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Monday 6 December 2004

Lundi 6 décembre 2004

Speaker
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 6 December 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 6 décembre 2004

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education): I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 135, An Act to establish a greenbelt area and to make consequential amendments to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001 and the Ontario Planning and Development Act, 1994, when Bill 135 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on social policy; and

That the standing committee on social policy shall be authorized to meet on Thursday, December 9, and Monday, December 13, 2004, from 10 am to 12 noon and following routine proceedings for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and that the committee be further authorized to meet on Tuesday, December 14, 2004, from 10 am to 12 noon and following routine proceedings for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be 9 am on December 14. No later than 5 pm on December 14, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put, and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than December 15, 2004. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

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

That at 5:50 pm or 9:20 pm, as the case may be, on the day that the order for third reading of the bill is called as the first government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of any vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Ted Arnott): Mr Kennedy has moved government order of motion number 292. Do you have some comments, Minister of Education?

Hon Mr Kennedy: Only to say that this is a necessary adjustment to this particular bill that we are putting forward. It will allow for hearings, it will allow for debate, but it will do that in the manner described.

The Acting Speaker: Debate on the motion?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I do this standing on one leg now.

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): How about sitting down?

Mr Bisson: I know I should, I'll tell you. I'm just doing this on one leg today. That is sore.

I just want to put a couple of things on the record in regard to this particular time allocation motion. It's interesting that the government has to—if you wouldn't mind, Mr Speaker, I really do need to sit down. Can I just talk later? Oh, my foot.

1850

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would ask for unanimous consent for the member to make the address seated.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent to allow the member for Timmins-James Bay to make his presentation from his seat? Agreed. We're making history tonight, I think. The member for Timmins-James Bay.

Mr Bisson: Thank you. Just for people back home watching, if you're wondering, I've got a really bad foot. I think I broke it and I'm sitting here waiting to go for X-rays, so I'll do this sitting down. I have to say, this is the strangest speech I've ever given in this House. I've never done it sitting down before.

I just want to put a couple of things on the record. This is a time allocation motion. I think it's important to note, in the spirit of co-operation, that there is some discussion going on among the three parties about trying to work out some sort of arrangement when it comes to public hearings on this bill. We know that there are a number of people, especially those people contained within the greenbelt, who, even though they support this particular bill, have some issues that they want to be able to raise at committee in order to make sure that whatever we do with the bill, we do it right.

I want to say that I, myself, have no problem with the direction that the government is taking in regard to the greenbelt legislation itself. I do think there are some problem areas around aggregate. For example, last week our critic for environment, Marilyn Churley, raised a number of issues in regard to how, the way the legislation is drafted and the way the aggregate act is drafted, the greenbelt in fact is going to probably allow, and continue to allow, the development of quarries in the greenbelt area. That is an issue that we need to clarify: Is it or isn't it? And if it is, we need to have some form of amendment to be able to deal with that.

There are a whole bunch of other issues in regard to the legislation that I think are important from the perspective of committee hearings. It's always a good thing, I would say—and I think my good friend Mr Dunlop, the Tory whip, will agree with me that it's not a bad thing—when we get bills out to committee and we get the opportunity for the public to be able to—

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I love it.

Mr Bisson: As whips, we love it for a different reason. We have to find people to staff these committees.

Mr Dunlop: It's tough getting people to committee in January.

Mr Bisson: That's another story. It's going to be fun to see what you guys have to do.

It's not a bad thing, I think, for the government to allow this type of legislation into committee, even though this bill got out to committee at first reading. There were, first of all, some consultations before the bill was ever drafted. There were some committee hearings that were given just after first reading, which I think was a good step on the part of the government. But it's clear there's still some point of contention, and I think it's important that the government allow this bill to go off to committee in January for a bit in order to make sure the public, the municipalities and the developers have an opportunity to come before the committee to raise their particular points, to make sure we're able to deal with the concerns that they have.

I know that my good friend the member for Niagara Centre, Mr Kormos, has some pretty specific concerns as well. He has talked to me about some of the concerns that people in his part of southwestern Ontario have when it comes to the bill. I'm sure people from the area of Welland and others are going to have an opportunity to speak at committee on that.

But let's keep in mind that we are in time allocation. It's kind of an odd time allocation motion, because we're debating a time allocation motion that may not be necessary, depending on what the government does. The opposition has taken the position that it wants this bill to go out to committee. Originally, the government said no, they weren't going to allow it to go to committee. The opposition said, "Listen, there's a price to pay for that. If you want other legislation, it might be more difficult for you to get that done if you do not allow this bill to go to committee." So there is ongoing discussion. I think most members know that this is happening, in order to see if we can get to some sort of agreement when it comes to dealing with committee hearings.

I also want to put on the record—because it is time allocation—that there's an additional issue for us, that we want the government to deal with as part of the ongoing discussions that we have right now. That is, there's going to be another time allocation motion coming to this House around Bill 106. If you remember, Bill 106 is the time allocation motion that allows the government to pass its tax measure when it comes to the health tax, and also to make amendments to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. I would just say—

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Did you get unanimous consent?

Mr Bisson: Yes. I got unanimous consent, John. Can you believe that? If you've got a sore foot, you can get away with almost anything.

I would just say that there's another time allocation motion that's coming before the House. I want to make it very clear to members—and I know that Mr Brown, my good friend from Manitoulin, is here, who's also a northerner and who, like myself and other northerners, cares deeply about what happens in our special part of the province—that contained in the next time allocation motion around Bill 106 is the issue of mills and mill closure.

I know that there are two sides to this story. The government is trying to basically say, "Don't worry. The amendment that's put forward in the bill is not going to put mills in jeopardy. It won't allow for supermills." I have a much different opinion. I want to put on the record that in conversations I've had with mill managers, with Ministry of Natural Resources staff, with people who drafted the original legislation—by the way, I was on the committee that drafted the original legislation—there was a reason we put that section in the bill.

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I was there too.

Mr Bisson: Yes, you were there, along with Mr Hodgson, Mr Wood, myself, and I forget who else was there.

I want to be clear about what the bill actually did. Back in the early 1990s, it was pretty clear that there were going to be some substantive changes happening in the forestry sections. Most members will recognize that most of the sawmills were independently owned. Up in my part of the province there were companies like—

Interruption.

Mr Bisson: Oh, Lord. That thing never does that. Let me just turn that off. Here we go. I've got to say that only my daughter and my wife have that number. They do it to me every time. I don't know why they do this to me. Turn on the television when you're calling dad, for God's sake. That's all you've got to do. You'll see where I am. That's the second time that has happened. How embarrassing can that be?

Mr John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex): They saw you seated.

Mr Bisson: They saw me seated. They thought I wasn't talking.

Mr Dunlop: You can have your sandwich now.

Mr Bisson: I can have my sandwich, my glass of—

I want to put some clarification on the Bill 106 amendment of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

Back in the early 1990s it was pretty clear that there were going to be some substantive changes in the lumber industry. Most sawmills were independently owned. In fact, if you look at places like Constance Lake, Lecours Lumber, Hearst was Monsieur Fontaine, who was the member from Cochrane North at the time, if you take a look at Levesque Plywood, the Isabelle Bros, the Malette family—the list goes on—most of the sawmills were independently owned. There might have been a group of one or two mills owned by a family, and by and large they were pretty well stand-alone operations. Back in the regime of the day, you used to have what were called forest management agreements, FMAs. What would happen was that a company basically needed wood to be able to operate, and they would get an FMA from the Ministry of Natural Resources and tie this to their ability to produce.

