



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 38th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 38^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 16 June 2004

Mercredi 16 juin 2004

Speaker
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Copies of Hansard

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Exemplaires du Journal

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 16 June 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 16 juin 2004

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

JASSEN CULLIMORE

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):

Every hockey player dreams of becoming a Bobby Hull, a Mark Messier or a Wayne Gretzky and taking to the ice in the Saddledome, the ACC or the St Pete Times Forum. For Simcoe native and Tampa Bay Lightning defenceman Jassen Cullimore, that dream has been realized.

On June 7, while much of Canada was fired up about the Calgary Flames playing in game seven of the Stanley Cup finals, many of my constituents were cheering on Tampa Bay and Cullimore, as he manned the Lightning blue line. Despite a storm of activity in the dying seconds of the game, Cullimore and his team were able to clinch a 2-1 win and, as a result, the Stanley Cup will be returning again to my riding. The return visit follows its arrival three summers ago on the shoulders of Norfolk county native and Avalanche star Robbie Blake. He lives just a mile up the road from Jassen.

Championship hockey players are not unique to my riding. I think of locals Red Kelly, Chico Maki and Rick Walmsley, all of whom have had their names engraved on the cup. On the women's side, Hagersville's Becky Kellar has been playing for Team Canada for several years. She competed in the 1998 Olympics and helped bring home the gold in 2002 from Salt Lake City.

So to Jassen and the rest of the Tampa Bay Lightning crew, congratulations. Jassen, we look forward to seeing you and NHL's most coveted prize.

DAVID COOK AND TERRY BUTT

Mr Tim Peterson (Mississauga South): I rise today to recognize two outstanding individuals from Mississauga South: Mr Dave Cook and Mr Terry Butt. Mr Dave Cook has written, and Mr Butt has financed, a book about the history of Applewood Acres, which is in the northeast corner of Mississauga South. In Mr Cook's book, titled *Apple Blossoms and Satellite Dishes*, you can read how Applewood Acres was given development approval by Premier Leslie Frost.

Some of the historic people who lived in Applewood Acres include Buffalo Bill Cody's father and grandfather and Colonel Harland Sanders.

In Mr Cook's book, he will tell you the story of how William Grenville Davis, the 35th Premier of Ontario, changed his name to Bill Davis so he could appear first on the ballot. That was a decisive part of his first election victory.

Mr Cook was able to give free copies of his book to all residents of Applewood Acres, thanks to Mr Terry Butt. As former councillors in Mississauga, both Mr Cook and Mr Butt have shown their passion and dedication to their community, and now have enshrined it for all to read about.

I hope you will join me in congratulating Mr Cook on the tremendous work he has done in writing about this very important time in the history of Mississauga South and of Ontario, and to Mr Butt for sponsoring him. Will they please rise in the east gallery to be recognized.

RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): It was my privilege to attend the first Relay for Life cancer research fundraising event held in Bracebridge, in my beautiful riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, last Friday evening. Such events are organized by the Canadian Cancer Society as a celebration of survival and a tribute to the lives of loved ones. Approximately 300 people were present at the fairgrounds in Bracebridge, including 160 participants, volunteers and entertainers, for the 12-hour relay.

The weather was beautiful and the enthusiasm of those who participated, both young and old, was exceptional. The survivors' victory lap saw 39 cancer survivors walk the first lap of the relay in recognition and celebration of their courage and struggle with cancer. Another highlight of the evening was the luminary ceremony, in which candles were lit and placed around the track in memory of a loved one or in honour of a cancer survivor.

The event was a massive success, having raised \$39,000 in this inaugural year. This is a true reflection of the hard work and commitment of all those who participated, volunteered and provided their financial support. To all of them, I send my most sincere thanks. In particular, I would like to thank the enthusiastic organizing committee, chaired by Tina Plavinskis; the many sponsors, including Dura Automotive Systems and Pride of Muskoka Marina; and the Bracebridge OPP for their participation by shaving their heads in the Cops For Cancer event.

We all know someone who has been touched by this disease. It is events like this that give us hope that the day

will come when cancer will be beaten. I extend my warmest congratulations to all involved. I look forward to the second annual Relay for Life next year.

JACK McCLELLAND

Ms Monique M. Smith (Nipissing): I rise today on a sad day for Canadian publishing and culture. On Monday, our country lost a legend in Jack McClelland, who passed away at the age of 81. Jack was born in Toronto, attended U of T and served in the Royal Canadian Navy. He joined the firm of his father, McClelland and Stewart, a Canadian publishing firm, in 1946, and became president in 1961.

Over the next 20 years, Jack McClelland built M&S, as we lovingly know it, into the most significant Canadian publisher in the business. The house publishes countless Canadian literary giants, including Farley Mowat, Peter Newman, Pierre Berton, Margaret Atwood and Margaret Laurence, to name but a few.

Mr McClelland had a keen eye for publicity and was a great promoter of Canadian literature in Canada and around the world. One of his most notorious moments was when he marched toga-clad down Yonge Street to promote Sylvia Fraser's novel *The Emperor's Virgin*.

He was, to say the least, a legend. He was named a Companion of the Order of Canada in 2001 and held 11 honorary degrees for his contribution to Canadian literature. He has been declared the "father of Canadian literature" and has been described as being instrumental in creating "the whole existence of Canadian literature."

Today I rise in respect of a legend. I hope that we as Canadians and as Ontarians will remember that Jack McClelland was such a contributor to our culture. I thank him and thank his family for his contributions.

1340

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I want to take a few moments to discuss serious constituent concerns in my riding of Leeds-Grenville related to the McGuinty Liberal government's attack on Ontario's health care system through the delisting of chiropractic, optometry and physiotherapy services. This ill-thought-out decision is yet another direct violation of a Liberal campaign promise. Rather than providing reinvestment dollars for health care, it will ultimately cost the provincial treasury more and will inflict needless pain on thousands of low- and middle-income Ontarians, especially seniors on fixed incomes.

One of the many seniors who contacted me is Evelyn Pelton of Brockville. For Evelyn, her chiropractic treatments are an essential part of the health care system. She requires periodic treatments to restore mobility in her neck, and the chiropractic care she receives provides relief and doesn't require more expensive alternatives.

Evelyn is just one of thousands of Ontarians affected by the McGuinty Liberals' betrayal of promises and their pay-more-for-less approach to health care. I urge the

Liberal government to reconsider this wrong-headed and short-sighted decision, and restore funding to chiropractic, optometry and physiotherapy services in the province of Ontario.

HEADWAY HOMES (NIAGARA) INC

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): The goal of Headway Homes (Niagara) is to provide a model long-term home with appropriate services for severely brain-injured persons who are identified as slow to recover. There are currently no community-based services for these persons.

They formed a board of directors in June 1995 and since then have been meeting and discussing their project proposal with the central south regional office of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Niagara District Health Council. At the request of the central south regional office, they prepared several proposals and a business plan, but they continue to wait and wait for approval for funding to build the first Headway Home in Niagara.

They understand and they've been told that a significant barrier to funding is not only financial but policy-related. In order to move the needed project forward, the current policy preventing 24-hour nursing care in community-based settings must be revisited. They call upon this government—I join them in calling upon this government—to take the necessary steps to correct this policy and open the door to more effective services for a unique group of individuals who are slow to recover from severe brain injury.

I have hundreds of signed letters from people in communities across Niagara who express their concern for the lack of residential services for adults who are slow to recover from severe brain injury. I urge this government to respond. I insist that this government respond promptly to the creative, cost-effective and indeed humane and socially progressive proposal of Headway Homes, so that they can move ahead with their plans to care for those very important people in our communities.

EDUCATION

Ms Laurel C. Broten (Etobicoke-Lakeshore): I would like to rise today to point out a visitor in the gallery. My nephew Christian Giansante is here in the legislative gallery today. Christian is six years old and just about to complete the first grade.

Last fall, when we were engaged in the election, one issue in particular was repeated thousands of times at the doorsteps across Etobicoke-Lakeshore. The public had lost faith in the public education system, and the Tories had turned it into a political football. They were looking for a strong commitment from our party to rebuild our fractured educational infrastructure.

For years before the election and ever since our government has been elected, I have been meeting with parents and education experts who have been saying the

same thing: The most effective way to turn our system around and guarantee positive long-term results in education is to give children a strong start in public school.

Our budget has answered that challenge. We told the people of Ontario that class sizes from junior kindergarten to the third grade would be capped at 20, and we have made the necessary investment to ensure these kids get the start they need to succeed in our public schools.

The Tories gambled and lost with public education. I can't imagine what they must have been thinking when they purposely set out to create a crisis in the system so they would get credit for solving it. Luckily for the children such as Christian, they are no longer at the controls. When Christian enters second grade next fall, it will be in a public system that is once again striving for excellence.

FEDERAL ELECTION

Ms Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): In the federal leaders' debate last night, Stephen Harper confirmed that his plan for Canada is to recycle failed Ontario Tory ideas. What you might not know is that he is recycling failed Ontario Tories.

Looking at the names of candidates for Stephen Harper's Conservatives in the federal election, I came across a few that struck a chord with me and obviously struck a chord with Ontarians recently.

One candidate, as education minister under Mike Harris, made drastic cuts that led to the textbook shortages, crowded classes and decrepit buildings that were hallmarks of their education agenda. That same candidate, as health minister under Mike Harris, closed 36 hospitals, leading to the long waiting lists, crowded emergency rooms and nursing shortages that patients struggle with every day and that we will have to reverse. This same candidate, as Management Board chair under Mike Harris, slashed the environment ministry budget in half and fired one third of the staff, directly contributing to the Walkerton disaster, according to the public inquiry.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): The member from Renfrew is not in his seat.

Ms Wynne: That Conservative Party candidate is David Johnson, running for Stephen Harper in Don Valley East.

Another one who caught my eye was the member who was known to have paid his press secretary \$300,000 a year. That was Tony Clement.

We're repairing the damage that these members did when they were members of the Ontario government. Let's not give them another crack at government in this country.

MEMBER'S COMMENTS

Mr John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex): It was an amazing night last night as we were debating Bill 70, because our good friend the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound stated the obvious: that his government had

incompetent ministers. In his own words, "We had an incapable, incompetent minister handling it in Minister Hudak. He shouldn't have been the minister. He was the minister, and that's unfortunate. He had his own agenda."

I wonder if the former minister, the member for Erie-Lincoln, was incapable and incompetent, but what was his agenda? I recall that under his tenure hundreds of birth certificates were lost and he didn't tell anyone for months. Afterwards, he told the Toronto Sun, "We've got to do a better job." Well, no kidding.

Under the Tories, our schools were crumbling, cancer patients were waiting weeks and months for therapy, the former government was flip-flopping daily on the energy sector, and the environment ministry was slashed by 40%, which led to the tragedy in Walkerton. Under the Tories, Ontario was left with a \$6.2-billion hidden deficit, a provincial debt increased by \$25 billion under their term that our children and grandchildren will be paying off for years, and a decimated infrastructure.

I think Mr Murdoch is absolutely right. When he talks about the former government's incompetence, it seems that not all is warm and fuzzy in the opposition's caucus.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated June 16, 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.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington): Pursuant to standing orders 59(a) and 60(a), I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on estimates on the estimates selected and not selected by the standing committee for consideration of the House.

Clerk at the Table (Ms Lisa Freedman): The standing committee on estimates presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to standing order 59, your committee has selected the estimates 2004-05 of the following ministries and offices for consideration:

Ministry of Finance: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care: 7 hours, 30 minutes;

Ministry of Energy: 7 hours—

Interjections: Dispense.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Dispense? Dispensed.

Pursuant to standing order 60(b), the report of the committee is deemed to be received and the estimates of

the ministries and offices named therein as not being selected for consideration by the committee are deemed to be concurred in.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr Tony C. Wong (Markham): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on regulations and private bills and move its adoption.

Clerk at the Table (Ms Lisa Freedman): Mr Wong from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presents the committee's report as follows, and moves its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr5, An Act respecting Conrad Grebel University College

Bill Pr6, An Act respecting Redeemer University College.

Your committee further recommends that the fees and the actual costs of printing at all stages be remitted on Bill Pr6, An Act respecting Redeemer University College.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? No further actions are required on your part—or no further actions are required on my part. Got that.

1350

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ASIAN LONGHORN BEETLE CONFINEMENT ACT, 2004

LOI DE 2004 SUR LA LIMITATION DE LA PROPAGATION DU CAPRICORNE D'ASIE

Mr Tascona moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 102, An Act to limit the spread of the Asian longhorn beetle / Projet de loi 102, Loi visant à limiter la propagation du capricorne d'Asie.

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

Mr Tascona?

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): The intent of the bill is to prohibit persons from transporting firewood infested with the Asian longhorn beetle, and creates an offence for doing so.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader): I believe we have unanimous

consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Do we have unanimous consent? Agreed.

Hon Mr Duncan: I move that, pursuant to standing order 96(g), notice be waived for ballot item 27.

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

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader): I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 till 9:30 pm on Wednesday, June 16, 2004, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Dombrowsky, Leona	Peterson, Tim
Bartolucci, Rick	Duguid, Brad	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Duncan, Dwight	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Qadri, Shafiq
Bountrogianni, Marie	Gerretsen, John	Ramal, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Gravelle, Michael	Rinaldi, Lou
Broten, Laurel C.	Hoy, Pat	Ruprecht, Tony
Brown, Michael A.	Kwintar, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Bryant, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Smith, Monique
Caplan, David	Mauro, Bill	Smitherman, George
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Colle, Mike	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Cordiano, Joseph	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Craitor, Kim	Milloy, John	Wilkinson, John
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Wong, Tony C.
Dhillon, Vic	Oraziotti, David	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Di Cocco, Caroline	Peters, Steve	Zimmer, David

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Jackson, Cameron	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	Kormos, Peter	Runciman, Robert W.
Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Hardeman, Ernie	Murdoch, Bill	Witmer, Elizabeth
Horwath, Andrea	O'Toole, John	Yakubski, John

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 54; the nays are 18.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

1400

VISITORS

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Page Jessica Guthrie from Welland South in Welland has visiting her today her parents Joe and Debbie Guthrie. Her three brothers were left behind.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): That's not a point of order, but we welcome them.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo): My question is to the Minister of Health. On May 19 your Minister of Finance, during his budget speech, made the commitment to invest in public health, and that it would increase immediately. He also said your government would increase the province's share of public health funding to 75%. I was very surprised, in reviewing the expenditure estimates that were tabled before this House yesterday, to discover, when I took a look at the vote item for public health, that it had been reduced by half a billion dollars. I would say to you, Minister, how can you justify this cut to public health?

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I think the honourable member is on slightly interesting ground, as it's her legacy as a member of a government that actually cut public health. The estimates are very clear; that is, they demonstrate that there is a significant increase in funding for the provision of public health services in this province, but it's not reflected exactly in the estimates for two reasons.

First, there are some transfers out of the Ministry of Health into the Ministry of Children's Services that are in effect in that estimate's line, but more importantly there was a very significant expenditure related to one-time initiatives for SARS that are not repeated in this fiscal year. Overall, with respect to public health funding, there are eight very distinct areas in our budget where public health will be advantaged as a result of the commitments we've made in this year's budget.

Mrs Witmer: It certainly looks to me like there are more shell games being played by this government. I would remind the minister that when we were in office, we increased public health funding between 1998 and 2002 by 43%, both at the municipal and the provincial level. However, I would say, if I take a look at the estimates and look at the programs that are there for Ontarians infected with HIV, I see that we spent \$31 million on AIDS prevention and treatment assistance, HIV and the Ontario HIV Treatment Network. If I take a look at your estimates, you have actually cut the public health programs and services for HIV and for AIDS-infected patients. I ask you, how can you justify what appears to

be a cut of over \$23 million for these vulnerable Ontarians?

Hon Mr Smitherman: There's not much I can do for an honourable member who continues to stick with the script she wrote before the first answer. First off, you've got a lot of revisionist history going on. You like to pretend you weren't the government from 1995 until 1998 and that there weren't consequences related to the decisions you made then, like the arbitrary downloading of more of the responsibility for public health on to the tax base at the municipal level—first and foremost. But the facts are very clear here. When you remove the \$589 million that was in the public health line item from last year which was one-time funding related to SARS, what's absolutely, abundantly clear is that this government, in our first budget, is increasing public health expenditures by \$190 million, for increases in eight very distinct areas. And any shell game that you see is purely a shell game that is a figment of your imagination, but understandable given the fact that that's the way you operated for so many years.

Mrs Witmer: Talk about shell games; this minister stood up in this House and pretended that they were providing the funding for the immunization programs for children, when he knew full well it was the federal funding that he was counting on. It had nothing to do—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling): Order.

Mrs Witmer: What you have done is, you made a commitment to health care; you are investing it in sewers. You're using the federal money to pay for the immunization program. And if I take a look at your public health commitment, as the critic for women's issues, I find that you have cut \$3 million from the Ontario breast cancer screening program. This at a time when we know there is a need to invest in breast cancer screening. Are you going to immediately restore the funding for this program?

Hon Mr Smitherman: What is astonishing about this honourable member is that she served in cabinet for years and years, and still, through all of that experience, doesn't seem to have come to understand that one-time federal money for immunization does not sustain immunization on an ongoing basis. What you have in this government, as a result of the commitments that we made during the election, is the implementation of an immunization strategy for our children, not just for this year and not just for next year, when there are federal dollars available, but a program that will be available for Ontario forever. This is an increase in immunization, a development of a new strategy that will be funded by the provincial government for as long as that program is offered. That is a clear commitment.

Here's a quote from John Rapin, president of the Ontario Medical Association: "I want to applaud the government for making good on its promise to increase funding. Expanding funding for children's immunization programs and public health is long overdue in Ontario and will improve health prevention and promotion initiatives."

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington): My question is to the Minister of Health as well. On Monday of this week, I asked your Premier a question. Clearly, he has been misinformed by staff in the Ministry of Health about the status of your new drug funding program. I want to revisit your answer, not that I'll quote from Hansard, but you'll recall that you indicated an error had been made by Cancer Care Ontario, that had released the drug, and then they were correcting—your word, “correcting”—that error.

Minister, I wish to advise you. I spoke earlier to the oncologist who headed the haematology disease site group that approved Rituximab for the province of Ontario. It received its policy recommendations on September 23 and began usage in the province on January 1. And as you know, I tabled in this House the notice from Cancer Care Ontario saying that the government of Ontario had a hard cap on their new drug funding program and that's why Rituximab for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma was delisted in this province.

Minister, will you correct the record now that I've proved to you that this drug was on the formulary?

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): There's no argument about the drug being on the formulary and there's no decision point on the part of the Ministry of Health or certainly the Minister of Health with respect to what drugs Cancer Care Ontario chooses to put on the formulary.

By way of explanation that had been provided to me, I offered to the honourable member what I had been told, which is that the policy approvals necessary to list the drug on their formulary had not been granted, and they made the decision, with no consultation and no communication, which is totally appropriate with my ministry.

Go back and read Hansard very carefully. What you'll find is the essential point and it is this—I repeat it for the honourable member: The government of Ontario will back up Cancer Care Ontario on the decisions that they make and on the implications that has in terms of spending. What I said very clearly to the honourable member is that we make the commitment that the people of Ontario who need cancer drugs will get them, and therefore, as required, we will find the additional resources necessary.

