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of Ontario

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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 7 April 2004**

**Mercredi 7 avril 2004**

Speaker  
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président  
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk  
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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 7 April 2004

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 7 avril 2004

*The House met at 1330.*

*Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

**Mr Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** Today I will be introducing two bills that would fix the dates of future provincial elections in Ontario. Government sources have told the media that the Premier is considering legislation that would extend its current mandate beyond the promised four-year term by an extra seven months, into 2008. The two bills I will introduce are identical except for one thing: They offer different dates for the next provincial elections. Those dates are October 4, 2007, and June 7, 2007. The October 4 date is the true four-year mark from the last provincial election. The June 7, 2007, date is earlier, addressing any concern regarding conflicts with elections at other levels of government.

In either case, subsequent elections would follow every four years. I am giving the members of the Legislature a choice, and I can support either bill. What I cannot support is any effort of this government to break yet another election pledge by stretching out the time in office well beyond their promised four-year term. I don't think the people of Ontario can afford this government for that long.

The legislation I will introduce would also allow for early elections as a result of non-confidence votes. However, I am incorporating one essential safeguard against any government that might be tempted to engineer a vote on a confidence matter. My legislation would require a majority of the Legislature and a majority of the opposition to support a non-confidence motion in order for an election to be triggered. My biggest concern is that the Premier is essentially saying, "Sure, we want elections every four years, but just not for us." I cannot accept this double standard.

#### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

**Ms Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** The Don Valley West One-Tonne Challenge is a local response to a national challenge. Every year, each Canadian produces an average of five tonnes of greenhouse gases. The emissions by individual Canadians account for approximately 28% of Canada's total. The One-

Tonne Challenge asks and pushes Canadians to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 20% or one tonne.

On March 27 of this year, interested residents of Don Valley West and field experts convened at York University's Glendon College campus for a strategy session to plot out how we can meet that target in Don Valley West. Specific suggestions were taken from the participants' discussions and were submitted to a coordinator of the Don Valley West One-Tonne Challenge, Andy Horsnell, to be incorporated into a formal proposal.

As a member of this government's conservation action team, I'm pleased to say that many of the suggestions we talked about in that meeting echo the recommendations of our conservation action team. I want to acknowledge John Godfrey, the federal member of Parliament for Don Valley West, for his efforts in spearheading the initiative in the riding and his understanding that all levels of government must be involved co-operatively. In 1999, John co-wrote a book entitled *The Canada We Want*, in which he argues for the need for Canada to have new national projects. The One-Tonne Challenge can be one such national project. However, local responses to the challenge are necessary for the initiative to move forward. I'm proud to represent a community that has embraced this challenge and has already taken concrete steps to ensure that we do our part. We're ready to take the next step, and we hope that our example will encourage other ridings to do the same.

#### MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I rise to express the concern of motorcyclists all over this province with rapidly rising insurance costs. Over the past two years alone, the premiums for mandatory insurance coverage for motorcyclists have increased an average of over 40%.

A constituent's letter I recently received exemplifies the seriousness of the situation. Between last December and March of this year, the quote he received from his insurance company had increased from \$1,300 to \$2,325, due to a rate increase on February 1, 2004. Meanwhile, he, like many other motorcyclists in Ontario, was under the impression that the Liberal government had frozen insurance rates for motor vehicles, which by definition includes motorcycles.

This constituent is not alone. Over 250,000 people drive a motorcycle in Ontario. It is a \$1.25-billion industry that, through the manufacturers, distributors, dealers and related services, employs over 8,000 people.

Yet due to skyrocketing insurance rates, this industry has suffered significantly in past years.

In my own beautiful riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, rising insurance rates are a particular concern. Each year in early July—July 9 to July 11 this year—the town of Parry Sound is host to Canada's largest sport bike rally, attracting over 2,000 motorcyclists from all over the continent. This is an event that has become increasingly well-recognized in the sport bike community, has been a consistent source of revenue to the local economy and has become one of the summer's most important community events.

Unless these insurance rates change soon, the numbers will dwindle, and Parry Sound's local economy, like the motorcycle industry throughout this province, will suffer unnecessarily.

#### ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

**Mr Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** As a result of a relaxation in the health environment under the government of Dalton McGuinty, recently at the London Health Sciences Centre, Dr Patrick Luke and Dr Vivian McAlister performed London's first kidney-pancreas transplant on Tossa Vollrath, who suffered from type 1 diabetes for 20 years.

The results of this groundbreaking surgery have been amazing. Every night, Ms Vollrath had to hook up to a home kidney dialysis machine to cleanse her blood. Now she no longer requires such action to remain active and healthy. Her new pancreas provides regulated insulin and her new kidneys eliminate the need for dialysis. Basically, her diabetes has been cured because of this transplant. She can now enjoy her life and be happy with her family.

This is a perfect example of the London Health Sciences Centre and its physicians showcasing their expertise in the area of transplantation. I congratulate the two doctors for their performance in that surgery. Hopefully, we'll see more action in the future under this government.

#### ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAY

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** I rise in this House today to remind the government of the commitment they made in the last election, and that was the plight of the Ontario northland with regard to the Ontario Northland rail services. I said at the time, when the government announced that they weren't going to privatize the rail service, that was a step in the right direction. However, we have yet to hear from this government what its plan is when it comes to the necessary investments that are desperately needed at the ONR to increase services, so passengers from both northern and southern Ontario are able to take the train either to or from northern Ontario.

We recognize—I think all of us in this Legislature and certainly all people in northern Ontario recognize—that

the Ontario Northland can and should play an important role when it comes to not only basic transportation needs, but also when it comes to the issue of being able to develop northern Ontario, vis-à-vis the tourism industry.

So I say to the government, it's a step in the right direction. You announced that you weren't going to privatize; for that, we give you credit. But we are still waiting today for any move on the part of this government to make announcements about what kind of investments they're prepared to make when it comes to the Ontario Northland.

#### 1340

I noticed about a week ago that there were some significant announcements made when it came to the transit services of the city of Toronto. I also note that in previous governments there were announcements about investments with GO Transit. I just say that we in north-eastern Ontario are still waiting to hear from this government in order to find the investments necessary to make sure that the Ontario Northland is able to build itself into the strong viable presence that it should be in north-eastern Ontario.

#### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Citizens are concerned by the recent changes surrounding electricity in Ontario. They are outraged by the gross mismanagement of the previous government. Allow me to name but a few examples of Tory mismanagement in the past few years:

As stated in this morning's Toronto Sun, one in every three employees of OPG earned more than \$100,000 last year. What about the Tories' close friends—Tom Long, Leslie Noble and Paul Rhodes—who were paid more than \$5.6 million by Hydro One? What about the top brass at OPG, getting \$31 million in bonuses while OPG reported losses of nearly half a billion dollars in 2003? Who is footing the bill now for this Conservative mismanagement? Ontario consumers.

Our government is working hard to fix the hydro problem, whether it's by our government's initiative to conserve energy in the public workforce or whether it's by our government's plan to generate new electricity in Ontario for the first time in nine years.

The McGuinty government did not create this hydro mess, but I can tell you that we sure are cleaning it up.

#### HIGHWAY TOLLS

**Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I hope the Hansard clerks will entitle this statement "Tolls Confusion." The reason I want to speak to the issue of the highway tolls policy today is that the Minister of Transportation and his cabinet colleagues apparently are too confused to know what a tolls policy is. The fact of the matter is that over the last few days the minister and the Premier have talked about tolls with no clarity, no indication of how or where. We're getting phone calls and e-mails from across the province from people who are in the dark about what this

government's intentions really are. People don't know if they're going to be paying tolls tomorrow morning going to work or shipping their goods or going to their cottage. This is what happens when a minister simply throws out trial balloons without having regard to a clear policy statement.

Over the past few days, this minister has suggested that there may or may not be tolls on Highway 69. Yesterday, within minutes, he changed his mind on this issue. How much confidence can the people of Ontario really have in this government when from one day to the next—even within question period—they change their position on something as important as an issue like this?

Does the Minister of Transportation not understand that with each irresponsible statement, such as the ones he has been making, he is confirming further that this government has a serious leadership deficit? Does this government have a policy on tolls or not? If they do, let them be clear about what it is, and if they don't, let's work together to make sure that they do have a policy that the people of Ontario can rely on.

#### CANADIAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

**Mr Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** Team Canada struck gold again last night in the World Women's Hockey Championship. Congratulations to all the players, especially the eight team members from Ontario: Becky Kellar from Hagersville, Gillian Ferrari from Thornhill, Cheryl Pounder from Mississauga, Gillian Apps from Unionville, Jayna Hefford from Kingston, Cassie Campbell from Brampton, and Cherie Piper and Vicky Sunohara from my hometown of Scarborough. You make us all proud.

But special congratulations to their coach. Karen Hughes, another Scarboroughite, head coach of the women's national hockey team for the 2003-04 season, took her team to a smashing 2-0 finish against the US in the World Women's Hockey Championship at the Halifax Metro Centre last night. This is the eighth time in a row this team has won the world title.

Ms Hughes has been a member of Canada's international women's coaching pool since 1996. As you may remember, Ms Hughes was an assistant coach with Canada's women's Olympic team which won the gold medal at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. She also coaches the University of Toronto Varsity Blues women's team.

But here is the kicker: She is also a member of our family here at Queen's Park. Ms Hughes is a full-time employee here. She is a member of the Ontario public service and has been for 14 years now.

We're very proud of her accomplishments. We'd like to congratulate Ms Hughes and Team Canada for the great job they did last night.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** The Liberal cloud of secrecy continues to grow. Dalton McGuinty

promised open and accountable government and Dalton McGuinty has broken that promise. On March 1, Dalton McGuinty shut down an inquiry being considered for the review of the vice-chair of the Ontario Securities Commission. On March 24, Dalton McGuinty once again stepped in to ensure that there was no sunlight and no light of day on the Ontario Securities Commission. Last week, again Dalton McGuinty intervened to put a cloud of secrecy over the Sorbara affair. Apparently George Bush will let Condoleezza Rice testify, but Dalton McGuinty won't let his own finance minister testify at the general government committee. It's an absolute disgrace.

We in the opposition are forced to ask for information through access-to-information requests and we still don't get the information. We have to appeal. We have to seek mediation. We have to call upon a legislative officer of this House to step in to help this government comply with the law and release documents and information.

The latest example comes from the Premier's office, where they say they will only respond to the access-to-information request on July 8, a full week and a half after this chamber closes down for the summer.

We'll continue to expose this secretive, manipulative government for what it is.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated April 7, 2004, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to standing order 106(e)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### FIXED DATES FOR ELECTIONS (OCTOBER 4, 2007 COMMENCEMENT) ACT, 2004

##### LOI DE 2004 SUR UNE DATE D'ÉLECTION FIXE (À COMPTER DU 4 OCTOBRE 2007)

Mr Sterling moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 51, An Act to amend the Election Act to provide for elections on fixed dates commencing October 4, 2007 / Projet de loi 51, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale pour prévoir la tenue d'élections à une date fixe à compter du 4 octobre 2007.

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

**Mr Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** As I indicated before in my statement, this bill calls for the next election to be on October 4, 2007, and every other election thereafter, every four years, on the first Thursday in October, each and every year.

This bill also calls for the fact that a non-confidence motion would only be valid in terms of dissolving the Legislature if it was supported by a majority of the Legislature and a majority of the opposition, in order to prevent the governing party from engineering a non-confidence motion that they would lose.

1350

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS  
EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION ACT, 2004

LOI DE 2004  
SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'EMPLOI  
DES POMPIERS VOLONTAIRES

Mr Arnott moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 in order to protect the employment of volunteer firefighters / Projet de loi 52, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l'incendie afin de protéger l'emploi des pompiers volontaires.

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

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

All those against, say "nay."

The ayes have it.

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** Members may recall that I introduced a bill similar to this in the previous Parliament. It was Bill 130. It had more debate than any private member's bill, I think, in the history of this province, going back to 1950, but the problem persists and I'm continuing to raise this issue.

The bill amends the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, with respect to salaried firefighters who also work as volunteer firefighters. If a person is denied membership in an association of firefighters, is expelled or disciplined by the association or engages in reasonable dissent within the association in connection with this kind of dual employment, the association is not permitted to require the employer to refuse to employ the person as a salaried firefighter, terminate his or her employment as a salaried firefighter or refuse to assign the person to fire protection services. The person is also entitled to fair representation by the association. The person who believes that any of the rights has been contravened may file a complaint with the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

PROTECTION OF MINORS  
FROM SEXUALLY EXPLICIT GOODS  
AND SERVICES ACT, 2004

LOI DE 2004 SUR LA PROTECTION  
DES MINEURS CONTRE LES BIENS  
ET SERVICES  
SEXUELLEMENT EXPLICITES

Mr O'Toole moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 53, An Act to protect minors from exposure to sexually explicit goods and services / Projet de loi 53, Loi visant à protéger les mineurs contre les biens et services sexuellement explicites.

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

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** In respect to former member Bob Wood from London, who introduced this bill in June 2000, I was supportive of the bill. The bill prohibits a person from knowingly selling, offering to distribute or display sexually explicit goods or services to a minor in any premise or place. The prohibition does not affect activities in a private residence. The real intent here is to take appropriate action to protect minors from exposure to sexually explicit material.

FIXED DATES FOR ELECTIONS  
(JUNE 7, 2007  
COMMENCEMENT) ACT, 2004

LOI DE 2004  
SUR UNE DATE D'ÉLECTION FIXE  
(À COMPTER DU 7 JUIN 2007)

Mr Sterling moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 54, An Act to amend the Election Act to provide for elections on fixed dates commencing June 7, 2007 / Projet de loi 54, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale pour prévoir la tenue d'élections à une date fixe à compter du 7 juin 2007.

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

**Mr Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** This bill is identical to the other bill, except that the date is different. There would be an election on June 7, and every four years thereafter, on the first Thursday in June. This is to avoid the conflict with municipal elections that might occur in the fall. We don't want to give this government the excuse that they're going to go to a four-and-a-half-year term rather than a four-year term. This province can't afford this government that long.

**Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to seek unanimous consent to move a motion with regard to the Keele landfill site.

**The Speaker:** The member for Oak Ridges has asked for unanimous consent. I heard a no.

ANNIVERSARY OF RWANDAN  
GENOCIDE

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Being the 10th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, I believe we have unanimous consent for all three parties to make a five-minute statement to commemorate the victims.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** The government House leader has asked for unanimous consent. Agreed.

**Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Today, April 7, is the day that the United Nations, Canada and many countries around the world have chosen to mark the 10th anniversary of one of the most heinous crimes of the 20th century, the genocide of more than 800,000 people, members of the Tutsi tribe in Rwanda.

I invite my fellow Ontarians to reflect on this unspeakable crime and to express once again our horror and revulsion at this deliberate human slaughter.

The commemoration of this tragedy reminds us of the need to remain ever vigilant in protecting human life everywhere. We must promote the basic values of decency, justice and due process, which are the most effective guarantees of freedom from fear and freedom from tyranny.

Ontario is the adopted homeland of people who come from diverse parts of the world to create a better life for themselves and their families. We are a proud collection of many ancestries, histories, languages, cultures and beliefs. It is that diversity that imbues us with a particularly keen sensitivity to the fortunes of people everywhere in the world. In a very real sense, as Ontarians, our sisters and brothers live all over the globe. Together we celebrate their joys and successes. In times of sorrow, we also share their suffering and mourn their loss.

We are proud of the democratic traditions of our province. We are proud of the diversity of our heritage that contributes immensely to the vitality and prosperity of our society. We are proud that we live in one of the most culturally diverse and most successful societies in the world.

Accordingly, we are particularly appalled at the inhumanity that planned and perpetrated the massacre of 800,000 people. We are also ashamed of the inability of the world community to prevent it or even to intervene. As we reflect on this tremendous loss, we are also reminded through recent events in our own country that unchecked hate and intolerance sow the seeds of violence. They must not be allowed to take root, whether abroad or at home. We must commit ourselves to be ever vigilant against such atrocities in the future. To do otherwise would jeopardize the very values we hold dear, the very values that make us all human: truth, justice, peace.

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** Last Saturday morning, as is my normal routine, I was reading

through a stack of my weekly newspapers. I eventually got around to reading the *Globe and Mail*. In the *Globe and Mail*, there was an article that seared into the core of my being, a vision of unspeakable horror. I would expect that some members of the House would have read the same article. But if you haven't, I'd like to relate briefly some of its contents.

The article told the story of Athanasie Mukarwego, a young mother who was a high school teacher in Kigali in 1994. On April 6, just 10 years ago yesterday, she heard the news that the president of Rwanda had been killed in a plane crash. There was an ominous sense that immediately went through her community, a sense that something terrible was about to happen. Over the next 100 days the world was to witness again the atrocity of genocide, in stark contrast to the beautiful and scenic African land of Rwanda.

**1400**

Within days, Athanasie's husband, along with the other men in her community, was brutally tortured and killed because he was a Tutsi and for no other reason. His national identity card became his death warrant because it indicated he was a Tutsi. The bloodthirsty Hutu killers were not satisfied with killing the Tutsi men. In fact, later it became apparent that Hutu men who refused to participate in the killings were themselves hacked to death with machetes, as barbaric and revolting as that sounds.

After her husband was killed, Athanasie was subjected to the most dehumanizing torture that a woman could face. The rampaging Hutu mobs used her as a sex slave for 89 days, repeatedly assaulting her in her own bedroom while her children were crying in the next room. Athanasie was a Christian and is today. Understandably, while trying to endure through this ordeal, she questioned her faith. She asked herself, "Does God exist? We were always taught that God loves us. He would not have let me live through this. Clearly, he does not love me."

In the end, it was her love of her children that helped her to want to live to see the end. When the mob was finished with her, after 89 days, they took her outside intending to shoot her. One of the soldiers said to her, "Speak for the last time." She did, and she remembers every word she said: "When I see you, your youth, your strength, I pity you. You could use it to protect those who need protection, but instead you use it to kill. We are innocents. There is not even a stick in my house. No one has ever received so much as a nasty look in my house, and yet you will kill me. The others who died were innocent, and we will all go to another life, one you won't have."

They said to each other, "Why isn't this woman afraid?" She answered, "All who live must die." Her courage and humanity in the face of death stunned the killers, and they couldn't do what they had set out to do. Perhaps they finally felt revulsion at the blood on their hands. They let her go, and 10 years later she has been able to tell her story. In the end, as the article says, this is a hopeful story. Athanasie feared contracting HIV and was certain she would because of the prevalence of that

horrible disease in Africa, but she didn't and her health was eventually restored.

This former high school teacher now serves as a coordinator in a village called Hope, counselling women like her who were raped during the genocide. In Rwanda, there is peace between the Hutus and Tutsis. The national identity cards no longer identify people as Hutu or Tutsi but simply as Rwandan. First steps which represent national reconciliation are occurring, even as those responsible for inciting this act of genocide are being held accountable for their crimes.

As we reflect on the events of 10 years ago, I am reminded of an old adage, and perhaps I'm paraphrasing it: The only way evil can triumph is if good people are indifferent and do nothing. The Western world, the United Nations, the European Community, the Canadian government, the Canadian people, we in this House, what did we do during these infamous 100 days when evil reigned supreme in central Africa and 800,000 people were being slaughtered? Where was our expression of outrage? Where was our moral indignation? Where was our support for General Dallaire, who requested reinforcements and a revised mandate to come to the aid of the victims? What did we do? Thinking of the history of mankind, what will we do the next time this happens?

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** This commemoration today is about reminding ourselves about the genocide of over 800,000 people in Rwanda in 1994. It's hard for most of us to imagine horror and, yes, evil on such a scale, but it is very clear, historically clear, that this happened.

As the courageous Canadian General Roméo Dallaire reminds us, it happened on our watch. General Dallaire and others warned the world and, in particular, they warned the Western world about what was happening. Yet nothing was done. General Dallaire wrote that the UN Security Council members "procrastinated, bickered and cynically pursued their own selfish foreign policies."

The United Nations 1948 genocide convention obligated governments to intervene to stop this kind of killing, but still, nothing was done. It was a shocking and shameful failure, and we are marking that failure here today. The message has to be, "Never again," but this message has to mean action, not just words.

In the years after Rwanda, there have been some signs that the world is taking its responsibilities to prevent genocide more seriously. The Canadian-backed report *The Responsibility to Protect* lays out a framework for when military intervention, always a last resort, must happen. It argues that there is an international responsibility to protect civilians where the people face large-scale murder and where the state involved is unable or unwilling to prevent it.

Today there are United Nations-mandated troops in Ituri province in northeastern Congo as well as in Liberia, both of which have stopped much bloodshed. The setting up of the International Criminal Court, unfortunately rejected by the United States, is another positive step. But as United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has put it, the Security Council is still "tardy and

hesitant" when it comes to actually doing something about mass murder. We still have a long way to go.

Here in Ontario, while we are very far from Rwanda, we need to redouble our efforts to stop racism and discrimination. If people are unwilling to believe the worst about their neighbour, they are less susceptible to propaganda of the most hateful kind.

We have built a generally tolerant, peaceful society here in Canada, but recent events show that we are not immune to hate and hate crimes. We must also ensure that Canada's role in the world, our main role in the world, is to assist the international community through peacekeeping as well as building and strengthening the institutions, such as the International Criminal Court and the United Nations, that will help to prevent another Rwanda.

Many of us ignored what was going on in 1994. Perhaps there were more glamorous things happening in the world, or things which captured the headlines more easily. But the genocide of over 800,000 people is something that we cannot allow to happen again. It's clear now that we have the possibility, that we have the institutions to prevent it. We must all dedicate ourselves to that now.

**The Speaker:** Thank you for the statements. I'm going to ask all members to rise for one minute of respectful silence, and I'd also ask those in the gallery to do so.