What we worried about when we were in government—and Howard Hampton was the Minister of Natural Resources at the time. He was the drafter of the bill, so we obviously know what we'd put inside the legislation. We wanted to put in a stipulation that if large multinationals or national companies bought sawmills in northern Ontario and started to control more and more of the wood there, then we had to have some mechanism so that the trees that were in the forest were tied to the community. We were very much worried that if one company, ABC forestry, came in and bought let's say mills from Kirkland Lake up to Hearst, they'd be in a position to say, "We own all of these mills. We're going to shut down the smaller ones, the less productive and profitable ones, and operate fewer mills with larger production, what we call supermills."

So we put two things in the legislation. First of all we made the forest sustainability licence a requirement; we created what were called FSLs, forest sustainability licences. As part of the regulation under FSLs, we said that the trees in the forests were tied to the community, and we put that in the regulation.

Mr Brown: It doesn't say that.

Mr Bisson: It does say that. I drafted the legislation, so I know what I'm talking about.

On the FSL side, we had put in a regulation that basically said that when you do your forest management plans, you have to have socio-economic consideration for the community where the forest is in order to make your decision about what happens to those trees and where they're going to be processed and cut into dimensional lumber or pulped into wood.

The other thing we did was that we made a requirement on the licence for the mill that the only way a mill could have an operating licence was to tie the forest sustainability licence to the actual mill. The reason we did that was that if the trees that are in the forest are basically there, and under the forest sustainability licence there is in the forest management plan a stipulation that you have to take the socio-economic impact on the community in consideration when it comes to the disposition of the wood, should the minister have to decide that, we also said we're going to make sure the only way that a mill is able to keep its licence is to tie the forest to the mill.

1900

We did that for a very simple reason. We were worried that one company would come by, buy up a number of mills and, at the end of the day, you would end up with a corporate decision, saying, "Rather than operate eight mills, we're going to operate five or six, and we're going to have fewer supermills to boost production and maximize return on investment." We said, "We have to be conscious of the fact that those trees are there for the communities."

My good friend Mr Brown knows, because he has communities like I have in my riding, where, my Lord, if, let's say, some of those mills were to be shut down so that trees could be shipped somewhere else, we would have a whole bunch of small communities in northern Ontario without their major employer. For example, take a look at the Tembec group, which is not so much in Mr Brown's riding but more in my riding and Mr Ramsay's. The sawmills from Kirkland Lake, Timmins, Cochrane, Kapuskasing, Opatatika and Hearst are all part of the Tembec chain. We already know. I talked to Frank Dottori, CEO of the company, on Thursday or Friday of last week. We were at the airport. He was pretty clear. He said, "Listen, Gilles. I'm working toward eliminating a number of mills in northern Ontario to maximize production." I said to him, "You know I'm fighting you on that and I don't want to see Bill 106 passed as it is, because I think it gives you greater latitude to shut those mills down without consequence of what happens to the wood." He just shook his head and said, "Yeah, I've got to do what I've got to do, and you've got to do what you've got to do," and we parted ways.

What's clear to me is, if we allow that amendment to go through, it'll make it much easier for companies to say they're going to shut down mill X, let's say, in Kirkland Lake and take the wood from the Kirkland Lake mill and ship it to either Timmins or Cochrane. Why do I know that? Because this has already happened. In Kirkland Lake, about two years ago, Tembec had made the

corporate decision to shut down that mill, and the only reason they were not allowed to shut it down is that I had a meeting with then Minister of Natural Resources, Jerry Ouellette, and pointed out to him the clause in the legislation that basically says the forest sustainability licence is tied to the socio-economic impact on the community, and that the licence is tied to the mill. We then had a meeting in my office, along with people from the Ministry of Natural Resources, and the ministry had to reverse itself and stop the order to allow Tembec to ship the wood on a permanent basis to Cochrane and Timmins.

The law was quite clear that they couldn't do that because the effect would have been that if Tembec had said, "We're closing down the mill in Kirkland Lake," the Minister of Natural Resources would then have had to take the wood back to the crown and decide who gets it. If some other entrepreneur had wanted to operate a mill in Kirkland Lake, he would have been hard-pressed, as the minister, not to give the wood to whatever operator wanted to operate a mill in the area. As a result, Tembec didn't want to lose the wood and they reopened the mill.

So I'm saying to the government, it's a bad move. We don't need to be doing this. The government argues on their side, "Well, don't worry. This has nothing to do with that. We disagree with your interpretation." The government argues that this has everything to do with the Americans' threat of countervail duty after this latest round. I say it's pretty clear what the Americans want. The Americans want to open the Canadian wood system to an open, competitive bid system. What this amendment would do, according to the minister, is placate the Americans into seeing us move our forest system closer to what they want. If that's why you're doing it, I think it's even more wrong.

The last point I want to make is that this is not something that's gone without attempt in Canada. About two years ago, the British Columbia government did pretty well what's being done here. It's not the same regime; they don't have the same legislation as us, but they uncoupled the trees from the mills. There have been massive job losses in British Columbia. We now have round wood going into Washington state that is being cut into dimensional lumber in Washington state. A number of mills have closed down.

In talking to people in industry in British Columbia, along with the workers' representatives, who are now the Steelworkers, and Norm Rivard, president of the union, who actually comes from Kapuskasing and is the old IWA president, they're all agreeing. They're saying, "Listen, we've seen this in British Columbia and we've seen what happens."

So I say to the members of the House, there's another issue that we need to deal with. We take the position, as New Democrats, that Bill 106 has to be amended by withdrawing that particular section of the bill that deals with this forest sustainability act. If the government does that, we would obviously be more amenable to whatever else goes on in this House.

With that, I'm sitting down. I now officially sit down.

The Acting Speaker: I wasn't aware you were finished, but thank you for informing me. Further debate?

Mr Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise tonight to speak on this—I guess we'd call it a time allocation motion, although the Minister of Education referred to it as a necessary adjustment motion. I noticed how he avoided "time allocation" in his comments, so we're speaking about the necessary adjustment.

I'm glad to see the Minister of Municipal Affairs is here. It's his bill and it's his pride and joy, although we think this particular piece of legislation is flawed in a number of areas. In fact, we can't believe that at this point they want to pass this bill before the session ends, which is what the motion actually said. For our party, there's a lot of things in the bill we certainly agree with; however, there are things in the bill that we disagree with as well.

There's a lot of the key stakeholders—for example, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture put out a press release last week, and they certainly aren't pleased with the fact that you want to push this piece of legislation through. So what we're asking for—and there's a lot of negotiation going on here this evening with our House leaders. Obviously, there are a number of bills that you, as a government, want passed, and we're willing to concede debate time on a lot of those. We're prepared to move forward with those bills to committees, and those are things like the pit bull legislation, the greenbelt, the ministers' attendance legislation, the bring-your-own-wine legislation. These are all bills that we know the government wants to proclaim fairly quickly. From our perspective, we haven't got a lot of problems with some of those bills and we're prepared to move forward with them as well, to at least the next stage.