1410

Mr Jackson: Those words are rather hollow for several Ontario families who were told that Rituximab would be available to them in this province, from January 1 to 27, until your government informed Cancer Care Ontario it had a hard cap.

There is a Toronto family I spoke to this morning. At this time last year, this gentleman was almost dead. His oncologist here in this city said that his bone marrow blood tests showed 80% lymph. He had very little time left. They said it was at a critical level and he needed the Rituximab treatments. He went to Indianapolis at US\$26,000 for four treatments. If it was in our province,

it would have been \$12,000 for those four treatments, yet he was denied access to the drug, which is available in this province. Today, his blood is completely clear, because there are no side effects from this drug.

You tell this family and several dozen others that are traveling to the United States now why you've put a hard cap on Cancer Care Ontario's new drug funding program. When will you lift the cap so that these Ontarians do not have to go elsewhere to get this vital treatment?

Hon Mr Smitherman: This is evidence of an honourable member who is not acting in the interests of people who are suffering from cancer in our province, because he continues to propagate the idea that there is a hard cap. If you want to ask me questions, you, sir, have an obligation and a responsibility to listen to the answers and to reflect those answers in what you're communicating to people who are hanging in the balance on these kinds of debates.

I have been very clear and I will repeat one more time: There is no such thing as a hard cap. That is a manufactured phrase that has been manufactured by this member out of a political interest that is not serving the interests of patients in this province.

We print a budgeted number in the Ministry of Health. The member ought to know—I know he does—that in the Ministry of Health in a given year there are many, many programs which are more open-ended, and during the course of a year additional resources are always found to support the expansions which are sometimes unanticipated in those programs. But the key point is this: Those cancer drugs will be paid for.

Mr Jackson: I want to bring to the minister's further attention the damage he's doing to Cancer Care Ontario and to the thousands of cancer patients in this province who on a daily basis are denied drugs that they could get in other provinces and that are freely available to them. Rituximab is available in Prince Edward Island, in BC and Saskatchewan. Alberta actually lifted the discriminatory age cap of 65-plus which we have in this province because they had a rate of 55% fewer deaths from using this drug. It was discriminatory to people who were denied the drug because of their age. They've now put it on their formulary.

On April 1 of this year, Cancer Care Ontario sent a further memo to every single cancer hospital or clinic in this province indicating that the half a million dollars discretionary drug funding money that was available to them for the last five years has now been cancelled because of this government's approach to putting a hard cap on their new drug funding program.

If you are not listening to cancer patients who are having to go to the United States because they have to go into their pockets to find money to pay for this drug, will you not lift the cap?

Hon Mr Smitherman: There is no cap to lift. There is no cap to lift. Cancer Care Ontario makes decisions about drugs that it puts on its formulary based on scientific evidence of efficacy. I don't get involved in those; no one in the government does. Those decisions are not made at cabinet.

The message has been conveyed very directly to Cancer Care Ontario and it has been conveyed very directly numerous times now in this House to the honourable member, who chooses for some political reason not to get it. But here is the fact, and I will repeat it one more time to him: There is no hard cap. We've clearly indicated to Cancer Care Ontario that we will work with them through the course of this year, as required, to enhance the amount of money they need to provide the drugs that their scientific evidence indicates are appropriate for people suffering from cancer in this province. The commitment of the government remains firm on that, and any further attempt by the honourable member really needs, frankly, to be brought into very, very sharp focus, because the intent of the member, it seems, is to destabilize cancer treatment for people in this province. There is no hard cap, and I assure the honourable member that Cancer Care Ontario's resources will—

The Deputy Speaker: New question.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Acting Premier. It's now clear to all Ontarians that a good chunk of the McGuinty health tax is being spent on programs that no one believes are health care services, programs like sewer and water pipe.

The numbers in your budget speak for themselves. You will get an increase in federal funds for health care of \$726 million, and you will take in \$1.635 billion in the McGuinty health tax, which means you'll have an extra \$2.36 billion to spend on health care services. But when you look at the spending on health care services, you're \$200 million short, which is why you start including sewer and water pipe.

Will you admit, despite your Premier's promises on his radio ads, that all the new money isn't going to health care services, and will you withdraw your budget and bring in a new budget which recognizes all the false information that you put forward?

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Speaking of false information, who is here spewing it forth, trying to run away from his own party's platform? One time he believes in the determinants of health, and the next, he doesn't. This is a member who represents a riding that has an enormous number of native reserves. You go on to those native reserves and tell them there's no correlation between quality water, drinkable water and health. Is that the point that you're taking? Is that the point that you'd like your deputy leader to advance, after all the work about Walkerton, the lost and forgotten lessons of Walkerton? Evidence there in the front bench of the New Democratic Party.

Our party's commitment is clear. It's an investment in health care. In my ministry alone, \$2.161 billion this year; money from the health premium and money that's provided as a result of work that we've done with the federal government.

Other ministries, aligned across our government in the interest of enhancing the health of Ontarians, also have

money to expend. I don't hear the member talking about the commitment—

Mr Hampton: Your credibility problem grows worse in the out years. I want you to turn to page 12 of your own budget. What it shows on page 12 is that next year, you clearly state, health care spending will increase by only \$600 million over this year, but during that same period you will be taking in \$800 million more through the McGuinty health tax, and the federal government will be increasing health transfers by another \$800 million. So it means that you will have \$1.6 billion more that you say is going to health, but you're only spending \$600 million more on health. Next year you'll have a \$1-billion gap. What are you going to do next year, trot out another \$1 billion of sewer and water pipe and call it health care services?

Hon Mr Smitherman: This member just doesn't get it. He doesn't seem to understand that a government can come together, that it can reject the silo mentality that says the only ministry that influences expenditures on health care is the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. He doesn't seem to—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Smitherman: The others are chiming in. They don't seem to think that expenditures that are made by, as an example, the Minister of Community and Social Services that include significant investments in drug benefits, are health care expenditures by their logic, or that investments in children's mental health by other ministries, other than the one that has "health" in its name, are indeed dedicated to the task of enhancing the overall health of the people of Ontario.

What's new for the honourable member, and that I urge him to get used to, is that this is a government aligned on a narrow range of priorities. Enhancing the quality of health care and enhancing education are tasks that all members and all parts of the government are involved in.

1420

Mr Hampton: I want to read Dalton McGuinty's quote, which is playing on radio ads. It goes like this: "I'm Dalton McGuinty, and I want you to know that every penny of Ontario's new health premium will go to health care." Then we open up the government's budget, and what do we find? Next year the government will take in an extra \$800 million through this regressive tax on middle- and modest-income families. It will get another \$800 million of dedicated health care funding from the federal government. That's \$1.6 billion in total, but its health care investments only go up by \$600 million.

I say to the minister again, what are you going to do next year? Are you going to fill some potholes in the roads and say, "Oh, that's health care spending because the ambulance might go over it"? Are you going to run some ads on television telling people to jog around the racetrack and say that's health care spending? You've got a real credibility problem.

Hon Mr Smitherman: The honourable member continues to run from his platform, which said, "Practical

Solutions for Public Health Care,” where in part he says, “Smog kills thousands, and the NDP plan to shut Ontario’s coal-fired generating stations....” They talk about “protecting the quality of drinking water at source.” The other day in a statement, the honourable member from Sudbury went out of her way to say that housing is an essential component of health care as it relates to people with mental illness in our province.

The point simply is made by the honourable member, which is that health is so pervasive. It is influenced by so many things. It is a government-wide priority. There’s no secret in that. To his challenge at the beginning of his question, I’m pleased to stand in my place and say that the Premier is right: Every cent of the new health premium will be used to enhance the quality of the health of the people of the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: New question.

Mr Hampton: Again to the Acting Premier. I want to read the Premier’s promise again: “I’m Dalton McGuinty, and I want you to know that every penny of Ontario’s new health premium will go to health care.” Then he lists a number of things. He doesn’t list sewer pipe; he doesn’t list water pipe; he doesn’t list television ads saying, “You should start a fitness program.” Those aren’t health care.

That’s why you’re in such trouble, Acting Premier. Once again, you promised one thing, and now it’s clear that the money isn’t all going to go to health care. Some of it’s going to go to other things. You weren’t straightforward. You distorted the facts. Will you admit that to the people of Ontario? Withdraw your budget and bring in a budget which represents what’s really happening.

Hon Mr Smitherman: Man, oh man, you’re working pretty hard to spin away from what used to be an essential principle of your party and your government. Let me read a little bit more from Howard Hampton’s platform, which was drafted almost a year ago: “... finding practical solutions to some of the social causes of bad health—poverty, homelessness, inequality and illiteracy, to name a few—these are the keys to a healthy Ontario.”

That was then, according to Howard Hampton. But now, for purposes of his own political opportunism, he likes to try and characterize an initiative that is designed to give people opportunities to be more active as something that’s fundamentally not in the interest of better health. This is outrageous.

Mr Hampton: I certainly recognize that having safe drinking water is important. I certainly recognize that people being fit is important. I don’t call those “health care services,” and I don’t go out there and try to fool the people of Ontario by pretending that they’re health care services.

I don’t issue a promise saying I’m going to lift \$1.6 billion out of the pockets of modest- and middle-income families and say it’s all going to be spent on health care services, and then spend it on sewer and water pipe. It’s your promise. It’s your distortion of the truth. When are you going to come clean with the people of Ontario?

Hon Mr Smitherman: It’s a little rich to hear the man who authored this statement talk about coming clean to

the people of Ontario: “Public power means the best way to keep people healthy is to have a healthy environment.” The determinants of health messaging—all lost on that government now and the promotion of healthy lifestyles is not about health care, is not about making sure that people have all the information to stay healthy in the first place. This is an attempt on the part of that honourable member and his party to create nothing except a lot of noise.

The fact of the matter is that for years and years, they have been the proponents of the determinants of health argument that says health care is influenced by a variety of things, including the environment we live in, the quality of the air we breathe and the quality of the water we drink. That was then, though, and apparently this is now.

Mr Hampton: I suspect people across Ontario will now be very interested that the Acting Premier of the McGuinty government believes that when you do air quality testing, that’s a health care service and you should pay for it out of the health care tax; that when you put in sewer pipes, that’s a health care service and hard-working families of Ontario should pay for it under this new health care tax.

Minister, admit it, here’s what you did: You decided you were going to raise taxes, you decided you were going to raise them on modest- and middle-income families, and then you thought, “How are we going to make people swallow this? Oh, we’ll call it a health care tax. It doesn’t matter that the money’s going to be spent on sewer and water. It doesn’t matter that in the second year of this health care tax, we’ll spend a billion dollars less on health care services than we take in through the tax. We’ll just fool the people by calling this regressive increase in taxes a health care tax.”

The Deputy Speaker: Question.

Mr Hampton: Admit that, Minister, because it’s obvious to absolutely everybody in Ontario that that’s what the McGuinty government’s doing.

Hon Mr Smitherman: It wasn’t only in his party’s platform—oh, Howard, stop hogging all the questions so Shelley can ask one.

It wasn’t only his presentation in his public power platform that the honourable member is now running from. He went before the Romanow commission. Here’s what he said when he went before the Romanow commission: “Hampton argued that all levels of government must focus on the determinants of health and used the example of diabetes in a northern Ontario community to illustrate the impediments to access to basic health care....” The point of the matter is simple. Use diabetes as an example. How do you have kidney dialysis in Ontario if you do not have access to a clean, safe, stable and secure water source?

The fact of the matter is that they can run and they can make all the noise they want, but at the end of the day, people understand that the implication is clear, and what we learned in Walkerton was that as a province, we have an enhanced obligation to improve water protection.

MINISTER'S COMMENTS

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I'll give the Acting Premier a chance to cool off there.

My question today is for the Attorney General. As Ontario's Attorney General, the province's special investigations unit falls under your jurisdiction. It is your responsibility to ensure that the SIU is allowed to conduct investigations without influence from anyone, especially from cabinet ministers.

I established in my question to the Premier yesterday that the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services has tainted the SIU investigation with his recent comments regarding the police shooting of a Scarborough man. Minister Kwinter has also encouraged and biased a potential civil suit by the man's family, because with his comments he clearly implies that the police were wrong to shoot the man, that they should have been equipped with a Taser so they could have used it instead.

Minister Bryant, will you admit right now that Minister Kwinter has tainted the SIU investigation, tainted a potential civil suit and prevented you from effectively doing your job?

1430

Hon Michael Bryant (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal): With respect to the SIU investigation, obviously it is under investigation, and I certainly have nothing to say about that.

Minister Kwinter had made references to police operations. That is something Minister Kwinter does, make references to police operations. This government has complete confidence in Minister Kwinter's comments on police operations and otherwise, in every way.

Mr Dunlop: I don't think this government sees how serious this issue really is. It involves someone's death. Yesterday, the Premier brushed me off with short, arrogant answers. He obviously didn't want to comment on the issue at all.

This morning, my staff received a news release from Canada Newswire. In the news release, Minister Kwinter announced the funding already announced by our government—

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): You announced, but you never put the money up.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Eglinton-Lawrence.

Mr Dunlop: This is a serious issue, in case you don't know.

—on June 14, 2003, for a pilot project to help Toronto Police Services track sex offenders, a program that you and Minister Kwinter had refused to implement until you were embarrassed into doing it a few weeks ago on the anniversary of Holly Jones's death.

Minister, were you involved in the communication strategy to issue the release for the sole purpose of taking attention away from the mess Minister Kwinter has created with his remarks that now jeopardize a special investigations unit investigation?

Hon Mr Bryant: I say to the member, you're asking about two different things. If it's with respect to the announcement made by Minister Kwinter today, then if you have further questions, I suggest you ask him. If you have another supplementary, I will refer the questions.

I just want to make clear that Minister Kwinter did not make a comment on the investigation, and I will not make a comment on the investigation. That is the end of the matter.

HYDRO RATES

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, yesterday you unveiled a hydroelectricity plan that makes the profit-takers, the fee-takers and the commission-takers of Bay Street very happy. They are literally rubbing their hands with glee. They can't wait to start gouging consumers again. You've taken them back to the good old days of Mike Harris—privatize electricity, but consumers will pay handsomely.

You've already broken your promise to freeze rates until 2006, so you must have some idea of how much hydroelectricity rates will go up after this reintroduction of privatization. How much will they go up? Is it 20%, 30%, 40%? What are you telling the people of Ontario?

Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader): I can say with confidence to the people of Ontario that hydro rates will go up a lot less than the 40% they went up under his government.

Mr Hampton: Minister, that's the same answer Jim Wilson used to give before the prices shot through the roof. But I'll tell you, the people of Ontario deserve an answer.

For example, we know from the Electricity Conservation and Supply Task Force that to generate electricity from natural gas would cost 7.5-cents a kilowatt hour. That's a lot more than 4.7 cents. Your officials have these numbers. Will you share them with the people of Ontario, or are you afraid to tell the people of Ontario how much hydro privatization under the Liberals is going to drive up their hydro bill?

Hon Mr Duncan: The numbers are readily available from the IMO, and they vary from day to day. I take it from his question that the member would prefer to use coal, which is cheaper than natural gas.

Hon James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism and Recreation): He wants coal. He's in favour of coal.

Hon Mr Duncan: I suppose he wants coal.

The member opposite does not understand the hydro file. His policy's logic was flawed. The history he's recounted of hydro in this province was flawed. His ideas have been tried and didn't work. Ultimately, the people of this province rejected his ideas with respect to hydro.

What we can say is, if this government fails to do what we've set out to do in this legislation, then prices will go up. We're confident that the best way to provide reliable and stable electricity prices in this province can be found in the path that we've set forward, a path that undoes the

mess that the NDP left this province in when it cancelled all conservation programs and the mess it left when the NDP government raised electricity prices by 40% in less than three years.

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): My question is to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. In my riding of Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh, many of the smaller and rural communities and municipal councils are struggling to fund imperative infrastructure projects such as water treatment plants and road repair.

With the announcement of the 2004 Ontario budget, our government dedicated gas tax monies to Ontario cities for upgrading and maintenance of public transit systems. This dedication equals two cents of the existing gas tax, or approximately \$312 million when fully implemented. However, in Ontario there are countless communities and municipalities that do not have public transit systems.

Minister, the gas tax funds are a welcome and much-needed announcement to larger municipalities. However, since smaller municipalities will not be able to access these funds, what has been allocated in the budget to offset this perceived inequity, and what is our government doing to aid rural Ontarians in advancing their infrastructure needs?

Hon David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal): I thank the member for the question. I want to commend to you the words of AMO president Ann Mulvale, who said, "This budget turns a page in Ontario's recent history by working with municipalities, showing greater respect to property taxpayers, and making essential municipal services and infrastructure a priority." And she wasn't simply referring to our gas tax commitment. She was also referring to the Canada-Ontario municipal rural infrastructure fund, about which we signed a letter of intent with our federal and municipal partners at the OSUM conference in Owen Sound on May 6. COMRIF, as it's called, is a \$900-million fund dedicated to communities of 250,000 and less. It will help our rural and northern municipalities invest in capital projects that will help with prosperity, projects such as roads and bridges, water and sewer. This government is committed to safe, clean, liveable communities right across this province.

Mr Brownell: Thank you for clarifying how our government is going to aid rural Ontario to reach its infrastructure goals. As a government, we have high standards for municipalities and the services they offer to their residents. As a former municipal politician, I understand these constraints, which, under the past Tory regime, were downloaded upon municipalities without a whole lot of foresight and long-term planning.

To hear that our government has finally committed to helping rural Ontario provide safe water and waste water systems, safe roads and bridges and generally greatly

needed infrastructure improvements gives me much pleasure. I look forward to helping the communities of Stormont, Dundas, and Charlottenburgh apply and receive funding under the COMRIF program.

However, Minister, can you inform this House about other ways we are aiding to relieve the financial pressures on municipalities initiated by the past Tory government?

Hon Mr Caplan: One of the reasons why municipal leaders are so supportive of the budget that my colleague the finance minister introduced in this House on May 18 is because there are other methods. We are setting up the Ontario Strategic Infrastructure Financing Authority, or OSIFA, which will be a pooled finance vehicle for municipalities, a subsidized loan pool. OSIFA is simply another way in which we are going to be helping our rural and smaller communities in Ontario to invest in critical infrastructure. It is especially important in light of the fact that both previous governments did not make these much-needed investments, and our province is literally crumbling around us. Municipal leaders know the kind of support that Dalton McGuinty and Finance Minister Sorbara and this entire government are providing to them.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is to the Minister of Health. You might know that the most efficient program for eye cataract surgery is in my riding of Durham at Lakeridge Health Bowmanville. It's my understanding that they perform 29 extractions or replacements on a daily basis.

However, in the past few weeks a number of my constituents who have had the pre-op assessments etc have been called and told that their surgery has been cancelled. Lakeridge Health tells me they are working with your ministry people and appealing for increased funding.

Minister, would you kindly advise what action is being taken to respond to Lakeridge's request for increased funding for their eye cataract centre in Bowmanville?

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I would express more generally—this can't speak specifically to the Lakeridge piece of it, except to acknowledge that they're one of a variety of important providers of that service in Ontario.

We have additional resources as a government to deploy for cataract surgeries, recognizing it is one of those areas in our health care system where people are waiting longer than we think is appropriate, particularly given the capacity to enhance their quality of life. What I can assure the member of is that we're working in the acute care branch to establish budgets with hospitals for this year. Involved in that is the decision around where these procedures will be provided. All I can say to the honourable member is that we're working away diligently on that, and when I have something to announce, he'll be among the first to know.