*The House observed one minute's silence.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

1410

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** If I could at the outset, I just want to congratulate the three members for three excellent presentations on what is a true human tragedy.

I want to return to the Minister of Finance once again, to talk about the ethical scandal surrounding his involvement with Royal Group Technologies, a company that he directed for almost a decade and a company under three serious investigations, including a criminal probe.

In his letter dated February 27, Mr Justice Coulter Osborne ordered you to "ensure that you are in no way involved in any matters having to do with Royal Group Technologies and CCRA," the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. I want to ask you specifically, what have you done to comply with Mr Justice Coulter Osborne's request?

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** I will just advise the member that I've taken every step necessary to ensure that I don't have any involvement with the Canadian revenue agency in respect of anything dealing with Royal Group Technologies.

**Mr Baird:** It's a simple question and I don't think we got a clear answer. I think we want to know what spe-

cifically you have done to “ensure” that you are not involved with this scandal. You are the minister of revenue. The Ministry of Finance and the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency talk daily and conduct investigations, often jointly, and the Ontario Ministry of Finance can conduct investigations specifically themselves.

I would like you to stand in your place and inform the House of specifically what you have done to date to ensure that you, your political staff and the officials who report to you are no longer involved and at no time will involve themselves in this investigation. Will you do that, Minister?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** I’m not sure whether the acoustics are not working in this room or the member from Nepean-Carleton can’t hear. I’ve said in response to his first question, and I’ll say it again, I have taken every single step to make sure that I have no involvement in anything that might transpire with the Canadian revenue agency in any investigation relating to Royal Group Technologies.

**Hon James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism and Recreation):** What was happening when you were in the Mulroney government?

**Mr Baird:** I say to the member from St Catharines, he can talk to one of his cabinet colleagues if he wants to know what was going on in the Mulroney government.

Minister, you are accountable to the people of Ontario through their elected representatives in this House. You’ve said you have taken every measure necessary. I want to know, the people of Ontario want to know and, when there is a serious investigation by three bodies into the conduct of a company which you personally directed for 10 years, they are entitled to know what specific measures and the details of the specific measures you’ve taken to ensure that you’re not involved in this investigation. You are the chief tax man in Ontario. We want to know what your involvement is with the chief tax collector. Would you enumerate specifically to the House the specific measures that you’ve taken to distance yourself, your officials and your political staff from this investigation? Will you do that, Minister?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** I will reiterate: During the some nine years that I acted as a director of Royal Group Technologies, I acted in every single instance with the highest degree of integrity, if I might say so myself. I invite my friend from Nepean-Carleton to visit that level of integrity now and again. It will be an entirely new experience for him. I simply repeat my answer, that I have taken every step necessary to ensure that I do not put myself in a position of conflict of interest. That is my duty as a minister of the crown. That was my duty when I swore the oath as Minister of Finance and I will honour that duty every single day that I’m in this job, I tell my friend from Nepean-Carleton.

#### WASTE DISPOSAL

**Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday you introduced a bill in the House that demonstrates one more time that

your government is much more interested in spin than in demonstrating leadership. The spin begins with your reference to the Adams mine lake. One of these days we will have your Minister of Natural Resources tell you what a lake really is. What is more offensive, though, than the spin that this minister has put on this piece of legislation is the absolute, draconian provisions in this bill that rob Ontario citizens of this province of their fundamental right of action in sections 4 and 5. This minister has absolutely put the government above the law and robbed individuals, property owners in this province, of fundamental property rights and rights of action.

I want to know how the minister can justify such a draconian measure in this act that robs individuals in this province of their fundamental rights. What signal does that send to the business community, not only in Ontario but across the world?

**Hon Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of the Environment):** I recommend that the member opposite read completely the bill that was introduced two days ago in this Legislature. You would learn, honourable member, that there is also a provision in the legislation that will compensate the proponent for any out-of-pocket expenses that the proponent can demonstrate to this government. This government wants to be open and fair and transparent. That is exactly what this legislation will achieve.

**Mr Klees:** I strongly urge the minister to read her own legislation. The kind of reimbursement that the minister speaks to is pocket change compared to the kind of investment that has been made in these properties and it’s a signal. More important than the effects on this particular bill is the signal that this minister is sending as to how credible this government is with regard to property rights, with regard to fundamentally respecting contract law in the province. They’ve done it in other pieces of legislation as well. This is one more step: an assault and affront on business in this province. How can the minister justify placing herself above the law through this legislation?

**Hon Mrs Dombrowsky:** The purpose of this legislation is to protect a very important source of water in the Temiskaming area. That is the goal of the legislation. This government recognizes that there have been out-of-pocket expenses provided by the proponent and the legislation also has a very detailed list on how the proponent will be compensated when the proponent is able to demonstrate the cost. I would say that is number one—recognizing the interest of business. Most importantly, this bill is about protecting water sources and water resources in the province. It’s something that your government neglected; it’s something that this government wants to make our hallmark.

**Mr Klees:** Let me tell the minister what our government did. One of the things that our government did was to permanently close the Keele landfill site. The motion that I wanted to put earlier was exactly this: that this House reaffirm the former government’s commitment to keep the Keele landfill site permanently closed.

Members opposite, the House leader for the Liberals refused to give unanimous consent for that. I want to put it to the minister now. In light of the fact that your government refused to give us an opportunity to confirm this motion, will you stand in your place now—in light of the fact that you are willing to turn over and overturn every other piece of contract law in the province of Ontario, I don't trust your government to keep this commitment—will you stand in your place now and, for the people of York region and Ontario, confirm that you will not reopen the Keele landfill site? Will you do that today?

**Hon Mrs Dombrowsky:** First of all, I want to remind the member opposite that unlike the previous government, which tended to micro-manage and get involved in individual instances and issues, this government intends to address the issue around municipal solid waste with a comprehensive diversion plan. That is our commitment. We will assist municipalities in that regard. The member opposite knows very well that this government has committed that it will not reopen Keele, and I will do that in the House yet again today.

1420

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Before the election, you promised a better life for seniors living in nursing homes and homes for the aged. You promised an additional \$6,000 a year for each and every resident.

Seven months later, nothing has happened, except the situation has gotten worse. Seniors in Ontario nursing homes are eating sandwiches for supper because the daily food allowance of \$5.24 doesn't allow for anything more. They get a maximum of one bath or one shower a week.

These are our parents and our grandparents. They deserve to spend their last years in comfort and in dignity. So we must ask the question: Will you honour your election pledge to increase long-term-care funding, or is this going to be another of your broken promises?

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I'm pleased and honoured to have the opportunity to tell the honourable member that his assertion about the quality of care in Ontario's long-term-care facilities is just plain wrong. This government has taken steps early on in our mandate to ensure the protection of the individuals who are staying there.

He does not own the issue of compassion for those people whom we view as our parents and our grandparents and the like. Furthermore, my colleague the member from Nipissing has been involved in a comprehensive review of the long-term-care facilities in this province. Very shortly, we'll be moving forward with a comprehensive plan to improve the quality of long-term-care facilities for today and for tomorrow.

**Mr Hampton:** It was a simple question. This government, during the election, promised to increase funding for seniors who live in long-term-care facilities by \$6,000

a person. I didn't hear an answer. Now, maybe you think that's acceptable, but I think this is a basic question of human dignity for people who have already made their contribution to the province.

They deserve to have more than one shower or bath a week; you get more than that if you're in jail. They deserve more than \$5.24 a day for meal allowance; you get more than that if you're in jail. So I ask the minister again, are you going to increase funding for long-term care in this province? You promised \$6,000 more a year. Are you going to do it, yes or no?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** In answer to the honourable member, I'm pleased to give him the answer that I've given to him in this House and in scrums repeatedly, which is that our plans for comprehensive reform to Ontario's long-term-care sector certainly include additional resources.

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

**Mr Hampton:** To the Minister of Health, again: If we do the math, it's \$6,000 per person. There are 70,000 seniors now living in our homes for the aged and our nursing homes. That works out to \$420 million a year. So I want to ask the minister—you've got a budget coming up—are we going to see an increase of \$420 million a year for long-term care so that our seniors can live in dignity, so they can get more than one shower a week, so they can have a food allowance of more than \$5.24 a day? Is that going to happen in this budget, or will it be another broken promise by your government?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** What I'm pleased to tell the honourable member is that the budget our government will bring down will reflect the realities of Ontario and the needs of protecting those who are most vulnerable. Our government will continue to ensure that our health care system deals with them appropriately and in a compassionate way.

With respect to the work that we're going to do in our long-term-care facilities, it will be comprehensive. It will be focused on resources, standards and transparency. At the end of the day, it will deliver the necessary reforms to ensure the quality of these centres, because our most vulnerable residents are located there.

**Mr Hampton:** Minister, the answer you just gave sounds like the kind of answer the Conservatives used to give. They used to talk about "the realities of the province." Well, the reality seven months ago in the election campaign was that you said this was all doable. You said this was your commitment. You said to people, "Choose change." We read every day of seniors being abused. We read every day of seniors who are suffering from Alzheimer's; 50% of the residents in long-term-care facilities suffer from Alzheimer's and only 6% get any kind of mental health resources.

A very specific question, Minister: Before the election you had no problem making this promise. Tell us that in the budget we are going to see there will be \$420 million in additional dollars to look after our seniors in dignity. Will we see that, yes or no?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** What I'm proud to say is that the party I'm a representative of is a party that will, over

the course of our term, ensure a higher quality in standards in our long-term-care facilities, and in short order we will move forward on that across the 67,500 beds in our long-term-care facilities. We will improve the standards. We will improve nutrition. We will improve the care that people receive there.

What we will also do, which is long overdue—it wasn't done by them when they were in government nor by them—is shine a bright light of transparency and accountability on the operations of these facilities so that Ontarians have the opportunity across indicators that very clearly tell us how we are doing in relation to those standards—we will make that information available and public so that people are no longer left in any doubt about the quality of care that is provided in these long-term-care settings.

#### WASTE DISPOSAL

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** To the Minister of the Environment: Every year Ontario trucks a million tonnes of garbage to Michigan. That's 125 tractor trailers a day. Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm is concerned. She is concerned about Toronto's poor record on recycling. We're all concerned about border security post 9/11. Minister, what will you do if Michigan closes the border to Toronto's trash?

**Hon Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of the Environment):** I'm very happy to advise the member opposite. Obviously he doesn't read the papers; it's been well covered. We do have a plan to assist municipalities in Ontario, and that is to assist them to meet a 60% diversion goal. As recently as yesterday I had a conversation with the mayor of the city of Toronto. Mayor Miller is confident the city will be able to meet the new standard set by Michigan. Also, the mayor of Toronto is very willing to assist this government to work toward a 60% diversion goal.

**Mr Barrett:** Minister, obviously you don't have a plan. You're shutting down the Adams mine option. We just heard that garbage is not going back to Keele, and now the Premier is musing about opening new landfills in Ontario. You've introduced the No Landfill in a Liberal Riding Act, succumbing to not in my backyard, the NIMBY pressure, and hence you've set back environmental disposable management by 30 years. Does this mean that garbage will never be sent to your backyard, that it will never be sent to David Ramsay's backyard? Exactly whose backyard are you looking at for these new landfills in Ontario?

**Hon Mrs Dombrowsky:** This government is actually going to fix the problem that was created by the previous government. They tinkered with the Environmental Assessment Act, and as a result of that tinkering, it takes between eight and 12 years to site a landfill in this province.

Our government recognizes that landfills are a reality of municipal solid waste management. I just want to read a few comments I have received from groups that actu-

ally have the responsibility of dealing with municipal solid waste. The Recycling Council of Ontario has indicated that they are delighted this government is looking outside the blue box to find opportunities to divert waste away from landfills.

**1430**

The city of Toronto has indicated that it welcomes the provincial government's waste action plan. This announcement demonstrates that the government has listened and is responding by providing municipalities with the necessary tools to manage and divert their waste responsibly. So, obviously, we have some very good support from the people who actually have the responsibility of managing municipal solid waste. We are going to improve the environmental assessment and approvals process so we can actually site the facilities in a more timely way to meet the needs of the municipalities in our province, as well as assist them in building diversion capacity, green bin capacity, which the city of Toronto is already an example for in the province of Ontario.

#### HOME CARE

**Mr Vic Dhillon (Brampton West-Mississauga):** My question is directed to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Peel Senior Link is a not-for-profit neighbourhood organization which has been helping seniors remain independent and in their homes with dignity for as long as possible. They serve over 1,000 seniors who would otherwise need to enter long-term-care facilities. Eight years of Tory government has seen support for important services such as these badly eroded. The shift from institutions to the community has deeply affected the seniors in my riding. Groups like Peel Senior Link have had to pick up the slack for this off-loading of services without any proportional increase in funding.

In the recent election campaign, we maintained that if Ontarians required care and wanted it in their home, and if care costs less than receiving it in the hospital or a nursing home, they should get it. This privilege was very welcome news for seniors and signalled our commitment to a government that worked with seniors and care providers for the first time in a decade. Minister, could you please tell us the status of our home care initiatives which are so badly needed by seniors across Ontario?

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** In response to the excellent question by the member for Brampton, I'm pleased to say that our government believes that the best kind of health care is the health care that's available closest to home. Ideally, if that health care can be delivered in the home in a fashion that allows the person to stay there, then that's ideal. The challenge for our government is to make those investments in the necessary, complementary, community-based care and take some of the pressure off the hospitals that have, for too long now, been asked to do too much.

I'm pleased to tell the member and all members that our government sees home care as an enormously im-

portant priority, and to expect that we will be able to expand programs with a view toward enhancing the independence of our seniors and taking pressure off the institutions which have been asked to carry too much of the burden for too long.

**Mr Dhillon:** As Peel Senior Link points out, support for community care groups as required goes above and beyond home care initiatives. Could you please provide the Legislature with some details concerning our commitment to working with the community support sector to ensure that seniors have the access and the assistance they need to remain healthy and independent?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** The nature of the programming that is provided works both with respect to home-making, assisting people with things that they need and can't take care of in their home, and also, being able to use our home care services to focus on things like post-acute stays—in other words, people who are being sent home from hospitals. In the case of the Ottawa Hospital, we've seen a study where too many people are being readmitted because of an inadequacy of post-acute care. That will be a priority area for us, as will mental health-related home care and palliative and end-of-life care. These are all important areas for priority reinvestment. I'd like to thank the honourable member and all members for the work that they do in supporting the community-based organizations that play such an incredibly important role in the delivery of health care services across Ontario.

#### CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services and it concerns the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program. This program is intended to help all children reach their full potential by ensuring that they get the best possible start in life. The House may recall that I brought forward a private member's resolution highlighting the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program in the spring of 1998. My resolution passed with the unanimous support of the House and was embraced by the health minister of the day, the member for Kitchener-Waterloo. Later that spring, the provincial government responded in its 1998 budget, making a commitment to raise funding for this program fivefold for a period of years.

Recently, Waterloo regional council approached me with the news that the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program may be scaled back. The region may be compelled to cut six full-time employees because of the way resources are being allocated by the Ministry of Health. This means families in my riding will receive less service. I ask the minister: Is she concerned about this funding issue and the resulting loss of service that my constituents will suffer, and what is she prepared to do about it?

**Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and**

**Immigration):** I'd like to thank the honourable member for the question. Indeed, the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program has been transferred to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services as of last Thursday, and we are very supportive of this program.

For the year 2003-04, we spent \$72.9 million for this program. I will look into your question more closely, but I am telling you that we are committed to this program. The initial evaluations have shown that babies and children, having gone through this program, do better on measures of gross motor, fine motor and language development, and we are undergoing another evaluation now to see the long-term effects in junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten.

**Mr Arnott:** I appreciate the minister's willingness to respond and her expression of support for the program, but she needs to know that, even though the ministry's attempts to crunch dollars and shift resources away from Healthy Babies, Healthy Children may seem acceptable to her government, the social and economic costs down the road would far outweigh any short-term savings today. Second, it would be a disgrace to learn that the first major reduction in this service for children happened because the Liberals have taken a political approach and have started to starve it of resources simply because it was introduced by the previous government.

I suspect that the minister knows that with fewer service providers, fewer children will receive the service they need and, in turn, achieve success. The children not assisted by the government run the risk of needing more intensive and expensive programs and services later in life. So I ask the minister, will she take action not only to prevent the elimination of these staff positions, but will she agree to Waterloo region's request for full funding to deliver the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program at the required level of service for Waterloo region and across the province?

**Hon Mrs Bountrogianni:** I'd like to thank the member for the supplementary. I will look into that particular situation. I can tell you that we have no plans of cutting back on this service, because it's exactly the kind of programming that we believe in on this side of the House: preventive measures which, in the long run, not only save money but are the right things to do for children and families.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Children's mental health services have suffered greatly because of years of inadequate funding coupled with increasing demand. St Clair Child and Youth Services in my riding is one such agency that has to reduce crucial children's services in order to deal with continuous underfunding. Minister, what are we doing to help out these agencies who are on the front lines in terms of children's mental health services in this province?

**Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I'd like to thank my colleague from Sarnia for the question. Indeed, this is an area that is badly in need of repair. It has been neglected for the last 12 years. It's one of my personal priorities to improve children's mental health in this province. What the experts are telling us is, yes, money is one issue, but another, just as important, issue is a reconfiguration of the system. My ministry is working very hard and we are in the planning process of fixing this mess.

**Ms Di Cocco:** Thank you, Minister, for your commitment. St Clair Child and Youth Services is the only agency of its kind in my riding that deals with preventive care for high-risk children. As I said in the previous question, it's being forced to cut back on those services. Minister, what can we say to those working on the front lines in agencies like St Clair Child and Youth Services who have told me that they're hanging on by their fingernails, and to the families of these children who continue to need these services?

**Hon Mrs Bountrogianni:** Again, I'd like to thank my colleague and I would like to tell the people working at St Clair Child and Youth Services and the families that the member from Sarnia-Lambton has been relentless in talking to me about this issue. I understand it is a huge issue.

There are all sorts of complexities to this one. The lack of coordination and integration is one reason why we created the children and youth ministry, in order to better integrate and better coordinate the services out there, across ministries, across the education system. We are busily doing that. I can assure the member that we're working as fast as we can.

1440

#### MEDICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** To the Minister of Health: Earlier today you said that the government does intend to review the medical review committee audit process. This is a Canadian Press story I just obtained. You further said, "The commitments that we've made"—you made—"with respect to the MRC are commitments that we intend to fulfill."

Let me remind you of what those commitments are. The Premier said, when he met with doctors in Niagara a year ago, "that all audits must be frozen until that review" of the MRC audit process "is complete." In fact, your seatmate, the member for Windsor West, reinforcing that by way of her own commitment, said that "until the review is complete, we believe that all audits should be frozen."

It has been six months now. There has been neither a review commenced nor audits frozen. Doctors continue to be persecuted. Why are you breaking that promise?

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** The member will well know where

we're at on this, because I've taken the opportunity over the past several hours to keep him well-informed.

What I'm pleased to tell the House is that today our government is announcing that the distinguished retired Supreme Court justice, Peter Cory, an international jurist of some extraordinary reputation, has agreed to conduct a review of the MRC process and get on with that almost immediately.

**Mr Kormos:** Well, you see, the problem is that the promise was to freeze, to suspend, to put a moratorium on all audits. It was a very clear promise made by the Premier—

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** By the former health critic.

**Mr Kormos:** —made by the former health critic, made by every Liberal candidate across this province in the course of the election campaign, when the matter was put to them.

Doctors continue to be persecuted, to come under attack by an audit process that is arbitrary, that is fundamentally unfair, that took the life of Dr Anthony Hsu a year ago and continues to condemn doctors in this province. You made a promise to freeze, to suspend, to place a moratorium on the audits until the review was completed. You're going to commence a review; why aren't you going to keep your promise to suspend, freeze, put a moratorium on audits until that review is completed?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** I would like to inform the member, indeed all members, that earlier today I had the opportunity to speak with that gentleman's widow. I explained to her that our government's priority was to get on with the review and that upon review of the challenge of trying to bring in a freeze or a moratorium, it was found that legislation would be required to do that.

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** Instead, we have committed to engage Mr Justice Cory, a distinguished jurist, to ask him to do his work on an expedited basis.

I agree, based on the heckling that I'm hearing, that there would be the opportunity, I would hope, for speedy passage of any legislative changes that are necessary as a result of the work of Mr Justice Cory.

#### NURSES

**Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** My question is also for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. With each passing day, we discover that your words about increasing access to services and health care providers in this province are simply that: They are words. There are no actions.

We've just heard from my colleague that the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program is losing some of its funding. Yesterday, when I asked you to commit \$6,000 to residents in long-term-care facilities, you refused to do so. In fact, we learned yesterday that you actually were clawing back \$15 million in property taxes. So the level of service for our seniors, our frail, our elderly, is decreasing, as is the level of care.

Well, today I have a copy of a letter from the Lake of the Woods District Hospital in Kenora, a hospital that you know is facing a pending crisis in nursing human resources. Despite your promise to hire 8,000 more nurses, and \$50 million, you have not done so. Why is this hospital and 127 other hospitals not getting money for more nurses?

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I find it rather remarkable that that woman, who was for a very lengthy period—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** I'm sorry. I meant no offence. If there was any, I apologize—that member who for 30 months served as the Minister of Health in this province, who during her day had \$400 million targeted toward an initiative to improve the percentages of full-time nursing and achieved little or next to no improvement whatsoever, could stand and lecture me about the nursing agenda in this province.

We targeted resources to hospitals at the end of the fiscal year, to the 33 largest hospitals, because it was the expert advice of nursing officials that that was the best opportunity to get immediate results. The immediate results are being proven in those 33 hospitals, where nurses every single day are being given full-time opportunities that they did not have before. This government is committed to restoring the foundations of nursing in this province. We will rebuild nursing.