But I guess what is interesting is that we come here and, every time the previous government introduced time allocation, or I guess we could call it necessary adjustment motions—maybe as part of the democratic renewal process you could change the words "time allocation" to "necessary adjustment." That sounds like more of a Dalton McGuinty type of spin, so I think that may be something.

But I wanted to put on the record tonight a lot of comments made by the previous official opposition party, which was led by Dalton McGuinty at the time, and how opposed they were to time allocation or necessary adjustment motions. It's absolutely phenomenal, because now we're seeing a regular trend with this government. This is the second time in this session. Obviously, you're going to want to do 149. Some 14 months and you're pushing them through, because, remember, we had a programming motion for the first two sessions. So this is your third time allocation or necessary adjustment motion, and we're going to see a lot more of them.

You know, we have tactics with which we can delay legislation and all that, the same as what you folks did, but this is a very important bill, just as Bill 149 is a very important bill, in our opinion. When we see tax increases

and property rights destroyed, we have a real problem with that. We're not going to rubber-stamp anything like that, and we think that the public wants to see committee hearings on this as well—massive committee hearings.

I know that the minister has been doing some roundtables, and I commend him for doing that. I think any time you have open houses, public forums etc, whatever you want to call it—I think it's extremely necessary for the public to have that input, but this is just too fast. What we've seen here today is just too quick. It's a bill that was introduced just this fall. We need to make sure that we move ahead, but not at the pace we're going, where we'll see a motion.

I'm assuming the time allocation motion will pass tonight, but I understand there might even be an adjustment if the House leaders come to some kind of agreement on committee hearings over the course of the winter. We'll have to see what happens throughout the rest of the evening and throughout tomorrow as well. After today, I believe we only have seven days left in the Legislature before the House adjourns until some time around Valentine's Day. I think everybody wants to come back on Valentine's Day.

1910

I want to put on the record some of the comments made by the previous government as we discuss necessary adjournment motions. Let's start with a few of them.

From your leader, December 19, 2000: "For a government that promised to be open, this closure action is the height of arrogance, the height of exactly everything you campaigned against and you said you were for." That was Dalton McGuinty on December 19, 2000.

On the same day, Mr McGuinty went on to say, "I don't care what you people have to say when it comes to this matter. I've got all the answers. I run the government. I run the show."

Interjection: That's Mike Harris.

Mr Dunlop: December 19, that was Dalton McGuinty again.

Interjections.

Mr Dunlop: That's my quote.

Interjections.

Mr Dunlop: Ottawa South.

Mr Speaker, I'm going to continue. This time we're going to talk about a comment made by the current Speaker—Dalton McGuinty's choice to be Speaker—a fellow by the name of Alvin Curling, the member for Scarborough-Rouge River. On October 31, 2001, he said:

"What we have today is a short-circuiting of the democratic process and closure, limiting people in expressing themselves in this democratic society. This government has consistently been so undemocratic in their approach. It is appalling, it is insulting, it is degrading in a society like this to muzzle those who have been elected to our Parliament to speak by not allowing them to speak. Furthermore, not only are they muzzling elected individuals, but also the citizens of this province, who like to express their concerns about legislation that is so important to them in every respect—to their

children, to the economy and to the institutions themselves and how they are to be governed."

Again, that was Mr Curling on October 31, 2001, referring to—what did Mr Kennedy call it?—necessary adjustment motions.

Just a little later on that year, December 10, 2002, another quote by Alvin Curling. Alvin Curling had a lot of quotes on this:

"It's rather unfortunate that an important bill like this is being allocated a limited time in which to discuss it. As a matter of fact, we're not even discussing the bill; we're going to have to discuss time allocation," which is what we're doing tonight, a necessary adjustment motion.

"There's a hypocrisy about this place sometimes about how things are being run. It's a democratic society in which we are elected by the people to bring the issues and debate the issues of the day. But then the government of the day and the rules themselves have made it impossible for us to do so."

On December 10, just two years ago, Alvin Curling said that. It's about December 10 now, isn't it? No, it's getting close.

Then, on June 13, 2002, another quote from Alvin Curling:

"One of the things we hold most precious in this democratic society is the fact that one is able to have legislation made for the people and by the people, and the only way we can do that is by proper consultation. This government does not, in any way, have any public hearings unless they're forced to."

Mr Bisson: On a point of order, Speaker: This is really important. We need to recognize Jessica, the daughter of our illustrious clerk, who is here today. We need to put her on the record.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): The daughter of Lisa Freedman.

The Acting Speaker: Welcome to the Ontario Legislature. It's nice to have you here.

I return to the member for Simcoe North.

Mr Dunlop: I'd like to welcome Jessica as well; I had no idea. It's good to see her here.

I'll continue with my Alvin Curling comments: "This government does not, in any way, have any public hearings unless they're forced to. Not even adequate debate within the House is being allowed." That's what we're seeing here tonight under this necessary adjustment motion.

Interjection: What's he talking about?

Mr Dunlop: I'm talking about quotes made by your party in opposition about time allocation. I would have thought you were different. Under a democratic process, under democratic renewal, I wouldn't have thought you would have time allocation. I thought you were going to have full debate, send it out to committee after committee, through communities throughout our province, not squeeze it into two days before December 15.

Shall we go on with Alvin Curling? "I was appalled again today that the government House leader stood up to say that there would be a restriction, a closure and limited

time in which one would be able to debate this very important piece of legislation.” Alvin Curling, June 13, 2002.

Another quote, this time by—guess who?—Mr Duncan, the government House leader, the member from Windsor-St Clair, on November 25, 2002—

Mr Jeff Leal (Peterborough): Give us a real quote.

Mr Dunlop: We’re going to get around to some Jeff Leal quotes in a minute.

“We’re talking about time allocation, and in this motion they will not allow committee hearings, they won’t allow third reading debate—crazy.

“That’s why this institution is in such disrepute, because we don’t want to talk about the important things.”

I could go on and on here, and I’m going to go on and on. We go on to Dwight Duncan again—I see the Minister of Municipal Affairs is peering at me over there—on November 21, 2002, just two years ago now:

“On the serious matter before us, time allocation is used yet again by a government that has not been able to manage its meagre legislative agenda, on a substantive issue that ought to have the benefit of hearings so that experts on both sides can be called, so that members can have an informed debate on the specifics contained in the bill. That’s sad. That’s wrong.”

Dwight Duncan, November 21, 2002, talking again about necessary adjustment motions, or time allocation, as it was referred to at that point.

I’ve got lots of other ones. I’m only going to talk for another couple of minutes, because I know a couple of other colleagues want to make a few comments tonight as well. But I have to add a few things here. Dwight Duncan, October 26, 1998:

“Closure motions really are inherently bad for our parliamentary system and prevent members of all political parties—government members, opposition members, third party members—from fully participating in the debates of the day. They’re designed to limit those discussions.”

Another one from Dwight Duncan on April 27, 2000:

“If you’re truly interested in democracy, as you say you are, if that is where you’re going, I suggest to you that you won’t use the great mallet of closure to stifle this Legislature and to prevent public input into this bill. If you’re all about democracy, you ought not to be afraid of that.”

We’re talking about stifling legislation and stifling debate. Again, that was by Mr Dwight Duncan, the current government House leader, who is trying to force this through tonight.

Then we go to our friendly old colleague from St Catharines, Mr Jim Bradley, on December 11, 2001:

“This is indeed an interesting bill, but what’s even more interesting right now is the time allocation motion that faces us. For the people who are watching this perhaps on their television sets at home, I should clarify that. That is the choking off of debate, the ending of debate or the government allocating how much time there shall be for the debate on a piece of legislation.”