1440

Mr O'Toole: That's reassuring for the patients who are on the waiting list, but I read and watched your budget with some interest. You have allocated funding for 9,000 additional procedures in cataract, and your attempt to shorten waiting times—I completely encourage that because the truth is that it really is a quality-of-life issue. In fact, I have a specific constituent who's waiting for the surgery very patiently, and to return to work to support her family. Minister, I wonder if you could tell not just me in the House today when you're prepared to make those commitments so people can get on with the quality of life you've made reference to in the province of Ontario.

Hon Mr Smitherman: I would very much like to thank the honourable member for his endorsement of our government's strategy, as contained in the budget, which includes very specific initiatives to address wait times around cataracts, hips and knees, cardiac, cancer and access to MRI and CT scans in the province. I would just say to the honourable member that it will be a little bit of time yet before the absolute allocations are provided, but we are looking forward to getting on quickly with the challenge of shortening the list, the wait times for people waiting for cataract surgery in the province. Lakeridge continues to be one of those partners we look forward to working with.

DOCTORS' SERVICES

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): My question is to the Deputy Premier. My question has to do with the whole issue of the underserved situation we find in northern Ontario when it comes to physicians. Minister, you'll know that in towns like Kapuskasing, Geraldton, Timmins, and the list goes on, we have a shortage of family doctors. There are not enough doctors to serve the needs of the community. In fact, 1,700 patients are without a doctor in the city of Sudbury, and in the city of Timmins it's somewhere around 10,000.

You are now going to delist chiropractic services. You are now going to delist eye exams out of the OHIP formulary. You tell me how that's going to assist the underserved problem when people start piling into the doctors' offices because they can no longer afford to go to a chiropractor or an eye doctor.

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): When you ask your supplementary, I say to the honourable member, why don't you stand up and tell me why you cut the production line of doctors in this province? It's the biggest single contributor to the problem that is being experienced right now. The fact of the matter is that at least this party, while in government, enhanced our production capacities, but everybody will know the production of a doctor doesn't happen overnight.

It's important to note that just this very morning, the Ontario Medical Association spoke to the committee reviewing the budget and was complimentary in a variety

of areas about the initiatives we're undertaking as a government. Specific to the issue of doctors is the Northern Ontario Medical School, which I know the member supports, and we have already begun to see net increases in the flow of doctors to northern Ontario in anticipation of the role to be more involved in helping to do the clinical training for new generations of doctors.

Secondly, with respect to—oh, sorry, you want me to—

Mr Bisson: Yes, sit down, George, because quite frankly you're missing the point. The serious issue is that there is a shortage of doctors in northern Ontario. You can try to blame it on the Conservatives, you can try to blame it on the NDP, but the fact is you're the government, you're the minister in the chair and you're the one now responsible. Now your government decides you're going to exacerbate the problem of underserved areas in northern Ontario by forcing patients out of chiropractors' offices, out of the eye doctors' offices, and into either emergency wards that are filled to capacity, as you well know, or into the doctor's offices.

Minister, will you do the right thing and relist those services that you're about to delist in Ontario, and not make a bad situation in northern Ontario even worse?

Hon Mr Smitherman: I'd like to remind the honourable member that his party cut medical school spaces in this province. That's where doctors get produced, after all. So it's not about blame. Maybe it's a little bit more about standing up and taking some responsibility for the short-sighted efforts that you were involved in as a member of a government not long enough forgotten in this province.

I heard the physiotherapists were before the committee this morning, and here's what they had to say, in part: "In 1993, the Ontario Physiotherapy Association negotiated an historic fee increase with the OHIP schedule 5 with the Rae government that would have revitalized community-based physiotherapy." Regrettably, that fee increase was rolled back in the social contract.

Here's my point, after all: We're working very hard as a government to make up for a variety of decisions made by those two parties while in government. I believe that our family health team proposal to bring a multi-disciplinary approach to the provision of primary care services will be an extraordinary advantage to the people of northern Ontario.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr John Milloy (Kitchener Centre): In establishing the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, our government delivered on an important election promise. Our goal in establishing such a ministry was to eliminate many of the silos that exist within our government, demonstrate the importance we place in our children and youth in this province and pay particular attention to their programs and services. Children's agencies in my area, particularly family and children's services, and our local children's treatment centre, KidsAbility, supported the

creation of the new ministry but withheld judgment until they saw real results being delivered. Can the minister tell us of the progress she has made in keeping our commitment to better serve the needs of the children of Ontario, particularly in Waterloo region?

Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Since becoming a minister in this area—having the great honour of being minister in this area—one of my challenges is to better integrate the services across the province, and that means working very closely with other levels of government and with agencies like KidsAbility. Some of the things we've done are: We announced capital funding for non-profit child care centres, and just the other day we announced a 3% operating increase in children's treatment centres, including KidsAbility in your area. The centre will receive over \$130,000. As well, we've relieved the fiscal pressures of historical deficits of our children's aid societies and we'll very soon be announcing \$25 million of new money for children's mental health and \$58 million of new money for child care in this province.

Mr Milloy: Children's organizations like KidsAbility have told me they want to forge a new relationship with the government and work together to ensure that the needs of our children are being properly addressed. They want to be full partners rather than supplicants, going cap in hand to the government every year, often to be turned away. Will the minister commit to reviewing our government's programs and services for children and establish a new working relationship with organizations like KidsAbility?

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: What I've heard across the province over the last few months of consultations is that often programs don't meet the needs of children; basically children are trying to meet the needs of programs. We have to turn that around and break the silos that we heard earlier in this question period. In order for this to happen, we do have to work very closely with our transfer partners, with agencies like KidsAbility. I understand the good relationship that you have with the KidsAbility in your city. I also want to reassure you that this 3% is not one-time funding but annualized funding that makes KidsAbility and other treatment centres better able to plan for the future.

NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. On June 9, while introducing an amendment to the Ontario Municipal Act, 2001, you stated, "Far too often in years past, municipalities have been caught off guard and taken by surprise by the provincial government of the day." Did you consult with the six municipalities in the district of Muskoka before taking them out of the north in the budget of May 18?

Hon John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister responsible for seniors): I'd like to refer that to the Minister of Finance.

Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance): I'm happy to answer the question. I know the member has argued very eloquently the case for his constituency and the municipalities in the district of Muskoka. The fact is that we have an obligation to bring some reality back to the way we allocate very scarce taxpayer resources. The area we returned to the boundaries of southern Ontario had historically been part of southern Ontario, really, since the early days of Confederation. The land mass didn't move.

Back in the year 2000, the then Conservative government, for reasons that I don't understand, changed the boundaries to include Muskoka, including Gravenhurst and all that wonderful cottage country, in the boundaries of northern Ontario. Frankly, we thought that was an incorrect decision and we corrected it in our budget.

1450

Mr Miller: I would like to remind you that the federal government of Canada recognizes the entire riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka as part of the north.

I would like to go back to the minister's comments last week and remind you that there was in fact no consultation—I repeat, no consultation—with the six municipalities in the district of Muskoka. They were caught off guard and surprised by your government's actions. In the same statement, the minister went on to say that after municipalities have "worked hard to draft their annual budgets, the province has often come along and imposed new standards, programs and other municipal requirements." That is exactly what your government did.

These municipalities made up their budgets expecting to be part of the north, expecting funding from the northern Ontario heritage fund. Then on May 18, you came along, without consultation, without warning, and removed them from the north. At this point, seeing as you didn't consult with the municipalities in Muskoka before the May 18 budget, will you at least commit to consulting with them now?

Hon Mr Sorbara: There's absolutely no doubt. I'd be delighted to meet with all of those municipalities and have further discussions to respond to their needs. But let's be fair. I invite my friend to be fair about where the real needs are in the province. I invite him to visit northern communities where the issue is depopulation, where young people are leaving the communities and heading south, where the values of property are decreasing because the amount of business activity is not there.

I tell my friend that we have very scarce resources in this province. If we are going to give special treatment to the people of northern Ontario, that should go to the people of northern Ontario. Regrettably, we cannot share those resources with the people of Gravenhurst and the other municipalities in Muskoka, which really form part of a pretty vibrant southern Ontario economy. It was the

right decision. I'd be delighted to meet and discuss with those municipalities the rationale behind our decision.

IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): My question is to the Acting Premier. In 2000, four Albanian-born women in this province applied for Ontario College of Teachers certification. These four women were determined by the college to meet the qualifications. They passed all the tests in English. They concurrently, at the same time, went to York University and passed all of those tests. They were certified for two years, but the rules changed and these women, who did all of this work trying to get into a profession which they had previously done in Albania, are left high and dry. They have been teaching in private schools. They have been told that they're doing an excellent job.

In your election platform, you said you were going to help new immigrants get certified. Yet your ministers, the Minister of Education and David Caplan, have refused to meet with them. They have refused to help them. They have refused to do anything to help these women do what is necessary to get teaching accreditation in this province. I want a commitment from you today that you will meet with them and you will help them get the jobs that they deserve, and for which they are now qualified.

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I want to thank the member from Beaches-East York for bringing that to our attention. We are very eager to make sure that internationally trained individuals can practise in their chosen career here. As far as teachers are concerned, in January, one of our announcements was \$1 million, working in partnership with the college of teachers, which will serve 2,000 internationally trained teachers, enabling them to become accredited to work here. If I could just continue, or if you want a supplementary, I'd like to give you a little bit more.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): Some of these women are constituents of mine and they came to see me back in February. I've been dealing with the college of teachers on behalf of these women, asking them to please grandparent them because they completed all of the requirements under the rules at that time. They're now devastated to be told that they can't go out and work in their chosen profession. We are asking you very specific—

Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance): Totally unacceptable.

Ms Churley: It is totally unacceptable. We are asking you very specifically today, will you step in and fix this problem for these women? I want to tell you that if you don't do that, you will not be keeping your commitment to immigrants to support their efforts for Canadian

certification in their professions. Will you please look into this case and fix it?

Hon Mrs Chambers: I will be very pleased to look into these cases. I would encourage the member from Toronto-Danforth or the member from Beaches-East York to provide me with files on those individuals. I will be very pleased to look into that.

SARS

Mrs Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington): My question is for the Minister of Health. A few months ago, the final report of the Ontario expert panel on SARS and infectious disease control and the interim report of Commissioner Archie Campbell on the investigation into the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome were made public. As I recall, you said you would get back to the public within two months. Minister, that was almost two months ago and I'm wondering if you would have an update for us.

Hon George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Indeed, I do. First, I want to report to the House one very significant piece of progress. The Premier has given me some additional resources to help on the challenge of public health renewal, and that's by our colleague the member for Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh.

We are very involved at the ministry in developing our comprehensive response to the reports of Naylor, Walker and Campbell, and I'm pleased to tell the House that that response will be forthcoming next week.

Mrs Sandals: We've been talking about the budget and the fact that there is \$190 million in new investments in public health, and we all know that the failure of the public health system contributed to the SARS situation. Do you have any examples of how that money will be used?

Hon Mr Smitherman: More information on all these points will be forthcoming.

I would want to cover some areas that are going to be the beneficiaries of additional spending with respect to public health: first is the responsibility that the province is going to take back from our municipal partners, which I think has been enormously well received among municipalities; our immunization program, which we've spoken about; enhanced infection control; a very significant return to a tobacco strategy, long missing in this province; campaigns designed to enhance physical activity and address obesity and the challenges associated with it; new investments in public health information technology, which has been lagging far behind; enhancements to the amount that we spend at the Canadian blood service; and I think perhaps quite notably, our fulfillment of our party's commitment to help to develop a new public health agency for the province of Ontario. These eight distinct areas will be the beneficiaries of additional resources, all of which are going to contribute very significantly to the renewal of public health in Ontario.

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Yesterday you suggested that I review the estimates tabled for your ministry. When I received a copy of the estimates, I did just that. I would suggest that you not tell everyone to do that, because they will be surprised by the numbers. I saw \$65 million of your budget cuts coming directly from the farm safety nets. I saw that money to cover farmers' needs through the agricultural policy framework has dropped dramatically.

How can you face the farmers of this province and tell them you are fighting on their behalf when you let your budget be cut by \$128 million, half of which comes directly from the financial support of the farmers?

Hon Steve Peters (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Obviously the honourable member doesn't know how to read the estimates, because there is not a \$128-million cut to the budget. There is a change, a grand total change in the budget of \$66.9 million.

What we're trying to do as a government is something that you didn't do, and I can't believe you have the nerve to stand up, as a member who campaigned in 1995, who stood there in front of the people and said—and Mike Harris said—“No cuts to agriculture.” What did you do within your first six months in office? You closed down the vast majority of the agricultural extension offices in this province.

How you can stand up and be so high and mighty—we've had to do things differently, but we are committed to supporting the agricultural industry.

1500

Mr Hardeman: I suggest that the minister do a little reading of his own and find out that the Mike Harris government was elected in 1995, and the changes in the delivery of agriculture services were in 1999, in a different mandate of government totally. I suggest he read the document.

Minister, today we heard that you would finally flow money to the beef industry that you promised last February. Let's be clear: This is not new money. You have already made that announcement. But what about the front-line producers? They need compensation. Minister, you knew this when you were agriculture critic, and that, I believe, was in 1999. You told the then minister, Helen Johns, to do what it takes to save the entire industry. You said that provincial contributions of 40% were a minimum and called on the minister to enhance and expand the program.

Minister, are you willing to go to your Premier and cabinet and ask for some of your safety money back so you can do what you know is needed, which is to compensate farmers reeling from the closed American border?

Hon Mr Peters: First, I want to thank the members of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association, the Dairy Farmers of Ontario and the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency who are here today. I want to thank them for hosting this ap-

preciation day today, but I think, more importantly, for demonstrating to everyone in this House and the staff in this building and the citizens of Ontario that we do need to stand behind and support our agricultural industry.

That's why this government moved forward with the agricultural policy framework. You were not able to achieve a deal with the federal government. We worked with the Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council and the Ontario Cattlemen's Association to get a better deal for the citizens of Ontario and ultimately a better deal for all Canadian farmers. We were able to get that agreement in place with the negative margins. We have a commitment from this government of \$120 million a year in support of agricultural programs. If you talk to those farmers about the CAIS program, you'll find out that that's a program that's going to work and help the farmers.

PETITIONS

MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington): This petition is signed by several hundred of my constituents.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas tens of thousands of responsible motorcyclists are being hit with huge increases in insurance or are being denied coverage because of the type of vehicle they ride;

“Whereas the premiums for the mandatory insurance coverage for motorcyclists have increased on average over 40% in the past two years;

“Whereas many responsible riders can no longer afford to insure their motorcycles due to high insurance costs;

“Whereas sales of motorcycles in Ontario have dropped over 7% year-to-date, a figure attributed directly to the increase in insurance rates; and

“Whereas many businesses and individuals in the motorcycle industry are suffering due to the loss of sales and decreased employment high insurance rates are causing;

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

“Please amend the insurance regulations to make motorcycle insurance more affordable and to ensure motorcyclists are treated fairly and equitably by insurance companies, brokers and agents.”

This petition has my signature of support.

CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I've got a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that I received from the office of Dr Gary Bovine, chiropractor.

“Re support for chiropractic services in Ontario health insurance plan:

“Whereas,

“Elimination of OHIP coverage will mean that many of the 1.2 million patients who use chiropractic will no longer be able to access the health care they need;

“Those with reduced ability to pay—including seniors, low-income families and the working poor—will be forced to seek care in already overburdened family physician offices and emergency departments;

“Elimination of OHIP coverage is expected to save \$93 million in expenditures on chiropractic treatment at a cost to government of over \$200 million in other health care costs; and

“There was no consultation with the public on the decision to delist chiropractic services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse the decision announced in the May 18, 2004, provincial budget and maintain OHIP coverage for chiropractic services, in the best interests of the public, patients, the health care system, government and the province.”

I have signed this petition as well.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls): I am pleased to present to the House a petition from the residents, family members and supporters of Bella Senior Care Residence in the city of Niagara Falls. In the petition they're indicating that “long-term care is underfunded and is one of the lowest-funded long-term-care sectors in North America.

“Long-term care needs nurses and proper funding to ensure such areas as dietary, housekeeping and maintenance and all other expenses needed for a quality of existence that the seniors so rightfully have earned. Bella Senior Care Residence needs the government's support for seniors in long-term care in Ontario.”

I'm pleased that our budget is doing that and I'm pleased to affix my signature to these 400 petitions.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have several hundred names from my riding, Leeds-Grenville, attached to petitions that read:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Liberal government has announced in their budget that they are delisting key health services such as routine eye exams, chiropractic and physiotherapy services,

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

“To reverse the delisting of eye exams, chiropractic and physiotherapy services and restore funding for these important and necessary services.”

TAXATION

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I also have a petition dealing with the government's breaking of the taxpayer protection act and their failure to comply with the requirement for a referendum. I'm affixing my signature to both these petitions. Thank you.

CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I have another petition to save chiropractic services in Ontario that reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas,

“Elimination of OHIP coverage will mean that many of the 1.2 million patients who use chiropractic will no longer be able to access the health care they need;

“Those with reduced ability to pay—including seniors, low-income families and the working poor—will be forced to seek care in already overburdened family physician offices and emergency departments;

“Elimination of OHIP coverage is expected to save \$93 million in expenditures on chiropractic treatment at a cost to government of over \$200 million in other health care costs;

“There was no consultation with the public on the decision to delist chiropractic services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse the decision announced in the May 18, 2004, provincial budget and maintain OHIP coverage for chiropractic services, in the best interests of the public, patients, the health care system, government and the province.”

I agree with this petition.

UN ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE

M. Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans): « Attendu que le gouvernement ontarien devance son projet de loi pour rendre l'Ontario une province sans fumée;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Nous, membres de la communauté de l'École secondaire catholique Garneau à Orléans (Ontario), demandons au gouvernement ontarien de devancer son projet de loi pour rendre notre province sans fumée. »

Merci.

CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

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

“Re support for chiropractic services in Ontario health insurance plan:

“Whereas,

“Elimination of OHIP coverage will mean that many of the 1.2 million patients who use chiropractic will no longer be able to access the health care they need; and

“Those with reduced ability to pay—including seniors, low-income families and the working poor—will be forced to seek care in already overburdened family physician offices and emergency departments;

“Elimination of OHIP coverage is expected to save \$93 million in expenditures on chiropractic treatment at a cost to government of over \$200 million in other health care costs; and

“There was no consultation with the public on the decision to delist chiropractic services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse the decision announced in the May 18, 2004, provincial budget and maintain OHIP coverage for chiropractic services, in the best interests of the public, patients, the health care system, government and the province.”

I'm pleased to sign my name to that.

AJAX-PICKERING HOSPITAL

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas at the time the Centenary Health Centre and Ajax-Pickering hospitals amalgamated under the umbrella of the Rouge Valley Health System, a commitment was made by the Health Services Restructuring Commission that the communities of Whitby/Pickering/Ajax, according to the amalgamation agreement, would not lose a full-service hospital and would maintain all existing services; and

“Whereas municipal governments in the region of Durham have provided financial support to the Rouge Valley Health System on the understanding that Ajax-Pickering hospital would continue as a full-service hospital; and

“Whereas numerous service clubs and other organizations have also raised money in support of the expansion of the Ajax-Pickering hospital and services provided therein such as the maternity unit on the understanding that the Ajax-Pickering hospital would continue as a full-service facility; and

“Whereas the Rouge Valley Health System has changed its strategic plan without consulting its key stakeholders, such as the residents who use the hospital, the doctors, nurses and other professional staff that work within the system and the local governments and organizations that fund the hospital; and

“Whereas this has led to a decrease in the level of service provided by the maternity unit and the number of acute care beds;

“We, the undersigned concerned citizens of west Durham, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That a full-service hospital with all the existing services at the time of amalgamation be maintained at the Ajax-Pickering site and new services added as the population continues to grow and age, as agreed to by the Ajax-Pickering General Hospital and Centenary Health

Centre in the amalgamation agreement signed May 31, 1998.”