That member's leader, when he was Premier, looked across at nurses and said that they're Hula Hoops, that they're redundant. For you to stand in this place and try to take—

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

**Mrs Witmer:** I would have to say I am very disappointed in the rhetoric. The member knows full well that I set up a nursing task force. We implemented every recommendation. We put forward \$385 million and created 12,000 nursing positions. Methinks that the minister doth protest too much. Roy Romanow said that in Canada there are too many people living in remote areas who suffer because they don't have access to nurses or doctors, just like the people up in the Lake of the Woods, in Kenora. He said that incentives should be offered to attract nurses to communities.

I ask you, why will you not restore the nursing incentive program which we put in place and which would go a long way to help underserved communities recruit much-needed nurses? Why aren't you taking the steps that we started?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** The honourable member believes that talk is something that started. When I arrived at the Ministry of Health to see the program that she is referencing in her question, what did I find? I found a program that was highlighted on a Web site but had never been enacted. The commitment that I make to that member and the commitment that I make to nurses in this province, who would be willing to go and work in remote places, is that our government's plans, as we move forward very shortly, will clearly demonstrate that

we believe incentives are one part of a package of rebuilding the foundations of nursing in this province.

I really would encourage the honourable member to remember the days when she was the Minister of Health. Look back on your \$385 million, and then look at the state of nursing when your government left office on October 2. Here is what I'm pleased to offer as the challenge—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** When I've been in the job 30 months I'll be very happy to compare it to your 30 months in the job, because nurses in this province understand today that they have an advocate, and that they have a Premier who will never refer to them as redundant and will never suggest that they are as out of fashion as a Hula Hoop.

#### POVERTY

**Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I think this minister should ask the next question. I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. The recent report on poverty by the United Way shows a dramatic increase of poverty in Toronto.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Ruprecht:** Mr Speaker, if I can get my question in, it would be great. I was referring to the most recent report on poverty by the United Way. The research they indicate is indeed very disturbing. The number of neighbourhoods where more than one quarter of the families live in poverty has doubled since 1981.

The United Way makes some specific recommendations that include investing in affordable housing, raising the minimum wage, helping new immigrants with re-training and investing in programs for youth. What action is our government going to take on this most pressing issue of poverty?

1450

**Hon Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** Thank you so much to our member for that question. We realize that Toronto is struggling on a number of fronts in confronting poverty issues in the city of Toronto. In fact, three ministers from the McGuinty government, along with the mayor of Toronto, appeared at a summit not long ago. That summit was on homelessness, but many of these same issues arose. On that day our minister for infrastructure announced the first in a long series of announcements around creating affordable housing in Ontario. That was the first for many years in this province, where we're actually moving toward sustainable growth in affordable housing, a \$56-million announcement on that day.

In addition, our minister responsible for universities and colleges has moved forward with a \$4-million plan over the next couple of years to integrate our new Canadians and allow them to continue working in the work and in the career they brought with them to this

country. On a number of fronts, we experience difficulties. Our government is prepared to address them.

**Mr Ruprecht:** Let me point out another very disturbing fact. That is the dramatic increase in the number of visible minorities who are poor. In 1981, visible minority families accounted for just 37.4% of the total of poor families. By 2001, their numbers had risen to 77.5%. We must not lose our caring, multicultural society where opportunities are open to all. What specific steps are you prepared to take in order to preserve our city as a place where everyone has a chance to break out of this cycle of extreme poverty?

**Hon Ms Pupatello:** The members probably realize that this government understands a multi-prong approach across several ministries. Our government is committed to raise rates of social assistance and ODSP. We will be delivering on that promise. For many of those who live at or below the poverty line, this will be a significant step forward.

Let me mention too our Minister of Labour, who announced for the first time in years a raise to the minimum wage, which will significantly assist those people who are living at or below the poverty line. Let's go further than that. The last government enacted policies to education that stopped the use of schools as community hubs and community centres. This government will be reversing that. Our Minister of Education will take schools and put them back in the centre of communities, in particular in those areas of Toronto that are of most concern.

We appreciate that all our ministers have to come together for solutions. We will be pleased in April to be working with the mayor of Toronto again on a summit he is bringing together on affordable housing.

#### AGRICULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Myself and the farmers of Ontario were very pleased to hear you've extended the deadline for farmers to make their contributions to the Canadian agricultural income stabilization program from the end of April to the end of June. Obviously both you and I have attended the information meetings on the CAIS program.

We all know that farmers are very concerned about some of the aspects of the program, beyond the fact that it's very difficult to understand some of the program or the information, such as I went to. I came out thinking I knew less leaving the meeting than I knew when I was going in. So it's a very difficult program to understand.

While I'm sure farmers are somewhat relieved to have a meagre deadline extension, can you explain why we were the last province to extend the deadline and why we didn't see fit to extend it to the federal deadline of December 31?

**Hon Steve Peters (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** When this government moved forward with the signing of the Agricultural Policy Framework in Decem-

ber 2003, we moved forward in consultation with the agricultural community, unlike many steps the previous government had taken of just acting unilaterally, without consultation. We worked very closely with the Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council to make sure that before Ontario signed on with the federal government, this was a program that was going to work for Ontario. The green light was given from the agricultural commodity council.

One of the issues the member raises was that we were able to negotiate an annual review of the program. We know this is a new program and we want to find out how this program works. The annual review is going to give us that opportunity. The deadline: We wanted to encourage as many people to sign up as early as possible, because this is a program that is going to help farmers for many years into the future. The deadline extension was granted as a request of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

**Mr Hardeman:** Now that safety net funds flow through the CAIS program, can you ensure farmers that it's a good deal?

I just want to correct the record, Mr Speaker. The minister suggested that the previous government wasn't working with the agricultural community to sign the agricultural policy framework implementation agreement that the minister signed one day before the federal minister left office. I want to point out that the reason Helen Johns, the minister of the day, did not sign the agreement was because the total farm community said, "Don't sign the agreement, because it's not a good deal for Ontario's farmers." We saw no changes, or very minimal changes, made in the agreement when this minister decided to sign it on behalf of the farmers, against the wishes of the farm community. I think it's inappropriate for the minister to suggest that we did not consult with the farmers and that he did.

Many farmers are concerned that the new program is designed to reduce the government's investment in agriculture. Can you assure this House and the farmers of Ontario that in the upcoming provincial budget, investment into the safety net program for Ontario farmers will not be less than the money paid out this year to Ontario's farm community?

**Hon Mr Peters:** I would really encourage the member to stand up and speak to John Gillespie, the chairman of the Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council, and challenge John Gillespie that they didn't give the green light for this to move forward. We did consult with the agricultural community and we're going to continue to consult with the agricultural community—

**Mr Hardeman:** They didn't want it.

**Hon Mr Peters:** I'd like to know who didn't want it. Mr Speaker, my apologies.

Starting this evening and throughout tomorrow, the federal-provincial-territorial ministers are meeting, and one of the items on the agenda is the agricultural policy framework. We want to make sure there's a program that works and is in the best interests of the farmers of Ontario.

This government has made the commitment to the wedge funding, to make sure that the three-year transition takes place in support of the agricultural community. We've also offered those assurances to the agricultural community that those companion programs that are in place, such as the self-directed risk management program for the horticultural industry or the market revenue insurance program, are programs in transition. We're going to work with the agricultural community to transition those programs to new programs that work in the best interests of Ontario farmers.

#### GREENBELT STRATEGY

**Mr Wayne Arthurs (Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge):** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Since being elected to this assembly, I have been approached by numerous recreational facility operators and landowners with applications and interest in recreational facilities that have been impacted under the Oak Ridges moraine legislation and/or the current zoning freeze, which is part of the proposed greenbelt strategy. The greenbelt strategy will be part of the urban shadow for millions of Ontarians.

Minister, I can give you a very specific example of a ski hill operator who wants to enhance their facilities to make the property usable year-round, of new applications for golf driving ranges, and interest by community organizations in establishing sports fields. Will there be significant opportunities for active recreational pursuits as part of the greenbelt strategy? If so, how will this be encouraged?

**Hon John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister responsible for seniors):** I know the member has a great interest in this matter. The greenbelt legislation is all about responsible economic growth. The sprawl we currently have is about bad economic growth and bad economic policy. Clear limits on development will protect the greenbelt for the long term and ensure that development is directed into those areas where services are actually planned.

The Greenbelt Task Force that was appointed approximately six weeks ago has been meeting on a weekly basis in order to set out and determine the criteria and make recommendations in that regard. They are looking at the kinds of issues the member has raised here today. I'm sure when they're ready to report some time in the middle of June of this year, there will be policies recommended by them that will not only be good for the overall greenbelt but will also be good for the individual operators in the area.

1500

**Mr Arthurs:** Minister, my supplementary question: At the end of the day, with the establishment of a greenbelt commission or similar body, will it have independent authority? In other words, will it be empowered not only to manage but to take specific action on the broad range of interests of the millions of Ontarians who will use that greenbelt?

**Hon Mr Gerretsen:** That, of course, is a major area of concern as well. The task force will also be making recommendations with respect to the kind of governance model that we want for the future. There are different models possible. We could be looking at the Niagara Escarpment model, we could be looking at the Oak Ridges moraine model, or other models that will have, as a main purpose, the protection of the greenbelt area. The development industry wants to know where it can develop and the environmental community wants to know what's going to be environmentally protected. That's the main criteria of the task force currently, and that's the main criteria of the greenbelt legislation in general. People want to know where development can take place and what will be protected for generations to come.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a question for the Minister of Health. Is your government going to pay 85% of the capital costs of reconstruction at the Sudbury Regional Hospital? Yes or no?

**Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** What I've indicated to the people of Sudbury—we had a terrific summit a week ago, last Monday night. I think that has been widely reported in the member's media. I made the comment that I felt very strongly that, as it relates to the Sudbury hospital and the Thunder Bay Regional Hospital as well, a strong case has been made to take a look at the contribution level of the provincial government. I further told the member's community, the representatives from the hospital and the voluntary board leadership that we would be back in the Sudbury community in a period of four to eight weeks from then to very specifically announce what funding arrangements we were able to come to. I would tell the member that I look forward to seeing her at that event.

**Ms Martel:** Minister, it wasn't a trick question. It's not a difficult question, but it's a question that's very important for our community because, you see, your colleague the Minister of Northern Development and Mines was very clear before and during the election. He insisted that the provincial government should pay for 85% of the capital costs of reconstruction at the Sudbury Regional Hospital. You're the government now. This important decision, this election promise, is in your hands now. I ask you again: Is your government going to pay 85% of the costs of capital reconstruction at the Sudbury Regional Hospital? Yes or no?

**Hon Mr Smitherman:** I'm pleased to join with the honourable member in recognizing the championing efforts of the now Minister of Northern Development. The results of the summit clearly indicated to the people of Sudbury that the Sudbury Regional Hospital does reflect on the function of the health care system in northeastern Ontario—a very significant element. What I'm pleased to tell the honourable member is that the hospital in Sudbury and the hospital in Thunder Bay, as a

result of the interventions of this government, and in particular of that minister, enjoy a much brighter future than they ever have.

#### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Ms Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** My question today is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I've risen in the House because many times the minister, when we've drawn her attention to the tuition freeze and the impact it would have on the colleges and universities, has stated in her responses that it's going to be good news for colleges and universities. Can you share that good news with us today?

**Hon Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I'm really pleased to have the interest of the member for Haliburton-Victoria-Brock. This is new interest from this previous government, given what they have done to undermine the post-secondary education system. You only have to wait another day.

**Ms Scott:** I'd like to draw attention to the over 135,000 spaces that were created in colleges and universities by this government. There is speculation running rampant that you're going to short-change the colleges and universities. Can you assure the colleges and universities today that they will receive full compensation for the money they have lost because of the tuition freeze?

**Hon Mrs Chambers:** This is a very interesting situation. I'm being questioned by a member of a party that added 137% to the tuition fees that students were paying in colleges and universities, a government that cut student funding by half, and a government that removed \$400 million in operating funding in—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Order. Could I have the minister respond without the noise that's coming from the opposition?

**Hon Mrs Chambers:** Let me repeat what I said before. This is a very interesting situation. The member opposite is speaking to a post-secondary education sector that was cut by her government by \$400 million in 1997 alone. Student aid was cut by half. Tuition fees over the last 10 years were increased by 137%. I cannot imagine why they're suddenly so interested, but do you know what? They'll find out the answer to the question tomorrow.

#### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** My question is for the Chair of Management Board. Last week you announced your ministry's plan for energy conservation within the Ontario public service. Last week in the House members of the opposition accused your ministry of making a reannouncement on the government energy conservation plan. Can you assure all members that last week's announcement was the announcement of a new and aggressive energy conservation plan brought forth by this government to further reduce our energy consumption?

**Hon Gerry Phillips (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** Indeed, it is a new program. The previous government may have talked about things, but we actually are going to do them. The target of the 10% reduction is a new target starting from now. It will mean that the province of Ontario will use about 62 million kilowatt hours less per year.

It will require some capital investment in lighting refits, in automatic programs to shut off our lights, in fixing our heating systems. All these things were not invested in over the last few years. It does require an investment, but it will result in substantial savings of electricity and electricity expenditures.

So I can assure the member from Ottawa-Orléans that it is a new target of 10% and we have a new program to make certain that we in fact deliver on this commitment once again.

**Mr McNeely:** Can you tell me about any projects that are taking place in the Ottawa area?

**Hon Mr Phillips:** We are investing in several projects in the Ottawa area. I might say again to the public that these are challenging economic times in terms of dealing with our fiscal situation. We are allocating a high priority on the budget that we have for what's called the Ontario Realty Corp for the maintenance in our buildings. We are putting a first priority on energy saving. Several of the major projects will indeed be in the Ottawa area—several million dollars of investment there—all designed to cut our energy use by 10%, to save well over \$5 million a year in energy costs for the province of Ontario and to help lead by example.

Our Premier and the Minister of Energy have said that we are going to create a conservation culture in the province of Ontario. I think the people of Ontario will expect that their government would lead by example, and indeed we are, right across the province.

1510

#### FIREARMS CONTROL

**Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** I have a question to the Attorney General. I'm sure the Attorney General is aware of the \$1-billion-plus boondoggle at the federal level called the long gun registry. We know that seven provincial governments in this country, and the territories as well, have indicated they will not prosecute charges laid under the long gun registry. This government, through the Attorney General, has yet to indicate its position with respect to prosecutions. Will the minister stand in his place today and indicate that he will join with the six other provinces and the territories across this country and ensure law-abiding Ontarians that this new government will not prosecute under the long gun registry?

**Hon Michael Bryant (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I thank the member for his question. In fact, it turns out that when you were a government minister, police and prosecutors would use

violations of the gun registry laws, not against farmers and hunters, but in the context of organized crime, in the context of biker gangs. That's what your government did. At the same time, as I think the member knows, the federal government, the Martin government, has indicated they are going to be reviewing the gun registry and they will be coming forward with recommendations on that. We look forward to that.

But we will continue to prosecute offences to the full extent of the law, in the same way the previous government used that law to do so. We also look forward to whatever recommendations or changes might be made to the gun registry and, when we see them, we'll come forward with announcements on whatever changes we might make on the prosecution side.

## PETITIONS

### TILLSONBURG DISTRICT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have a petition signed by some 1,600 people in my community. It is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital has asked for ministerial consent to make capital changes to its facility to accommodate the placement of a satellite dialysis unit; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has already given approval for the unit and committed operational dollars to it; and

"Whereas the community has already raised the funds for the equipment needed;

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

"That the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care give his final approval of the capital request change from the Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital immediately, so those who are in need of these life-sustaining dialysis services can receive them locally, thereby enjoying a better quality of life without further delay."

I add my signature to this petition, as I totally agree with it.

### ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL PARKWAY

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** This is a petition that's written to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Alexander Graham Bell, renowned inventor of society-altering technological inventions, such as the telephone, greatly revolutionized the daily lives of people in Ontario, Canada and" indeed "the world; and

"Whereas Alexander Graham Bell's contribution to science, technology and society as a whole, were in part developed and tested while he lived in Brantford, Ontario; and

"Whereas Brantford lies at the heart of the section of Highway 403 which runs from Woodstock to Burlington;

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

"To adopt and pass into law Dave Levac's private member's bill, Bill 44, the Alexander Graham Bell Parkway Act, renaming Highway 403 between Woodstock and Burlington as a tribute to this great inventor" and Canadian.

I give my petition to Sarah and I sign my name to it.

## WATER SERVICES

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of the constituents of the riding of Durham:

"Whereas the riding of Durham is made up of many small communities such as Hampton, Tyrone, Blackstock, Newtonville, Kendal, Greenbank, Prince Albert, Epsom and" many "others; and

"Whereas not all citizens live in larger cities such as Toronto, where access to municipal water service is taken for granted; and

"Whereas smaller communities have little, if any, access to municipal water services; and

"Whereas Ontario's smaller villages and hamlets are home to many community buildings such as churches, community halls and arenas; and

"Whereas those responsible for halls, churches, arenas and other community facilities take pride in ensuring these buildings have access to the highest quality potable water; and

"Whereas churches, community halls and arenas are at the heart of rural communities and it is important that they remain open to the public" and to the community, "with full services available;

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

"That the implementation of regulation 170/03 as it relates to community halls and similar facilities be delayed; and

"That fair and open reviews of the regulation be conducted with respect to its impact on" rural community hall facilities; and

"That the province of Ontario ensure halls, churches, arenas and other public facilities on private wells comply with water safety standards that are reasonable and appropriate."

I am pleased to support this and my constituents of the riding of Durham.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

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

"Whereas the Sudbury Regional Hospital is a regional referral centre, serving patients from across northeastern Ontario;

“Whereas the burden of raising money to pay the local share of the hospital reconstruction ... has fallen primarily onto local residents;

“Whereas city council and local residents have already committed more money to the project than we were required to;

“Whereas imposing a private mortgage scheme on the hospital to pay more costs at the local level would be disastrous for patients, hospital programs and staff;

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

“We call on the Liberal government to fund 85% of the capital costs of reconstruction at the Sudbury Regional Hospital.”

I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Mr Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition to present. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the most vulnerable individuals in our society deserve to be treated with respect and dignity;

“Whereas the previous government ignored the poor in order to pay for irresponsible tax cuts for the wealthy; and

“Whereas barriers need to be removed in order to ensure full participation from Ontarians;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to introduce a cost-of-living increase to the ODSP program as soon as possible, and to legislate changes that will ensure Ontarians with disabilities can participate fully in a stronger Ontario.”

I agree with the petition and affix my signature to it.

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from Fitzroy Harbour, Lanark Highlands township and Mississippi Mills township in Lanark county:

“Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty stated clearly in his election platform that he is committed to improving the Ontario drug benefit program for seniors and has more recently said he is considering breaking this pledge by reducing coverage for seniors;

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

“That the provincial government fulfill its promise and start standing up for seniors by protecting the Ontario drug benefit program and the vital assistance it provides to those who require prescription medications.”

I have signed that.

#### NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

**Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

“We, the undersigned residents of Canada, are eager to see our health care system strengthened and the health care choice made available to all who live in Ontario ... implore the Legislative Assembly for the province of Ontario, its ministers and its members, to use their offices to immediately amend the Regulated Health Professions Act ... to permit registered nurses to take” direction “from naturopathic doctors in order to act effectively as a medical team and provide the care and treatments those health professionals and their patients feel are appropriate and necessary.

“At present, our rights to choose our own medical services delivered by a trained, competent and professional nursing staff is threatened by the outdated and narrow interpretation of” what constitutes “a ‘health professional.’ At this point in time, the Regulated Health Professions Act excludes regulated, well-trained and licensed naturopathic doctors, and in turn limits a naturopathic doctor's ability to order treatments that should be administered by well-trained” personnel, including “licensed registered nurses.

“The Ontario College of Nurses is at present adjudicating against two registered nurses for their participation in the delivery of health care needs and is using the Regulated Health Professions Act as a basis in their allegations. We find these actions to be abhorrent and draconian, and we therefore petition this honourable body to act with speed and clarity to amend all legislation to represent the right of choice for the patient in their selection of medical treatment, and the right of patients to expect their treatment be administered by trained, competent and appropriately regulated health care professionals. This situation has come about due to 13 years of neglect on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and in particular, the ministers of health, in addressing the incorporation of naturopathic doctors into the Regulated Health Professions Act;

“We, your constituents, would like naturopathic medicine to be regulated under the RHPA without delay.” That is the basis of this petition today.

“Please don't abandon us in our time of need.”

I present that on behalf of some 60 or so constituents who have affixed their signature.

1520

#### SEWAGE SLUDGE

**Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** I have a petition that was sent to me by the town of Wasaga Beach.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we, the residents Wasaga Beach, wish to bring forth our concerns regarding the transfer of approximately 5,700 tonnes of 14-year-old sludge, which

contains metals from the North Simcoe transfer station, to our recently closed landfill site. To date, there are no EBR requirements for hauled sewage.

“Due to this and the geography of the Wasaga Beach site being so close to the longest freshwater beach in the world and other sensitive areas, there exists a threat to the environment and the public’s health. The questionable product should be moved to a desolate location. Once damaged, the environment and people cannot be replaced;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: To stop the sludge from being transferred to Wasaga Beach.”

I thank the town and the clerk, Eric Collingwood, for sending me that petition. It’s several dozens of pages long, signed by hundreds of people. As a resident of Wasaga Beach myself, I’m very happy to sign this.