I could go on and on about the government members’ comments and quotes on time allocation.

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): What about the rest of us? We spoke up too.

Mr Dunlop: I could go through that, but I really wanted to get Bradley and Duncan in there; they were important. Bruce Crozier is not in the House tonight—

Interjection.

Mr Dunlop: Oops. OK, there’s Bruce Crozier coming.

Here’s one; this will be very interesting, because the Minister of Municipal Affairs will know this gentleman very well. November 19, 2002, the member for Kingston and the Islands, John Gerretsen—

Hon John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister responsible for seniors): Don’t you dare.

Mr Dunlop: Yes, I have to put this in. The man bringing in this motion on necessary adjustment:

“So we know, first of all, why it’s going to committee: to basically correct the government’s own errors in the bill. We also know why they only allow about two hours of discussion there for the amendments to be moved and why they don’t want any debate on third reading: because this government no longer believes in what I regard as the democratic process, and that is for a bill to be discussed as fully and completely as possible.”

Again, that’s by the current Minister of Municipal Affairs, the honourable John Gerretsen. There are a number of John Gerretsen quotes in here, but I don’t want to bother the minister on that. I know he wants to get up and explain his reasons for this bill.

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I think what’s important for our party—I don’t know how the NDP will look at this—is we consider this a very important piece of legislation. It’s probably one of the most important bills that we will pass in this House in the 38th Parliament, so I believe that it needs a lot of attention, a lot of committee hearings. We’re prepared to allow some of the other bills to pass fairly easily before December 16 so that we can have some time in committee on this particular bill. We think it’s that important to the citizens of Ontario, not just those affected by the greenbelt and the areas you’ve outlined, but those areas that I’ve brought up a number of times in this House, areas like the county of Simcoe and around the county of Peterborough, where we’re going to see huge, leap-frogging growth as a result of this legislation.

I know I’ve made those comments about infrastructure, health care, education etc and all the additional costs that will be required by those areas as a result of any kind of leapfrogging that takes place. It’s something we really want to get our head around; maybe there’s a simple answer to it all. But we think there are a number of areas the government has to look at with this. That’s why, although we’re doing the time allocation tonight, we are hoping we can get a reversal of this even yet so that we can carry on and actually see committee hearings in January and February.

With that, I thank you for the opportunity tonight. I'm pleased to stand here on behalf of our party and make a few comments on this necessary adjustment motion. I'll be pleased to sit down now and allow the next party to take its turn.

Mr Marchese: I want to welcome citizens watching this program. We are on live. Don't shut off your power. It's 7:22 on Monday night. We're still here.

I was reminded by the member for Kitchener Centre that the Speaker is downstairs lighting the candles. He was saying that everybody is happy, everybody feels good, and why can't we spread that love around a little bit? Other speakers were there. There's probably some choir, I suspect, singing. They're having some punch—no alcohol—and some cookies. God bless. Everything just perfect, just the kind of setting to have fun.

But here we are debating a strangulation motion, a motion that Liberals, when they were on that side, would attack the Tories on, and they wouldn't relent, like the good bulldogs that we are in opposition. Then they come into government, and they do the same. Nothing changes under this beautiful sunflower of ours. You're in opposition, you attack. You get there and you say, "You're so negative on the other side." Then the Liberals will lose the next election, they'll come here and they'll attack like they used to. Then the government will get there and they'll do things differently. It's just pitiful, really, to see. It's just a sad thing to see.

I am against time allocation motions. I always have been. Our government decided to change the rules. Because Tories and Liberals hated the fact that we were in government and we couldn't do anything, some of our members felt we needed to change the rules because, without changing the rules, we just couldn't get ahead. They felt that these people, Liberals and Tories, hated us so much, we'd just have to override that hatred by changing the rules.

Mr Leal: You did that. You brought in closure.

Mr Marchese: I wasn't pleased with that. I wasn't one of the members who was happy to change the rules. Then the Tories get in, and they do the same; they change more rules. The Liberals are probably contemplating, "Let's change the rules again," assuming they could get away with it. God help us, I hope they won't do it and hurt themselves, both being in government and when they get to opposition. Because, as God surely knows if he's up there, you guys are going to lose. If it's not the next election, it will come. It will, and then you'll have to face your own judgments, your own rule changes and so on. You know what I'm saying.

Hon Mr Gerretsen: What's going to happen to you?

Mr Marchese: So when you strangulate debate, I say to you, Minister from Kingston and the Islands, it doesn't feel good. You pretend that you don't like it either, but I know you do, because you need to get on with it because you're in government. And God knows that this Bill 135 is the best thing since white bread. and God knows how much we all love white bread, and refined at that. I know you want to speed through this as quickly as you can

because you think you've got a good thing here. I'm not so sure. I really am not so sure.

And I'm not the critic for the environment; my colleague is. I don't want to speak for her, I've got to say that, but I am generally supportive of this bill. The member from Toronto Danforth, the critic, is generally supportive of this bill. I suspect, and I can't speak for everyone, the caucus is generally supportive of the bill. But I have some concerns.

You might say it's typical of opposition parties—

Mr Leal: It's Christmas. Get on board with the positive stuff.

Mr Marchese: Well, Christmas isn't a sufficient reason for us to simply, you know, shut our eyes, right? Just can't do that.

Mr Levac: How about New Year's?

Mr Marchese: New Year's is even worse.

I want to speak to the bill and read from the bill as a way of alerting those citizens who are watching, consumers and citizens alike, to why it is that some of us have some worries about it.

Because this bill is enabling—the minister nods in approval; he knows what I'm talking about. It allows for certain things. The language around the bill speaks to "may," and I will refer to the "may" word, because it's a recurrent word.

The Speaker is not nodding at this moment, because he's a bit nervous and worried, possibly. I don't know. But it does centralize power in his little or big hands. I don't think that's good. Centralizing power in his hands and/or cabinet's to set the rules completely by regulation is not a very positive thing.

And while a lot of people, environmentalists and others, might consider this bill to be really, really bold, I want to put on the record what I think about this bold step. Here is what it says, page 2 of the bill, the Greenbelt Act:

"Designation of area

"2(1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may by regulation,

"(a) designate an area of land as the greenbelt area; and

"(b) amend a designation made under clause (a)."

Minister, are you following this?

Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): I am.

Mr Marchese: The Minister of Citizenship is, because I can tell.

It says "may by regulation designate an area of land." It doesn't tell us—environmentalists, the general public, farmers, anybody concerned—what we are designating. There is no established greenbelt area. I don't know what the area is; environmentalists don't know—they hope they know; farmers don't know; the general public doesn't—

Mrs Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington): Look at the map, Rosie.

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: A lot of Liberals behind me say, "Look at the map, look at the map."

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: Polkaroo.

Mr Marchese: Well, Polkaroo might know, but I don't.

Those of you who are saying behind me saying, "Look at the map, look at the map," should read the bill, which says, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may by regulation designate an area of land as the greenbelt area." It doesn't say what it is, John.

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Mr Wilkinson: Look at the maps.

Mr Marchese: "Look at the maps." I know all of you folks are Polkaroo lovers, and I know that Polkaroo might be peeking in here and there trying to find out where it is on the map, but I don't see it.