Mr Speaker, I'm sorry, it's a long petition, but I certainly agree with it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Of course, that was the member from Davenport.

1510

CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberal government is cutting provincial funding for essential health care services like optometry, physiotherapy and chiropractic care;

“Whereas this privatization of health care services will force Ontarians to pay out-of-pocket for essential health care;

“Whereas Ontarians already pay for health care through their taxes and will be forced to pay even more through the government's new regressive health tax;

“Whereas the Liberals promised during the election that they would not cut or privatize health care services in Ontario;

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

“We demand the McGuinty Liberal government keep its promises and guarantee adequate provincial funding for critical health services like eye, physiotherapy and chiropractic care.”

I agree and have signed this petition.

DISTRICT OF MUSKOKA

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): I have thousands more petitions to keep Muskoka part of the north, now bringing the total to 6,000, and I shall read it.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the district of Muskoka is currently designated as part of northern Ontario; and

“Whereas the geography and socio-economic conditions of Muskoka are very similar to the rest of northern Ontario; and

“Whereas the median family income in the district of Muskoka is \$10,000 below the provincial average and \$6,000 below the median family income for Greater Sudbury; and

“Whereas removing the district of Muskoka from northern Ontario will adversely affect the hard-working people of Muskoka by restricting access to programs and incentives enjoyed by residents of other northern communities; and

“Whereas the residents of Muskoka should not be confused with those who cottage or vacation in the district; and

“Whereas the federal government of Canada recognizes the district of Muskoka as part of the north; and

“Whereas this is a mean-spirited and politically motivated decision on the part of the McGuinty government;

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

“That the McGuinty government maintain the current definition of northern Ontario for the purposes of government policy and program delivery.”

I support this petition and affix my signature to it.

TAXATION

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): A petition to force Premier McGuinty to obey the taxpayer protection law:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the McGuinty government’s 2004 budget will break the taxpayer protection law by not conducting a referendum on tax increases; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty signed an election pledge on September 11, 2003, not to raise taxes without the explicit consent of voters through a referendum; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised in TV ads not to raise taxes by one penny on working families; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty pledged in writing to obey the taxpayer protection law, which requires a referendum before increasing taxes;

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

“To ensure that all of the McGuinty government’s tax increases are put before the people of Ontario in a referendum.”

PROPERTY TAXATION

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): I have another petition and it is addressed to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Finance. It reads as follows:

“We, the undersigned property owners and tenants, strongly recommend changes to the current value assessment system.

“We believe the municipal tax system should reflect the following principles: (1) Ability to pay should be a consideration; (2) property taxes should be related to services 100%; (3) homeowners should not be penalized for improving their properties; (4) dependence on the residential property tax to raise provincial and municipal revenues should be reduced; (5) the assessment system should be stable over a long period of time—10 years; (6) assessments should be objective, accurate, consistent, correct, equitable and easily understood—house sf class price; lot sf class price, garage sf class price; and (7) the owner should be authorized to approve the assessment.”

Most of our funding has come from the ratepayers groups and citizens from across the city. I will just sign my name to this petition.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): I have a petition from my constituents in Parry Sound-Muskoka. It says:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Liberal government has announced in their budget that they are delisting key health services such as routine eye exams, chiropractic and physiotherapy services,

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

“To reverse the delisting of chiropractic, physiotherapy and optometrist services and restore funding for these important and necessary services.”

I support this petition and affix my signature to it.

LCBO OUTLET

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey): A petition for an LCBO agency store in Baxter:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

I’ve signed and agree with this petition.

CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): This is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Re support for chiropractic services in Ontario health insurance plan;

“Whereas elimination of OHIP coverage will mean that many of the 1.2 million patients who use chiropractic will no longer be able to access the health care they need; and

“Whereas those with reduced ability to pay—including seniors, low-income families and the working poor—will be forced to seek care in already overburdened family physician offices and emergency departments; and

“Whereas elimination of OHIP coverage is expected to save \$93 million in expenditures on chiropractic treatment at a cost to the government of over \$200 million in other health care costs; and

“Whereas there was no consultation with the public on the decision to delist chiropractic services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse the decision announced in the May 18, 2004, provincial budget and maintain OHIP coverage for chiropractic services, in the best interests of the public, patients, the health care system, government and the province.”

I’m pleased to sign that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADAMS MINE LAKE ACT, 2004

LOI DE 2004

SUR LE LAC DE LA MINE ADAMS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 15, 2004, on the motion for third reading of Bill 49, An Act to prevent the disposal of waste at the Adams Mine site and to amend the Environmental Protection Act in respect of the disposal of waste in lakes / *Projet de loi 49, Loi visant à empêcher l'élimination de déchets à la mine Adams et à modifier la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement en ce qui concerne l'élimination de déchets dans des lacs.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier): Questions and comments?

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I listened with interest to the debate yesterday. I'll have an opportunity in a few minutes to put some of my thoughts on the record. Right now, I want to respond to the comments made by several of the official opposition members yesterday. I forget some of the things that were said. I don't agree with many of things that were said. Some of the Conservative members are outraged that the Liberal government is stopping the Adams mine. I certainly don't agree with them on that.

It was our party, me working with Jack Layton, David Miller, Michael Prue—who was at city council then—who fought very hard from our end here in the city of Toronto, along with Gilles Bisson, Howard Hampton, Shelley Martel and others from the north, fighting it from that end. So we think this is the right way to go. We hope this time it really is “D-E-D,” as Mel Lastman said at the time; dead.

I do want to say that there was something that I agreed very vehemently with: some statements made by the member for Simcoe North. Those were around how the government is determining, cherry-picking, what they're going to stop and what they're going to allow to happen in other jurisdictions in terms of landfills. What I would say about that is that there isn't going to be an opportunity any more for any government of any stripe to be able to site landfills, to expand landfills, to build incinerators, to even build the new modern type of incinerator—the so-called gasification process I'll talk about later—because people just won't allow it.

So I would say in response that we all agree that, whether philosophically we're there or not, we have to move on by dealing with our waste in different ways.

1520

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): I'm pleased to comment on the comments made previously. I understand the member from Toronto-Danforth has suggested that it's not so much the bill, but she's also questioning the motive with which this bill is being brought forward.

I have to say that it certainly is about the notion that government has a role to play in protecting the public

interest when it comes to the environment. This is an example where government has acted. Very shortly, we will also see that hazardous waste landfilling will also have higher standards in this province. As you may know, in the last four years in opposition, I brought to the attention of the government of the day the need to have more stringent standards for the disposal of hazardous waste in this province. Nothing was done. As a matter of fact, the notion that this was possible was scoffed at.

Well, we're also doing that. So there's a comprehensive, long-term plan to deal not just with the nature of the Adams mine and landfilling at this site, but also with how we dispose of hazardous material in this province so that we don't have the lowest regulations in North America and that our standards are strict and therefore we are protecting the public long-term. It is about that long-term vision that we bring in this type of legislation, so that we don't leave legacies to our children and our grandchildren that will—but something we would be proud of long-term when we say, “You know what? We have been able to protect the environment, and the government has done the right thing in these matters.”

It's silly of the third party to question motive, even though the bill is a good one.

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): I'm pleased to add comments on the speech by the member from Simcoe North on the Adams mine lake bill. I think that if the government wants to achieve the 60% diversion target it has set for itself, it should be seriously looking at a deposit-return system, which is why a month or so ago, I introduced an LCBO deposit-return private member's bill in this place. It's been shown in other jurisdictions that a deposit-return system is much more effective in terms of keeping waste out of our landfill sites, in terms of keeping litter off our streets and roadways, and there are many other benefits from a deposit-return system.

I would like to comment not only on the member from Simcoe North, but also on the member from Lanark-Carleton, who was speaking on this bill yesterday as well. I'd like to point out that I don't like landfill sites, personally. However, in the case of this Adams mine lake landfill, the proponent had gone through a lengthy, expensive process, following the rules that were set for the proponent, and then the government just pulled the rug out from underneath this proponent.

I question the way in which they have done this bill, the way they have arbitrarily changed the rules at the last moment. I think there are some serious property rights being undermined by the way in which this bill has been introduced. That is something I have real concerns about with this bill. I hope it's not the way this government is going to proceed with property rights in the future.

Mr Wayne Arthurs (Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge): I have enjoyed the debate, particularly yesterday. The member from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant spoke for some time on the matter. During that time, he was referencing a motion that, I guess, today is before the Michigan House of Representatives, regarding landfill matters. He

made particular reference to Daniel Acciavatti and some concerns he seemed to have had.

Let me assure this House that our Minister of the Environment has met with Member Acciavatti on two occasions so far. When he was here at the hearings on this bill, he made reference to the fact that the waste stream that's coming from the Toronto area is, in waste terms, clean waste. It was his view that, working together with the province of Ontario, there would be common accord and opportunities to continue doing what we're doing as we seek the long-term solutions necessary for our waste.

I must say that, having heard the members opposite talk about landfill, how the proponents have all this investment and that, somehow, by not allowing this to go forward, we are putting them at some disadvantage, that we're taking away their rights, I recall the NDP government, with the IWA process, spent an awful lot of taxpayers' dollars trying to site landfill sites in the greater Toronto area.

One of those was in the municipality that I represent. I have to tell you that my constituents didn't feel that, because the government of the day had spent tens of millions of dollars trying to site landfills, they should let one go forward in the municipality in which I live and which I represent. What it did do was drive home the need to deal with waste.

As a matter of fact, I put the waste out just yesterday, for the first time, as an expansion within our community: the wet waste program. It's now expanding throughout the municipality.

I know the time is short in the couple of minutes I have right now, but I'd love to be able tell the House more about that initiative during the course of debate.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Simcoe North has two minutes to reply.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I'd like to join with my colleagues from Lanark-Carleton and Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant to thank the folks from Toronto-Danforth, Sarnia-Lambton, Parry Sound-Muskoka and Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge for their comments on our leadoff yesterday.

In summary, we won't be supporting this piece of legislation. It's as clear as that. We believe there are a lot of faults that were outlined by all three of our speakers yesterday.

I think what's really important is that we have to look at what happened as a result of the Walkerton inquiry. Justice Dennis O'Connor made some very, very specific recommendations. One of those recommendations, of course, was to provide water source protection legislation. In effect, this bill jumps ahead of all the other pieces of legislation or other landfill approval sites in the province of Ontario. We haven't seen any background material that would suggest any technical reasons why the Adams mine should be turned down, and yet we have all kinds of other landfill sites across the province. I know you know I've mentioned many times about site 41 in my riding.

The bottom line is that they have jumped the gun on this bill for political purposes. They're passing it. I understand that a lot of people don't like the idea of waste going into an old mine shaft, but the bottom line is that they have not looked at other landfills across the province. If you treated everybody fairly, I could understand why this bill would be passed, but this bill does not treat the other municipalities fairly. I made that very clear in my comments yesterday.

In summary, I'll say again that site 41 in my riding is a mistake. The recommendations of the Walkerton inquiry clearly point that out. I'd like to see a moratorium put on that site until we actually see legislation on water source protection implemented in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Ms Churley: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent for the member for Timmins-James Bay to use any remaining time in our lead a little later in the rotation. He can't be here right now. Is there unanimous consent for that?

The Deputy Speaker: Consent has been requested. Is it the pleasure of the House?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Just repeat it, please.

Ms Churley: Mr Bisson, the member for Timmins-James Bay, would like to share the lead with me, but I would like it to be later in the rotation. Is there consent for that?

The Deputy Speaker: I think we have consent. Agreed.

1530

Ms Churley: Thank you, Mr Speaker. And I understand the House leader needs to know before saying yes to any unanimous consent request from any other party. We listen very carefully over here when the House leader from the government side stands up to make any motions.

Here we are, talking about Adams mine again. I simply want to say that I support the legislation to hopefully kill Adams mine once and for all. There are a lot of people, of course—and I said this when the bill was first introduced—taking credit, as politicians and parties tend to do. They don't often take responsibility for things that go wrong and the actions that cause problems, but politicians are well-known for taking credit for things that they played a tiny part in. That's OK, but I also think it's important to point out who really did the hard, slogging work, and to thank them, because I don't believe we'd be here today, years after this was first proposed. When the NDP was in government, we said no to Adams mine. We got a lot of flak for it. You weren't here then—a lot of new members since then.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Ms Churley: Were you? Sorry, Speaker.

You will recall that we said two things: We were not going to allow incineration and Adams mine to be options for garbage. It was, I admit, a rather disastrous process we went through in trying to find new land sites> We were hoping that banning these other two things,

along with some of the other plans we had for diversion of garbage, would lead us more quickly to a full environmental assessment; once, and if, sites had been found under the old environmental assessment, before it was scoped by the previous government, we'd be looking at, through that process under the Environmental Assessment Act, alternatives to the undertaking and alternatives to the site.

Intervener funding used to exist then, but the previous government cancelled that as well, and we're hoping the Liberals will bring that back. By the way, that doesn't cost the taxpayer a penny. It came under the Attorney General's office, and it was paid for by the proponents of the large undertaking.

Under that scenario, we were hoping that would happen, and that it would drive the process of moving us forward more quickly in recycling, composting, all of the other diversion tactics that we know about and we're still so far behind on. What happened, of course, is the Conservatives came to power, cancelled all of that, cancelled the process where we would end up having a full-blown environmental assessment process, and brought back Adams mine again, which was just a travesty. It caused huge problems.

What got me into politics was fighting garbage incineration and closing down, with other citizens and politicians, an old garbage incinerator in my riding. I was known as the garbage lady of Toronto. It was not very flattering, but said in flattering terms at the time.

I thought you were going to chastise me for something, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Never.

Ms Churley: So the situation was then, and still remains, that we're far behind other jurisdictions in terms of moving forward on the other diversion tactics that are in place.

I started by saying—and I thanked them when this bill first came forward, but I'm going to mention them again. That would be Public Concern Timiskaming, the Timiskaming Band Council, Timiskaming First Nation. There are so many names, people from the area, that I'm loath to mention anybody in particular.

Well, I'm going to mention Charlie Angus, because he's running for the NDP federally in the area. Do you know what brought him into this? It was getting involved. That's what got me involved in politics too. I must say, these fights sometimes do create, after citizens taking actions, more interest in the political process and people leaping from that into politics. That's certainly, I believe, partly what spurred Charlie Angus on. He, along with some of the others, fought very hard and spent a lot of their own money and a lot of their own time coming down here to Toronto time after time, in busloads sometimes, to go to city council. Mel Lastman at city council at one point voted for it.

I remember we went there one day, my leader Howard Hampton and me, Gilles Bisson and some others, and there was quite an interesting scenario going on at city hall. The people from the area came down. Council had

voted for it, but there was an opportunity for them to revisit it. I remember that then-Mayor Mel Lastman was so mad at us that I think he called my leader and I—it was printed in the paper. I don't know if he called us "dumb" too. I think he said that Mayor Miller, before he became the mayor, said dumb things and would never become mayor, and look what happened there. But it wasn't very flattering about my leader and me being down there among the protesters. So we played a small part.

We played a small part in this House by standing up to the Tories at the time and continually pointing out the flaws and the problems, working with the citizens' groups and First Nations to show the problems. Some of the independent professors and others did independent reviews of the very flawed computer modelling that was done and the very scoped environmental assessment that was done. It was just so clear that it was flawed and shouldn't proceed.

Those people should be thanked particularly for their hard work because they're the ones who really made the difference. We became the mouthpieces in many ways for people who did a tremendous amount of hard work.

I recall that during the municipal election at that time—I think it had just been called—Charlie Angus and a bunch of other people came down and brought their guitars. They came down in buses. Jack Layton, who was then the municipal councillor in that ward in my riding, had just opened up his campaign office. They had nowhere to stay—it was a very exciting night—so we opened up the campaign office. We got them sleeping bags and food, and most of them slept there on the floor that night. People were up half the night, playing guitars and singing. They were a determined bunch of people.

We all went down to city hall the next day to fight this. Thanks to many of the councillors there, then-councillor David Miller found something within the existing agreement that made even Mel Lastman nervous. I'm not going to go into the details of that because I have too many other things to say about waste diversion.

So here we are, and the Adams mine—this bill will be passed, I'm sure—will be hopefully dead forever. It was a bad plan from day one, and it will continue to be a bad plan.

What I want to say as well—my colleague from Nickel Belt, Shelley Martel, raised this yesterday—is that here we are cancelling throwing tonnes and tonnes of garbage into the Adams mine, into water, into a man-made lake, at the same time that the federal Liberal government in Ottawa has created—I have to look here. It's a Canadian agency called the Nuclear Waste Management Organization. It was formed under the Liberal government in Ottawa and it has been looking at long-time storage options for nuclear waste somewhere in Canada. I know the federal government in Ottawa has been looking at this for a very long time.

The reason it's connected to the Adams mine debate is that we have I don't know how many hundreds of tonnes of deadly nuclear waste that has to be stored somewhere.

This agency is now again looking at—it has been looking at this for some time—storing this in underground caverns in the Canadian Shield. Some of those, as you know, are in northern Ontario. I would say, as the member for Nickel Belt said yesterday, no way is that going to be stored in the north. I know she and our northern colleagues will fight very hard for that. We've got a problem here. Where are we going to store this stuff? It should not be stored. You're going to find the same problems with the caverns in these underground mines as you did with the Adams mine. This is deadly waste that will be around for generations to come.

1540

Here we have a Liberal government, at the same time, now that it has come out with its energy plan, giving the go-ahead, the green light, for new nuclear plants. It is insane. While we sit here—

Interjection.

Ms Churley: No, no. He's talking about burning coal; we have to shut the coal plants down. But nuclear power, already, just on the basis of the cost, has proven to be not cost-effective. There are all kinds of alternatives.

Do you know what? That is not even the debate here. The debate here is: What do we do with the waste? Nobody's talking about that. The decision has been made, after all the billions and billions of dollars of cost overruns on nuclear, and they continue to happen—nobody's talking about what to do with this deadly nuclear waste.

Interjection.

Ms Churley: Now they're heckling me and harassing me, suggesting, "What are the alternatives, so why worry about it?" Adams mine is a perfect example of why we need to worry about it. We are faced with this same problem, only a much, much bigger problem: where to put this deadly waste. We're talking about building more nuclear plants that will create even more deadly waste, and we have no safe place to put it now. We're not just talking about our grandchildren; we're talking about their grandchildren. We're talking about your great-great-grandchildren. This is very, very serious when we're talking about leaving this kind of legacy for generations to come.

I think we need to have a debate in this House in the context of expanding nuclear plants. There are all kinds of reasons I could give and others could give as to why we shouldn't, in terms of cost-effectiveness—it isn't—and other environmental problems. Actually, nuclear plants are one of the biggest water polluters we have. Maybe the Minister of Health can take some money out of the new health care tax to deal with nuclear waste. Hey, that's a health problem. Our water is polluted by this, and we need money from somewhere to help deal with that.