#### TUITION

**Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a petition from the Canadian Federation of Students. This one comes from the student association, Fédération Canadienne des Étudiantes et Étudiants, from George Brown College and it reads as follows:

“Whereas average tuition fees in Ontario are the second-highest in Canada; and

“Whereas average undergraduate tuition fees in Ontario have more than doubled in the past 10 years; and

“Whereas tuition fees for deregulated programs have, in certain cases, doubled and tripled; and

“Whereas Statistics Canada has documented a link between increasing tuition fees and diminishing access to post-secondary education; and

“Whereas four other provincial governments have taken a leadership role by freezing and reducing tuition fees;

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

“Freeze tuition fees for all programs at their current levels; and

“Take steps to reduce the tuition fees of all graduate programs, post-diploma programs and professional programs for which tuition fees have been deregulated since 1998.”

Since I agree—

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** Sign it, Tony.

**Mr Ruprecht:** Yes, the member is correct. I will sign it and I will pass it on to the page to give to you, Mr Speaker.

#### OAK RIDGES MORaine

**Mr John O’Toole (Durham):** It’s a pleasure to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, on behalf of the people of the riding of Durham.

“Whereas the Oak Ridges moraine is an ecological treasure that warrants protection and careful stewardship now and in future generations;

“Whereas the province of Ontario has recognized the importance of the moraine with the passage of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001, to protect natural and water resources, preserve agricultural lands and provide clarity on where development can and cannot occur;

“Whereas the act has resulted in certain limitations on citizens’ use of their property within the moraine;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario take action to ensure there are no undue restrictions on Oak Ridges moraine residents making minor improvements to their homes and property; and

“That the province of Ontario work together with municipalities and land owners to ensure the interpretation and enforcement of the act continues to fully protect the moraine while also giving residents the right to fair and reasonable enjoyment of their property.”

I am pleased to endorse and sign this petition on their behalf.

#### CORMORANTS

**Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin):** I have a great number of petitions.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources continues to study the impact of cormorants and possible management strategies without examining a managed cull; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources has committed to experimental control of cormorants at specific sites; and

“Whereas cormorant populations in the Great Lakes basin have increased to 450,000 over the past several years, are continuing to grow, and are significantly depleting fish stocks; and

“Whereas numerous scientific studies have clearly documented the serious negative impact on fish populations and habitats in the Great Lakes basin; and

“Whereas cormorant populations are no longer in need of special protection;

“Therefore be it resolved that we petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“(1) immediately begin to significantly reduce cormorant populations in areas where they are having a demonstrably negative impact on local fisheries through managed culls;

“(2) make public the results of all Ministry of Natural Resources science assessing the impact of cormorants;

“(3) remove the special protected status on cormorants and treat them the same as crows, as identified in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.”

I’ll present these. I have signed the petition, and I give them to Mason to present to the table.

## ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Liberal government has said in their election platform that they’re committed to improving the Ontario drug benefit program for seniors and are now considering de-listing drugs and imposing user fees on seniors;

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

“To halt the consideration of imposing an income test, de-listing drugs for coverage under the Ontario drug benefit plan or putting in place user fees for seniors, and to maintain the present Ontario drug benefit plan for seniors to cover medications.”

I am pleased to sign this petition.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

#### DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 22, 2004, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**Mrs Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** I rise today to speak on the motion in support of the adoption of the speech from the throne, this being my maiden speech in the House.

*Applause.*

**Mrs Jeffrey:** Thank you. Isaac Asimov wrote, “It is change, continuing change, inevitable change that is the dominant factor in society today. No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be.”

Mr Speaker, I failed to remember to tell you that I’m sharing my time with the member for Thornhill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier):** You can tell me at any time, but that’s fine.

**Mrs Jeffrey:** Bramptonians, like all Ontarians, understand the need for change. They understand why, after eight years, it was time for change. This throne speech sets the stage for real, positive change. The constituents of Brampton Centre understand this, and they have sent me here with a mandate to fix our schools, protect medicare, and ensure clean air, safe water and properly inspected food. They also want me to make certain their money is spent wisely.

In the short time I have been here, I am proud to be part of a government that has acted decisively on the need for a new hospital in Brampton. A hospital is more than bricks and mortar. It is one of the most important institutions a community can build. When fully operational, the new hospital will add 65% more hospital

beds, double the number of operating rooms and add 1,500 staff, including 200 physicians.

The Premier and the Minister of Health are to be congratulated for their swift action on this issue. It is no coincidence that the honourable Bill Davis, in his maiden speech in 1960, talked about the need for a new hospital in Peel, and then called on the Minister of Health for assistance. Within a week of being sworn in, I was able to meet with Minister Smitherman, Brampton Mayor Susan Fennell, the member for Brampton West-Mississauga and the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale.

The minister recognized the need for immediate action and stated his intention at that meeting for a quick resolution. One month less a day after cabinet was sworn in, this government announced its intention to not only build a hospital, but to restructure the deal so that it is, and will always be, a publicly owned, publicly controlled and publicly accountable hospital.

Yet there is a small group, friends of the third party, who will stop at nothing to derail this vital project. They would rather we paid millions of taxpayers’ dollars in penalties to cancel this hospital and turn back the clock. This is an irresponsible action that I will never support.

#### 1530

They cannot accept the results of the election, where they made the hospital in Brampton their key issue. The people in Brampton Centre understand clearly the options available. They understood our position. They understood the third party’s position, and they chose to have a publicly owned, publicly controlled and publicly accountable hospital.

The minister and his team restructured the previous government’s contract to ensure that the hospital remains in public hands. The minister has done it in a way that ensures the project goes through and stays on schedule. For some, though, there is a refusal to accept the people’s decision. They would rather we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, actually millions of dollars, on costly and time-consuming court challenges—money that could hire more nurses, buy desperately needed medical equipment or reduce wait times in emergency rooms, not to mention the additional costs associated with delaying this project.

Our government will commit over a quarter of a billion dollars to this new hospital over the life of the project. It is a real and tangible commitment to the growing community of Brampton and Peel, and my community is doing its part in raising money for the new hospital. Over \$150 million needs to be raised before the doors open, and it will be.

A new hospital makes good economic sense. The economic development from such a project will have a significant impact throughout our community. From new jobs to new businesses to new housing, the hospital project will have an economic multiplier effect on Brampton and the surrounding communities. The new William Osler Health Centre will make an important contribution to Brampton, but also to our region and to

the province as a whole. I look forward to inviting members to the opening of this new facility.

Our second greatest challenge facing us is providing excellence for all in education. Our education system must serve its most important end, that being education and the preparation of our children, so that one day they will take our place as the heads of families, heads of businesses and heads of government. Our schools must stand as castles, strong, proud and majestic. Yet, in order to build a school that is to be a castle, it must be built on a strong foundation. That foundation is the unwavering commitment of our government and our commitment contained in our platform: Excellence for all.

In the recognition that education does not end in high school, we are committed to improving post-secondary education. Such steps have already been taken in my riding. In 2002, Sheridan's board of governors approved a new Davis campus plan that focuses on advanced manufacturing, allied health and justice, which fit well with the current economic and manufacturing priorities in the automotive, aerospace and food services, as well as telecommunication industries. Ensuring the success of students is one of my priorities and one of this government's. I look forward to working with the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities as well as the Minister of Finance to see how we can ensure a world-class system while responsibly managing our finances.

Like many of my colleagues here, I am a former municipal politician. Municipal politics is a great love of mine, and as the late US Speaker Tip O'Neill once said, "All politics is local." I share in that belief. I most definitely enjoyed serving the people of ward 2 in Brampton for the last 12 years as their city councillor. It never occurred to me to seek provincial office until the member for Vaughan-King-Aurora approached me and asked me to consider running for the position of MPP for Brampton Centre. I told him I wasn't interested and to please go away, "Please find someone else more suitable." Yet he was extremely persistent, and despite my refusal, returned many times over the next few months, just as enthusiastic as he was that very first time. I hate to admit it, but the member for Vaughan-King-Aurora was right, and I thank him for his persistence.

After 12 years of advocating on behalf of my constituents, I came to realize that nearly all the problems that affected my municipality were of a provincial nature. It has often been noted that municipalities are children of the province. Now, as the new member for Brampton Centre, I intend to help my constituents by getting things done here at Queen's Park. So I would like to thank the people of Brampton Centre for their confidence in me. I would like to thank my family and my supporters for their unwavering encouragement, and I would like to thank the Premier and the member for Vaughan-King-Aurora for their belief in me.

Brampton is a growing and vibrant community that continues to attract people from all over the world. From our roots in England 150 years ago, we now welcome people from Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and

the Middle East. Between the period of 1991 to 2001, the population of the city of Brampton increased by 91,000 people, or 39%. The rate of growth of Brampton consistently doubles, sometimes triples, the rate of growth in the GTA.

Brampton is at the crossroads of almost every major highway in the GTA. Highways 401, 403, 410, 407 and 10 either pass through my borders or border the community, bringing goods, services and people into and out of the city of Brampton. Because Highway 410 is vital to the economies of Brampton and surrounding areas, I am committed to seeing the expansion that has been promised by previous governments for so many years. In this respect, I am encouraged by the Minister of Transportation's recent remarks in the Legislature on this matter. I believe that the Highway 410 expansion is long overdue and its completion will significantly contribute to the economic growth of Brampton, Peel and this province.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I take great pride in being part of this Legislature. As Margaret Campbell, the trail-blazing Liberal member for St George-St David, noted, a woman's place is in this House. I am honoured to be the first woman to represent Brampton Centre. Our job is to help our children realize their potential. It is our job to provide assistance for those who face sickness and disease. It is our job to bring justice to those who have been wronged or harmed, and it is our job to help create opportunity for all. In short, it is our job to leave Ontario a better place than we found it. That is our task as legislators. This throne speech sets out to deal with these issues, and that is why I support it.

**Mr Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I'm honoured to share the time with the member for Brampton Centre in making our maiden speech.

I am deeply honoured to be here in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario among my fellow members of the provincial Parliament. We have been given a duty by the people of this great province: to make the decisions which will affect their lives now and into the future. We are here, as individuals, to represent the views and opinions of our constituent ridings, and we are, as a body, to represent the hopes and needs of the province as a whole. May we never forget that responsibility.

I represent the riding of Thornhill and Concord, which was newly created in 1999. The riding includes parts of the town of Markham and the city of Vaughan but takes its name from the old village of Thornhill, which is located on both sides of Yonge Street immediately north of Steeles Avenue. Parts of the new riding of Thornhill have received very distinguished representation in the past: His Honour Alf Stong, currently a federal justice; the Honourable Don Cousens, now the mayor of the town of Markham; and the Honourable Greg Sorbara, now the Liberal finance minister of Ontario. I am honoured to have been chosen as the newest representative for the area and I promise to continue the high level of service to its residents that was delivered by its distinguished predecessors.

The riding takes its name from the village of Thornhill, which is named after Benjamin Thorne and was founded in 1794. It and surrounding communities grew slowly and steadily until the mid-1970s. Since then, the area has boomed, in terms of business and industry as well as population. Its population is now just under 140,000 people living in 40,000 houses, each with an average income of over \$85,000 per house per year. It is among the highest-educated ridings in the province, with 33% of the population having received a university education. There are over 100,000 jobs available in the riding, including high-tech jobs, skilled manufacturing positions, thousands of small and medium corporations, as well as many large national and multinational corporation headquarters. The riding can be described as one of new Canadians living side by side together with long-established residents, new cultures living next door to old settler families, and a wide range of religious and cultural beliefs co-existing in peace.

#### 1540

Like many of my neighbours, I'm also an immigrant to Canada in search of a better life. Proud to have been accepted to this great country of Canada in Ontario, I and my fellow residents have taken on the responsibility of helping to build a community we all want to live in. We wish for safe, clean neighbourhoods. We wish for a proper education for our children. We wish for dependable health care, efficient infrastructure, and a good transportation system. We wish for good government.

I believe that Dalton McGuinty will deliver on all the issues that are important for Thornhill. For that, he needs all MPPs supporting him, instead of bickering, accusations and the noise-making we hear quite often. We must provide leadership, and that is why I'm here. That is why all 103 of us should be here: to provide the people of our individual ridings and the province of Ontario with good government. We were elected to do so, and nothing else.

I renew my promise now that I shall, as a member of this House, represent the people of Thornhill and Concord, and always represent the views of the residents to the best of my ability. I am here on their behalf. That is why the people of Thornhill have elected me all six times I ran as a local councillor for the city of Vaughan. I will always be thankful for that, and the fact that the same people who chose me also chose my wife in the last municipal election to represent them and replace me once I was elected here.

With that, let me say again how pleased I am to be here and trying to make a difference in this House, in this province and, hopefully, in this country. After all, Ontario is the largest province, and what takes place in this House certainly provides leadership to the entire country.

When I came here, and still today, I was amazed how some members acted in this House. I felt that by coming here I was going to enter a House where decisions were made, where serious discussions would take place, where philosophy was going to be discussed, instead of hearing bickering all over the place. Quite often, I have difficulty

listening to what people are saying because there is discussion going on all over the House which has nothing to do with the topic of discussion. I hope and trust that the minister responsible to make changes in this House will be able to do so quickly so that we will spend more efficient time in making the decisions that are important to the people who have sent us here, instead of trying to argue partisan discussion, which, at the end of the day, doesn't do anything for this province. Sometimes when I listen to what people have to say in this House, I wonder if my kids are watching me on TV, because if they are, chances are I will not be able to feel as excited at being here. I believe that when the kids or anybody who watches this House on TV sees what does take place, I wonder what they think of us.

Therefore, I guess I'm trying to stress a point that is so important to me. Please, let's make sure that we remember why we are here. We are here to make changes. We are here to make a better system. We are here to make efficiency. Efficiency comes when everybody co-operates. When there is an issue that makes sense we should encourage it, whomever is speaking. It doesn't matter which party it is. After all, at the end of the day, we will be judged individually by our ridings.

I have been in politics for 27 years and have participated in so many elections. It reminds me of how interesting it is that when we go door to door, people really remember us based on what we do. Sure the political affiliation has some value, but people look at what we did in the House, how we represented the people and what kind of leadership we provided in the community we represent. If all of us would see value in what I'm saying, surely we would be able to act much more professionally in this House.

Again, there are a number of issues that we know must be addressed. My party, the Liberal Party of Ontario, has made clear the commitments we want to deal with. The other two parties in the House, it seems to me, are not that far away when it's time to identify the issues. What I would ask this House is that we try to co-operate in a way that we will be able to achieve those issues sooner, quicker, so that not only will we do the right thing for the people of Ontario and Canada and the world, but we will also be able to spend more time in our constituencies, with our families and with our children at home, instead of sitting here listening to bickering and nonsense.

With that, Mr Speaker, let me tell you again how honoured I am to be here. It took me 25 years to come here. Twenty-three years ago I tried to come to this House, and unfortunately it took me this long to reach this location. I am so pleased and excited, and I hope the House will keep me at that level. With that in mind, let me thank you, Mr Speaker, and everybody for listening to my speech.

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

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** It's a pleasure today to be here to witness the maiden speeches by the member from Brampton Centre and the member from Thornhill. It is important. I would hope the member from Thornhill,

with his most recent remarks, won't be disappointed by the process of democracy and full debate. I felt, and do feel, very much the same as he does in my opening remarks, nervously made in 1995 after being elected here.

I admire and respect the experience the member from Thornhill brings to this place, serving on other levels of government, which is important. I can say it reminded me much of my own background, in terms of how important our community, our province and our country are. In that regard, when raising my family, I found myself drawn, very much like yourself, to try to make a change, to try to make a contribution, all in the context of the ideology of politics.

That's where this actually becomes rather unproductive at times, because our role in opposition is to point out those parts of legislation that we have a problem with. I've always said that, from my experience, if you have three people in a room it's difficult to get them to agree on what time it is. Here the issues are far more complex, and the solutions or suggestions are a series of options. Those options, over time, may not work, and all governments, I believe, try to move it forward.

But out of respect for your remarks and the 20-some years you spent in public office prior to getting here, I hope you enjoy your experience here and that your contribution is a benefit to you individually and to your riding specifically, but more importantly, for the greater good of all of us in Ontario. I think that's a commendable goal by any member here. Thank you for your remarks.

1550

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I want to make some comments with respect to the speech by the member from Brampton Centre, because if there ever was a promise broken by this government to the people of Brampton Centre, then the P3 hospital is it. I want to remind this member and her constituents and all other Liberals who don't like to hear the truth that this is what Premier McGuinty said about P3 hospitals: "What I take issue with is the mechanism. We believe in public ownership and public financing (of health care). I will take these hospitals and bring them inside the public sector," said Dalton McGuinty to the Ottawa Citizen on Wednesday, May 28, 2003. He also said, and I know Liberals don't like to hear this, "Mr McGuinty believes that public-private sector partnerships in health care would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional arrangements. He says such arrangements would be discontinued."

That was the promise Mr McGuinty made. That was the promise I'm sure this member made to her constituents. Your government has broken this promise. What will go on in Brampton and Ottawa is this: A private sector consortium is going to privately finance this hospital and that's going to cost the taxpayers of Ontario more, because it costs more for the private sector to borrow than it does for the government, and the private sector is going to want to make a profit off this little arrangement, probably on the order of 15% to 20%.

So instead of traditionally using capital grants through the public sector to build this hospital, we're going to pay more for the private sector consortium to do this. We're going to pay twice, and we're going to pay through the operating grant, putting services and hospital programs at risk. New Democrats oppose private hospitals. These hospitals should be publicly financed, like your Premier promised.

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** First of all, I want to thank the member from Brampton Centre, Linda Jeffrey, and the member from Thornhill, Mario Racco, for their maiden speeches. You can hear that they speak of their ridings and the pride in their communities. It is also encouraging and inspiring to hear newly elected members in this House bring idealism and optimism, to be a public voice for their constituents in protecting the public interest.

In my capacity as parliamentary assistant for democratic renewal, I see the opportunity to strengthen the relevance of this Legislature and of enhancing the role of the private member with the sincerity and ideals that the newly elected members bring to this House. We have many new members. But it's probably the quality and the talent these new members bring that are the best assets, both for this government and for this Legislature.

We are all here as individual members because we have been elected by our constituents. It is that opportunity that the new members certainly appreciate. You can hear from their maiden speeches that wonderful period in the life of a legislator when you actually hear the sincerity and ideals in their voice. None of us should lose that throughout the career we have in this place, because it is a privilege. It's a privilege for me to have heard the inspiring words from both members.

**Mr John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** I'm delighted to speak and to praise the new members for Thornhill and Brampton Centre for giving their maiden speeches. Speaking on behalf of all of us who are rookies to this place, including two new members from the Progressive Conservative caucus and countless members from the Liberal caucus after the last election, I find it personally inspiring to hear the members speak about their ridings with such passion and conviction.

I want to commend the member for Brampton Centre on her comments about those most important issues in her riding—I think she was elected because she feels the heartbeat, the pulse of her riding—and the eloquent words of the member for Thornhill, who spoke about his own desire about what this place could become if occasionally we could set aside partisanship.

I might note for the record that my understanding of this place is that when someone gives a maiden speech, it is on a non-partisan basis, other than the fact of course that they were elected, and that usually the responses from members of the opposition, members of the other parties, are tempered.

I commend the member for Durham, who I know and respect as being a particularly partisan member, and who has always been, because he refrained and spoke

movingly, I think, about the sentiments expressed by our two members.

I was frankly shocked that the member from Nickel Belt—

**Ms Martel:** And appalled.

**Mr Wilkinson:** —but never appalled when I'm dealing with the member from Nickel Belt; just shocked, and sometimes, I really think, disappointed, that when the member from Brampton Centre speaks so passionately about her own riding, someone from another corner of Ontario would get up and lecture this House about her motivation, about why she's here, about what she represents, about what she believes. Surely in a maiden speech we should allow a member to speak their mind and commend them for actually being here.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is time for a reply. The member for Brampton Centre or the member for Thornhill can have two minutes to reply.

**Mrs Jeffrey:** It was a nerve-racking experience to do my first maiden speech. I've had it in my thought process since December. I can tell you why I'm here. I'm here because the people of Brampton Centre supported my running for office, because they were so frustrated with the kind of promises that were given to them about their health care, and they were frustrated by so many promises that were not kept about their highways and their colleges.

More importantly now, this government, through its throne speech, has given my community hope. It is so important to have a community with hope, and I see a change in the atmosphere in my community. They are starting to believe government can do what it has always promised it could do.

They saw Minister Smitherman come out to our community and they embraced him when he came out, physically and metaphorically. They were hugely impressed that a minister would come to my community to talk about the problems, to make a commitment to make our hospital publicly accountable, and to assist the community in building a hospital that we've needed for decades. I'm shocked that we've waited this long. I'm pleased that we're moving forward and that we have the momentum, the will and the desire to make sure our promise is kept.

I wanted to use my maiden speech to remind people of the investment this community is going to receive from Ontario, which it needs and so richly deserves. It has the growth that absolutely shows it is entitled to that kind of health care. It's been waiting a long time, and I am thrilled we're going to make that investment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr O'Toole:** Actually, this isn't my maiden speech, so I will not depart to the—

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** You've never stopped since you started.

**Mr O'Toole:** I think we're all trying to do our best here, and our roles are always different.

Today's order paper business is to respond to the throne speech, and it's been a long time. In fact, the Lieu-

tenant Governor made the throne speech in this House on November 20.

**Mr Hardeman:** November 20?

**Mr O'Toole:** Exactly. His Excellency, Mr Bartleman, read the report just exactly as the government and Premier McGuinty had written it for him.

I'm surprised, listening to the maiden speech and the two-minute response from the member from Brampton Centre. Not to be critical, but she was trying to imply that at the time of the election in 2003, under the Ernie Eves government, there was a shortage in health care, and all these various deficits were there. It just shows the little experience she actually brings to this place. We had the largest expansion of post-secondary education ever in the history of any province or any jurisdiction in Canada; the largest expansion in health care infrastructure in Canadian history as a result of the Health Services Restructuring Commission; the strongest growth in the Canadian economy, with balanced budgets.