Mr Leal: Rosario, if you phone MNR in Peterborough, they'll give you a full-page map.

Mr Marchese: And there's my buddy from Peterborough saying that if you look somewhere, you'll find it on some map.

Mr Leal: It's free. Phone MNR in Peterborough.

Mr Marchese: Phone MNR Peterborough and it'll be on the map—free. I hope Polkaroo finds it.

It says, "The greenbelt area shall include the areas covered by the Oak Ridges moraine conservation plan," but remember the first clause that says, "may," Johnny. "May," it says. It doesn't say "a prescribed area." The minister John Gerretsen says "may." We are leaving it to his good graces to determine whether the area that all of you seem to be familiar with is the area we're speaking about. Do we trust John? I don't trust John.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: This John trusts the other John, but I don't trust John. And my friend John here—Perth-Middlesex, for your purposes, Speaker.

Let me go on, member from Peterborough; let me read on, for your benefit. Establishment of area: "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may establish the greenbelt plan for all or part of the Greenbelt Area." John, the member from Perth-Middlesex, thinks he knows where it is, but this clause says that John Gerretsen, the minister, "may establish the greenbelt plan for all or part of"—all or part of. We don't know what that is.

Mr Leal: Do you want me to send you the map for Christmas?

Mr Marchese: The member for Peterborough seems convinced that he knows what he's talking about. I'm reading him the act and he says, "Do you want me to show you the map?"

Mr Leal: MNR will give you the map and they'll show it to you.

Mr Marchese: My good buddy Jeff from Peterborough, I'm reading you the act. I'm not just—I don't know what else I can do. David, I say to Jeff, "I'm reading the act," and he says, "I'll show you the map."

The minister, at the moment, is not nodding, which means that we've got a problem here. He and I are disagreeing on this, or he wants to be silent. And silence

is an indication that Marchese is right, that we are on the right track, and he can't say yea or nay because he doesn't want to give his ball plan up in some way that could be confusing to some.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: OK, Jeff.

What else does it say? On page 3:

"Content of plan"

"The greenbelt plan may set out policies with respect to the lands to which the greenbelt plan applies, including,

"(a) land use designations;

"(b) policies to support co-ordination of planning and development programs of the various ministries...;

"(c) policies to support co-ordination of planning and development among municipalities; and

"(d) policies with respect to transitional matters that may arise in the implementation of the greenbelt plan."

Now, Minister, I've been around here for a while, a little bit longer than you, and a whole lot of people are just willing and happy to believe what you're saying, whatever it is that you're saying. But when I read the act, and the act says, "The greenbelt plan may set out policies with respect to the lands to which the greenbelt plan applies," I say, I don't know what you're giving us. John, are you following me? Are we in this together?

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: I am.

Mr Marchese: I know the Minister of Citizenship is with me and I'm really pleased, because I like it when people are sort of intent and following the discussion. The Minister of Citizenship understands when the use of the word "may" is used versus the word "shall." "Shall" clearly prescribes, or proscribes, and "may" does nothing of the sort. "May" says maybe, maybe not. We all leave it to John the minister to decide whether "may" becomes a reality in some way, by way of a "shall," or not. It will all be in regulation, and the minister will decide in his own good time, when he has the ability to raise his feet and put them on the desk and reflect on the matter. At some point or other, he'll be able to tell us what will be in this bill. I don't feel good about that. Do you, Marie?

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: I trust him.

Mr Marchese: Marie, the Minister of Citizenship, feels fine. She trusts the minister. I suspect what that is all about is cabinet solidarity.

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: You know what that's all about.

Mr Marchese: I do. I do know. Sadly, I'm very familiar with the issue, because when you're in cabinet, you're supposed to do all sorts of things that you hate doing. While you might disagree with the Premier or the policies of the cabinet, it's a "too bad, so sad" kind of politics; you're just stuck with supporting anything that's given to you or supported by the majority. I understand that. If I wasn't there, I wouldn't be able to appreciate what we're talking about.

Let me go on, Marie. It says on page 4:

"The greenbelt plan may set out policies with respect to the areas designated by it as protected countryside, including,

“(a) policies prohibiting any use of land or the erection, location and use of buildings or structures...;

“(b) policies restricting or regulating the use of land or the erection, location and use of buildings...;

“(c) policies relating to land and resource protection and land development; and

“(d) policies for the economic and physical development of the land including,

“(i) the management of land and water resources,

“(ii) the development of major servicing, communication and transportation systems,

“(iii) the identification of major land use areas..., and

“(iv) the development of cultural, recreational and tourism facilities; and

“(e) such other policies as may be prescribed.”

That’s the extent of Bill 135, and I don’t understand what is bold about this bill. What is revolutionary about this bill, except that in every section that I have read what it speaks to is that the minister may or may not do certain things?

It’s not much of a bill. We’re not even really debating a bill, because we don’t even know the contents of the bill. That’s why we oppose strangulation motions in particular, because they cut off debate. They do not allow people to adequately read bills that are put in front of them. They do not allow enough debate by the opposition parties to allow for the clarification of these issues to be put on the record. We are put in a position of the government saying, “You better support this or else.” We’re often put in the position where the government says, “New Democrat or Tories are stalling, which they usually do on everything around here.” So if you disagree, they put a message out there saying, “The Tories or New Democrats are stalling the bill.” They devote a whole lot of money, time and resources to communicating with the public, or rather miscommunicating with the public, to let them know not the reality of what’s being debated here but only the one-sided information this government wants you to hear.

Other concerns: the Neptis Foundation—a long article in the Toronto Star raised some interesting issues. I thought they were rather relevant in terms of the comments they were making, because they said 143,000 hectares have been left open for future development within the greenbelt area, an area about 75% the size of all currently developed GTA lands—too much room for continuing sprawl, enough for 60 or 70 years, according to this foundation.

Enough for 60 or 70 years. That’s a whole lot of development. And if the Liberals’ stated goal of increasing urban density and curbing urban sprawl and the environmental impacts that accompany it—the loss of prime farmland, increased smog, increased CO₂ emissions—is to be achieved, a principal objective of both the greenbelt plan and the Places to Grow growth plan for the Golden Horseshoe, then the amount of lands designated “future development” in the greenbelt area must be significantly reduced. That’s the argument they make. It appears to make sense.

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So wouldn’t we want Neptis to come in front of a committee to present its picture, its side of the argument, its expertise, put it on the table for debate so as to allow the minister the opportunity to reflect on this tremendous unilateral power he has to determine what may or may not happen around this greenbelt area? I would want to hear from the Neptis Foundation, because it appears to me they have a whole lot to say.

The advisory council is an issue. “In our view, the act must clearly state that the minister shall establish the greenbelt advisory council, and we say, further, it should be mandated to develop and submit annual reports to the House regarding the process and problems in implementing the greenbelt plan, and when the Greenbelt Act is meeting the objectives, as laid out in section 5 of the act.” So this advisory council has to be prescribed. It cannot be left to the minister to decide if and when this advisory council is set up. Again, it’s left to the minister, by fiat, at some point undetermined, to decide whether or not and when, if it is to happen, this advisory council is to be established.

Why would we want to support a bill—

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: I’ll be right back.

Mr Marchese: Marie, please, don’t delay. Why would we support a bill that leaves so much undetermined, undecided, vague and left in the hands of Minister Gerretsen? Why would I do that? It would be like allowing an oil—snake—a snake oil salesman—

Mr Patten: Come on. You said a “snake.”

