr Kormos .....	1147

## MOTIONS

<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr Duncan .....	1147
Agreed to .....	1148

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Hydro generation</b>	
Mr Ramsay .....	1148
Mr Ouellette .....	1149
Mr O'Toole .....	1150
Mr Hampton .....	1150

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Conflict of interest</b>	
Mr Eves .....	1151
Mr McGuinty .....	1151
Mr Baird .....	1151
<b>Nuclear energy</b>	
Mr Hampton .....	1152
Mr Duncan .....	1152
<b>Automobile insurance</b>	
Mr Hampton .....	1152
Mr McGuinty .....	1152
<b>Democratic renewal</b>	
Mr Wilson .....	1153
Mr McGuinty .....	1153

## Career colleges

Mr Kular .....	1153
Mrs Chambers .....	1153

## Photo radar

Mr Dunlop .....	1154
Mr Takhar .....	1154

## Hydro generation

Mr Oraziotti .....	1154
Mr Ramsay .....	1154

## Home care

Mr Prue .....	1155
Mr Smitherman .....	1155

## Hydro rates

Mr O'Toole .....	1155
Mr Duncan .....	1155

## Tourism

Mr Fonseca .....	1156
Mr Bradley .....	1156

## Government accountability

Mrs Witmer .....	1156
Mr Smitherman .....	1156

## Energy conservation

Mr Levac .....	1157
Mr Duncan .....	1157

## Children's mental health services

Ms Martel .....	1157
Mr Smitherman .....	1158

## Nurses

Mr Miller .....	1158
Mr Smitherman .....	1158

## Workplace safety

Mr Berardinetti .....	1159
Mr Bentley .....	1159

## Firefighters

Mr Wilson .....	1159
Mr Kwinter .....	1159

## PETITIONS

### Ontario drug benefit program

Mr Hudak .....	1160, 1161, 1162, 1163
Mr Murdoch .....	1160
Mr O'Toole .....	1161
Mr Wilson .....	1161, 1163

### Electricity supply

Mr Miller .....	1160
-----------------	------

### Optometrists

Ms Martel .....	1160
-----------------	------

### Services to deaf-blind persons

Mr McNeely .....	1160
------------------	------

### Landfill

Mr Dunlop .....	1161, 1162
-----------------	------------

### Affordable housing

Mr Baird .....	1162
----------------	------

### LCBO outlet

Mr Wilson .....	1162
-----------------	------

## SECOND READINGS

### Public Sector Salary Disclosure Amendment Act, 2003,

*Bill 15, Mr Duncan*

Mr Duncan .....	1163
Mr Ramal .....	1166
Mr Qaadri .....	1167
Mrs Cansfield .....	1168, 1172
Mr Dunlop .....	1171
Mr Hampton .....	1171
Ms Broten .....	1171
Mr O'Toole .....	1172, 1173
Debate deemed adjourned .....	1178

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 31 mars 2004

### PREMIÈRE LECTURE

#### Loi de 2004 modifiant la Loi sur les optométristes,

projet de loi 45, *M. Kormos*

Adoptée .....

### DEUXIÈME LECTURE

#### Loi de 2003 modifiant la Loi sur la divulgaration des traitements dans le secteur public,

projet de loi 15, *M. Duncan*

Débat présumé ajourné .....