Of course, in the last year prior to the election, there were several interruptions, not the least of which was mad cow or BSE, which affected the agricultural community. There was the issue of SARS, which affected all the health care professions, and the paralysis that occurred in tourism, the economic implications that were there. I don't think any government of any stripe would try to inflict that on the people of Ontario. To imply that was somehow the responsibility of the government just shows a person's lack of understanding of the economy of Ontario.

**1600**

We put to the people an honest argument during the election, prior to October 2. Apparently the people made a choice, but at least we told the hard facts or what I call the truth. It's common knowledge for those listening today. I have the booklets here; I have the 230 promises; I have them here for the people of Ontario. There's book number one, book number two, number three, number four, number five. These five different books outline 230 promises that the people of Ontario now have come to know as broken promises. They got an early start on broken promises. I just happen to have with me a little reference list where I keep track of these for my constituents. I write to them every week and I try to keep them informed of the latest broken promise.

I think the latest broken promise is the one that was in the media today, and it's the freeze on tuition fees. All of this, of course, was sort of outlined in the throne speech as well. The other part of these equations that the people of Ontario need to pay attention to is not just the broken promises, which I've come to expect—Liberals don't handle the truth very wisely. The Liberals'—the other acronym or analogy I make—whole foothold is to tax and spend. All I'm saying is going to be shown over the next four years to be the case.

What did they actually start with? I think even today the member from Nickel Belt asked the Minister of Health a question which, prior to the election, illustrates just how kind of reflective or unreflective the Liberals

can be during an election, or how not straightforward—let's put it that way. I want to say that the member from Nickel Belt asked the question of the Minister of Health, and really the question was pointing to the member from Sudbury.

So the member from Nickel Belt was basically in the same kind of area in the election, and it's my understanding the member from Sudbury was passing around cards that said Dalton McGuinty promises to fund the Sudbury hospital at, I believe, 85%. The regular funding for capital is 70-30: 70% by the province and 30% the local's share.

**Hon Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** I don't think the member from Nickel Belt said that.

**Mr O'Toole:** The member from Sudbury now is again denying it here, and in fact the Minister of Health—the member from Nickel Belt didn't raise the question because it was just hearsay. That was the kind of deviousness going on during the election: Say anything to get elected.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member take his seat. I'd like to keep the language rather tempered, and the word "devious" implies other things, so maybe you will just—

**Mr O'Toole:** OK, I'll just say they had difficulty explaining their accurate position, and so I withdraw it if "devious" offends someone. It's one of the few words you could use there, but to be democratic and diplomatic, I would just say they didn't respond with the facts, and that's really the case here. I found that during the election in my own riding, where they would say absolutely anything to get elected. If it had no basis in fact, that's the case. That's the litany I'm going to read out.

They sort of started with the Oak Ridges moraine: "We're not going to build any houses up there." How did they do? That's the first broken promise, technically. The second one I think was Bill 2, where they raised taxes, or they raised their revenue by cancelling tax cuts, many of them retroactively, by \$4 billion. That was your first, worst tax increase. They said they wouldn't increase taxes. They were seen in a big smarmy picture with the now Premier with the taxpayers' federation, signing the pledge. Remember that? Signing the promise, taking the pledge. A photo op—

**Ms Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I take exception to some of those adjectives employed by the honourable member.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member from Hamilton West, I'm kind of keeping track of that. I take your point. The member for Durham, you should be sitting in your seat. Now I'm ready to recognize the member for Durham.

**Mr O'Toole:** Mr Speaker, perhaps I could get the time set back. I get about another minute.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Durham, just continue, please.

**Mr O'Toole:** Thank you very much for that indulgence. There again, shutting down the very debate. They don't want me to—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Durham, take your seat. I'm not shutting down debate. Points of order do arise. I listened only a short time, and then I had the member take her seat in order that you might continue. I'm going to give you that opportunity now.

**Mr O'Toole:** I apologize if I've offended you. I've lost two minutes of democratic freedom. I've lost the democratic freedom to speak. I think the point raised by the member from Hamilton West was clearly not a point of order; it was just a time-wasting tactic so that I couldn't list the over 40 promises that have been broken. I'll stick to the facts here.

Ban self-promotional government advertising: In fact, there's even stuff coming to me now each day that is—it's difficult to use "obsequious" or "subliminal." These words are suggestive, I suppose, so I won't use them.

**Mr Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North):** Obsequious?

**Mr O'Toole:** Obsequious, OK? You can look it up. Obfuscation; look it up.

Now we have the member here from Etobicoke North trying to dissuade me from putting it on the record. The member should know full well that I have the right. I have the floor. The member from Etobicoke North does this every single time in the House. He's an absolute shame for the government today.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member take his seat? I would ask the member for Durham to direct his comments through the Chair.

**Mr O'Toole:** With that, I will just continue to read.

The promise, again, to cap hydro rates: During the election, they said they were going to cap them at 4.3 cents, and now we know they're increasing them by 25%. It's this lack of confidence that I have in anything they say. The ministers get up and make these pronouncements. Whether it's on the new support program for agriculture—I can't understand for a moment why the commodity councils even have the discussions, because it's just one more promise.

Now, the other thing of having independence for the appointments: I could go through a list of appointments that are absolutely shocking, the first one being Sheela Basur being appointed as an independent medical officer of health. This clearly, in my opinion, was not the case.

It's been brought up here almost every day: the now Minister of Finance and a very key appointment to the Ontario Securities Commission of a very reputable person. That appointment was denied to the committee that reviews appointments. I sat on it. Again, it's a litany.

The cancellation of the P3 hospitals, the public-private partnerships: I understand your right to disagree, but to tell the people you're going to cancel them and not do that, and then not let them see the truth of what you did—it's hard to find the word when someone isn't dealing with the truth very well. "Obfuscation" comes to mind.

Public inquiry into meat inspection: Mr Peters, the Minister of Agriculture, promised an inquiry. They slipped it off the board to some judicial panel to review.

Reduced use of private consultants: Well, the first friggig—the first person they hired was—

**Mr Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: My good friends in Durham and Bowmanville don't even use that kind of language. What would Madge, your mother-in-law, say? She's probably watching this evening. I think you've got to keep track of what the member from Durham is doing.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member from Durham please take his seat when I'm standing. Perhaps the member from Durham will please temper his language.

**Mr O'Toole:** The member from Algoma-Manitoulin, basically his comments should be struck as well. He should know better than that, because he does sit in the chair from time to time.

Peter Donolo was the first consultant; John Manley was the next consultant. Every consultant that you've appointed, indirectly or directly, contradicts one of your promises.

I would say the whole thing of reducing auto insurance—my constituents are still waiting, and they'll be waiting and waiting.

Providing \$300 million annually from provincial gas tax for municipal transit: They not only didn't give the two cents, they took away what the previous government was transferring to municipal transit.

**1610**

Holding elections every four years: We know that is another commitment that's been seriously renegeed on, shall we say.

Respecting MPPs' democracy: If someone looks at the transcript today, you might see that maybe isn't happening as well as it could.

Freezing university and college tuition fees—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member for Durham please take his seat? Please take your seat. Really, the Chair sees subtle references to the way that I am handling this debate. I am trying to do it as fairly as possible and I'm trying to keep the language as tempered as I can. So I do wish the member for Durham would co-operate.

**Mr O'Toole:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think I've lost about five minutes on the clock now. I'm not in any way challenging anyone, but it's the amount of disrespect to the time of my speaking by the members for Guelph-Wellington—or the member for Guelph, I guess it is. If I have to name them, certainly it's very difficult for me to keep in context the points I'm making, and the points I'm making are very clear.

During the throne speech, during the election and during the procedures in this House, there is no time that I have confidence that what is being said will actually be what's delivered. It's that lack of confidence that I'm addressing this afternoon in terms of the throne speech. Now naturally, it's always quite adversarial when you're criticizing someone who is not being forthright with you. It's in that vein that I find it's hard for me to not put these things on the record, when in fact they are the record.

People want to say it's a harsh way of dealing with what goes on in this place, especially when I heard previously the members for Brampton Centre and Thornhill make some very excellent maiden speeches about their

ridings and how they arrived here, and I have the greatest respect for that. But our job here is clearly to point out where we have grave and serious differences. These are serious concerns that I'm raising, and they're being raised in question period and there have been points of order. In fact, I believe it was the member for Toronto-Danforth who tried to move that the Minister of Finance would appear before one of the all-party standing committees, and that was blocked by a whipped vote in a committee. I understand that, but the people of Ontario need to see that the minions of the centre office are hard at work controlling the agenda of Ontario.

I know that we can promise and promise. The teachers, the 8,000 nurses—my wife's a teacher—the number of students in the class, all these promises that were made are still to be delivered on. That's the problem here. It is hard for me to point these things out because they are the truth. There were 230 promises made; a promise made should be a promise kept. I judge a person by their integrity and their forthrightness, even if it's difficult.

The role of government, you will find out—and I would say, looking at some of the members across who have served in other offices, they would know—the member for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot should know—that it is a promise that you should keep. If they ever keep a promise, they're associated with that.

*Interjection.*

**Mr O'Toole:** He's barracking now to try and over- come any of the comments that I'm putting on the record. That's clearly the intention. I can honestly say that to work here in this House under these conditions, sometimes it's difficult to serve the people of Ontario in a straightforward role as an opposition member and to make sure your voice is heard. I would only say to you that my job is different. My job is to point out, often painfully, the commitments that were made and the failure to deliver those commitments.

I can tell you, each person in Ontario who voted for you wants you to deliver them. I suspect that's why you are the government. It's up to the opposition to point out that that indeed is not happening.

I have other things that I could put on the record in the two or three minutes. There are some good things that go on here, and I do say this in respect to change the tone, because I hadn't got through the list of promises, by any stretch.

I attended a reception last night which was sponsored by Kevin Flynn, who is the MPP for Oakville, and I was quite impressed with the information provided. It was on property tax assessment. That, we all know from MPAC, the Municipal Property Assessment Corp, is cause for great alarm throughout all municipalities, and in fact across Ontario.

**Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** Who set it up?

**Mr O'Toole:** The member from Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot has just interrupted again. I guess he has intercepted again. He is a person who

wasn't really straightforward with the people of his area when it came to amalgamation and de-amalgamation. It's these kinds of people who are serving in government, and they're caught criticizing us for—

*Interjection.*

**Mr O'Toole:** We are all human. I have made mistakes, and for those I apologize. The reception last night was informative. I encourage members—in fact, there was a whole list of municipalities. I should say that former member Marcel Beaubien was there as well. He had done a lot of work on the assessment system. There was a list of municipalities that have now asked the province to revisit the MPAC; that would be Norwood, Alviston, Callander, Chatham-Kent, Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough county. So a lot of communities aren't happy with the delivery of service. I would encourage you to look at the proposal brought forward by CLT and sponsored by your member Kevin Flynn, which I thought was informative and productive.

I thought there was another very good presentation the night before. That presentation was from the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors. It was something that many of us may not pay as much attention to as we could. They're really talking about the important security issue surrounding land registration records and how they expose us to potential risks going forward. I commend the group there: Murray J. LeGris, who's the executive director of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors. They're a self-regulating organization. They did bring some very good information to the attention of members.

Outside of the House, where there's the drama of theatre and interruption, it is our duty to point out the ongoing debate on policy, the ongoing holding people accountable to those things they commit to. If I have in any way offended anyone with my direct remarks, including you, Speaker, I completely apologize for that, but it is my duty to point out those things that you've promised and failed to deliver.

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

**Ms Martel:** I want to just follow up on a few things that the member from Durham had to say. He focused on a number of the broken promises by this government already, only seven months into its mandate. There's one I want to focus on in particular and then a second issue that I think is important to raise.

First of all, he mentioned the position of the chief medical officer of health. The government has appointed Dr Sheela Basrur in that position. I think that Dr Basrur did a fine, wonderful, incredible job during the SARS outbreak. I have no question about her capacity and her skill.

What I do wonder, though, is why the government broke its promise with respect to that position. In the government's health platform it says very clearly that the position of the chief medical officer of health would be independent of government. I think that's a position that the government should have kept. It's a position that has also been taken by the committee that recently released the interim report on SARS. You'll remember that the

former government appointed a number of people, Dr Donald Low and others, to do work on SARS and how Ontario could better respond. Their second recommendation, which was released in December 2003, said that the position of the chief medical officer of health should be independent.

What did this government do? This government, in addition to making her the chief medical officer of health, also made her an assistant deputy minister. So she's tied more clearly than ever before to the bureaucracy, which is what we wanted to get away from. You want to give the public every perception, real and perceived, that the person in that position is not tied to the government in any way, shape or form, is not just parroting the government line. This would have been a simple, easy promise to keep, a simple amendment. I don't understand why the government didn't do it.

With respect to funding 85% of the capital costs at the Sudbury Regional Hospital—I said earlier and I'll say it again—the member from Sudbury talked about that before and during the campaign. I asked the question today because we can't afford to pay anymore. I just want the Liberal government to keep its promise in this regard.

1620

**Mr Qaadri:** I was honoured today to be sitting next to my colleague the MPP from Thornhill, Mr Mario Racco, as he was delivering his throne speech address, his maiden speech, and the depth and the feeling and, I think, the heartfelt sentiment that he put into talking about his own history, having won six elections, and also the underlying, perhaps, premise or inspiration that really should inform all of us as we come here and deliberate on the business of Ontario. As Mr Racco said, he wishes that many of the opposition members would conduct themselves with, perhaps I may say, a more elevated level of seriousness—

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe this is questions and comments on the speech delivered by Mr O'Toole, not Mr Racco.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Would the member please take his seat. That's not a point of order.

**Mr Qaadri:** I'd like to thank my honourable colleague for bringing my attention to Mr O'Toole, the MPP from Leeds-Grenville. I'd be very pleased to oblige. There's so much to work with there. For example, in referring to the MPP from Leeds-Grenville, the Honourable Mr O'Toole, I'm reminded of the difference between the speeches of Gladstone, which is, of course, what my colleague Mario Racco did, and Fred Flintstone, which seemed to be more the level of the MPP from Leeds-Grenville. In fact—

**Interjections:** Durham.

**Mr Qaadri:** The MPP from Durham, sorry.

This place is the seat of parliamentary democracy in this province, a tradition that is 800 years old. This is a place for serious business, for serious deliberation. The MPP from Durham, I counted, actually led to something

on the order of seven infractions of the standing orders in a single 10-minute address, and we would like improvement for the future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Nepean-Carleton, you might like this. Just for everybody's explanation, I thought there was a certain amount of latitude given on the speech from the throne. I'm advised that there is, but when something is drawn to my attention, then I should rule on it. So it was a point of order. I think I did hear the member kind of get back on track. So we'll all keep that in mind from now on, OK? The member from Nepean-Carleton.

**Mr Baird:** Speaker, that is the remark of a professional parliamentarian, and I thank you for your comment.

I found the comments by the member for Durham to be a useful intervention. On the questions and comments from the member from Etobicoke North, he's been here six months and he's already hectoring and lecturing members who have been here nine years about the rules, which I thought is rather interesting.

**Mr Hardeman:** It's not interesting, it's arrogant.

**Mr Baird:** It is rather interesting, and there is a degree of arrogance in that. This is a member who goes far and wide telling people not to call him "Mr" Qaadri but "Dr" Qaadri, which shows where his priorities—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Nepean-Carleton, I remind him that this is questions and comments regarding the throne speech.

**Mr Baird:** Mr Speaker, you are—

**Mr Hardeman:** A gentleman and a scholar.

**Mr Baird:** A gentleman and a scholar, says the member for Oxford.

The people of Ontario should know that the member for Durham, with respect to his speech on the throne speech, is a member who works incredibly hard representing his constituents at caucus meetings around this place. He is always forceful in standing up and talking about the issues in Clarington, talking about the issues in North Oshawa and bringing the concerns of people he represents in the east end of Durham. That's why the people of Durham have placed confidence in him not once, not twice, but three times, and sent him to this place, and long before that, as an elected representative before he was in this place. I just want to congratulate him on his speech.

I'd like to ask him a few questions, if I might. I'd like to ask the member, what do people in his constituency think about ethics in government? Do they think it's important, and do they think that we should raise the bar or lower the bar on ethics? Maybe that's a question he might address. It would be good advice to the government when they listen to his useful interventions.

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** I do enjoy the opportunity to hear the member for Durham. I will speak specifically to his discussion this evening, his 10-minute speech. I will give him some contrasts to what he was trying to assert that this government has been doing, or has not been doing.

They fired water inspectors; we hired them. You encouraged sprawl; we're changing the Planning Act to stop that. You closed schools; we're calling a moratorium on closing those schools. You did not release the task force on mental health; we've released them. You've wasted millions and millions of dollars on self-promotional gobbledegook in your advertising; we're putting a law out to ban that. You pointed fingers instead of helping farmers; we hammered out a deal with the feds for the farmers. They interfered with the Provincial Auditor; we've given them new, sweeping powers across the province to take care of our money. You guys love skipping question period; we've introduced a law to make their attendance mandatory. You've allowed a \$3-billion boondoggle on OPG; we're reassessing that and making sure it never happens again. So giving you the contrast that you need, I would like to say to the member for Durham, let's talk about some of the things we've done to make this a better province today. We've already taken those steps.

You like to point out, and you assume that everybody's listening to you and thinking that, "You know what, they're absolutely right. Everything that you say is happening." I want to make sure that the members of this House and the people out there understand clearly: There is a contrast between how the government of the other day used to operate and how this government is operating now. We're bringing back democracy. We're going to bring back democratic renewal and we're going to involve the people of Ontario. Like no other jurisdiction in North America, we went to 12 million people and asked them what they want to see in the budget, and they're going to see real change.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Durham has two minutes to reply, and I sincerely want to see him get a full two minutes.

**Mr O'Toole:** I would acknowledge that people did respond. In fact, it would appear that they were indeed listening. I would just comment on the member for Brant, as he was the most recent speaker, and say to him that some of the questions today still remain unanswered. The \$6,000 promise per person in long-term care: Where is the money? That question has been asked. You promised it. It's a question that should be asked. If you want to look at the other outstanding commitment that people expect, it's the 2 cents per litre from gas for transit. I just wonder if there's really any commitment to deliver on the promises. I raised the question.

I'm looking at booklet number one in your advertising pre-election campaign. In it you promised, "We will cap class sizes in all important early grades and the class size would be a fixed number of 20." These are the promises that the people of Ontario often seem to forget, not the least of which is the most recent increase, April 1, in your electricity bill. During the election they promised to maintain the freeze at 4.3 cents and they've increased it as much as 25%. The consumers are the taxpayers of Ontario, and as such they deserve to be told and you deserve to be held accountable, as we were, and we're no longer government.

I think early in the mandate there is a sense of forgiveness. The members who responded today have provided some input. The member for Nickel Belt clarified a couple of the points that I raised. The member for I believe Nepean-Carleton pointed out that it is my duty and privilege to work hard here. I'm embarrassed by the member for Etobicoke North. He not only used my name, which is improper; he addressed me by the wrong riding, which is improper. There have been a number of infractions. As well, he's started on personal attacks. That's his record; that's his legacy. I'm only repeating for the record that that important exemption is made for him, but not for us.

**Mr John Milloy (Kitchener Centre):** At the outset I'd like to notify the House that I'll be sharing my time with the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

Although I've had the pleasure of intervening in a number of debates on a few occasions in this Legislature, this is the first time that I'm able to stand in this place and formally acknowledge and thank the voters of Kitchener Centre for giving me the great honour of representing them as their MPP. Such an honour is humbling. All I can do is promise to work as hard as possible to represent the people in my riding and never lose touch with the basic beliefs and values that have made my community one of the most prosperous and caring places to live in Ontario.

**1630**

I would be remiss not to acknowledge my predecessors from Kitchener Centre, starting with the individual I replaced, Mr Wayne Wettlaufer. Although a political opponent, I want to publicly thank and recognize Mr Wettlaufer for his commitment to public service and his pride in our community. Other predecessors have touched me more personally through their friendship, support and encouragement and will always serve as powerful examples. Individuals like Jim Breithaupt, John Sweeney and David Cooke taught me that politics is an honourable profession and that in your own way you can make a positive difference.

With your indulgence, I also want to thank all those who supported and encouraged me during the course of the election, particularly my brother and sister and their families, and perhaps most importantly, Sara Pendergast, the woman who began the election campaign as my girlfriend, ended it as my fiancée and recently became my wife.

**Hon Jim Watson (Minister of Consumer and Business Services):** Did she vote for you?

**Mr Milloy:** She didn't live in my riding.

Elections are not simply about slogans and promises. By putting our names forward as candidates, each and every one of us in this Legislature was forced to define and express their own personal political philosophies. In my case, I come here believing that government can be a force for good in our society, that it can create opportunities, remove barriers and at times offer a helping hand. I don't believe government can solve every problem. I believe that just as government has a duty to create

opportunities, individuals have a responsibility to take advantage of them and put in the required effort to succeed.

I believe in balanced budgets and low taxes, but I also believe that all of us have an obligation to pay our fair share to maintain adequate services for all, especially the less fortunate.

I am very concerned about poverty and homelessness, but at the same time I recognize that a strong economy and business environment can be harnessed to help address these problems. As a colleague recently remarked to me, I am sure glad the good Samaritan had some money in his pocket. I believe these core beliefs resonated in the riding of Kitchener Centre during the last election.