We can't ignore these problems. It is easy to stand up and say, "We're going to build new nuclear plants because we need the power," and not deal with the repercussions. So I just want to put the government on

notice that this is going to turn into a very serious problem that we're going to have more debates about.

I wanted to take a little bit of time to talk about, OK, if not Adams mine, what?

This is not a prop; this is part of my discussion. I don't know if people have had an opportunity to read Ontario's 60% Waste Diversion Goal-A Discussion Paper, which just came out June 10. As you can see, I've been through it—these little yellow stickies. It's not exciting reading, but if you're interested in this, as everybody should be, it's an interesting read. There's some good stuff in it, but there are a lot of problems. That's why discussion papers, of course, are put out: for people to critique. That's what it's all about. I'm going to do a little bit of that now.

The only way we can prevent another Adams mine type of scenario, whether it is a proposal to dump waste in the ground, in a landfill; whether it's a proposal to dump it again in some form of water at some point; whether it's a proposal to expand existing landfill; whether it's a proposal to build new incinerators or gasification and other new and emerging technologies, which have to do with not diverting our waste but actually finding ways to dispose of it—we're going to have problems, no matter who's in government, from any party, political stripe. People are too aware, in this day and age, of the ramifications and implications of having those kinds of things, whether it's technology or just a hole in the ground with a good liner in it. They're not going to go for it.

That only leaves us one option, and that is to move forward far more quickly than we have on diverting waste, which they have done in other jurisdictions. We talked about it here before. Edmonton is one example, and Halifax. We know they are smaller cities; that's true. It's a little more complicated here; we have more high-rises and things, but it can be done. It has been done in Germany and other jurisdictions.

The only way we're going to prevent other really bad proposals and huge fights within communities—and that's the other piece of the problem with having these proposals in our communities. People in that community were really split, and I felt for everybody. There were people desperate for jobs and it was being proposed as job creation, although there weren't a lot of jobs. There were some jobs. Good friends and neighbours were really split. Things got ugly, and that was very unpleasant for everybody. That's another reason why, to the extent we possibly can, we need to keep these kinds of proposals from communities so that people—good neighbours and friends—don't end up being at each other's throats, which is what happened here.

For the province to meet a 60% waste diversion goal, it has to do a lot more than it's doing now. As we know, the province never met its prior target of 50% waste diversion by 2000, and then, as a consequence, landfills have imploded and garbage has to be trucked outside of our borders. This has given us an infamous reputation as a wasteful jurisdiction and as a jurisdiction that can't deal with its own waste. I'm not proud of it; I think it's

terrible. I don't blame the people in Michigan for saying that they don't want our garbage. I'm embarrassed by it. That's the situation we find ourselves in, and I think we would all agree that we have to—in fact, we're not going to have any choice in a few years. I expect, when the contract runs out, there will be no renewal of that contract.

The minister released this waste diversion discussion late last week. It outlines potential strategies to consider, and I want to discuss a few of the things in it. I don't have time to discuss it all because I will be leaving some time for my comrade-in-arms on the Adams mine, Gilles Bisson.

I want to talk a bit about industrial, commercial and institutional waste. One of the problems with this document and one of the critiques I would make is that when it comes to these kinds of waste streams, one strategy doesn't fit all. It's important to show that there are different volumes and types of waste generated by the different sectors in this category, and I'll just give you a fast and easy-to-understand example. Restaurants generate a large proportion of organic waste compared to office towers, which, of course, generate a lot of paper. So to see a visible reduction in the overall volume of ICI waste, you need to have specific programs and targets for each of the different sectors that fall under this category.

I want to talk a bit about construction and demolition waste, which is a very important one. The paper does discuss this category of waste, but in very general terms. It does not list any concrete action items for consideration pertaining to this kind of waste. So, some suggestions for this category: One is that there must be targets set, real targets set for using recycled materials in road construction, such as reclaimed aggregates, concrete and asphalt pavement. I'm certainly not alone in advocating this suggestion. I pointed this out recently at the greenbelt committee hearings.

People may not be aware of this, but the province's Environmental Commissioner has also said that Ontario is not taking full advantage of the opportunities to conserve aggregates. In his 2002-03 annual report, the commissioner analyzed that an estimated 3% of Ontario's aggregate consumption is supplied by non-virgin materials, "in great part because of the lack of incentives," such as a preferential bid system for contracts that use recycled materials.

I'd suggest that people look at the Environmental Commissioner's annual report, 2002-03. That's something that should have been acknowledged in this paper. Recommendations should be there. I'm hoping that will be included in a later updated version.

What has happened is that, as a result, there has been no government action on this since that report. The demand for cheap aggregate goes unabated.

These are the points I made in the greenbelt hearings, that what's happening is it's creating large holes in our landscape, such as the case of Dufferin Aggregates expanding into Milton quarry. This is a big hot-button issue in the area, and in my view—not everybody shares

my view, but from my perspective—it could be a disaster if it's allowed to proceed.

1550

It's currently before a joint board hearing, and that's only thanks to the efforts of groups like CONE. If it goes ahead, it will create yet again another giant hole in the Niagara Escarpment, and we all know the value of the Niagara Escarpment, not only in Canada, one of its natural treasures, but it's a designated UNESCO biosphere. I'm hoping very much that the government will put in regulations that will not require so many new holes to be dug for new materials in our very environmentally sensitive area.

I want to talk a bit about the regulatory framework. We need to really strengthen and then enforce the regulatory framework, so that the 60% diversion is actually met. Otherwise it won't happen. You can put all the words on paper, but if you don't have a strong regulatory framework, and then the resources and the enforcement put in place, it will not happen.

You have to list the series of waste management regulations currently in place, because these regulations have not been diligently enforced. That has also been one of the problems. They're not listed here. If people were aware of some of the regulations that are actually on paper, and how many of those are not being enforced, not carried through, they would understand why we're so far behind in the 50% reduction target.

For example, according to regulation 104/94, producers are to devise and implement packaging reduction work plans. There's a regulation that says that, but little, if any, real work has been done on these plans.

I understand that regulation 357 requires vendors to sell carbonated soft drinks in refillable containers. Nothing is enforced. You can't find any. Who has found any refillable pop bottle containers recently?

To put these regulations in force, the MOE needs to double its enforcement staff. This has gone hugely unnoticed in the recent budget, but there are a number of ministries in the out-years, starting in the next fiscal year, that are actually going to have huge cuts in their ministry funds, and the Ministry of the Environment is one of those.

I don't know if that means that the government is going to start making the Ministry of Health bigger and bigger, and that this new health care tax is going to expand bigger and bigger, and that we're going to see all kinds of environmental programs as well as sewer and water pipes put into that health tax, which unfortunately is being paid for by modest- and middle-income people. They're going to end up having to pay money to be put in—because this is a health issue, too. We're talking about garbage. We've got to do something with it. So you could say, I suppose, that because the Ministry of the Environment is going to be cut, I think it's 12%; I'd have to look at my notes—

Mr John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex): That's wrong.

Ms Churley: It is. Here we go again. I'm saying something here and I'll have to get the budget out to show him, to show the government that in the out-years a number of ministries are going to be cut and the Ministry of the Environment is one of those. So here we go—

Interjection.

Ms Churley: Well, then, have you changed your budget book?

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Oh, I'm teasing the bears here.

What the government needs to do is make sure that those regulations are actually adhered to, and the only way to do that is to make sure the regulations are actually enforced.

I want talk a bit about the electronic—

Applause.

Ms Churley:—I see we have another Speaker in the chair—the electronic producers, the extended producer responsibility under the Waste Diversion Act. They have to be—I'm just waiting for the Speaker to settle in and everybody to stop congratulating him. Are we done? OK.

The extended producer responsibility act—there needs to be a new bill to deal with this. The amount of e-waste is growing, and because of the compounds it contains, it constitutes another form of hazardous waste.

One of the Liberal members today was talking about next we're going see something on dealing with hazardous waste. There's nothing in this that really deals specifically with it. I, of course, have a bill—I don't know if you're aware—to deal with the electronic waste, e-waste, as it's commonly known today, and I've asked for unanimous consent on several occasions to have it passed.

I've asked for the minister's office to take a look at it. It has broad support. I have consulted out there with the generators of electronic waste. They're anxious to get on with it. They're doing some good work. They've put some money into a fund. They're doing the research, but they do need some assistance from the government right now. They're ready to move, and it is critical, because again, some of this waste stays here and goes into our landfills, and we're talking about hazardous waste, poisonous waste. An awful lot of it gets shipped to developing countries. Did you know that? Tonnes of it gets shipped out. Then it goes and poisons people in other lands and other countries.

So if the government doesn't come forward soon with a bill of its own—which, if it's adequate, a good enough bill, I will certainly support—we've got a good bill. It's my bill, and we should just pass it and get on with this.

Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton): Let's pass your bill and get on with it.

Ms Churley: Let's pass my bill. You'd support my bill, wouldn't you? It's an e-waste bill, electronic waste bill, and, of course, the two biggies: banning organic waste and recyclables from entering landfills. I mentioned the Nova Scotia and Edmonton, examples, and other European countries, and I want to remind you again that that is the biggest problem with landfills, with our

waste. The biggest challenge we have is getting the wet out, and there are experimental programs now. Hopefully, we're going to start in my riding soon in Toronto.

I'm ready. I compost in my backyard, and many people do, but we need to make it mandatory, and we need to make it happen all across the province, because, as you know, the biggest problem with landfill is the organics. What happens is they decompose. They create this toxic soup. The leachate that goes into our water can contaminate it. It creates the smell, the seagulls—most of the problems associated with landfill come from that.

So just in that sense, if that becomes a priority and we're able to get the wet, the compostable materials out of landfill, which they've done in some other jurisdictions, then you put all of these other programs in place—refillable bottles—let's get on with making the LCBO deal with that. The time has come. We're way past that time. Let's get on with the pop industry finally agreeing to go to refillable bottles. Let's get on with the composting programs, the diversion of waste, the refillables. All of those things are critical, but the compost program, getting the organics out, is one of the most important things we can do right now.

I'm going to talk just briefly about financing the building of the waste diversion infrastructure. Again, let me point out that without an alternative place for it to go, waste will continue to collect in landfills or burn in incinerators, and we're going to continue to have communities fighting and up in arms, and governments put in disarray as a result. It's one of the hardest issues to manage, and I speak from some experience with that one. This is really where the government's commitment to this plan is going to be tested.

Without the funds to build the appropriate infrastructure, the strategies for waste diversion, particularly the organic waste, in many ways the most important diversion tactics we have to bring in, will not happen. So we need to have, after looking at other jurisdictions that do this, centralized composting facilities, and the resources have to come from the government for that to happen. It's just not going to happen overnight. All of the down-loading and other responsibilities given to municipalities, many of them—in fact, I would say none of them can afford to do this on their own, and they won't.

1600

I want to talk briefly about funding mechanisms. I do have some problems with several of the funding mechanisms being proposed. This is an important one, the self-financing through user-pay. This is discriminatory; it favours producers over the consumers.

Let me tell you why this is a problem. Just think about it. It's really unjust to penalize consumers who do not have a choice in the amount of packaging that comes with the products they purchase. Think of all the things that we buy right now, where even if we look hard to find the same product without so much packaging around it, sometimes we just have no choice. Those of us who are conscious of those things and actually do go out of our way to limit the amount of packaging we buy quite

frequently don't have a choice. So I end up, in my home, having to deal with all of the packaging, all of the waste, as a result of these products I buy, because I have no choice.

Similarly, electronics, computers and televisions are by now part of most people's everyday life, but consumers don't have any choice in selecting from electronics equipment that varies in lead content. Consumers don't have nearly as many choices.

Furthermore—let's think about this—it's regressive. It penalizes larger families and homes where multiple families reside. That's a situation common to a lot of recent immigrants establishing themselves in Canada.

So I want to say again, in successful jurisdictions that have done this, you have to replace this idea of user-pay with producer-pay. It will be a huge incentive for the producers if they have to pay for their own packaging and deal with their own packaging at the end of the lifespan of that packaging. It really does strike to the source of the problem. Only the producers can actually reduce the amount of packaging they use. So I'm very much hoping that the government will see fit—I know this is just a discussion paper—and that we can have more discussion about that.

To finish here, so I can leave some time, many municipalities have been carrying the load of responsibility in terms of waste diversion for a very long time now, and it's time for them to get the helping hand they need. Several have created, on skeleton budgets, successful waste diversion plans that the province is drawing ideas from for its own strategy.

Some of those are on their way to 60% diversion rates right now. Peterborough reports a 50% diversion rate; Wellington—

Mr Jeff Leal (Peterborough): Peterborough, 50%

Ms Churley: That's right, and Wellington, 57%, but they can't do it alone any more.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Everybody woke up. Yea. I mentioned somebody's riding—no longer just talking about waste diversion, which is a really exciting topic, isn't it? But a very important one. We should congratulate those municipalities that are doing good work.

Mr Leal: The leaders.

Ms Churley: What did you say? The leaders are—

Mr Leal: They're the leaders at 50%.

Ms Churley: Yes, that's right. They should absolutely be congratulated for the great work they're doing.

But these jurisdictions now need resources, because they really are at the forefront of any waste diversion plan. We have to rely on them to implement it and make it happen. So give them the resources they need. You can't just present them with a vision, although this vision still needs some work.

I'm sure there will be all kinds of information coming forward to the minister, which I know she will appreciate, after releasing this paper. If you have expectations mandated by law, then you have to make sure that the resources are there so that the municipalities can comply.

The last thing I want to mention, and this is always of great concern, is that the paper mentioned streamlining the approvals process for small-scale research, which is fine, but then it says "demonstration projects for new or emerging waste diversion technologies." We need make sure that the wording is changed so that it is explicit that the new and emerging technology being introduced under this waste diversion strategy is there to divert waste, not dispose of it, not burn it, because burning is a form of disposal. Waste disposal encompasses landfills and incinerations. It is extremely important to change the wording there so the whole thrust of this paper and the diversion of Ontario's garbage is about that, about diversion.

Pursuing new and emerging technologies for waste disposal encourages the behaviour that underlines the garbage problem we currently face: overconsumption and choosing the easiest path of most convenience. I'm really concerned, because in my riding of Toronto-Danforth we have been fighting garbage incineration for a number of years. It's what got me into politics, drew me into politics, because I started fighting the city of Toronto's proposal to build a large garbage incinerator. Another private company wanted to build a smaller one. We formed a group called Citizens for a Safe Environment, which, by the way, is still active. It's still out there, still fighting pollution in the area. We were on the forefront of the blue box program that came to Toronto. It's done a lot of positive work in the process of stopping garbage incineration.

There are now new kinds of incineration, and the proponents don't like it when we call it that, because they call it gasification. But it is still a process of combustion; there's just no way around that. But as I said earlier, when you start moving in that direction, we continue to see our garbage as garbage, not as resources to do other things with. The problem with moving in that direction is that it takes us down that same path: digging the hole in the ground with the liner; burning it; it goes up a stack where you have fly ash and bottom ash to deal with, some of which is very hazardous, contaminated waste. Think about it: The higher the stack, the more the smoke is dispersed and the better pollution abatement equipment you have, the more hazardous waste goes down into the fly and bottom ash.

Now, gasification is a different technology, but you still have some of the same problems. Furthermore, you continue to see garbage as garbage, and it's an easy way out. You throw it over here. Then people will lose the incentive and say, "No, no. We can just send it to the new gasification plant. Then we won't have to worry about it any more." So if we start going down that road, that's where we're going to go. We're not going to continue in this, what I think is the right path.

I'm glad that some of these issues are raised in the discussion paper, such as new and emerging technology around composting, because that's a form of diversion. Any new and emerging technology research that's going on in that area, those areas that are actually diverting the waste, I applaud, and we should move forward on those.

But let us not go down that road of looking for the easy way out, the technical way out that allows us to continue to treat our garbage as garbage, not as a resource, when so much of what we throw out, when you think about it, are actually resources that should be and can be reused, refilled, whatever, in so many ways. Composting can be used for all kinds of things. We have so much information now at our fingertips from other jurisdictions that are so far ahead of us.

That's just a short discussion on the discussion paper before us. I'll have more to say about it at a later date.

In closing, I just want to come back briefly to why I'm having this discussion, why we're having this debate, and that is that the Adams mine, I hope, is dead forever. I'm glad that the Minister of Natural Resources didn't have to resign, because he was very honourable about it. He said if his government didn't stop it, he would resign, and I was a bit worried about it for a while. I was a bit worried for him, I should say, because—

Interjection.

Ms Churley: I had some worries, because I was looking at some of the correspondence coming out of the Premier's office for a while, and some of the press releases coming out of the area. I've got them here from Timiskaming, from the Concerned Citizens group. They were quite concerned for a while that Mr McGuinty, given some of the information they were getting, was going to go ahead. So I'm really glad that the cabinet minister didn't have to resign and that he's here and we're proceeding with this.

Again, I want to end by congratulating, as I started out, all of the people from the area who fought so hard and so long, with great conviction, to stop this ridiculous, crazy plan to deal with Toronto's garbage.

1610

The Deputy Speaker: Since the member for Toronto-Danforth is sharing her time with the member for Timmins-James Bay, questions and comments will be deferred until after. So we have further debate.

Hon David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources): I'm very pleased to be able to stand in my place and finally put closure to an issue that has been long-standing, as the previous speaker from Toronto-Danforth just mentioned. Maybe I'll start where she just left off.

I certainly owe a great deal of gratitude to the people of Timiskaming, who stood shoulder to shoulder in the community in opposing this particular project. It's been a very difficult time for the people up there. The member was very supportive of our cause too, and I appreciate her help, especially when it involved Toronto city hall. The fight wasn't always just in the north but it was in Toronto too.

I should say, Mr Speaker, that I will be sharing my time with the member from Peterborough, to let you know that and get the technicalities in order.

It's interesting to note, because people aren't always aware of it, that when the city of Toronto council did vote to approve sending Toronto garbage to the Adams mine, the deal fell through about three weeks after that

vote because the proponent at the time refused to accept liability for the site and the city didn't want to take on that responsibility. I think that tells you why we're here today. If the proponent in his negotiations would not accept liability for that site, that really tells you that none of us, including the proponent, was probably very sure of the environmental viability of that particular project.

I'd like to recognize, in the members' gallery, John Vanthoff, who is one of the leaders, certainly the leader in the farming community, in the fight against the Adams mine. Thank you, John, for being here. John was the president of the federation of agriculture for the Timiskaming-Cochrane area and has quite literally put his farm on the line in fighting this, because he was bold enough to tell the truth and to do so publicly, and there are still some legal actions that hang over his head at this time. John really needs to be recognized for being the brave warrior that he is in defending the agricultural area.

That brings up a point that really needs to be mentioned, that while people would presume this was just an environmental argument, it was very much more than that. It was also an economic argument, because the little clay belt where my farm is, where I and my wife live on the Blanche River, is an area that supports about 600 farmers. It's the largest agricultural area of northern Ontario. It pumps millions of dollars into the Ontario and northern Ontario economy. One thing that's very interesting about that is that it is growing and it is sustainable. We have a great future there. With thanks probably to a bit of global climatic change and plant genetics, we are expanding the range of products we produce there. This particular project would really put that area in harm's way, and that's why the farmers were the leaders in this charge, working with environmental groups. They were defending their families, their way of life and their workplaces. That's what the fight was for them. Basically, they put their hearts and minds into that fight. John, I thank you very much for the work you did.