Mr Marchese: I didn’t say the minister was; I said “It would be like...” Why would I simply accept or buy something that is being sold to me on the basis of what could be? That’s why the comparison. John, you would agree with the comparison therefore.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: The Greenbelt Act states that the minister may establish the greenbelt advisory council, whose membership and terms of reference are then determined—by whom?

Mr John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): The minister.

Mr Marchese: The minister. Not this John, from Perth, but the minister. On something this critical to the long-term environmental health of the region of Ontarians, the implementation and integrity of the plan cannot be left without a mechanism beyond direct political control, which acts as a guardian for the greenbelt. We can’t have the minister be the guardian of some undefined plan. We need to put into place a council that is in the act so we know who it is who’s going to be there, or even if not that—because we can interview them in the government agencies committee; that’s not a big deal—

Mr Yakabuski: Absolutely. We’ve got lots of time.

Mr Marchese: We’ve got time for that. But we can, in the act, say that the advisory council shall be set up. John, have you got any problems with that?

Mr Wilkinson: Are you going to repeal the greenbelt when you get into power some day—heaven forbid?

Would you do that? Are you going to get rid of the greenbelt?

Mr Marchese: Would we repeal the greenbelt? If it contained the things that we support, would we repeal it?

Mr Wilkinson: That's the question. I'm waiting for the answer.

Mr Marchese: Why would we do that?

Mr Wilkinson: Do I hear the answer?

Mr Marchese: We were the ones who invited Sewell to deal with these planning issues. We were the ones who invited Sewell and other environmentalists not just to set up this group of people who went out and did hearings, but we did something that I'm not sure your Liberals—we didn't have the full support of your Liberal caucus. In fact, I don't remember any Liberal caucus supporting the Planning Act changes that we made.

So John says, "Would you support this if you were in government, if we pass it?"

Interjection: You're probably going to repeal it.

Mr Marchese: We did it before you were there. We were preventing urban sprawl before you even got into this place. We had very little support from your Liberal caucus men and women who were here at the time. We had no support. Now you want me to support a bill that is so vague and undetermined, that is left in his hands, and say, "Trust me." Why would I do that?

John, correct me if I'm wrong. I don't want to say anything that is inopportune or inappropriate or not speaking to the bill, please. I don't want you sitting there, letting the public think that somehow I'm either misleading someone or misinterpreting, deliberately or otherwise. Please, I await the opportunity to hear you respond to the things I'm putting out here, because the public needs to know what you're thinking and what you're feeling. It can't be left to regulation down the line, to the Polkaroo demarcation line of where this greenbelt is going to be.

Mr Yakabuski: Can we not take more time and do it right before we do this—

Mr Marchese: I just think we need time to let people speak to this issue because, John, unlike the Conservative Party, we are generally supportive of this move. I suspect some of you are not generally supportive of the thrust of this bill. I don't know that, but I leave this to you to determine.

Mr Yakabuski: I don't think we should do this overnight, Rosario.

Mr Marchese: It cannot be done quickly, that's for sure.

There's another concern: the settlement areas. Five years is too long for municipalities to come into compliance, so some people are saying we should reduce that to two. Why are they saying that?

Settlement areas within the protected countryside designation of the greenbelt must bring their official plans into compliance with the greenbelt plan no later than the date respective councils are required to undertake their next official plan review.

As official plans are to be reviewed under the Planning Act every five years, those settlement areas which have recently reviewed their official plans, the town of Halton Hills, for example, will not have to comply with the greenbelt plan for another five years.

This implies that they will not have to implement the policies regarding natural heritage features on development lands until the next review of their official plan.

Hon Mrs Bountrogianni: I'm back.

Mr Marchese: Thank you, Marie, for coming back. Nice to see you again.

If you passed your official plan just a couple of days, weeks ago or months ago, you're OK for another five years. You don't have to worry about enforcement or being bound by this bill that says "may or may not," whatever, blah, blah. But it's still a concern, because irrespective of what this bill says or doesn't say, it's going to be stated in regulation, and we don't have a say on those regulations. At the moment, if we leave it to five-year plans—and some councils have already passed their official plan—they will not be bound by this Greenbelt Act, however vague it is.

Hon Mr Gerretsen: That's not true.

Mr Marchese: The minister speaks softly and says it isn't true. We await the vigour of his response.

The Greenbelt Act contains no enforcement mechanisms or penalties if municipalities fail to comply within the stated five years. Why would you do that? Why would you not have enforcement plans contained in the bill so that we would know, and have the ability to speak it, where municipalities would be aware of their responsibilities and duties set in the act. But at the moment, if a municipality does not conform to this vague act, yet to be determined by regulation and the minister down the line, there is no penalty. There is absolutely no enforcement.

How do we expect municipalities to abide by any rules we want them to abide by, to respect the act, however vague, if we don't have any enforcement mechanism built in; if we don't know in advance, John from Perth, what penalties would be imposed on municipalities that don't buy in?

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Yes, a big stick; of course you have to have a big stick. Why would you pass a bill and not include enforcement? I don't understand that, John from Perth.

Mr Wilkinson: The minister will tell us.

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Mr Marchese: No, I don't want the minister to tell me what may or may not be included; I want to see it in the act. Like so many other bills that we have dealt with in my history of 15 years in this place, we do include, in bills, enforcement mechanisms and penalties when people break the law. We do that, John. So would you say of other bills that you may have passed where there's enforcement that that's the big stick and you don't agree with that?

Mr Wilkinson: I'm just asking the question, are you going to go to committee?

Mr Marchese: Ah. We'll wait for John the minister to clarify the matter.

My view is, if you don't have enforcement built in, it's not going to be very helpful.

The minister must have the powers to bring the official plans of municipalities into compliance with the Greenbelt Act, if necessary. Unlike the growth plans in the complementary Places to Grow Act, 2004, the Greenbelt Act contains no provision for the minister to amend municipalities' official plans to bring them into compliance with the Greenbelt Act. That, in our view, is a serious lack of accountability in this act.

Another issue: The Tories made the viability of municipalities dependent on growth. Now the Liberals are telling small settlement areas in the greenbelt that their growth will be frozen for the next decade with no corresponding increase in the new financial measures to offset infrastructure costs. This is a serious issue. On November 15, the Liberals and feds jointly announced new funding for municipal and rural infrastructure projects, \$298 million each over the next five years, leaving the municipalities to fund one third. The program applies to centres under 250,000 in population. This funding mechanism applies to the entire province but does not directly address the specific situation of small settlement areas under the green plan.

What are the implications of that? The implications are very clear. Without increased revenues to fix infrastructure and maintain services in smaller settlement areas, property tax increases are inevitable. Increased property taxes will create hardship for residents, especially those on fixed incomes, and already struggling farmers and young families. Infrastructure funding specifically for those smaller communities, rural communities, must be made available immediately to ensure their long-term sustainability.

These little communities have no money. So this wonderful contract you signed with the feds, where these municipalities have to raise a third of this money and the smaller settlements do not have the money to be able to kick into this program—what are they going to do? They either do not buy into this program and/or increase property taxes. What an incredible burden to put on people of modest income who might have invested their whole life into a little home and are going to be expected to accept increases in their property taxes in order to be able to buy into this infrastructure program.