Kitchener Centre is the heart of a proud and dynamic community that makes up Kitchener-Waterloo. It is comprised of hardworking men and women who see the value of education. In fact, my area boasts three excellent post-secondary institutions: the University of Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier University and Conestoga College.

Residents of Kitchener Centre also see the importance of a first-rate health care system, including the need to support the outstanding work done at our two local hospitals, St Mary's and Grand River, as well as the need for a safe and healthy environment.

They also recognize the responsibility to pay for these services as long as they know the money is being spent efficiently and effectively with real, measurable results.

These beliefs were reflected in the positive messages that our Premier and party brought forward in the last election campaign and that were developed in the speech from the throne, a speech that outlined our plans to provide excellence for all in education, deliver the health care we need, build an economy that achieves our potential, grow strong communities and create a government that works for Ontarians.

We have already started to deliver on many of the commitments outlined in the speech. To give just a short list, since the election we have hired more meat and water inspectors, introduced a moratorium on school closures, increased funding for high-risk students, introduced measures to ban partisan government advertising, capped and reduced auto insurance, increased the minimum wage, cancelled the private school tax credit, reached new constructive agreements with the federal government, introduced measures to increase the Provincial Auditor's powers, announced a tuition freeze, announced new money for housing, started to clean up the mess at Hydro, and announced \$385 million in additional funding for hospitals, including over \$14 million for my area.

We have also begun to address the huge economic challenge facing our province. As members are aware, despite protestations to the contrary from the previous government, we inherited a shortfall of some \$5.6 billion. Although we have no choice but to address this grave fiscal situation, its existence doesn't change our basic belief in the positive role government can play. For that

reason, eliminating the deficit cannot be about slashing and burning. I think Ontarians, and the people in my riding, have had quite enough of that. Instead, as was outlined in the throne speech and the Minister of Finance's economic statement delivered a few weeks later, we need to reshape the way we deliver services. We need to make them more efficient and effective. We need to shift resources from services that matter least to those that matter most. We need to find new revenue sources. In short, we have to do government differently.

A few moments ago, I mentioned an announcement of new money for hospitals. Much more important than the money that accompanied this announcement was its underlying vision. Rather than throwing money at health care as previous governments did, the Minister of Health announced that he was going to sit down with hospitals to work out accountability agreements that spell out expected results. In other words, every dollar will have to be justified in terms of how it will help patients. At the same time, the government will be taking a broader look at where we invest health care dollars, asking ourselves if more money should go to areas like home care and preventive measures, which cost much less than hospital stays. I congratulate the Minister of Health on this approach, because at the end of the day it is not about the quantity of the spending, but the quality of the results.

I understand that the government is in the process of identifying other major priority areas where performance measures can be established to show progress is being made; for example, higher literacy and math scores, or increased public transit ridership. This way, the people of Ontario will be able to judge the performance of this government in a real and tangible fashion.

As members know, we are currently engaged in the largest pre-budget consultation in the history of our province. We want to learn at first hand from the people of Ontario how we should transform our government. In my area I welcomed 140 people to a special budget town hall. What I saw impressed me: professionals, union leaders, small business men and women, social activists and ordinary working people sitting down together and rolling up their sleeves, trying to find creative ways to reform government.

Why is there so much positive interest in our efforts? I believe that the people of my riding, and the people of Ontario as a whole, recognize that we are not looking to find fiscal room as an end in itself or to deliver tax cuts to the rich. No, the difficult choices the government will be making in the coming months are to lay the foundation needed to create the first-class health and education system and safe and clean communities we outlined in the speech from the throne.

Our province faces some tremendous challenges over the next four years, but by sticking to the basic values reflected so clearly in this throne speech, we can overcome them and put our province on track for a bright and prosperous future.

1640

**Mrs Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):**  
I want to thank the member from Kitchener Centre for

sharing his time with me. I also want to tell everyone that I stand in my place today to make my maiden speech and to thank the people of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex for the confidence and trust they have placed in me.

This place that I stand in is truly a place that belongs to those people in the riding. The members of the riding consist of 98,000 people. There have been many who have stood here before me in the Legislature, from all parties: Doug Reycraft, David Smith, and my predecessor, Marcel Beaubien, just to mention three. They have honoured their constituents by representing them to the best of their abilities. I hope to do the same during my tenure as their member of provincial Parliament.

Lambton-Kent-Middlesex is by most definitions a rural riding. The largest community in our riding is about 12,000 people. It is also a very diversified riding. We are made up of English, Scottish, Irish, Germans, Dutch, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, Ukrainians, Hungarians, East Indians and Americans. The First Nations communities have always been an integral part of the riding's mosaic, contributing in their own unique way to our diversity. Uncle Tom's Cabin at Dresden is a reminder not only of the oppression suffered by members of the Afro-American community; it is a reminder of the pride they have in their history and the richness of their contribution.

Agriculture and its related industries remain the economic engine of the riding, but employment in manufacturing, tourism and other service industries continues to grow as many of our municipalities seek out new economic development. They are working to promote their communities and overcome both distance and low population densities in their efforts to attract new industries.

New investors are looking for schools for their employees and their children, health care, including rural hospitals, a healthy environment, and the infrastructure that will transport resources and finished products in and out of the area. We need to be able to offer prospective employers a workforce that is both flexible and well-educated.

But not all rural ridings in this province enjoy the diversity of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Throughout rural Ontario, there continues to be a disparity in advantages and opportunities. Among the major forces creating pressure on rural areas are economic change, changing employment patterns, new environmental demands, and the out-migration of our youth. It has never been easy to be a farmer or a business person in small-town Ontario. When agriculture suffers, so do many businesses and services in their communities.

Agriculture remains synonymous with rural life. It is still the second-largest industry in Ontario, an economic driver that is second only to the auto industry, with farm gate sales of over \$8 billion per year and economic spin-off benefits of over \$30 billion a year.

Rural life as a culture is changing. Ours is not only a diverse community; it is a very complex one. The traditional image of it being a simpler way of life is no longer

true, but for those who live there it is still preferable to the lifestyle that is found in larger urban areas. Overall, this perception continues to draw thousands of tourists and non-farm residents into the countryside every year.

Although our lives are different from those of our urban cousins, we nevertheless have many of the same basic needs. We need job security, a clean environment, adequate family income, effective social services, schools and continuing education, and local places to worship, play and socialize.

How we address those needs must be adapted to our rural culture. One size truly does not fit all. It must be done so that we are left with sustainable communities. We must have quality schools that are close to home. We have as much right to access health care and hospitals as those who live in larger urban communities. We need rural economic development that gives us dignified employment. And we need the infrastructure that supports all that.

One of the best indicators of the relative health of our communities are our schools and churches. Rural schools and churches are the social hubs of our communities. Junior farmers and 4-H are no longer just for farm kids. Arenas and school gyms are needed to provide an outlet for the youth of our communities, with everything from sports events to Scouts and Guides to 4-H club meetings.

The greatest worry we have is the loss of our youth. Our young people want a reason to stay and not to be forced to leave because of a lack of opportunity. If rural Ontario is to survive, we need to retain our young families.

Our expectations have changed over the years. Rural Ontario has not always captured its fair share of services in return for society's use of our resources, and we have not always been patient or willing to stand back while others assumed control of our way of life. Rural citizens have taken it upon themselves to change their own circumstances. In one of my communities, a service club is tackling their doctor shortage by fundraising to pay a student's tuition in exchange for future health care in their area. Another municipal council is developing a mechanism that will facilitate the certification of internationally trained physicians. We have parents who challenge their school board so that their local school will stay open. Local citizens' groups monitor the dumping of household garbage that comes from all over the province, including the transportation of hazardous waste into a neighbouring riding, and citizens refuse to sit idly by as the safety of their drinking water is threatened.

Volunteerism has long been the hallmark of rural communities, both out of goodwill and necessity. Ours is a cohesive social attitude. We each know our personal fate is intertwined with that of our neighbours. People in rural communities understand that we are interdependent. We pride ourselves in our independence, yet we all know that we have to depend on our neighbours, and we can when we need their help. Although our community volunteers still come forward to offer their time freely, they look to all levels of government to provide the

resources they need to deliver the services. That means that as a government we have to create policies that either get out of their way or assist them, or we may be asked for financial assistance to bring about innovative ideas. Regardless of what our role is, the result must be one that improves the quality of life for all, whether we live in urban, rural or northern Ontario.

You may well ask, why should the problems of rural communities merit any attention when so much of our population lives in urban areas? I believe that in an equitable society, we should not look at this only from the perspective of voter numbers or economic wealth, but from a position of what is the right thing to do and what is fair to all our citizens. We must look at the value and uniqueness of the contribution that rural Ontario brings to the table. What would Ontario be without a rural component? I truly believe that rural communities have the ability and resources to continue to make an important contribution to the wealth of this province, as they have done historically. We give to this province a social and economic quality that is unique and diverse.

The citizens of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex have told me that they expect me to represent their needs and influence the decisions that will improve the prosperity and vitality of their communities and their personal quality of life. These decisions must not only be visionary, they must be sustainable. A strong rural community is essential for a strong province overall. So I again thank the citizens of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex for the confidence they have placed in me.

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

**Mr Baird:** I listened with great interest, first on television to my colleague from Kitchener, and second to the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. I particularly strongly agree with her with respect to rural Ontario. I come from a riding where, while entirely in an urban municipality, about 40% of the people I serve live in rural communities in Ottawa. I say to her that, regardless of political stripe, whether it's Conservative, Liberal or New Democrat, it is a challenge to keep the interests of rural Ontario at the forefront, not just because Toronto and the GTA are so big and have such a great population, but because Queen's Park is headquartered right here in Toronto. Too often we read the Toronto papers in the morning and we forget that there are other voices, other issues, that are every bit as important to the future of the province. We always hear—and the Premier will say this on occasion—that a strong Ontario needs a strong Toronto. I don't think we hear enough from any political party about: If we're going to have a strong Ontario, we've got to have not just a strong rural Ontario but strong small communities and strong medium-sized municipalities. That's something that is incredibly important.

**1650**

It goes far beyond just dealing with agriculture. The effects of BSE are important to a small number of people who are directly affected, but they have a huge effect on the rural economy. There are not that many corn farmers,

but if corn prices are down, it has a huge impact on those in fertilizer or farm equipment or small retail stores in rural Ontario. I think it's a challenge. Those of us of any political stripe who represent rural communities should certainly work together to ensure that those concerns are heard.

We have heard about a small business tax cut. Many small businesses in rural Ontario, certainly in my riding and I suspect in hers, really get whacked with property taxes. That's one example, on a non-partisan basis, where I look forward to working with this member and others on strengthening rural Ontario.

**Ms Martel:** I want to thank the members from Kitchener Centre and Lambton-Kent-Middlesex for their comments.

I want to respond to the comments that were made by the member from Kitchener Centre. He referenced the difficult decisions and choices the government would have to make in the lead-up to the budget. If you listen to the public musings, particularly from the Minister of Finance, we all had better be worried about what some of those choices might be. I've heard the minister, Greg Sorbara, say on at least three different occasions that the Ontario drug benefit program may be up for grabs. The universality of the program that has been in place for many years may be completely set aside and we are going to ask "rich" seniors to pay for their own drug benefits.

Contrast that public musing with the preamble to the government's Bill 8, where the government speaks in glowing terms about supporting and enhancing medicare. Surely if you support and enhance medicare, you cannot take the step of ending the universality of the drug benefit program. There will be many seniors who will not be able to afford to pay, and we will pay much more in the long term as those seniors who can't afford to pay and take their medication end up in their doctors' offices, in emergency wards, in long-term-care facilities etc.

I'm also worried about the musings about selling off TVO or the LCBO. Why would we ever sell off the LCBO? We get about \$800 million worth of revenue annually as a province from the LCBO, and we use that to invest in our public services. If we privatize that, we can kiss that revenue goodbye. It would be folly for us to do that, but those are some of the musings.

What I'm most worried about is that we will see a decimation of public services, because the government will come in the budget and say, "We had such an overwhelming deficit that we have no choice." Do you know what? You guys knew about the deficit before the election, and that didn't stop you from making the promises you made. I hope you won't use that excuse in the upcoming budget.

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I'm pleased to enter this comment and question period in regard to the speeches just given by the members for Kitchener Centre and Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. I want to congratulate them both on their election victories. No one from any party enters this House without hard work and the sup-

port of their families, friends and so many others—new acquaintances you might have met during the election period.

I also want to congratulate the member for Kitchener Centre on his being a newlywed. He also had the foresight and knowledge to pick a wedding day that everyone can remember. He was wed on Valentine's Day. We know there can be no excuse for the member from Kitchener Centre forgetting that particular date.

I want to congratulate the member opposite from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. We share parts of the great municipality of Chatham-Kent. I appreciated her conversation about rural Ontario. Indeed all of us on this side of the House appreciate the role that rural Ontario puts forward in this province. We continually speak up for rural Ontario, and the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex does that on all occasions, speaking eloquently about her riding. We heard during her speech that she knows the riding well. She knows the rural schools, the important role they play, and the people within her community.

They are here to bring positive change to Ontario, and we can see that they are ready and willing to contribute to our caucus in any way, shape or form. They have been doing that for six months now. We're very proud of both the member from Kitchener Centre and the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

**Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I too would like to commend both the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex and the member for Kitchener Centre on their maiden speeches in the House. As I recall, when I did mine 20 years ago in this House—

**Mr Levac:** Oh.

**Mr Jackson:** It was a little while back, yes. However, I thought they were done without rhetoric and without some of the bravado that typifies some of the debate in this House. I think that augurs well for your statesmanlike presence in the House, and I commend you.

During the course of the debate on the throne speech, I would have liked more mention from all members of the House with respect to children, seniors and persons with disabilities. I know there were many promises made in the last election and there are many disappointments out there particularly from these three groups of Ontario citizens with respect to what they can anticipate from their new government.

However, without taking up all of my time to discuss that—I'll have many opportunities in the next few days—I want to say that both individuals who spoke come from ridings with very proud and rich histories, both in terms of their geography and in terms of the representatives they have sent to this House. I truly hope they continue to enjoy their time here and take away from their time in Parliament much of the quality that their predecessors did. We miss them, but we also welcome you and appreciate your participation in the debate today.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex has two minutes to reply.

**Mrs Van Bommel:** I would like to thank the members from Nepean-Carleton, Nickel Belt, Chatham-Kent-Essex and Burlington for their kind comments. I also want to thank the House for the opportunity to make my maiden speech. I'm sure the member from Kitchener Centre feels the same.

I would like to take this opportunity, however, to tell the people of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex about my experiences as their new MPP. The past five months have been a steep learning curve. It's been a pleasure to represent them, and also rural Ontario, as the rural affairs parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, John Gerretsen.

The responsibility of standing in my place and looking out over a chamber that is filled with history and tradition is thrilling and awe-inspiring at the same time.

Then there are the things that I hadn't thought about when I was elected, including finding a home away from home and all the accompanying risks that brought.

Since the outbreak of avian influenza in the Far East, I no longer step into our poultry barn at home because it's too risky. My husband, René, has worked too hard on the farm's on-farm food safety assurance program to jeopardize that, so going to the barn is no longer an option for me.

Being home for family events takes a certain amount of good luck and balancing with constituents' needs. Two grandchildren were born in December, and I was fortunate to have been with their mums at the birth of both of them. I welcome Josie and Nolan.

All of this has meant a real sacrifice for my family, and I want to thank them, especially my husband, René, and my mum, who is watching all the time. Without their support, there would be no poultry producer standing in this House today.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

1700

**Mr Baird:** I'm pleased to have a rare opportunity to rise in this House and to say a few words. I don't get the opportunity to speak much, so I appreciate the chance to speak to the throne speech.

I'd like to be able to look at the substance of the throne speech—it's the government's agenda for the legislative session—but I must say at the outset how disappointed we were that what was promised before people voted and what people have ended up seeing—that there's such a huge difference. People were sold one product, and another one is being delivered.

The throne speech did talk about education. I can tell you that education is one of the big priorities in my constituency. I represent a lot of young families in the growing suburbs of Stittsville and Barrhaven and South Nepean. We've been fortunate to see a number of schools go forward and be built.

I was at St Joseph's Catholic High School in South Nepean—a beautiful facility built with the reality of the funding formula. The Catholic board in Ottawa-Carleton responded to the challenge and has moved forward very aggressively over the years with a big school construc-

tion project. That has certainly worked for that board. They've shown that if you make some difficult decisions, it can work. I dare say that there are a number of community colleges which aren't nearly as nice and don't have nearly the breadth of offering that St Joe's high school has. It is virtually a small community college with the breadth of programs that they offer.

Just the other day I spent the morning at Monsignor Paul Baxter School, another new school that was built and opened three or four years ago, named after Monsignor Paul Baxter, who presided at St Patrick's Catholic Church in Fallowfield, Ontario, and had a strong relationship with the former Carleton Catholic School Board. The school was named in his honour.

The use of technology is just astounding, even for children as young as six. I had the opportunity to visit five or six classrooms and meet some of the children who attend school there. I talked to some of the teachers and the principal. They have a special program—I think they have about eight students who come to that school from other areas—for students who have had trouble fitting into the previous school experience and, with some additional supports, are hoping to get them back on track. I learned a little bit about that program. That's certainly something that has worked there.

The throne speech also talked about health care. I can tell the House that there is a huge amount of concern by hospital boards out there about Bill 8. I'm not being political when I say that there's not a single hospital in the province—there are 161 or 163 hospitals out there—and there is not a single hospital anywhere in Ontario that supports the bill. Are these a bunch of partisan hacks? No; they are the volunteer boards that run our hospitals. I look at the Queensway Carleton Hospital board in Nepean—it sort of abuts my riding and the member for Ottawa West-Nepean's—and their board is tremendously concerned about the direction this government is taking. It is done in the name of accountability, but it seems to me to be one-sided accountability. So I do have a concern about that. To say, "We're going to hold them accountable to live within their budget"—if you want them to do X and it's going to cost Y, there should be a corresponding method of accountability that they'll get the funding on that. There should be a corresponding accountability on the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance, under the legal restrictions we have on the delivery of health care, that the funding will be there.

I'll tell you, it is a huge, huge challenge for hospitals in Ottawa with the funding levels they have. They've made great strides in recent years, but that accountability will be a lot of bluster. The Ministry of Health corporately—and I don't think it's going to change from one government to another—has a lot of wink-wink, nudge-nudge to ensure that programs aren't reduced with respect to budget decisions. In fact, we're already into the fiscal year and these hospitals don't know what their budget is. The members opposite made complaints about that for many years. The problem continues, just as we expected it would. It wasn't going to change overnight. It

didn't change under our government and it certainly hasn't changed under this government.

I also want to talk about the Ottawa Hospital. The Ottawa Hospital's probably the best example of the accountability mechanisms that the Minister of Health has. The Minister of Health can send in a supervisor if he or she is unimpressed with and concerned about the operation of a given hospital.

In fact, the previous Minister of Health, Tony Clement, did have the courage to go in and say that the Ottawa Hospital, with a deficit approaching \$80 million annually—that there were significant concerns and that he was going to take some responsibility. He went in and appointed Dennis Timbrell to supervise the hospital, effectively becoming the board. I can tell you, it was a huge turnaround for the Ottawa Hospital. I thought the most telling example of the success at the Ottawa Hospital—it's the big hospital in Ottawa, with a budget of more than \$500 million. The biggest endorsement we could get for the changes brought about at that hospital is that Dalton McGuinty, when he was Leader of the Opposition, came and did a press conference on the sidewalk in front of the hospital, the big Ottawa Hospital sign in the background. He gave a grade for health care. He had all the institutions, home care and various other hospitals, to whom he gave a grade, but he missed the Ottawa Hospital. He didn't give a grade on the Ottawa Hospital because he knew the hospital had improved immeasurably since Mr Timbrell went in and worked with the administration to change things.

Mr Timbrell appointed Dr Jack Kitts, who had been the vice-president of the hospital, as president. I think having his leadership has made a huge, huge difference. It wasn't a partisan exercise. I think he is a distant relative, relation, to the former member for Renfrew county. He has done a great job. Staff morale has improved incredibly. They appointed a board of directors that I think is far more responsible to the community and more representative of the community. We had members of the board of directors of the Ottawa Hospital saying, "Oh, we'll just keep spending money and the government will have to bail us out." That was not the way it should have been.

It shows that with this government's health care legislation, Bill 8, they have the authority to go in and take over a hospital if they need to. They've got it on the books today. What they want to do is not just have a gun at their disposal; they want to load the gun and point it at the heads of every volunteer hospital board. They want to turn the CEOs of each of our community-based hospitals into employees of the minister. I don't think that's a good idea. I think independent, community-based governance is important. I think it works. I think it has been a good success. I think different concerns—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Baird:** The member for Nickel Belt produced a list of all of the hospitals that support Bill 8. Here's the list. It's a blank piece of paper because not one single hospital in Ontario, out of 161 or 163 hospitals, supports

the bill. You have a bill about health care and you have the biggest part of the health care budget—not one single representative of a hospital came forward to say, "I think it's an OK bill." Not even OK; they all think it's bad. Some think it's terrible; some think it's disastrous. Some have said, "This is what the bureaucrats at the Ministry of Health have been planning for years and they finally found a minister crazy enough to bring it into the House and table it." That's unfortunate. I say—

**Ms Martel:** What did Bernard say?

**Mr Baird:** I'll come to Bernard in a sec. I look into the TV: If there's anyone at the Hepburn Block watching this in Minister Smitherman's office, you've made a mistake on Bill 8. I say that to those political assistants in Minister Smitherman's office. They've made a terrible mistake. That includes you, Ken, and includes you, Jason. You've made a terrible mistake and you should make changes to that bill when it goes to committee.