I think it's most appropriate that our Minister of the Environment is sitting beside John right now, because that's the next person I want to thank for bringing forward this piece of legislation.

As the official opposition states, it is a pretty serious piece of legislation. This type of legislation is not legislation that governments enter into lightly. It is the heavy hand of government, there's no doubt about it.

I have to also thank Premier Dalton McGuinty for proceeding with a piece of legislation that is very strong, that is basically taking away the use of a person's property. He's doing that because he believes it's the right thing to protect the environment of our particular area of northern Ontario, the families up there and their way of life.

Also, I think the Premier, as well as the Minister of the Environment, understands that this sort of project of finding the biggest hole in the ground and shipping up all the garbage from the country's biggest city is just not a 21st-century answer to the challenges that we have for waste disposal. This sounds more like a 1950s mega-project to me, when we really didn't think about the

environment: "Let's just find a big hole, get rid of the problem and just dump the garbage away, and we won't have to worry about it."

We're much more cognizant now of the fact of the value in our waste stream. I suppose we're just on the cusp now of dealing with emerging technologies that deal with that. I think we have a tremendous opportunity with these new technologies in getting the energy and the resources out of our waste stream.

What's left? We certainly have a lot more work to do in reducing the waste stream to begin with. I think all of us in this House have the responsibility to do that. So there's much that has to happen.

Another colleague of mine is in the House too, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I know he's particularly interested in this piece of legislation, because once companies such as the proponent seek out open-pit mining sites that have closed, it now puts the fear—until this bill is passed, or when it is passed—in people's minds and in communities' minds when mining companies want to develop open-pit mining operations. While our communities certainly embrace those operations, they do have a nagging thought in the back of their mind: "What's going to happen after that mine closes? After the battle that the people of Timiskaming-Cochrane fought—and the people in Quebec, from the same proponent, fought—does this mean we're going to have a waste site in our backyard after the minerals have been extracted?"

What's very good about this piece of legislation is that it does something very similar to what happened in California: to say that old mining sites cannot be used in the future for garbage dumps. Besides what we're doing here today with regard to one particular proposal, I think the legacy of this legislation and the initiative of the Minister of the Environment is that it is going to protect and enhance the mining industry, because of the knowledge of the communities now that once an open-pit mine ceases to operate, there will never again be any fear that the site could be used for a waste disposal site. That's a very good, long-lasting part of this legislation that I think is very, very important for all of the province, especially our mining industry, and is very important for northern Ontario. So I'm very pleased to see that.

I think the Adams mine process has also brought to light to the Dalton McGuinty government that we have to improve our environmental assessment process. For a project of this high risk to get as far as it did, to get the permits that it did, really shows that we're not doing the due diligence that is required to really properly assess whether these projects are environmentally sustainable or not. That it got this far is probably because the idea came from the city of North Bay and was related to people who were close to Mike Harris, two Premiers ago. I don't think, if this idea were to come forward today, that it would even be given a bit of attention. Thank God that would be the case.

I think we've learned over the last few years, as people have wrestled with these ideas, that, quite frankly,

putting garbage in the ground in a pit that bisects two aquifers is just not the proper way to dispose of garbage. I think we've learned, obviously since Walkerton, how precious our groundwater resource is and how important it is for us to protect it. Of course, that's another initiative of our government that the Minister of the Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources are working on, groundwater source protection, because, as came out of the Walkerton inquiry, while it's very important to make sure our water treatment plants properly treat our water, we have to go back to the source of that water, whether it be the wonderful water we have in our rivers and lakes throughout this province or whether it's our underground resource, and we need to protect that too.

1620

We're doing that with nutrient management, and of course we're doing that with our source water protection processes. Those are going forward. Those are going to be done at the local level, which I think is great too, with our conservation authorities leading that in southern Ontario.

We're going to be looking at working with our sister ministry, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, our aboriginal communities and our municipalities in the north to find a way to make sure we protect the source water in northern Ontario also.

As I promised, I am going to share my time with my colleague the member from Peterborough. I just want to thank the members who are going to be supporting this bill. I look forward to the vote tomorrow. For sure it will be a very big day for the people of Timiskaming-Cochrane, who have fought for years against this particular project, but it will also be a very big day for the environment of this province.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Leal: It is indeed a pleasure to have the opportunity to get a bit of time to make some comments on Bill 49, the Adams Mine Lake Act.

My background is that I spent some 18 years in municipal politics, and I spent 13 years on the county-city waste management steering committee for the municipality of Peterborough. During that time, our community spent some \$6 million to extend the life of an existing landfill site called Bensfort Road. It's located in the municipality of Otonabee-South Monaghan.

Through that experience, I came to the conclusion that the burying of waste is a very archaic method of handling it, that we must find something different; we must explore new technologies to address the problem.

I know that this government will be looking at ways of diverting particular organic waste from our waste stream, indeed perhaps looking at the notion of centralized composting through our communities throughout Ontario.

I've always been particularly pleased that the city of Peterborough has a long history of recycling. Indeed, the member from Davenport this afternoon indicated that we have one of the highest diversion rates in the province of Ontario, at some 50%, and we do that through recycling, through the blue box program. We do it by having an

extensive green waste pickup by our municipal employees in that area.

We also have a backyard composting program that has been phenomenally successful. When you look at backyards of many houses in Peterborough, you'll see backyard composters, that people, through an extensive education program, are using it on a daily basis, again helping us to achieve that goal of a 50% diversion rate.

But it really goes back to the early 1970s. In Peterborough, we had set up a volunteer recycling program of newspapers. One of the people who spearheaded that program is our current member of Parliament, Mr Peter Adams, a member who has served the constituents with great distinction since 1993. I know he'll be very successful again on June 28. Mr Adams has been a leader in our community in various capacities.

But looking forward, it has been a Liberal government that has always been on the forefront of making changes to how we handle waste in Ontario. I recall I was a special assistant to a cabinet minister in the 1980s when the Honourable Jim Bradley, then Minister of the Environment, was the fellow who took a leadership role to bring the blue box program to the province of Ontario. We'll be ever in gratitude to Minister Bradley that he had great foresight then to bring that program to Ontario that all municipalities now are involved with. At that time, Minister Bradley provided financial assistance for those municipalities that wanted to get on board.

Also in Peterborough, we have a group that has been headed by a gentleman by the name of Mr Ed McLellan. Mr McLellan has been doing extensive studies in the whole concept of energy from waste. He is a retired engineer from General Electric Peterborough and he has put together a group of citizens to explore that alternative.

One of the sites he has looked at, which some will be familiar with, is the Ontario Power Generation site of Wesleyville, Ontario, near Port Hope. That was abandoned some years ago and it's thought it might be a prospective site for an energy-from-waste operation modelled on the very successful plant in Syracuse, New York, that is operated by American Refuel, a state-of-the-art energy-from-waste operation that puts electricity back into the grid.

I want to spend a moment talking about property rights. My friends in the opposition talked about that at length, about how they couldn't support this bill because of property rights. My friend for Perth-Middlesex talked about it the other day. I'll talk for a moment just to recap that issue.

In 1982 the Prime Minister of the day, Mr Trudeau, put property rights on the table during the constitutional discussions. Three Premiers—Mr Davis of Ontario, Mr Lyon from Manitoba and Mr Lougheed from Alberta—wanted no part of a property rights discussion. The reason why? The enshrinement of property rights in the Constitution would have made it extremely difficult for provinces to acquire corridors for new roads, for hydro corridors, and it would have been virtually impossible for

municipalities to acquire rights-of-way for new sewer and watermain projects. So that was abandoned quite quickly.

This past Monday, I had the opportunity and the honour to participate in the Ontario Aboriginal Chiefs Conference. Attorney General Michael Bryant spoke on behalf of the government, indicating that a new era has begun in terms of our relationships with First Nations. I'd like get on the record that Chief Greg Cowie of Hiawatha was the host of this conference. I had the pleasure of meeting Charles Fox, who is the current chair of the aboriginal chiefs conference. One of the things that's on their agenda is talking about the broad determinants of health, and that being clean water. I was concerned today during question period when I heard the opposition kind of skate around this issue, not understanding that fundamentally the provision of clean water is a great determinant to health.

In 1981, I had the opportunity to visit the Tri-town area of Cobalt, Haileybury and New Liskeard. A friend of mine whom I was in university with, Rick Campbell, was getting married in New Liskeard. I had the opportunity at that time to tour the little clay belt area, an area that is noted throughout this province of having one of the great dairy operations. On May 21, I had the opportunity to participate in the committee hearings and to hear John Vanthoff speak on behalf of the Timiskaming Federation of Agriculture.

I will get some of his comments that day on the record: "The Timiskaming Federation of Agriculture represents 400 farmers in an area known as the little clay belt. The clay belt was actually an ancient glacial lake bottom. It's about 200,000 acres in size, and Lake Timiskaming is a remnant of that ancient lake." He presented photos of some of the farm operations in the area. "The agriculture sector in Timiskaming contributes over \$130 million annually to the area's economy in direct and indirect sales. Over 1,000 jobs are directly dependent on agriculture in the little clay belt."

I know from my experience, having participated in the area waste management, that indeed every landfill site leaks leachate. You can't help it. It doesn't matter if you're in southern Ontario and use natural clay as a continuation barrier, or in other areas of the province you may use plastic liners. In the Adams mine case, it's using an open pit mine and hoping the rock formations would contain the leachate.

But you and I both know that leachate escapes. What troubled me about this was by having this operation in Timiskaming, in having this operation at the Adams mine, we were potentially going to leave one of the terrible legacies in the province of Ontario, actually destroying one of the best agricultural operations in Ontario. I can't understand why all parties in this House would want to see us jeopardize that area of farming in the New Liskeard area. Frankly, it's appalling that we wouldn't be standing in unison to support this legislation.

I was concerned yesterday when I heard the member from Lanark-Carleton—I understand he's both a lawyer

and an engineer—trying to claim that engineering studies say there are not going to be any leachate leaks from this particular landfill site. At the end of the day, that just doesn't hold.

I was interested to hear my friend the member for Simcoe North, who I think has a legitimate concern with regard to site 41 in his area, knowing full well that it has the same kind of problems that may occur with this site.

I wholeheartedly support Bill 49. I think it's a positive thing for Ontario and a positive thing for this community.

1630

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): It's a privilege to rise and make a few comments relating to the presentation from the minister—the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane—and the member for Peterborough in relation to Bill 49, the Adams Mine Lake Act. I appreciate the comments about the esteemed president of the Timiskaming Federation of Agriculture, who is directly related to me, being my nephew. I was very happy to hear the comments made about his presentation.

What I really want to point out in the presentation that Mr Vanthoff made—I had the opportunity to be at the committee hearing in Milton, and the part that was so important to me was what he said that the members opposite didn't mention. He made the point that stopping the garbage from going into the Adams mine shouldn't be done through legislating it out, that it should be proven through the process that's in place that it's the wrong place to put garbage, that that type of garbage disposal will not work. He made a very intricate display of how the hydraulics of the site would work and that the lake beyond the Adams mine site would in fact get some of the leachate in it if you filled that mine. But none of that is going to be heard or seen. We are not going to go through the process again.

It would seem to me more appropriate if the minister had developed another hearing or had another extended hearing to point out the fallacies of putting garbage there, rather than override all the rules. Now no one will be looking to site another landfill site, because we have no assurance that if we go through the process and get an approval, in the end we could use the site for waste disposal. Why would anybody go through the process that's presently in Ontario if this can happen at the end of that process? I think it would have served us well if a new process had been put in place prior to this happening so we could do all those things people said: "Find other places for garbage to go, because some day we're going to run out of a place to put it."

Ms Churley: I was really very remiss in not mentioning Mr John Vanthoff, who is the president of the Timiskaming Federation of Agriculture. I saw him sitting over there and he looked familiar, but it has been a while; I haven't seen him in a while. My eyesight isn't what it used to be, but I'm very pleased to see John here today, and I want to take this opportunity—among the others I mentioned from the area earlier—to give special acknowledgement to him.

This must be a good day for him. I know he worked very hard and took many risks to try to reveal to the government of the day and the citizens of Toronto and Timiskaming the flaws in this system. That was his whole approach, it is true, a very reasonable approach and very different from mine. My position was, "This is bad news. We don't need to have a full environmental assessment. The whole idea is crazy to dump garbage in a lake, with crevices in the rock where the leachate can happen." Anyway, he took the position and he made it very clear.

He was the one, as I understand it, who commissioned this independent review and critical analysis of the hydrogeological investigations. He commissioned Professor Ken Howard, a university professor and groundwater consultant, to do this independent study on the government's process. He is a very skilled person who sent information that showed very clearly that the process was flawed, that the EA process was flawed, that the computer modeling was flawed. What he was asking for was for it at least to be a proper process. I know he took a lot of risks, and I want to congratulate and thank him as well for all the work that he did on behalf of the rest of the farmers in Timiskaming.

Ms Monique M. Smith (Nipissing): I'm pleased to rise today to speak to third reading of this bill and to comment on the comments made by the Minister of Natural Resources and the member for Peterborough, the member for Oxford and the member for Toronto-Danforth.

I, too, would like to acknowledge John here in the gallery today, whom I've had many opportunities to speak to about cattle farming in northern Ontario. John, I commit to you that I will continue to work with you to convince your uncle, the member for Oxford, that what we're doing in this legislation is absolutely the right thing to do.

As most of the members in the House know, I was born and raised in northern Ontario and I'm very proud of it. I can only tell you that, during the election campaign of last fall, I heard from many concerned citizens in Nipissing about the Adams mine project, about what it was going to do to the north, how it would affect our environment, our neighbourhood, our lakes, our rivers.

I spoke last time about one particular individual I met with who was a retired miner who was very concerned about the leakage of the mine and who—having been working in those mines in northern Ontario, I thought he was well placed to advise me on this—spoke without a doubt of the fact that that would leak and that it was inappropriate to be dumping garbage in Adams mine. I wholeheartedly agreed with him.

I am so delighted today to speak in support of the Minister of Natural Resources, David Ramsay, who fought so hard against this project and, on behalf of the citizens of Nipissing and of his riding, was an eloquent advocate against this project from the very beginning. There were many supporters in my riding of this project, I have to tell you, but there were many more who were

very deeply concerned and raised those concerns with me over the last few months. They are very pleased with the legislation that we have before the House today and are very pleased to see that this project is coming to an end once and for all and that the pristine natural resources of northern Ontario will be protected for all to enjoy, for all of us and our children, in the future.

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): We are here to discuss, and the member for Peterborough has ably presented the case for, this bill, the Adams mine site. I sometimes, in sitting here, question—and the viewers must question, too, with the important things going on in regard to the budget—why we are discussing at this time one of the possible alternatives for Toronto's garbage. We, in the city of Cambridge, see hundreds of trucks a week passing by our highway on the way to our friendly state of Michigan in order to dump Toronto's garbage because they have not come up with a decent proposal and have decided upon doing something about their own garbage. So we end up with that status.

Here we are discussing preventing the filling of an artificial hole somewhere in the north, and I don't think that's the priority we should be looking at. We have repeatedly asked this government to have public hearings in regard to the budget so that individuals who phone my office can come before a committee of this Legislature to talk about their health. They can talk about why they need chiropractic care, which has been taken away from them without notice. Seniors want to come before a committee of this House to ask you why you have taken the physiotherapy that they rely upon to be productive citizens.

Those are my priorities, and I ask the government to consider their position.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Peterborough has two minutes to reply.

1640

Mr Leal: I certainly appreciate the comments of the member from Cambridge and others, Ministers Dombrowsky and Ramsay, but you know, we campaigned on improvements to Ontario's environment.

Over the last eight years, in my view and others' on this side of the House, environmental concerns were put on the back burner. Now we have been given a mandate to bring new direction to address these environmental concerns in the province of Ontario. The Adams mine bill is part of that new approach, where we fundamentally see it as wrong to put waste in a landfill site that has potential to leak leachate and actually destroy an economic base in northern Ontario. For us, that's a concern.

Minister Bartolucci is an able representative of the north. The previous government had no northern cabinet ministers. Now we have northern cabinet ministers. We listen to them and we know that the area of New Liskeard is fundamental to the long-term health for the province of Ontario and, in particular, northern Ontario.

There's some other information floating around that's just not correct. When you look at the budget for the Ministry of the Environment, under the previous Con-

servative regime they had allocated \$260 million. This year, under the leadership of Minister Dombrowsky, it's increasing to \$304 million. I know I'm from Peterborough and I learned my math in an elementary school in the south end of Peterborough, but I would think we would all conclude that that's an increase in the Ministry of the Environment's budget, not a decrease, as some others have tried to concoct this afternoon.

Indeed the environment is a priority of this government, will continue to be a priority, and this government will be a leader in the environment for the people of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Thank you very much for the opportunity today to speak to Bill 49, An Act to prevent the disposal of waste at the Adams Mine site and to amend the Environmental Protection Act in respect of the disposal of waste in lakes. That's the title of this bill. It could also be called the Oak Ridges moraine Liberal CYA bill; it could also be called the David Ramsay save-my-career bill. But for the purpose of what is being tabled in this Legislature, it is called An Act to prevent the disposal of waste at the Adams Mine site and to amend the Environmental Protection Act in respect of the disposal of waste in lakes.

We have some significant problems with this bill, and the possible titles indicate what some of those problems could be. I'm sure you understand that. This bill is all about politics. It is not about science; it's all about politics. If that's how we are going to make these kinds of decisions, we're in for a rough ride for sure in the province. The people of Ontario will not be served the way they should be served by this Legislature if our only motivation is, "What do we need to do to get ourselves out of political trouble or to create a diversion from a potential political problem that we've created?"

For example, when the government was elected, they had run on a promise of shutting down all development on the Oak Ridges moraine, and in fact they knew at that time that the contracts were already in place. No self-respecting developer would have entered into any kind of agreement without some protection, so in case a government changed its mind on the project, they would be compensated for their losses and their investment.

This government probably could have brought in a piece of legislation, such as they've done on the Adams mine, and just pulled the rug out from under those developers. But they were not about to tackle the developers with regard to the Oak Ridges moraine in the same way they were willing to tackle the developers and the investors in the Adams mine project, because they knew the cost of that decision would have been substantially more to the taxpayer, and the legal bills and the time it would have taken. So they made the decision, "OK, we're going to make a bit of a sweetheart deal and we're going to beg and cajole you to take 900 less homes on the moraine and we're going to put it through. But I can assure you that within a week or so we're going to

have a bill tabled in the Legislature to shut down the Adams mine because we've got to do something to placate the environmental lobby in the province of Ontario." There's the development side of it. They just took that rug and ripped it out from under the feet of those people and left them basically no recourse.

If I could quote the preamble of the bill: "The bill revokes...." Well, we'll go back to that a little later. But the next paragraph is, "The bill extinguishes certain causes of action that may exist in respect of the Adams mine site or the adjacent lands. (See section 5 of the bill.)"

In short, they're going to dictate what kind of compensation these people will get. The government is going to set the amount. They are removing any right—and I stress that word "right," because we cherish rights in the province of Ontario. They are extinguishing any right of these people to challenge the government's decision with regard to compensation. Now, where could that lead?