You've got to help, John Gerretsen. Minister, you've got to help them; otherwise, there's going to be a serious problem.

On the issue of agriculture: Protecting farmland does not protect farming or safeguard Ontario's important agricultural industry. Farmers want to farm, and we know that. But the global crash in agricultural commodity prices, combined with the ongoing effects of BSE in the North American cattle market, have many farmers on the brink of financial disaster. We are all familiar with that.

Farmers want to farm but are often forced to become speculators, because the government is not doing enough

to make farming financially viable in the greenbelt and elsewhere in the province. The farmers' concern with the greenbelt and its potential to decrease their equity and increase their taxes brings to light some of the systemic problems with agriculture in Ontario that require immediate action.

The potential for what this government is doing in terms of limiting some of the farmers who are hurting and their ability to be able to sell some land to make ends meet is real. We want to keep the small farmer farming; we do. It's part of what we value in Ontario and in Canada. But they can't do it alone. They need government support.

How do we do that? Protecting farmland is simply the first step, but farmers and farm communities in the greenbelt and in the entire province need a meaningful farm income support system. Without that, many of our farmers are going to be in trouble.

To sum up, we want hearings; we need hearings. We need hearings because a whole lot of questions are being raised by the vagueness of this bill. We want people to comment on what this minister has done by way of introduction of this bill with language that is clearly enabling and nothing else. It prescribes nothing. Every section of this bill includes the word "may." In every section of relevance, it's "may." Something may or may not happen, and it may or may not happen because of what the minister will or will not do sometime in the future because of regulation.

We're generally supportive, but we have a whole lot of questions.

Hon Mr Gerretsen: Let me, first of all, say that this government does not take any pleasure in bringing in a time allocation motion. We would much prefer not to have a time allocation motion. I'll just go through some of the history as to how we got here in the first place.

I think the record will clearly show that this is, I believe, the third time we've used time allocation in 14 months in office. When we compare that to the time of the previous government, when in the last couple of years just about every bill was time-allocated on a regular basis and some after only two hours of debate, as the member from Simcoe North indicated, and we look at what has happened in our particular case here, I think we can see a dramatic difference.

At the outset, let me say that no government, particularly this government, wants to time-allocate debate on a motion. However, we also know that the current greenbelt legislation expires on December 15. A year ago, we passed an act which basically allowed for a one-year moratorium so that this area could be studied, so that the proper legislation could be introduced, so that the plan could be introduced and the mapping done during that period of time.

There has been widespread consultation. Let me just compare the consultation that we've had on this greenbelt legislation to the Oak Ridges moraine legislation that was passed three or four years ago. In the case of the Oak Ridges moraine legislation, there was a similar bill

passed which called for a moratorium on development on the moraine as we passed a year ago, and that bill then went out to a task force—or rather an advisory panel was set up. That advisory panel, dealing with the Oak Ridges moraine, held exactly four public meetings: in Uxbridge, Caledon, Vaughan and Cobourg. When it came out with its final report and made a number of recommendations as to what should be included in the Oak Ridges Moraine Act, that report was never made public.

Now, compare that to our Greenbelt Task Force, which was made up of 13 citizens of our community, of this province, having a wide variety of interests from environmental interests to development interests. They held six public meetings: in King City, Oshawa, Hamilton, Caledon, St Catharines and Burlington. After receiving some 1,200 verbal submissions and after meeting with 60 different stakeholder groups, it made a report. You may recall that that report was made public for everyone to study and see, as to the principles that were going to be used in determining what the greenbelt plan was going to look at.

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Since that time, since our greenbelt plan under the current legislation, the draft plan, was made available, and the mapping thereto, we have held eight formal public meetings: in St Catharines, Stoney Creek, Oshawa, Caledon, Toronto, Burlington, Markham and Oakville. It has been posted on the EBR for 45 days. We've received lots of submissions.

Interjection: What's the EBR? People don't know what that means.

Hon Mr Gerretsen: The Environmental Bill of Rights registry.

When we compare that to what the previous government did on the Oak Ridges moraine final bill, there were absolutely no public meetings at all; we held eight of them. It was posted on the EBR for 30 days. As a matter of fact, when the bill finally came to the House, it was time-allocated, and a committee dealt with the bill over a three-and-a-half-hour time period. Compare that to our suggestion in this time allocation motion that there be two days of hearings, both before question period in the afternoon and following question period, as well as one day of clause-by-clause.

The sole point that I'm trying to make is that, in legislation of a similar nature on the Oak Ridges moraine and the greenbelt that we're dealing with currently, we held a total of 14 public meetings, compared to four under the Conservative bill, and we're allowing for three days of debate by the committee, as opposed to three and a half hours of debate. And I think it should also be said that we've already had three days of debate on this particular bill here in the House. As members well know, the usual time that we allow for a bill to be debated in this House is three days. So it has had the usual kind of debating time that most bills get.

I cannot overestimate the notion that the previous government time-allocated just about every bill that came before the House, whether they were large, small or in

between, particularly near the end of their regime, over the last couple of years, whereas this is only the third time that we've done this. We have to do it quite simply because the current legislation sunsets on December 15 and, as we heard about earlier, it's absolutely imperative that we have this enabling legislation in place by that time.

In dealing with the comments of Mr Marchese, the member from Trinity-Spadina, he has made some good points here, some valid points; no question about it. So I say to him, allow this bill to go through to committee. Let's have that discussion, let's have the formal deputations before the committee. We're always open to having anyone try to improve this bill. But for him to somehow suggest that because the word "may" is used in the third section of the bill, which states, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may establish the greenbelt plan for all or part of the greenbelt area," that that somehow means that—is he trying to suggest that we are not going to pass or in effect implement the greenbelt plan under this bill? Some of the arguments that he made, quite frankly, were—

Mr Leal: Suspect.

Hon Mr Gerretsen:—suspect, or at least unusual. Would he really have the people of Ontario believe that we'd somehow go through debating this bill and spend all this time over the last year in consulting with the people of Ontario during the Greenbelt Task Force debates and discussions and during the current bill, and then at the end of the whole exercise we're not going to somehow approve the greenbelt plan, we're not going to implement the greenbelt plan? That's somewhat hard to believe, that we would go through this whole thing and not implement the greenbelt plan, because I've got news for them, Speaker: We are going to implement the greenbelt plan, and it is going to have precise mapping attached thereto, as to what is and isn't included. We are also going to appoint an advisory council to give advice and to review the legislation as it proceeds over time.

He made the comment with respect to where the greenbelt plan ranks in the priority of planning documents that municipalities and the province have. Let me make no doubt about the issue, which is clearly contained in section 8 of the bill. It clearly states in straightforward terms in subsection 8(1), "Despite any other act, the greenbelt plan prevails in case of a conflict between the greenbelt plan and (a) an official plan; (b) a zoning bylaw; or (c) a policy statement issued under section 3 of the Planning Act," which is the provincial policy statement.

So let there be absolutely no question about it that once the greenbelt plan is in effect, it will supersede the official plan of a municipality, its zoning bylaws and the provincial policy statement as well. So for him to somehow suggest that there's something underhanded that's going on by not making it a requirement for municipalities to adopt this greenbelt plan in their official plan—first of all, it's not required. The section of the act clearly states that it supersedes any official plan or

zoning bylaw, so it's not required to be immediately done. That's why, in order to be reasonable about it, we basically said to municipalities that we want to see it adopted within their official plans as well to bring some conformity, but in the meantime, the greenbelt plan will supersede any official plan or zoning bylaw that a municipality may have.