I want to congratulate Liz Witmer, who fought to get committee hearings, with the member for Nickel Belt, on Bill 8, where we'll have another round. It was embarrassing. The last round of hearings on this bill—this is how it went. The committee would go to a community, they would set up, they would hear from a presenter who would lambaste the bill. Not one single presenter came before the committee—at least, not in the Hansards that I read—to support the bill. Am I correct, member for Nickel Belt?

**Ms Martel:** You're right.

**Mr Baird:** Not a single member of the public came forward and said they supported the bill. We'd hear a presentation and then we'd hear the member from Nipissing, the parliamentary assistant, apologize to every presenter, "We're sorry. We're going to change it. The minister has said he's going to rewrite the entire bill."

1710

**Ms Martel:** The tone is wrong.

**Mr Baird:** The tone is wrong, and you wonder.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Nepean-Carleton, the Speaker feels a little left out of the conversation.

**Mr Baird:** And you wonder why, Speaker. It was embarrassing. They had to send the member from Nipissing to apologize in every community about this bill. They had to apologize, and I was embarrassed for her that she was put in that position. They should have just withdrawn the bill. It wasn't after they had listened to anyone. It was so bad that the first witness was the minister, and he did the big apology. I thought they should have maybe taped the minister's speech or had a video of him apologizing that they could have just played. Then the parliamentary assistant, the member for Nipissing, wouldn't have had to apologize to every single presenter.

The best presentation on that, le meilleur discours sur ce projet de loi, bien sûr, était des présentations par Gisèle Lalonde et Bernard Grandmaître. Gisèle était la présidente d'un groupe à Ottawa, SOS Montfort. M. Bernard Grandmaître, bien sûr le père de la Loi 8, a fait un très bon discours avant la réunion à Ottawa.

C'était une grande surprise pour moi, parce que Bernard Grandmaître était un ancien député libéral, un ancien ministre des Affaires francophones. Il était un des seuls députés libéraux dans cette Chambre qui ont appuyé Dalton McGuinty quand Dalton s'est présenté en tant que chef du Parti libéral. Bernard était bien respecté dans la communauté francophone et dans toute la région de l'est de l'Ontario. Il était un partisan libéral, et je suis tellement choqué.

Je vais lire un discours qu'il a dit. He said, "As a Liberal, I have seen better days. This law, Bill 8, is not the product of the Liberal Party I know. In fact, it is in flagrant contradiction with some of the most basic principles that inspire and have always inspired my party.... This bill is a serious breach of confidence and of democratic principles, and like Mrs Lalonde, it is hard for me to believe that it is done by a Liberal government." Ouch.

Je vais dire que M. Grandmaître, quand il était ici, était le premier député à quitter la salle à cause du projet de loi 26, avant que M. Curling ait été demandé de sortir de la Chambre. Il a fait une grande bataille pour les droits démocratiques dans cette Chambre, et il est absolument extraordinaire qu'un vrai membre du Parti libéral, un vrai partisan, un grand appuieur de M. Dalton McGuinty a fait ce discours.

Aussi, on a écouté M<sup>me</sup> Gisèle Lalonde. Je l'ai toujours appelée, avec amitié, M<sup>me</sup> Montfort. Le député de Nickel Belt a dit, «Lisez les commentaires, le discours de M<sup>me</sup> Lalonde,» et je vais le faire. M<sup>me</sup> Lalonde n'est pas la présidente de l'hôpital. Elle était une bénévole qui appuyait fortement non seulement les droits des Franco-Ontariens mais aussi l'avenir des institutions franco-ontariennes et, bien sûr, l'hôpital Montfort. Je vais lire ses commentaires.

"It is extremely difficult for Franco-Ontarians to fathom how a Liberal government could even propose to pass a law so draconian, so totalitarian, that it brings back the sad days of the ill-advised and unconstitutional proposed closure of our hospital by the Ontario Health Services Restructuring Commission."

M<sup>me</sup> Lalonde a fait une très bonne présentation devant le comité du projet de loi 8. On a demandé ce jour pourquoi ne pas arrêter la réunion dans toutes les parties de la province et recommencer avec un nouveau projet de loi. Bien sûr, les députés conservateurs qui étaient à cette réunion et les députés néo-démocratiques—M<sup>me</sup> Martel était là, et M. Klees a proposé une résolution au comité de quitter les réunions pour demander au ministre de réécrire le projet de loi et de remettre ça ici à la Chambre. Mais il n'a pas pris notre avis, et malheureusement c'est très terrible. Donc, j'ai fait un petit discours en français pour mon cher collègue le député de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, mon premier discours en français comme député de l'opposition. J'apprécie les commentaires.

That was Bill 8. So when we talk about health care in this throne speech, there is a significant amount of concern about that.

There is one thing I think the throne speech didn't contain. There was so much attention on economic and

taxation issues, so much attention on the alleged deficit of last year, so much attention on health care and education. The real challenge—I say this to all members of the House—is to ensure that other issues don't fall through the cracks, that other issues get attention.

An issue I worked tremendously hard on over the past five years has been the issue—I think it was alluded to by my colleague from Burlington—of helping people with developmental disabilities. There is never going to be a public opinion poll that says developmental disability supports rank up there with taxes, health care and education, but it is every bit as important to this group of vulnerable Ontarians who require the support of their community.

Not all of that should come from government, but certainly government has an important responsibility, particularly with the growing number of elderly seniors who have in many cases aging children themselves who are becoming more high-need. At the very time their loved ones need more support, they are not able to provide it because of declining health. I often talk to many parents in my community about this, and they need day supports, they need residential placements for their loved ones when they are no longer able to provide it, places where they can have confidence their loved ones will be safe and secure when they're not able to provide the care.

There was a five-year plan announced in 2001. I'm going to say that I have confidence the Minister of Finance will continue to fund it. It was a \$197-million initiative phased in over four or five years to increase supports to people with developmental disabilities. I recall that the Minister of Finance when he was a candidate in Vaughan-King-Aurora actually noted that that content of the Flaherty budget was good. Now that he is minister, I strongly believe he will keep that in, and I'll certainly be the first to congratulate him when he does because it is important.

I would tell all members of the House to visit their associations for community living. In Oxford county I had a number of representations from the member for Oxford, and I say to the member for Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk that there is a particularly dynamic group of community living activists and supporters of those with developmental disabilities in his part of the province. The Toronto Association for Community Living is going to have, with other representatives, a developmental disability day in the Legislature, at Queen's Park, some time in May. I would encourage all members to take the time to participate and meet with folks and hear their concerns.

I mentioned briefly, in my two-minute comment to the member for Lambton, the issue of BSE. There are some folks out there who are really hurting, getting a \$1.97 cheque or a \$2.05 cheque for a cow. I'll tell you, the culled cow support not just from the federal government, but from the province if they were going to match with their 40%, would go a long way in dealing with this. This is genuinely an issue where, through no fault of their

own, the markets in the United States have closed. It's completely out of their control. It's not a risk that a business person could reasonably assume. The BSE problem is very significant. It's the last thing they need. I want to congratulate my two colleagues in the House because I know they've been big proponents of this. It is something that is incredibly important.

Also with respect to the throne speech, we can't take our minds off high-tech and economic growth. There are still a lot of people in my community who have been laid off in the high-tech sector who are experiencing difficult times. Job creation and economic growth must continue to play a big part. We have to acknowledge that many of these people's severance and EI are coming to an end. This is a huge concern for some folks and their families who I represent, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention that.

Mr Speaker, I appreciate your regular assistance with helping me and advising me on how to be a better member. I want to thank you for your good attention in the chair. I also want to thank my friend the chief government whip, who is a good friend; I like him, he's a good guy. He's the only whip who has had to whip himself, as we discovered recently, and he did.

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** Self-flagellation.

**Mr Baird:** Self-flagellation, my colleague said. But I look forward to the interventions of all members of the House on this important throne speech debate.

1720

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

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I just want to say how much I enjoyed the presentation, vigorous and lively at that, from the member for Nepean-Carleton. It's amazing how much we can disagree with the government. It's so nice to have him in opposition because on many occasions we sound so alike, in the same way that we sounded so much like the Liberals when they were in opposition. It's an incredible metamorphosis that happens.

I enjoyed his remarks on Bill 8, because the Liberals are just so happy with Bill 8. They just can't wait to go out and trumpet the merits of Bill 8 with the public, with hospital boards, with CEOs, with the world. In fact, when the minister stands up, he talks so wonderfully about Bill 8 and how everybody loves it. Member for Nepean-Carleton, you know and I know that there wasn't one deputation that came before the committee that said, "We love this bill." Not one. But if you listen to the minister, you'd think the whole world out there loves Bill 8.

It was so good to see mon ami Monsieur Grandmaître, because he was a former minister with the Liberals in the good old days and he was a member of the opposition when he was here, and just to hear him come before the committee as a deputant to say, "This law, Bill 8, is not a product of the Liberal Party that I know"—you understand, he doesn't know the Liberal Party any longer. He doesn't recognize it. You've changed, is what he is saying. "In fact, it is in flagrant contradiction to some of

the most basic principles that inspire and have always inspired my party," he said. He doesn't recognize you folks any longer. It's not me saying that, it's your friend Monsieur Grandmaître saying that about you and your friends. It's sad.

**Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** I was listening to the member for Nepean-Carleton a few minutes ago. Let me tell you that the McGuinty government is committed to giving the best hospital services to all Ontarians—anglophones, francophones, Italians and Lebanese—everyone in this province.

But this is not what you did when you tried to close down the Montfort Hospital. When you say the Montfort Hospital was not too pleased about Bill 8, it's probably people like you who tried to convince them to go against it, because I was speaking to the Montfort Hospital and they seem to be satisfied. They have misinterpreted the regulation.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Lalonde:** Definitely. You tried to close CHEO, the cardiac clinic. We said that we will keep it open.

There are 161 hospitals in Ontario and we want every one of them to be accountable, not to come up with the surprise we are faced with at the present time: \$800 million not accounted for. We want every hospital administrator to be more accountable. There are definitely some times that hospitals have some unpredicted expenses. But it is easy to grab the phone and call the minister's office. The minister will understand immediately, if you can justify the reason.

But the big problem with this was that people were telling the unions that if Bill 8 goes through, you'll be losing your job—the clerical staff and other staff were going to lose their jobs. These are the calls I have been getting all the time. This is completely false. You tried to convince the other people to go against Bill 8. We have a good Bill 8 that will be accountable for everyone in this province.

**Mr Jackson:** I want to thank my colleague the member for Nepean-Carleton for his spirited and bilingual presentation on—what are we talking about, the budget?

**Interjections:** Throne speech.

**Mr Jackson:** The speech from the throne, exactly. I had to remind myself there.

My colleague raised some very important points about Bill 8, and I too would like to echo his concerns. They have been presented by the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital in Burlington. They are extremely concerned about the implications of Bill 8. The medical staff in that fine facility, whether it is the front-line nursing staff or whether it was CUPE staff that work in that hospital, whether they are providing pharmaceutical supports or additional medical supports, to a person have expressed concern with Bill 8. They have every good reason to, because there was a promise made by the Liberal government that they would pay down the deficits of the hospitals, as we have in the past and as previous governments have. But apparently, all of a sudden this was one of the health care promises that the new Liberal

government was unwilling to honour and unwilling to keep. That is truly tragic.

You can appreciate why members on this side of the House are so concerned about the implications that Bill 8 has for doctors, nurses and all medical professionals, as well as the volunteer hospital board members. There are other issues of concern that were raised by my colleague, certainly seniors, with the threat by the government to begin a major change to the drug benefit program. Rather than going after the federal government for our fair share of the health dollars, they seem to want to go after seniors to get them to pay more money for their health services. That's quite unacceptable.

**Ms Martel:** I appreciated the comments that were made by the member for Nepean-Carleton. I know when the member gets back to Ottawa he's going to call up Mr Grandmaître and he's going to say that Mr Grandmaître's former colleague Mr Lalonde said he misinterpreted the legislation. Misinterpreted the legislation? Mr Lalonde, what are you talking about? I was at the public hearings. I heard hospital board after hospital board come forward and condemn this government for the arbitrary powers it has under this bill to take over hospital boards, to unilaterally issue orders, to unilaterally issue compliance directives, to claw back the pay, the compensation of CEOs who aren't employees of the Ministry of Health. They are employees of these local boards.

You know what? It wasn't just Mr Grandmaître from Montfort Hospital who had something to say. The member for Carleton-Nepean talked about a M<sup>me</sup> Chrétien. Michelle de Courville Nicol, who's the past chair of the Montfort Hospital board of trustees, said the following: "We changed governments. We changed the flavour of the month. Now it's accountability and it is imposed with a law so draconian, so totalitarian that it rivals in scope with the powers that were ceded to the restructuring commission by the previous regime"—except this time it's the minister who seeks to increase his own power over hospitals and over the communities they serve. Maybe Michelle de Courville Nicol has misinterpreted the legislation too. Maybe she doesn't understand. Maybe she hasn't read it. The only person who hasn't read it is Mr Lalonde. If he had read the amended bill, he clearly would have seen all the provisions in the new bill that continue to give the minister the unilateral power to impose orders and compliance directives. There's nothing negotiated about accountability agreements. They're going to be imposed by this government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member has two minutes to reply.

**Mr Baird:** I want to thank the members for Trinity-Spadina, Nickel Belt, Glengarry-Prescott-Russell and Burlington for their comments. About Bill 8, I say to those people at the Ministry of Health—Jason, Ken, Thomas—are you listening? I don't think you've sold anyone on your bill.

Je veux dire à mon cher collègue le député de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell que si M. Grandmaître ne

connaît pas le projet de loi, il entend beaucoup les députés néo-démocratiques et conservateurs. Tous les syndicats dans la province attendent maintenant l'avis du Parti conservateur sur ce projet de loi. Chaque conseil d'administration dans chaque hôpital dans toutes les régions de la province se trompe, et le gouvernement est correct. Bien sûr je suis tout seul.

Je veux dire que c'est une bonne idée de regarder les Hansard de toutes les présentations faites devant le comité où on a discuté de ce projet de loi. Il n'y avait personne, pas une seule personne dans n'importe quelle ville, dans toute la province, qui a présenté en faveur du projet de loi 8. Il n'y avait aucune personne, dans n'importe quelle région, qui a dit, « Oui, on appuie le projet de loi. » Il n'y avait aucun hôpital, aucun médecin, aucune infirmière, aucun avocat pour la santé publique qui a dit, « On est d'accord avec ce projet de loi. » C'est absolument extraordinaire; c'est sans précédent. C'est quelque chose que—je vais le dire en anglais.

The powers in Bill 8 would make Mike Harris blush.

I do appreciate the other comments on the bill. We're going to continue to be here fighting for new school construction in growing communities like Stittsville and South Nepean. We're going to continue to fight for health care spending for hospitals with growing populations and for vulnerable people like those with developmental disabilities.

1730

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? The member for Niagara Centre.

**Ms Martel:** Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Oh, I'm sorry. I hadn't been informed of the rotation. The member for Nickel Belt.

**Ms Martel:** I know, Speaker, it's late on a Wednesday afternoon.

It's a pleasure for me to participate in this debate, because I want to focus on some of the broken promises of the Liberal government. There are four that I'm going to talk about in the 20 minutes I have. That will take us to 6 pm.

*Interjection.*

**Ms Martel:** I only have 20 minutes. I'm sure I could go on at great length, Mr Marchese, but I'm just going to focus on four. I'm sure that you, in your comments, will have more to say about those as well.

The first one has to do with the promise made by Dalton McGuinty to end P3 hospitals. I want to go back to the quotes that were made by the Premier before the election when he was out trolling for votes from the Ontario electorate. This is what Mr McGuinty had to say about P3 hospitals: "What I take issue with is the mechanism. We believe in public ownership and public financing (of health care). I will take these hospitals and bring them inside the public sector," said Dalton McGuinty to the Ottawa Citizen, Wednesday, May 28, 2003.

In the same article: "Mr McGuinty believes that public-private sector partnerships in health care would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional

arrangements. He says such arrangements would be discontinued.”

That’s what Mr McGuinty said before the election. After the election he went to Brampton and Ottawa and reannounced the P3 arrangements that essentially had been negotiated by the previous Conservative government. We’ve moved from a Conservative lease to a Liberal mortgage, but Mr McGuinty has not brought this into the public sector and has not, as he promised, ensured that these hospitals will be publicly financed. And the people in Brampton and Ottawa are going to pay more as a result of this broken promise.

You see, traditionally the province would borrow the funding necessary for hospital construction and hospital renewal and the province would use capital grants to the hospital to pay for that construction. Now the Liberals, just like the Tories, propose that a private sector consortium will build the hospital. The private sector consortium will go out, borrow the money and build the hospital, and the hospital will be stuck with a mortgage. That mortgage, year in and year out, will be paid through the operating grant of the hospital. That is an operating grant that should be used to pay for patient services and programs in the hospital, not to finance capital construction.

So we’ve got a complete change in the traditional way we’re going to finance these two schemes, despite what Mr McGuinty promised, and we’re going to see the taxpayers get dinged for more dollars, because Mr McGuinty is right: It is going to cost the taxpayers more. It’s going to cost the taxpayers more because government gets the lowest and best interest rate for financing, especially a project of this magnitude. So we’re going to pay more interest because it costs the private sector more to borrow. But we’re also going to pay more because the private sector is not going to do this work for free. It’s not a charity case. This is a business matter and they’re in business to make a profit. Their aim is to take maybe a 15% or 20% profit—if they can get it that high—on this job. So the taxpayers are going to pay more because now we’ve got to pay for the profit of the private sector consortium that is doing the work.

New Democrats are opposed to P3 hospitals. The hospitals in Brampton and Ottawa should be built through public financing, just like Mr McGuinty promised before the election. In that way, money that is now, under the scheme incorporated by the Liberals, going to go into the pockets of the for-profit consortium would instead go into patient care and programs in the hospitals, where it belongs. We’re going to pay more, and we have the first example I’m going to relate today of a broken promise. Very clearly, it’s going to cost taxpayers more. If we were the government, we would be building that with public financing, because we have some of the lowest rates in 45 years in the province. We should be making these kinds of investments, not paying profit to a private sector consortium to do the job that government should be doing.

The second promise Mr McGuinty made, and this has to do with private health care as well, has to do with his

promise on the private, for-profit CT scan and MRI clinics. Here’s what the government said in the health document they used in the ramp-up to the election:

“The Harris-Eves government opened private, two-tier MRI and CT clinics. These clinics will sell” a variety of “scans alongside public services, giving quicker access to those who can afford to buy their way to the front of the line.

“We will cancel the Harris-Eves private clinics and replace them with public services. The Romanow commission proved there is no evidence to support expanding private diagnostic services.

“Many communities have already raised money for a new MRI or CT for their local hospital, but have been denied operating funds by the Harris-Eves government. Instead of opening private clinics, we will work with these communities to expand access in the public system.”

Here we are, six months after the election. Has the Liberal government closed the private, for-profit MRI and CT clinics? No. Has the Liberal government announced funding to expand public MRIs in a publicly funded hospital system? No. Has the Liberal government broken yet another promise on health care? Yes; absolutely.

They were very clear. They were going to cancel, shut down, end, terminate the for-profit clinics. And here we are six months later and they’re still operating. I remember the health critic for the Liberal party, Ms Pupatello, saying these should be shut down because the private, for-profit MRI clinics were going to poach technicians from the publicly funded hospital system, and that would make the wait in the hospital system even longer.

She was right. That’s exactly what happened. That’s happening right in her community in Windsor. We had an example of that in a deputation on Bill 8. That’s exactly what happened. The private clinics are poaching dedicated people from the public system. Where is she now? I haven’t heard her talk about shutting down these clinics. I haven’t heard her stand in her place and encourage her colleague who sits beside her in the front row, the Minister of Health, to shut these down, just like they promised when they were in opposition. How times change. That was then and this is now.

It was good enough to go out before the election to troll for votes. The campaign is over and the Liberals promised change. The Liberals promised some pretty specific changes with respect to this promise, but where has that promise gone? It’s now six months. Maybe the minister is doing something about this; I don’t know. It’s hard to imagine, because if this was a priority, then this would have been done very early on after the government’s election. If this was a priority, the minister would have said in the throne speech, “Imminently, immediately, tomorrow we’re going to cancel the private, for-profit MRI clinics.”

I didn’t hear him say that. I didn’t hear the Lieutenant Governor say that in the speech from the throne that was written by the Liberal government. That’s because I think

they have no intention of shutting down the private, for-profit clinics. I think that's what's really happening.

1740

What a shame, because Mr Romanow went out for 18 months and talked to Ontarians, talked to Canadians, and came back and said very clearly: "There is no compelling evidence from the for-profit health care industry that private, for-profit health care either provides more efficient health care, more effective health care or health care that results in better health outcomes," no evidence at all. Yet you've got the government in the preamble to Bill 8 coming forward and pretending to be supportive of medicare, pretending to be supportive of Mr Romanow. But in reality, the private, for-profit MRI clinics that Mr McGuinty promised to shut down are still operating. As they continue to operate, more professionals will be poached from the public system and more money that should be going to patient care will instead go into the profits of those for-profit operators. Shame on the government for yet another broken promise on health care.

Let me move on to the broken promise on hydro rates. Just on April 1—oh, so recently—the government's legislation to raise the cap on hydro went into effect. As of April 1, the rate frozen at 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour is going up to 4.7 cents for the first 750 kilowatt hours used in a month, and after that the rate is going up to 5.5 cents.

What did Mr McGuinty say about hydro rates before the election? Let me give you just a few quotes. Here was Mr McGuinty on Focus Ontario, November 23, 2002: "I think the most important thing to do at this particular point in time is to put a cap on those rates through to 2006."