I do want to stop for one second, because I also want to recognize Mr John Vanthoff. I've never met Mr Vanthoff. But, as of right now, I think he will be the most mentioned person in Hansard today, and I would be remiss if I didn't get in on the act. I want to mention Mr John Vanthoff from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, up in David Ramsay's riding of Timiskaming-Cochrane, I believe.

Mr Wilkinson: Tell him how you're going to vote against this bill.

Mr Yakabuski: I am definitely going to vote against this bill, John, so you may not be smiling at me in 20 minutes or whatever time I've got left. I will definitely be voting against this bill, because I can't vote in favour of a bill that extinguishes the rights of people basically to own private property. Where is the next step? I have some real concerns about where the next step is, if this bill is enacted into law.

Again, it's all about politics. This government has certainly done some things with respect to effects on my riding that are politically motivated only; for example, the failure to reinstate the spring bear hunt—a terrible decision, totally political.

Now, the Minister of Natural Resources is very much in favour of this bill. In fact, this bill is his political salvation. It was more important than his promise to do everything he could to see that the spring bear hunt was reinstated. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines was also a proponent of the spring bear hunt. But they were willing to make certain concessions to satisfy the powers that be in their party, the Toronto members who really do control the caucus, such as Greg Sorbara, the Minister of Finance. So it's all about politics.

Where does it end up? Are they about to extinguish my property rights or your property rights because they decide that it's good politics to do so? That's a real concern on my part today, that the Ministry of the Environment could simply shut you down.

With respect to the suitability of the Adams mine as a waste disposal site, this property had gone through all of

the environmental assessments. It had received approvals. Then those were appealed, and they were approved. Quite conceivably, it may have been the best place to put garbage. It was the most judged and considered with regard to how many questions had to be answered and how many conditions had to be met. It may have been the most suitable place to put garbage that would ever have been approved in this province, because no piece of property was subjected to the kind of scrutiny that that piece of property was. So in the end, it was approved.

The city of Toronto actually had planned to put their garbage there. They actually had voted to put their garbage there. That's a pile of garbage: somewhere in the neighbourhood—I don't have the exact amount—of 125 or so trucks, tractor-trailers, of garbage a day going to Michigan.

1650

What has this government done to ensure that if the government of Michigan—there are all kinds of legislators in Michigan who oppose the fact that they accept Toronto's garbage. They could shut that border down at any time. They have no contingency plan in place to deal with that should that happen. This government has gone ahead and closed one door. They've closed the front door to the house and they didn't even build a door on the back. So where are they going to go? What happens if the government of Michigan says no to Toronto's garbage?

Garbage is a municipal responsibility, but you guys are the ones who have shut the door. By closing off this mine you have, by extension, accepted responsibility for the garbage of Toronto. By the fact that you have closed off that option of putting garbage in the Adams mine, you have said, as the province, "We will be responsible for the garbage that is produced by the city of Toronto." If something happens to that, it's your fault. You will be responsible for it, you will have to deal with it, and the city of Toronto can wash their hands. That could create one heck of a stink—no pun intended.

I want to talk about some of the other things. We're going to come back to the Adams mine specifically, but I want to talk about a couple of other things I have concerns about with respect to other Ministry of the Environment decisions.

Regulation 170/03: That's a big one for me and a big one for all the rural members, including the Liberal rural members. It is a mess, and it's going to create a mess for businesses, community halls, churches, children's camps and everybody else in rural Ontario. Essentially what they're forcing us to do—it's all part of this tragedy of Walkerton that got so politicized because members of the opposition at that time tried to make this the stake through the heart of the government of the day. They wanted to destroy the government, because incompetent people who lied and falsified records in a treated water system caused it, committed actions that led to the deaths of seven people.

The issue got so politicized that Dennis O'Connor was commissioned to write a report. He came up with these

recommendations to, in my opinion, make Ontario water—it was a utopian hope that we could guarantee the safest water anywhere in heaven or on earth. In a perfect world, they thought they could create those circumstances and that situation.

As you know, Mr Speaker, and I know, we don't live in a perfect world. But now we've taken this regulation 170/03, which is part of Bill 195, which all the Liberals voted for and the government of the day passed, and they all failed to see what the ramifications of implementation of this legislation was going to be across Ontario. Now what has happened is that there is a terrible mess created for rural people, rural businesses, rural community halls, churches etc.

The minister, and I give her credit for it, has taken a step back and said we're going to take a look at this for six months. I appreciate her new—her original parliamentary assistant was Dominic Agostino who, as you know, passed away earlier this year, and we certainly all miss his presence here. But she has a good one now in John Wilkinson from Perth-Middlesex, and I'm hopeful that he's going to inject some common sense into this. I'm going to be talking to John a lot over the next few months on behalf of the people in my riding and across all of rural Ontario, because we need to see some changes.

Some things are on the horizon right now with respect to the children's camps, for example. It's a numbers game. If you have nine people in the camp, basically what they're saying is, "We're not that worried about you." But if you bring in number 10, "Oh, we're very worried about you. Now you're coming under our legislation." The whole world changes. When you pick arbitrary numbers like this—it also happens with wells.

I have a letter here from a lady. I haven't talked to her today, so I'm not going to use her name, but she's from Renfrew in a development called Pleasant View Park, a mobile home park where there are about 25 units. Of course, they fall under the category of six to 6,000 homes. If there are five homes on that well, the government is basically saying—I don't know if I can say this, Mr Speaker; you'll correct me if I can't—"We don't give a damn about you." But if you're now the sixth home on that well, "We are going to control your life." All of a sudden, they start to care about you. It's not because they care about you, just as I'd like to believe that it wasn't because they didn't care about you when you were only number five, but they establish these arbitrary numbers that are ridiculous, and all because of what happened with the Koebel boys in Walkerton.

Testing used to be done by health units. Now you've got to have the Ministry of the Environment approve all these methods and you've got to have certified people to come in and do the testing. We're talking about rural Ontario. We're not talking about downtown Toronto or Ottawa where you have all kinds of qualified people.

The Deputy Speaker: I know in closing—you're getting near the end—the member is going to come back to Bill 46.

Mr Yakabuski: Certainly so, Mr Speaker, and the environment is a big issue that we try to get around sometimes. We try to cover all the bases.

But this 170/03—and I appreciate the latitude because it all ties in, you'll see, in the end—is going to be devastating to these people in rural Ontario.

Children's camps: If you're drawing your water from a surface source which is a lake, sorry, July 1, 2004, you're under the gun. If you're drawing it from a well, you've got to apply for some extensions and they've got to know what your plan is and this and that, but most likely they'll give you an extension.

Where the common sense is lacking here is the government thinks they can control everything. The government's going to bring in a water regulation on a children's camp and they're going to make you safe. Well, most of the members of this House either have children or know somebody who has children, and all of these children have swum and played in a lake. Here's the funny part of it. I know my children, when they swim and play in the lake—

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): Do they know you?

Mr Yakabuski: Yes, I hope they still know me. When they swim and play in the lake, they go down underwater and they're up and they're down and they're in there all day. They drink about a quart and a half every hour right out of the lake. Are we now going to put some sort of meter on them? Are we going to put a chlorinator on them to make sure that as they're diving in and out of that lake they're not catching something? We live in the real world, and we're trying to make it perfect by all kinds of artificial means that really put an undue burden on people who are trying to make life more enjoyable for your children and mine. So this kind of approach is just heavy-handed. The government's going to control everything. Do you know what? When it comes to rural Ontario, it just doesn't work.

1700

I worked in Algonquin Park in the summer of 1976—spent the whole summer in there. I drank water out of the lake, untreated, never boiled it for the whole summer, and I was never ill once.

We live in a country where the water is the best in the world, but we have created a collective paranoia about water in this province. We've got more fresh water than any country in the world here in Canada, and we've created a collective paranoia. People walking down the streets of this province are afraid to drink the water because the government of the day, which was the opposition at that fateful time that Walkerton was struck, created such a political furor over that mess that they have created this collective paranoia across the province about water. Everybody feels you can't drink the water now; you've got to buy it in a bottle off the shelf. You know what? You've no way of knowing what the safety of that water is, but we're going to tell all the rural people in the province of Ontario, "We're going to make your water safe."

You can't do it. You'll never be able to guarantee it, but you'll regulate people to death. You'll price them out of their own businesses. You'll force them out of business. Then what do you have for an economy in rural Ontario when you can't even get the tourists up there because nobody can afford to operate a camp? Nobody can afford to operate because your regulations are putting them out of business.

I'm running out of time here, and I know that I want to spend most of my time on Bill 49, the Adams mine act, which is important. I oppose that legislation for some—I can't even take a break for water right now, Mr Speaker, because I'm down to my last five minutes.

The Deputy Speaker: Less than that.

Mr Yakabuski: The Adams mine act extinguishes people's rights only for political purposes, and that's a shameful thing for this government to do.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Bisson: I want to talk about the water regulations that he talked about that are related to the Adams mine act. I know they're directly related because we know it's an aquifer.

I've just got to say, I agree with him with regard to the comments he makes about the frustration of municipalities, small business owners, trailer park owners etc, who are really frustrated by the water regulations. I want to remind you, however, that the water regulations were created under your government. I agree that maybe you guys, now late in the game, are saying they've got to be changed, but I want to remind you where they came from. We can't let that go without a comment.

Mr Yakabuski: I recognize that, Gilles.

Mr Bisson: You recognize it? OK, very good.

But the first step—and that was my point—to being able to deal with an issue is to admit that maybe we made a mistake.

On the water regulations, I've just got to say, it is horrendous. This government's got to get the bull by the horns and deal with the water regulations. Nobody in Ontario disagrees that we need to have water regulations that ensure we have safe drinking water in the province of Ontario. The problem is, who's going to pay for it?

Unless the province of Ontario is prepared to put up the billions of dollars it's going to take to make everybody compliant, I fail to see why we should pass that responsibility on to individual property owners, small business owners and municipalities across the north.

Communities across this province in northern Ontario, as the Minister of Northern Development and Mines knows, are beside themselves figuring out how they're going to be able to upgrade their water systems to meet the new water regulations, not to mention trailer parks, motel units and restaurants that are on private water systems.

I say to the government, we need to think through what we're going to do. If there is a problem, let's deal with it, but let's not deal with it in such a way that it

becomes overwhelming when it comes to our ability to meet—without having to spend billions to get there.

Mr Wilkinson: I'm more than happy to speak about the comments made by the good member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I appreciate those kind words that he had toward me.

He decided in this debate to bring up regulation 170, which our ministry has to deal with, which was created by the former government. It comes to a question of regulation, and I want the member to listen to this, because there's a theory that goes around that somehow people should be regulating themselves, that government regulation is somehow evil. I always tell people, "It's like this: The argument you propose is like a person going down the 401. That person's going 130, maybe 135 kilometres an hour"—

Mr Baird: Not John.

Mr Wilkinson: Not John; not the member. Not that member. Let's just say, any member of this House would be driving down the highway and going 135 clicks—

Mr Baird: You're not allowed to talk about issues that are before a court.

Mr Wilkinson: This is hypothetical. He looks down and sees that he's going 135. What he decides to do is slow down to 100, drive along the 401 until he finds a police officer, flag down the police officer and say, "Officer, I was going 135. Give me a ticket." That's what self-regulation says. That's your idea.

The problem we had in Walkerton is that people who were supposed to do their job were not trained and did not do it. The responsibility of the provincial government was to regulate them. The people who were supposed to inspect them were fired. The government that was supposed to keep an eye on these people and not trust them to self-regulate—

Interjection.

Mr Wilkinson: Not for people who were supposed to—

Mr Baird: Jim Bradley grandfathered them.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Nepean-Carleton.

Mr Wilkinson: Those people were not going to let themselves in, and that is why we fundamentally disagree. But we'll fix regulation 170 because we're rural brethren, and we have to do that.

The Deputy Speaker: Further questions and comments?

Mr Baird: Thank you very much, Speaker. You did a great job in question period today; everyone's talking about it.

I am pleased to respond to the speech by the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I think he very admirably made the case for property rights and what an egregious piece of legislation this is. I say to the people watching, it may not be you who are affected today by the heavy hand of government, but it could be any one of us who could be the next target of a government gone wild.

This is just for political purposes to prop up Liberal fortunes in one part of the province and make them appear like they've got some sort of strong environmental record. As the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke said, "They have no plan on how to do waste disposal."

I'm going to quote this quote back: "If those borders close, don't think you're bringing Toronto's garbage to Nepean." We need a plan to deal with it that is province-wide and it should be investigated.

You have, in the case of the Adams mine, some very well-respected business people here in Ontario, people who have created a lot of jobs in the province, people who have been good corporate citizens. What's being done to them through that piece of legislation is nothing short of an abomination.

I think the member certainly spoke to these issues very well. I want to congratulate him on his excellent speech, and say that I will be voting against this egregious violation of civil liberties and will not support the legislation. I want to congratulate the member for the usual high standard of discourse that he brings to this place through his intervention.

Mr Arthurs: I can't believe that the members opposite would actually stand in their places and try to defend that, for years to come, they would allow, condone, encourage and support people standing on the shore of a lake and taking bags of garbage and tossing them into the lake, day in and day out.

Mr Baird: It's a pit.

Mr Arthurs: If you can water-ski in it, it must be a lake. Let's not confuse the issue with pits and lakes full of water. That's a lake. That's no way to treat the environment.

It's also not going to resolve the problems in the GTA or elsewhere with respect to waste management. We've proven that in the past. Taking the garbage to northern Ontario and dropping it into someone else's property is not going to do what has to happen here in the greater Toronto area to deal with the waste.

What's going to have to happen is that folks here in the GTA are going to have to do what's happening in Peterborough and elsewhere, and that's manage their waste more effectively locally; raise diversion rates so that there's very little or no waste left. It's happening in communities throughout the GTA.

1710

I can tell you that, as of this week, the first of the small, green, 20-litre wet waste containers arrived at my doorstep. So my municipality, my community, my neighbourhood, my family now have the opportunity to take our wet waste—not just our recyclables, not just the cans, not just the bottles, not just the paper but the wet waste—and package it separately so it can be composted effectively. The amount of stuff that's actually left on the curb is decreasing and decreasing. That's how we're going to solve the waste problem—not taking the waste north, standing on the shore of the lake with garbage bags and throwing it in and watching it splash.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Ted Arnott): The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke has two minutes to reply.

Mr Yakabuski: Oh, so much to reply to and so little time. I wanted to thank the members from Timmins-James Bay, Perth-Middlesex, Nepean-Carleton and Pickering-Ajax. I'm going to start with the member for Perth-Middlesex.

I did just want to point out that if he was driving down the 401 at 135, he'd better get out of the way, because if you're not driving 140, you're driving too slowly. That's the reality of driving in Ontario, but that's a discussion for another day. In the left lane, you've got to be driving just to keep up.

Mr Leal: At 140 through Peterborough?

Mr Yakabuski: No. That's another story, Jeff.

I do want to talk about the member for Pickering-Ajax as well. You know, the Adams mine, calling it a pit, a lake or whatever—we do have to find ways of dealing with our garbage and we have to find ways other than burying it. But if you're going to bury it, that's the best place to bury it right now. But we've got to get our heads out of the sand and start talking. We've got to start talking in this country, learning from the Europeans and start dealing with the incineration of waste.

The incineration of waste is the right way to go, but no one in the government wants to talk about it. We have wet waste composting, generating electricity from the incineration of waste—those are some other things we've got to do, but we have got to start talking seriously about the incineration of waste in this country and in this province if we're going to deal with it. We can't keep finding new places to bury the garbage. With the environmental assessments that are needed and everything else, nobody will get involved in that. Nobody's going to make the investment into trying to find one because it's too expensive, especially if the government can pull the rug out from under them, just like they did with the developers in the Adams mine.

So we have to get prepared for the future, be prepared to deal with garbage in a responsible way and not run away from burning it. Thank you very much.

M. Bisson: C'est toujours un plaisir d'être ici avec vous cet après-midi pour parler de ce projet de loi.

Je voudrais dire premièrement que le caucus NPD va supporter ce projet de loi. Cela a déjà été mentionné à la deuxième lecture, mais je pense que c'est important encore de le mentionner une fois qu'on arrive à la troisième lecture.

On a toujours cru que toute l'initiative qui était mise en place par le gouvernement conservateur, originellement par le gouvernement de M. Peterson, pour être capable d'amener les déchets à Kirkland Lake, a toujours été, quant à nous autres, les néo-démocrates, et je pense aussi pour les citoyennes et citoyens de la région non seulement de Kirkland Lake et les environs mais aussi de Toronto, une approche qui, franchement, ne faisait pas de bon sens. Je vais expliquer pourquoi.

Premièrement, on comprend tous qu'à la fin de la journée Toronto a un problème comme l'ont d'autres municipalités. On a besoin d'être dans une situation—excusez-moi; on est dans une situation—dans la ville de Toronto comme dans d'autres villes où il y a un vrai manque de capacité de se débarrasser—c'est beau quand on parle le français, madame. Je vous vois. Vous écoutez très bien. C'est un vrai problème de capacité qu'on a—if you only knew what that was all about. On a dans des villes comme Toronto un manque de capacité de se débarrasser des déchets dans les poubelles soit dans nos maisons, nos industries ou dans d'autres édifices dans la ville de Toronto.

L'approche de prendre les vidanges et de les envoyer dans le nord, à une mine qu'on appelle la mine Adams, et de les enterrer dans la terre ne fait pas de bon sens sur le point environnemental, parce qu'on sait, comme on dit en anglais, « Out of sight, out of mind. » On se trouve dans une situation où les cités comme Toronto sont allouées de dire, « On a un problème, et pour régler le problème, on va envoyer nos déchets quelque part dans le nord. » Ça veut dire qu'on prend le problème et on le transfère quelque part d'autre où on ne le voit pas. Quand on ne le voit pas, il n'y a pas de nécessité dans les cités comme Toronto de dire, « Mais peut-être que nous autres, on doit prendre la responsabilité. » On a peut-être besoin de regarder comment établir d'une manière agressive des programmes de recyclage pour la ville de Toronto, comment s'organiser pour avoir moins de déchets aller dans nos dépotoirs. On pourrait dire, par exemple, « Quand je m'en vais acheter un paquet de batteries au magasin, ou des lames de rasoir, est-ce que j'ai besoin d'un gros paquet comme ça pour une petite affaire comme ça? » On a besoin de regarder à ces questions et dire que, comme une société, on a peut-être une responsabilité, que le gouvernement provincial, avec les municipalités, mette en place des règlements et des lois qui disent premièrement, « Réduisons le besoin d'utiliser les dépotoirs », et on fait ça en rendant moins grands les paquets quand on vend des produits. On regarde au recyclage. On regarde comment on peut utiliser d'une manière plus efficace la technologie pour être capable de réduire le besoin d'utiliser les dépotoirs.

Envoyer les vidanges à Kirkland Lake, sur l'autre bord, est un problème pour la communauté aussi. Le gouvernement dit, « C'est la communauté, ce sont eux autres qui s'intéressent à avoir les vidanges. » C'est possible qu'à Kirkland Lake, oui, il y a eu un référendum, et la ville de Kirkland Lake a voté oui pour accepter les vidanges de Toronto. Mais il n'y avait pas une autre communauté dans les environs qui était directement affectée parce que la mine Adams, comme vous le savez, n'est pas à Kirkland Lake. Elle est en dehors de la ville de Kirkland Lake, dans un autre « township », un autre canton, comme on dit, et ces cantons-là et d'autres villes y étaient totalement opposés.