Here is the Ontario Liberal plan for hydro, released in September 2003, entitled "Hydro You Can Trust." Catch this: "We will keep the price cap in place until 2006."

Hydro you can trust? Please. What about me trusting McGuinty when he said he was going to keep the rates in place? What about all those Ontarians who put their trust in Premier McGuinty when he said during the election campaign, "We will keep the rates in place"? Please. Trust? My goodness. People voted for change and they got more of the same. No wonder they're not trusting this government when it comes to keeping election promises.

Here is some more: "The Liberals, meanwhile, frontrunners in the polls, vow to maintain the rate cap at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour until 2006—the same timeline the Tories have promised." That was in the London Free Press, September 30, 2003.

Here is more: "McGuinty also said he would keep a rate cap in place until 2006 and keep hydro in public hands"—Broadcast News, September 29, 2003. In public hands? Please. Now we've got the government talking about building more nuclear stations and inviting the private sector to do that. Where did the promise go about keeping hydro public?

Here's another one from the Toronto Sun, September 6, 2003: "[McGuinty] said the 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour freeze on rates will go sometime after 2006....

"It's going to add to the hydro debt and if there was another way around it, I would be delighted to entertain it. It's going to have to come out of rates. It's going to be like a mortgage and we will have to pay it a little longer."

People believed Mr McGuinty when he went around the province before and during the election. They believed he was going to keep the rate cap in place. Even Mr McGuinty said, "Yes, we may have to pay for it, but we can do that through a mortgage"—something like the mortgage at the P3 hospitals—"but we're going to bite the bullet and do that." Before the election, a very specific promise; after the election, gone.

It was astonishing to see the excuse the Minister of Energy, Mr Duncan, used to try to justify why the government was going to get rid of the rate cap. He said, "We didn't know it was costing so much to keep the rate cap in place. We didn't understand that it was costing so much and that we were subsidizing these rates." For goodness' sake, who is he trying to kid? When the previous government brought in the legislation to cap rates—because hydro privatization is such a fiasco that of course rates haven't gone down; they went through the roof—in the fall of 2002, Mr McGuinty said the following when the Conservatives brought in the rate cap. He described it as "an attempt to bribe us with our own money." And two days later he voted in favour of the bill.

Flip-flop, flop-flip. One thing one day; one thing the next. Wherever public opinion is, that's where Mr McGuinty is. When the Tories brought in the rate cap, he said they were trying to buy them off with their own money. Then the Liberals voted in favour of it. Last session we saw the government changing its mind once again and moving the cap up.

Hydro privatization and deregulation hasn't worked. If it did, we wouldn't have to have a price cap, because everybody's rates would be going down, not through the roof. What the rate caps prove is that we need to go back to public hydro, but what the most current change on April 1 proves is that you really can't trust Mr McGuinty when he makes a promise. It was good enough before the election, and after the election they have all kinds of excuses about how they didn't know, when they surely did. Everybody knew it was costing \$800 million to keep the rate cap in place, including Dalton McGuinty.

The final issue I want to raise has to do with autism. From a personal perspective, this has got to be one of the most shameful breaking of promises this government has made since it took office. People know that I have been advocating for these parents for over two years now. What I find shameful about the broken promise is that when the Tories were over there in government and the Liberals sat over here, when I raised questions about discrimination against autistic children over age six, the Minister of Children and Youth Services and other Liberals called it like it was: discrimination. They criticized, they condemned, they were just as critical as I of the previous government's policy with respect to these children.

Mr McGuinty, during the election campaign, wrote a letter to Nancy Morrison, who has twins. Her five-year-old son Sean has autism. She wanted to know the Liberal Party position with respect to children over the age of six and ongoing services. Mr McGuinty wrote Nancy Morrison, parent of an autistic child, the following letter:

"I also believe that the lack of government-funded IBI treatment for autistic children over six is unfair and discriminatory. The Ontario Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six."

That's what he said during the election. I can tell you that the Bouffords, who were here the other day from London, voted Liberal specifically because of that promise. Their son Jordan turned six on May 8, and his IBI treatment is going to be arbitrarily cut off by this government, even though two of the specialists he works with say he needs to continue with IBI treatment.

It is discrimination. It is immoral that a government would discriminate against some of its youngest and most vulnerable citizens. It was wrong under the Conservatives and it's wrong now under the Liberals. I resent that the Minister of Children and Youth Services, whom I like as an individual and who I hoped was going to make a change, would stand in her place and parrot the same pathetic, sick excuse that the former minister, Brenda Elliott, used to give when I raised these questions. She got up in this House the two times I've raised the question this session about autistic children and said, "We've consulted with experts and the experts say there is no evidence that this works in children after the age of six."

I have a copy of a court transcript here dated December 9, 2003. On that day in the court case where 29 families are trying to sue the government to get the IBI that their kids need, Mary Eberts, who was representing the plaintiffs, cross-examined a government witness. The government witness was Dr Adrienne Perry, who was one of the individuals responsible for setting up the IBI program in the first place. She was there as a government witness.

Mary Eberts said to her, "So could you tell me what is the empirical basis for cutting off IBI on a child's sixth birthday in the experimental literature?" Adrienne Perry said, "I'd say there is not an empirical basis for that particular decision, nor for the decisions about duration. As I said in my report, there's no very good evidence on that question in general." That's what Dr Adrian Perry said, one of the people responsible for establishing this program. Why would the minister say her experts are telling her that this doesn't work?

1750

The minister also, in the question that I did this week, referred to a Mr Ron Scarfone, vice-president of the London chapter of the Autism Society. She says it's "absolutely the right thing to do. We are moving in the right direction." Do you know what? The parents who were here the other day called Mr Scarfone, wanting to know why he was in support of discrimination against their children, and he said very clearly that he can't believe that the minister is referencing him in this regard,

that he in no way, shape or form supports cutting off IBI services for children over six. That's what he said.

I want this government to do the right thing. I want the government to live up to the promise Mr McGuinty made: End the discrimination against autistic children over the age of six.

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

**Mr Levac:** I appreciate the opportunity to put on the record some things that the member might not remember in terms of the throne speech, in terms of the previous government. In eight years they never, ever raised the minimum wage. We did it. We raised the minimum wage. They fired meat inspectors; we've hired them again. We've not resisted, as the previous government did time and time again, to get to the bottom of Ipperwash; we're doing an inquiry. They used energy as a political football; we're actually taking action on the pricing, which as the members opposite know, I'm concerned about. The people of Ontario realize that the price cap is something that was artificial, and that eventually we're going to have to own up to the fact that we would have added billions of dollars, not just the \$800 million that was spent, on to the debt.

We also took away that mask of question marks, right across the board, about budgets. The reality is, the \$5.6-billion budget was way more than a \$5.6-billion budget, because the previous government didn't want anybody else to know that there are the CASs, hospitals and school boards. There are a tremendous number of other institutions and, inside of budgets, that still means that it came from the same taxpayer. So we're going to put the flashlight in the deep, dark corners of government and start to make them transparent.

The other thing was recommended by the former auditor, Mr Peters, who, I suggest to you—and I don't know that anyone would argue with this point and I hope we will put this to work. We're going to make sure that budgets no longer get messed up.

**Mr Baird:** I want to congratulate the member for Nickel Belt, who made an excellent presentation of all the broken promises that Dalton McGuinty has perpetrated on the people in the province of Ontario. I listened with great interest to her comments about children with autism. I can remember that member, the now Minister of Children, harassing me, as Minister of Social Services, on the age six thing. At least I can say—and one of the parents actually said to me, "At least you were honest." We disagreed, but we had one opinion before the election and another after the election. We didn't make promises to parents of autistic children to get their vote, and then not deliver.

I think that speaks volumes to the ethical standards of this government, to say to young children with autism and their parents, "We will give you this therapy if you vote for us and if we're elected," only not to deliver. That is probably one of the most shameful attempts to get people's votes that I have ever seen in politics. To misrepresent a position is unconscionable. It's absolutely unconscionable to say to autistic children and their

parents, "If we're elected, we'll do this," get their votes and then not deliver. It is one of the most disgraceful conducts that I've seen in all of my years in politics.

I've had one position on this. The member for Nickel Belt has had one position on this. We can have an honest disagreement, but at least we are honest. At least we never have lied to children who are autistic.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There'll be further questions and comments, but I like to keep the word "lied" out of the Legislature as often as I can.

**Mr Marchese:** I want to congratulate my colleague from Nickel Belt for a strong presentation of a list of broken Liberal promises. I remind those watching that this is the party that before the election said the following: "We've got \$7 billion worth of promises. We're signing on to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation's pledge: no new taxes." We were all aware, including the now Chair of Management Board, that there was at least a \$4-billion deficit, but the now Chair of Management Board knew then that it was approximately \$5 billion. We knew that.

We also heard the Liberals say, "We're going to balance the budget." No new taxes; \$7 billion worth of promises; we've got a deficit to deal with that we're aware of, and they said, with the alchemy that only Liberals can conjure, "We will balance the budget." That's why it didn't take long, you understand, folks watching this political channel, after the day they got elected that they would of course break each and every one of the promises except a few. Of course they wouldn't keep the private-public partnership that my colleague talked about; their commitment to public MRIs; keeping the cap on hydro rates until 2006; keeping the promise on autism, to expand it beyond age six; reducing the rates on Highway 407; that they were going to cancel the 6,000 homes that were going to be built on the Oak Ridges moraine—they couldn't keep any of those promises and we knew it. It didn't take long.

What we now have is permanent change. You got the change the Liberals wanted, but you probably never suspected that the change would be ongoing and that the promises would be broken. You never expected it and that's what you got, and you're going to get a heck of a lot more in the years to come.

**Hon Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education):** It's unfortunate for the members who are here today and for the public watching that instead of a serious treatment of a serious problem, we get high dudgeon on the cheap. We get members of the third party wrapped in righteous wrath on behalf of somebody. Then we get the member opposite, from Nepean-Carleton, wrapped in something else. Let me tell you, it smells a little worse than the righteousness wafting over from the other side.

Let's look at the issue at hand. We're talking about 6,800 kids in school right now that, if the two parties opposite were being the least bit honest, they would say they didn't have the answers to when they were in government; 6,800 kids who have been diagnosed with autism who are trying to be reached out to right now. We

have a Minister of Children and Youth Services being honest with this House and saying, "We will take the resources direct to those children and we will provide for those children a better outcome than they get." We have a member opposite taking up the time of this House, not with solutions, not with hope for those families, not with some kind of answer to the angst they feel, but instead trying to twist what she said was said on the campaign trail.

This government has put forward \$40 million. That \$40 million will govern the \$140 million that we're also dedicating to those kids in school. What the members in this House have an obligation to do—because there's not a representative in this House who does not have families in their constituency who have sat across the desk from them—every one of us has an obligation to work with them for a better outcome for those kids.

For the member opposite to say, "I don't wish to impugn the integrity of the member who holds the ministerial seat," and then to go ahead and do that is frankly beneath the situation. What we need instead is a serious outlook that says, "We all are going to work together to solve this problem." The commitment is there; the dollars are there. It's time for some honest talk to come with it in this House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before the member for Nickel Belt has the opportunity for her two minutes, I really am getting a little concerned about the word "lie" that I hear float back and forth. I really think we should temper our language.

The member for Nickel Belt has two minutes to reply.

**Ms Martel:** I would say to the Minister of Education that what you and your government should do is keep your promise.

This is what your Premier said. You listen to what your Premier said to a mother who has an autistic child. This is what Dalton McGuinty said: "I also believe that the lack of government-funded IBI treatment for autistic children over six is unfair and discriminatory. The Ontario Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six."

You broke your promise. Your Minister of Children and Youth Services 10 days ago stood up in a public announcement and said that you weren't going to end the discrimination against kids over six. You're as bad as the Tories.

You explain to Jordan Boufford, when he turns six on May 8, why it's OK that his government, your government, is going to discriminate against him and arbitrarily cut off his IBI treatment. You explain to Lucas Burrows, who's eight, who had his treatment cut off, why your government thinks it's OK to discriminate against children over the age of six. You explain that.

It was your government and your Premier who said you were going to end the discrimination, and you haven't. Your conduct is shameful. Your breaking of this promise to parents with children over the age of six is shameful. You've got your lawyers down in court at the—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Ms Martel:** You are paying thousands of dollars on a court case trying to ensure parents don't get what they deserve. Explain to all those—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will the member for Nickel Belt take her seat? The member for Nickel Belt, if you don't take your seat—and the member for Nepean-Carleton, if he will stop banging his desk. The member for Oxford, you're not even in your seat, so you shouldn't be doing anything. Thank you.

On December 11, 2003, Ms Mossop moved, seconded by Mr Qadri, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

“To the Honourable James K. Bartleman:

“We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now

assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us.”

All those in favour of Ms Mossop's motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

“Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening session be deferred until Thursday, April 8.” This is moved by Dave Levac, chief government whip.

This will then be deferred until Thursday, April 8.

It being past 6 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1804.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Hamilton East / -Est	Vacant
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N.</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon / L'hon Marie</b> (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse, ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon / L'hon Leona</b> (L) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon / L'hon John</b> (L) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Don Valley East / -Est	<b>Caplan, Hon / L'hon David</b> (L) Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy House Leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint	London North Centre / London Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	London West / -Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon / L'hon Christopher</b> (L) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Dufferin-Peel-Wellington- Grey	Eves, Ernie (PC) Leader of the opposition / chef de l'opposition	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon / L'hon Harinder S.</b> (L) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon / L'hon Steve</b> (L) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation	Mississauga East / -Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce</b> (L) Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Cansfield, Donna H. (L)	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Brotten, Laurel C. (L)	Niagara Falls	Craitor, Kim (L)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)	Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)	Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)
		Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)
		Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)
		Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Ottawa South / -Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon / L'hon Dalton</b> (L) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (L) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon / L'hon Rick</b> (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Ottawa-Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon / L'hon Madeleine</b> (L) Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Parkdale-High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon / L'hon Gerard</b> (L) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Timiskaming-Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon / L'hon David</b> (L) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon / L'hon George</b> (L) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	<b>Sorbara, Hon / L'hon Greg</b> (L) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	Waterloo-Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Sault Ste Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon / L'hon Sandra</b> (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Scarborough East / -Est	<b>Chambers, Hon / L'hon Mary Anne V.</b> (L) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités	Windsor-St Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon / L'hon Dwight</b> (L) Minister of Energy, Chair of Cabinet, Government House Leader / ministre de l'Énergie, président du Conseil des ministres, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	York Centre / -Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon / L'hon Monte</b> (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Scarborough-Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon / L'hon Gerry</b> (L) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement	York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough-Rouge River	<b>Curling, Hon / L'hon Alvin</b> (L) Speaker / Président	York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	<b>Cordiano, Hon / L'hon Joseph</b> (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon / L'hon James J.</b> (L) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs		
St Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon / L'hon Michael</b> (L) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

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

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

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Caroline Di Cocco, Cameron Jackson,  
Kuldip Kular, Shelley Martel, Phil McNeely,  
John Milloy, Elizabeth Witmer  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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Finances et affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Deborah Matthews  
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Michael A. Brown, Deborah Matthews,  
Ernie Parsons, Shafiq Qaadri, Laurie Scott,  
Monique M. Smith, Joseph N. Tascona  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales**

Chair / Présidente: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
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Jim Brownell, Kim Craitor, Brad Duguid,  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Michael Gravelle,  
Frank Klees, Peter Kormos, Richard Patten,  
Jim Wilson, Kathleen O. Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative**

Chair / Présidente: Linda Jeffrey  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco  
Donna H. Cansfield, Ernie Hardeman, Linda Jeffrey,  
Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese, Bill Mauro,  
Norm Miller, David Oraziotti,  
Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio  
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**Public accounts / Comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
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Laurel C. Broten, Jim Flaherty, Peter Fonseca,  
Shelley Martel, Bill Mauro, Julia Munro, Liz Sandals,  
Monique M. Smith, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Regulations and private bills /  
Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Tony C. Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal  
Bob Delaney, Rosario Marchese, Jerry Martiniuk,  
Ted McMeekin, Phil McNeely, Carol Mitchell, Bill Murdoch,  
Khalil Ramal, Tony Ruprecht, Tony C. Wong  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

*Continued from overleaf*

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Mercredi 7 avril 2004**

### PREMIÈRE LECTURE

<b>Loi de 2004 sur une date d'élection fixe (à compter du 4 octobre 2007), projet de loi 51, <i>M. Sterling</i> Adoptée.....</b>	<b>1358</b>
<b>Loi de 2004 sur la protection de l'emploi des pompiers volontaires, projet de loi 52, <i>M. Arnott</i> Adoptée.....</b>	<b>1358</b>
<b>Loi de 2004 sur la protection des mineurs contre les biens et services sexuellement explicites, projet de loi 53, <i>M. O'Toole</i> Adoptée.....</b>	<b>1358</b>
<b>Loi de 2004 sur une date d'élection fixe (à compter du 7 juin 2007), projet de loi 54, <i>M. Sterling</i> Adoptée.....</b>	<b>1358</b>

### DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

M. Baird .....	1387, 1390
Vote différé.....	1395

# CONTENTS

Wednesday 7 April 2004

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Provincial elections</b>	
Mr Sterling.....	1355
<b>Greenhouse gas emissions</b>	
Ms Wynne.....	1355
<b>Motorcycle insurance</b>	
Mr Miller.....	1355
<b>Organ transplants</b>	
Mr Ramal.....	1356
<b>Ontario Northland Railway</b>	
Mr Bisson.....	1356
<b>Hydro generation</b>	
Mr Lalonde.....	1356
<b>Highway tolls</b>	
Mr Klees.....	1356
<b>Canadian women's hockey team</b>	
Mr Duguid.....	1357
<b>Government accountability</b>	
Mr Baird.....	1357

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

<b>Standing committee</b>	
<b>on government agencies</b>	
The Speaker.....	1357
Report deemed adopted.....	1357

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Fixed Dates for Elections</b>	
<b>(October 4, 2007 Commencement)</b>	
<b>Act, 2004, Bill 51, Mr Sterling</b>	
Agreed to.....	1358
Mr Sterling.....	1358
<b>Volunteer Firefighters</b>	
<b>Employment Protection Act, 2004,</b>	
<b>Bill 52, Mr Arnott</b>	
Agreed to.....	1358
Mr Arnott.....	1358
<b>Protection of Minors from Sexually</b>	
<b>Explicit Goods and Services Act,</b>	
<b>2004, Bill 53, Mr O'Toole</b>	
Agreed to.....	1358
Mr O'Toole.....	1358
<b>Fixed Dates for Elections</b>	
<b>(June 7, 2007 Commencement) Act,</b>	
<b>2004, Bill 54, Mr Sterling</b>	
Agreed to.....	1358
Mr Sterling.....	1358

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Conflict of interest</b>	
Mr Baird.....	1360
Mr Sorbara.....	1360

## Waste disposal

Mr Klees.....	1361
Mrs Dombrowsky.....	1361, 1363
Mr Barrett.....	1363

## Long-term care

Mr Hampton.....	1362
Mr Smitherman.....	1362

## Home care

Mr Dhillon.....	1363
Mr Smitherman.....	1363

## Children's services

Mr Arnott.....	1364
Mrs Bountrogianni.....	1364

## Children's mental health services

Ms Di Cocco.....	1364
Mrs Bountrogianni.....	1365

## Medical Review Committee

Mr Kormos.....	1365
Mr Smitherman.....	1365

## Nurses

Mrs Witmer.....	1365
Mr Smitherman.....	1366

## Poverty

Mr Ruprecht.....	1366
Ms Papatello.....	1366

## Agricultural policy framework

Mr Hardeman.....	1367
Mr Peters.....	1367

## Greenbelt strategy

Mr Arthurs.....	1368
Mr Gerretsen.....	1368

## Hospital funding

Ms Martel.....	1368
Mr Smitherman.....	1368

## Post-secondary education

Ms Scott.....	1369
Mrs Chambers.....	1369

## Energy conservation

Mr McNeely.....	1369
Mr Phillips.....	1369

## Firearms control

Mr Runciman.....	1369
Mr Bryant.....	1369

## PETITIONS

### Tillsonburg District Memorial

<b>Hospital</b>	
Mr Hardeman.....	1370

### Alexander Graham Bell Parkway

Mr Levac.....	1370
---------------	------

### Water services

Mr O'Toole.....	1370
-----------------	------

### Hospital funding

Ms Martel.....	1370
----------------	------

## Ontario disability support program

Mr Berardinetti.....	1371
----------------------	------

## Ontario drug benefit program

Mr Sterling.....	1371
Mr Martiniuk.....	1373

## Naturopathic medicine

Mr McMeekin.....	1371
------------------	------

## Sewage sludge

Mr Wilson.....	1371
----------------	------

## Tuition

Mr Ruprecht.....	1372
------------------	------

## Oak Ridges moraine

Mr O'Toole.....	1372
-----------------	------

## Cormorants

Mr Brown.....	1372
---------------	------

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mrs Jeffrey.....	1373, 1377
Mr Racco.....	1374
Mr O'Toole.....	1375, 1377, 1381
Ms Martel.....	1376, 1380, 1385, 1390 1394
Ms Di Cocco.....	1376
Mr Wilkinson.....	1376
Mr Qaadri.....	1380
Mr Baird.....	1381, 1384, 1386, 1390 1393
Mr Levac.....	1381, 1393
Mr Milloy.....	1382
Mrs Van Bommel.....	1383, 1386
Mr Hoy.....	1385
Mr Jackson.....	1385, 1389
Mr Marchese.....	1389, 1394
Mr Lalonde.....	1389
Mr Kennedy.....	1394
Vote deferred.....	1395

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Anniversary of Rwandan genocide

Mrs Bountrogianni.....	1359
Mr Arnott.....	1359
Mr Hampton.....	1360

Continued overleaf