Pourquoi? On a des terres agricoles dans cette région qui sont parmi les meilleures qu'on trouve dans la province. On s'est trouvé dans une situation où il y

avait une très grande possibilité, si on commençait à apporter les vidanges de Toronto à la mine Adams, qu'avec le temps l'eau qui rentrait dans la mine Adams des roches des environs, l'eau qui est dans la terre, aurait pu traverser des territoires et polluer le système d'eau, les aquifères, dans cette région. Pour les terres agricoles dans le coin c'était un gros problème.

C'est pour ça qu'on a vu une très grande organisation contre ce projet. Les agriculteurs, les citoyens—non seulement les environnementalistes—ont parlé très fort contre ce projet. Ils se sont organisés contre ce projet parce qu'ils croyaient que ce n'était pas la manière, premièrement, dont Toronto doit s'organiser pour se défaire de son problème de déchets, mais plus important, on avait besoin de reconnaître qu'il n'était pas une bonne idée de transférer notre problème d'une municipalité à l'autre et de donner le problème à quelqu'un d'autre quand ça vient à l'effet sur l'environnement.

Cela a pris beaucoup de monde. Premièrement, il faut remercier tous ceux qui s'y sont impliqués dans la ville de Toronto et le monde dans le nord qui s'y sont impliqués, qui ont travaillé des années contre ce projet. Je pense à du monde comme Terry Graves, qui a travaillé très fort dans le coin, à Charlie Angus, qui est présentement notre candidat néo-démocratique à Timmins-Baie James et qui était une des personnes-clés sur le projet. On regarde M. Bélanger de la ville de Earlton, qui était organisée, et j'en passe, il y en avait tant—moi-même, M. Ramsay. A un point, M. Ramsay était pour. Il était contre, il était pour et il était contre encore. Finalement il est tombé sur le bon bord et va l'accepter, mais à la fin de la journée cela a pris les efforts de beaucoup, beaucoup de citoyens dans la province, beaucoup de monde pour bâtir, finalement, une atmosphère qui faisait qu'il était impossible pour un gouvernement de continuer avec ce projet. Je veux dire, de la part de nous ici à l'Assemblée qui avons été opposés à ce projet dès le début, les néo-démocrates, qu'on veut vraiment remercier la population locale et la population de Toronto qui ont travaillé si fort, d'une manière acharnée, pour une période d'au moins 15 ans pour arrêter ce projet.

Je veux mettre un contexte un peu historique sur ce point, la perspective historique de combien de temps ce projet est en place. Moi, monsieur le Président, comme vous le savez—je pense que vous avez été élu au même temps que moi, en 1990. Je me rappelle un des premiers dossiers; c'était en 1990, si je me rappelle bien. Oui. En 1990, quand j'ai été élu, je me rappelle un des premiers meetings que j'ai eus. C'était M. McGuinty—pas le premier ministre mais l'autre M. McGuinty, la personne qui voulait commencer ce projet—qui nous avait « lobbés » pour nous dire, un, que la ville de Toronto avait signé une entente avec M. McGuinty et autres pour commencer le processus de développer le dépotoir à Kirkland Lake, et que le gouvernement de M. Peterson était en faveur de ce projet. Je me rappelle très clairement. Cela a été dit non seulement par M. McGuinty, mais aussi par M^{me} Swift, je pense, qui

travaillait à la ville de Toronto. C'était très clair que le gouvernement provincial de la journée, les libéraux sous M. Peterson, était totalement d'accord avec ce projet.

1720

Nous, les néo-démocrates, au gouvernement avec Bob Rae comme premier ministre, avons décidé, avec la ministre de l'Environnement, M^{me} Ruth Grier, de mettre en place un projet de loi qui a aboli la possibilité d'établir un dépotoir à Kirkland Lake. Nous avons amené cette législation ici à l'assemblée, et quand le temps est venu de voter pour ce projet de loi, les conservateurs et, oui, les libéraux ont voté contre nous. Ils ont voté pour avoir un dépotoir à Kirkland Lake.

Je me rappelle que M. Ramsay était en faveur d'avoir le dépotoir à Kirkland Lake à ce point-là. Le projet de loi était établi, je pense, en 1992, et essentiellement ce qui est arrivé est qu'en 1995 M. Ramsay avait changé sa position. Pourquoi? Il a bien lu l'électorat du comté de Timiskaming-Cochrane dans le temps. La majorité du monde était opposée à ce projet, et comme un bon politicien, il a décidé de renverser sa position et de prendre la position opposée à son parti.

Les conservateurs sont venus au pouvoir, ont introduit un projet de loi, qui a aboli le projet de loi NPD et a alloué la possibilité de développer ce projet à Kirkland Lake comme un dépotoir.

Cela a pris huit ans, une organisation énorme et des travaux de la part des citoyens et citoyennes de la région de Toronto pour finalement, à plusieurs reprises, repousser ce projet.

Je me souviens d'être venu à Toronto pour assister aux audiences qui ont eu lieu quand le maire Mel Lastman et son conseil voulaient accepter ce projet. Justement, il y a certains membres de l'assemblée qui sont ici aujourd'hui qui s'intéressaient à voir ce projet de loi.

Ça a pris des néo-démocrates comme Michael Prue, qui était au conseil dans le temps, et d'autres néo-démocrates à l'assemblée et une couple de conservateurs aussi, pour repousser cette entente. Finalement, c'était démontré que c'était une solution trop dispendieuse pour la ville de Toronto et ils ont rejeté l'utilisation de Kirkland Lake comme projet de dépotoir.

Cela a pris beaucoup d'autres forces après. Je me rappelle bien être à Kirkland Lake, je pense que c'était à l'automne—je ne me rappelle pas quelle année—où les citoyens et les citoyennes se sont organisés et ont bloqué le chemin de fer de North Bay à Kirkland Lake comme une manière de protester contre ce que ce gouvernement faisait.

Je veux dire très clairement que cela a pris une force énorme pour arrêter ce projet, et je suis fier d'être ici aujourd'hui, comme je l'étais en 1992, pour voter une deuxième fois à cette assemblée pour empêcher un projet comme la mine Adams d'être développé comme dépotoir pour la province de l'Ontario.

It's almost like what goes around, comes around. We find ourselves some 15 years later, going back and doing what we did about 15 years ago. I was elected in 1990 and the issue was opening the Adams mine. We

introduced legislation, as an NDP government at that time, to ban it, and at that point the Liberals and Conservatives voted in opposition to the government and supported not having a ban. We thought it was the right thing then. New Democrats think it's the right thing now. We voted and created the legislation in 1992 to cancel the Adams mine project and make it not be a possibility. We've always maintained that position.

There have been many hours, I would say years, of work on the part of many volunteers from Kirkland Lake, Earleton, New Liskeard, Timmins, Toronto—you name it—to stop this project. I want to take the opportunity to say to those people that if it hadn't been for the grassroots organization, if it hadn't been for people like Terry Graves, Charlie Angus, Pierre Bélanger and many others, it would have been pretty darn impossible to be here today. If this is a victory, I think it's a victory because the people not only of Toronto but, more importantly, the people of northern Ontario organized in opposition to this particular project.

This particular project also allows us to talk about something that is somewhat related: economic development. We need to remember that the town of Kirkland Lake wanted this project because that community has undergone massive change to the local economy.

There used to be a time when Kirkland Lake was almost like the streets were paved with gold. You had mines that were in operation—Kerr Addison, the Adams mine and many others—that contributed to the local economy of Kirkland Lake. Unfortunately, mining being a cyclical industry, basically all the mines have closed since the inception of Kirkland Lake back in the early 1900s.

When the town of Kirkland Lake was saying yes to this project, they were so desperate for any kind of economic development that they were prepared to say, "Yes, we'll take garbage in the town of Kirkland Lake." I think it was a cry for help that went unheard.

The Tory government took office in 1995, and yet this government is having to prove to me, including the federal government—we're not getting involved in local/regional economic development in the way we should be in order to assist towns like Kirkland Lake. It is really important that we double our efforts to look at what we can do concretely at the federal, provincial and local levels to work together with local individuals and entrepreneurs to figure out how to make the economy in Kirkland Lake and other places work.

There are a number of things we can do. One of the things I've advocated for, ever since the Tories in 1995 changed it, is that the northern heritage fund should not be used as a fund for capital dollars. Capital dollars for hospitals, schools, roads etc, should come out of the line ministries. I disagree that the heritage fund dollars should be used for capital projects.

The now \$160 million that we get annually in the heritage fund would go an extremely long way in assisting businesses to stay in business or get off the ground. We don't have to give those businesses grants. I've never

argued that in my whole time in politics. But we know it is difficult for a business to borrow money in northern Ontario. The banks just don't want to do business there to the degree they used to, even 15 years ago.

So we should use the heritage fund as a loan guarantee mechanism. Let's use the lion's share of that money to say that if Mr or Mrs X has a project that meets good, rational thought when it comes to a project that can be profitable for them and create jobs for northern Ontario, "OK, we're prepared to guarantee that loan," recognizing that some of them are going to go bad and we're going to have to use some of the heritage fund money to pay off loans that went under.

The reality is that if we don't take that chance in putting our confidence, by way of putting our money where our mouth is, to support businesses, the northern economy will continue to dwindle. We've had almost a 10% reduction in our population in some of the communities across northern Ontario since the last census.

I think the reasons for that are very clear. You've got the Paul Martin Liberals who have decided that they're out of economic development in regional places like northern Ontario. You had the Tory government that did the same thing. If I disagree with both Liberals and Tories on that point, it is that government does have a role to play.

Should we be investing capital dollars? The answer is yes, but capital dollars should come from line ministries. Do we have to have a good highway system? Of course we do. We need to have money in our Ministry of Transportation to make sure that our highway system works, not only for individuals running up and down the road, but for the transportation of goods up and down the highway into and out of northern Ontario.

Should we investing in the Ontario Northland Railway system? Obviously yes, but that shouldn't come from the heritage fund. That should come from an allocation of the treasury to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines to say, "We're prepared to invest in the future of northern Ontario."

How much money did we give GO Transit? I think it was about a year ago that we gave over \$100 million to GO Transit, rightfully so, to upgrade their stock, to be able to move people from their houses and commute into Toronto and back again. That's a good investment. That's how an economy works. Are we saying that we're not prepared to invest \$10 million, \$20 million or \$30 million in the Ontario Northland to help develop it as a vital link to northern Ontario and for economic development? It doesn't make any sense.

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: Listen, I have checked the budget. The problem I have is that we don't have a buy-in when it comes to the economy of northern Ontario. Should we have good telecommunication systems? Of course. How do we provide that? I think it's a partnership in that case between the private sector and government. Where the private sector is unable to provide really good high-tech internet and telecommunication infrastructure, because

the population base doesn't exist, the province and the feds have to come to the table.

For example, can a business make money setting up internet systems in a town like Attawapiskat? Probably not. Then maybe government's got to do it. Why should the citizens of Attawapiskat not have an ability to communicate with the rest of the world by virtue of being a small isolated community off of the main hub? We have to find ways of bringing them into the hub.

I argue there are a couple of things we've got to do. If people wanted garbage in Kirkland Lake as a project and voted yes in a referendum, I always understood that to mean they are frustrated with the downward spiral of their local economy and are prepared to do anything, including accepting Toronto's garbage, to create economic activity and prosperity in their community. So I say we have failed as an Ontario Legislature. The federal government has failed as a federal House of Commons to respond to the needs of places like northern Ontario, to say, "Listen. I don't buy into pure market economics as far as saying, 'If it ain't going to stand on its own, don't do anything.'" I think, in places like northern Ontario, that's a disaster. So I say, let's understand what happened in Kirkland Lake and let's take that, quite frankly, as a call for help.

1730

We as legislators have a responsibility for all regions of the province. If the north needs to have some special attention now and into the future in order to be able to develop its local economy, so be it. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on the 400-series highways in order to support Ford, GM, Chrysler, Toyota, Honda and everybody else in moving their goods east and west along the highway system. We think nothing of that. We say, "That's good for business." Well, of course it's great for business. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on Toronto transit. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on GO Transit. We think nothing of that because we see that as a good investment for southern Ontario. I'm saying that we have to have those kinds of investments in the north.

I see my good friend Mr Bartolucci is here. I give him some credit. Mr Bartolucci, I think, is actually attempting to do what I think is right. I only hope, at the end of the day, he's got the clout that he needs—and he certainly can count on my support, because I'll give it to him—to make those kinds of things happen. Mr Bartolucci, the heritage fund should not be about capital. We should have line ministries do capital. If we need better highways, MTO should pay for that. If we've got \$160 million in today's heritage fund, let's use it for economic development. You come from northern Ontario, as I do. You understand the northern economy needs some help. I'm saying across the floor to you today, I'm prepared to do whatever needs to happen in order to support some kind of initiative that, at the end of the day, is going to say that the north is going to get some kind of attention, so that towns like Kirkland Lake don't have to say, "Yes, I'm prepared to take garbage as a mechanism to create a

few jobs in my community.” That was a cry for help. Let’s not let the cry of the rest of northern Ontario fall on deaf ears.

Mr Speaker, I’d like to thank you for the opportunity to have this debate. I look forward to the vote that’s going to be happening probably tomorrow as a deferred vote, and look forward to yet again voting yes to saying no to garbage in northern Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Arthurs: A little earlier I had a chance to talk briefly, for a couple of minutes. I think I finished by talking about the garbage bags that left the shore and headed into the lake and made a splash.

Yesterday, the member from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant, as he was speaking about some things happening in Michigan, also made some references to Mr Anderson. I presume he was talking at that point, given the context—because he also talked about Joyce Savoline—about the regional chairman for the regional municipality of Durham. I think he implied somehow that the regional chairman was in favour of the position being taken by the opposition that the Adams mine would be a great spot for garbage. Now, I know the regional chair for Durham has concerns, as we all do, about how we’re going to manage our garbage, and has taken a strong leadership role within that municipality in looking at alternative ways of dealing with waste. But I can tell you that the regional municipality of Durham is on record as opposing the Adams mine facility, the Adams mine lake, the Adams mine as a spot to put Durham’s garbage or Toronto’s garbage. So any implication that the regional chair would support that would be false, given the position of that regional council.

I want to take you back for a minute, if I could, to some of the things we need to do to deal with our waste. I was mentioning that this week I had the opportunity for the first time to take my small, green, 20-litre bin and put

in the wet waste and get it out to the edge of the driveway along with my blue boxes and the brown bag with my yard waste in it. As a result—

Mr Baird: Who wrote this speech?

Mr Arthurs: This is reality. This is a reality show. To the member across, this really happens. In our community, people can take their wet waste out separately, take their recycling out separately, take their yard waste out separately. The impact is that there’s very little left at the end of that driveway in real waste.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and comments? OK, the member for Timmins-James Bay has two minutes to reply.

Mr Bisson: Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs Dombrowsky has moved third reading of Bill 49. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

I have received from the deputy government whip a notice of deferral. This vote will take place tomorrow at the appropriate time when we have deferred votes.

Hon Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): Mr Speaker, I move adjournment of the House until 6:45 of the clock this evening.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Bartolucci has moved adjournment of the House. Is it pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until a quarter to 7 this evening.

The House adjourned at 1736.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 16 June 2004

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Jassen Cullimore	
Mr Barrett	2939
David Cook and Terry Butt	
Mr Peterson.....	2939
Relay for Life	
Mr Miller	2939
Jack McClelland	
Ms Smith.....	2940
Health services	
Mr Runciman.....	2940
Headway Homes (Niagara) Inc	
Mr Kormos	2940
Education	
Ms Broten	2940
Federal election	
Ms Wynne.....	2941
Member's comments	
Mr Wilkinson.....	2941

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on government agencies	
The Deputy Speaker	2941
Report deemed adopted	2941
Standing committee on estimates	
Mr Jackson.....	2941
Report deemed received.....	2941
Standing committee on regulations and private bills	
Mr Wong.....	2942
Report adopted.....	2942

FIRST READINGS

Asian Longhorn Beetle Confinement Act, 2004,	
Bill 102, <i>Mr Tascona</i>	
Agreed to	2942
Mr Tascona.....	2942

MOTIONS

Private members' public business	
Mr Duncan.....	2942
Agreed to	2942
House sittings	
Mr Duncan.....	2942
Agreed to	2942

ORAL QUESTIONS

Health care funding	
Mrs Witmer.....	2943
Mr Smitherman.....	2943, 2945, 2946
Mr Hampton	2945, 2946

Cancer treatment

Mr Jackson	2944
Mr Smitherman	2944

Minister's comments

Mr Dunlop.....	2947
Mr Bryant.....	2947

Hydro rates

Mr Hampton	2947
Mr Duncan	2947

Municipalities

Mr Brownell	2948
Mr Caplan	2948

Hospital funding

Mr O'Toole	2948
Mr Smitherman	2948

Doctors' services

Mr Bisson.....	2949
Mr Smitherman	2949

Children's services

Mr Milloy	2949
Mrs Bountrogianni	2950

Northern Ontario

Mr Miller.....	2950
Mr Sorbara	2950

Immigrants' skills

Mr Prue	2951
Mrs Chambers	2951
Ms Churley.....	2951

SARS

Mrs Sandals.....	2951
Mr Smitherman	2951

Agriculture industry

Mr Hardeman	2952
Mr Peters	2952

PETITIONS

Motorcycle insurance

Mr Jackson	2952
------------------	------

Chiropractic services

Mr Kormos.....	2952
Ms Churley.....	2953
Mr Dunlop.....	2953, 2955
Mr Wilson	2954

Long-term care

Mr Craitor	2953
------------------	------

Health care

Mr Runciman	2953
Mr Miller.....	2955

Taxation

Mr Runciman	2953
Mr Martiniuk.....	2955

Un Ontario sans fumée

Mr McNeely	2953
------------------	------

Ajax-Pickering hospital

Mr Ruprecht	2954
-------------------	------

District of Muskoka

Mr Miller	2954
-----------------	------

Property taxation

Mr Ruprecht.....	2955
------------------	------

LCBO outlet

Mr Wilson.....	2955
----------------	------

THIRD READINGS

Adams Mine Lake Act, 2004, Bill 49,

Mrs Dombrowsky

Ms Churley	2956, 2957, 2966
Ms Di Cocco.....	2956
Mr Miller	2956
Mr Arthurs.....	2956, 2971, 2975
Mr Dunlop	2957
Mr Ramsay	2963
Mr Leal	2964, 2967
Mr Hardeman.....	2966
Ms Smith.....	2966
Mr Martiniuk	2967
Mr Yakabuski	2967, 2971
Mr Bisson	2970, 2971, 2975
Mr Wilkinson.....	2970
Mr Baird	2970
Debate deemed adjourned.....	2975

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitors

Mr Kormos	2943
-----------------	------

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 16 juin 2004

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2004 sur la limitation de la propagation du capricorne d'Asie,	
projet de loi 102, <i>M. Tascona</i>	
Adoptée	2942

PÉTITIONS

Un Ontario sans fumée

M. McNeely.....	2953
-----------------	------

TROISIÈME LECTURE

Loi de 2004 sur le lac de la mine

Adams, projet de loi 49,	
<i>M^{me} Dombrowsky</i>	
M. Bisson.....	2970, 2971, 2975
Débat présumé ajourné	2975