In dealing with the contents of the bill—and we've heard many, many comments—I had the opportunity myself to go to two of the public meetings that we held, both in Burlington and here in Toronto at the Ontario Science Centre. There are individuals who don't particularly care for this plan. The reason may be self-serving—not in all cases, but there may be a self-interest in some of the situations. That's for individuals themselves to decide. But I think we also heard overwhelmingly that the vast majority of individuals who do not necessarily have a self-interest in this particular area feel that this is the positive way to go. I mean, anyone who lives in and around the Toronto area, who has to either go home from work or vice versa and lives anywhere other than in the downtown area knows of the sprawl and the gridlock problems that are present here in this area on a day-to-day basis.

So what we're trying to do, in conjunction with the changes that were made to the provincial policy statement, in which we are urging municipalities to get more involved in the intensification of property development, particularly along transportation routes—the kind of greenfields development that just creates sprawl further and further out from the lakeshore is simply unacceptable in the years to come.

When you consider the fact, as everyone will agree, that over the next 25 to 30 years anywhere from an additional three to four million people will be settling in this area, it is absolutely imperative that a government—and certainly this government, by making it a platform commitment during the election last year—takes the problems that seem to be growing on a daily basis at hand and does something about them. What we've decided to do about it is to make sure that the prime agricultural lands and those environmentally sensitive lands that are in the Golden Horseshoe area, that connect in effect the Oak Ridges moraine to the Niagara Escarpment, are protected for future generations to come.

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A lot of people have put an awful lot of time and effort into it: the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, many of the planners in the area who work for various regional and local municipalities. We've consulted with these people on an ongoing basis over the last year to make sure we get the final plan correct.

I know that years from now we will be able to look back on this legislation. In effect, we've added a million acres, primarily made up of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands, to be protected for future generations, and those generations will thank us for that.

There are many examples around the world where this kind of legislation was not always popular at the time, or

had tremendous opposition at the time it was first introduced, yet once it was put into effect and people had an opportunity to look back on it later on, it became a resounding success. All one has to do is look at the Vancouver area, for example, where a greenbelt was established after a tremendous amount of controversy back in the mid-1970s. If you talk to anybody in the Vancouver area now, as I certainly have had the opportunity to do, even to some people who weren't all that much in favour of it some 30 years ago, they will now all admit it was the best thing they did. Not only was it good for the environment, but it was good for future generations. It dealt with the gridlock and sprawl problem that happens to each and every one of us who lives in the immediate Toronto area.

I urge the members of this assembly to vote for this motion so that we can get on with it, deal with some of the legitimate issues raised here today in committee and have the legislation passed by December 15.

As far as the plan itself is concerned, and the mapping that's attached thereto, we intend to have that in place within 45 days from the time the bill is actually passed, on or before December 15. So we hope to have that in place by February 1.

The reason we're taking that extra time is to make sure we've got it right. It is absolutely imperative that since we are dealing with, in many cases, lands owned by private individuals, we want to make sure we do it right. That's why all these various meetings have taken place. We're absolutely convinced that once we have taken that extra period of time and met with the various municipal and regional officials, we will get it right.

There have been many comments made that perhaps other programs should be put in place, such as in agriculture. I can certainly agree with that. We want to make sure that the agricultural community we are trying to protect within the greenbelt area is a viable industry, and viable economic plans are necessary to make sure that happens. That's one of the reasons why, in the plan itself, we have allowed for a certain amount of expansions, taking into account future methods in which agriculture, for example, can be advanced from a technological viewpoint. We realize that if we were simply to freeze the kind of agricultural practices that are in vogue or being used right now, we may in effect be harming certain ways of agricultural production etc. One way to deal with that is to allow technological advances that may occur over a period of time to be introduced into the agricultural component of the greenbelt.

There are many other issues like this that we've taken a look at to make sure we are fair to everyone concerned. For example, one of the things that hasn't always come out in the various discussions we've had is that the existing land uses that people have within the greenbelt area will be allowed to continue. Somehow individuals are under the impression that the moment the greenbelt comes into place, they can no longer carry on the kind of business activity or tourism activity they are currently carrying on. All existing land uses can continue.

So I would once again just urge the members here to vote in favour of this motion so that we can get on with it and implement the bill that I think generations in the future will thank us for.

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington): I am pleased to offer up some concerns that are being expressed by my constituents and by the region of Halton and the city of Burlington and, in fact, all the municipalities in Halton, who have prepared a joint submission and a joint response to the greenbelt plan.

As I am accustomed to doing, I am before the House tonight to put those expressions of concern on the record and to urge the government to follow a course as recommended not only by the region of Halton, but, I must admit, a cosignatory in the form of Mayor Rob MacIsaac, who chaired the minister's task force on the greenbelt. He too signed on behalf of the city of Burlington, expressing some concerns about the government proceeding with the current legislation until such time as certain matters have been clarified.

First of all, let me deal with this whole issue of closure. This is a non-issue for me. In the five different governments I have had to sit through in my 20 years here, closure is used all the time. I am not going to read anything into the record. Every government does it. I think the only things that are helpful to the debate are the importance of the legislation and the impact on the future of the province and timing. And timing is only of major concern as it relates to whether or not there is controversy within the bill and substantive concerns being expressed.

Having said that, that is exactly why I feel compelled to bring forward the concerns expressed by Halton region and the cities of Burlington, Oakville, Halton Hills and Milton. These concerns are well documented in a rather extensive report, portions of which I will be reading into the record.

As has been stated, this report was made public on October 28. Barely one month later, we are presented with the need to have this legislation fast-tracked in order to meet a deadline which the government could, at its own discretion, extend past December 15.

There are concerns that are being expressed in a couple of areas. The minister is present tonight, and he will know that during the course of his presentation of his ministry's estimates before the estimates committee I indicated to him that the very first concern being expressed by Halton region was the lack of clarity with respect to the actual mapping boundaries. The minister made a promise and an undertaking in Hansard that he and his staff would get back not only to myself and the Halton members, but to the city of Burlington, whose mayor, Rob MacIsaac, was on the committee, was expressing a concern, wanting to know exactly where these boundaries were. There were some assumptions made by the staff, at both the city of Burlington and Halton region, as to what was inside the boundaries and what was outside, and to date those matters have not been clarified.

On the premise that the minister did promise in an undertaking in Hansard that he would get clarification and has not been able to do that, that in and of itself is cause for concern, and one wonders if that has more to do with the speed at which the bill is proceeding and to what degree matters of accuracy and detail on land use planning are of that great concern.

It's been alluded to that the minister went to two public meetings. One was November 17, in Burlington, and we thank him. Burlington doesn't get chosen very often as a location for public hearings, but we're delighted it was chosen. I think that a lot had to do with thanking Rob MacIsaac, our mayor, publicly for his work in this area.

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However, there was a considerable amount of concern expressed at that meeting, concern about—I'll categorize it very generally—the degree to which agricultural land is being treated in a land use policy without an accompanying plan to protect, encourage and support farming. Halton region has such a plan. It's a very good plan. I recommend that the Minister of Agriculture, who's here tonight in the House, consider how Halton has worked with its Ontario Federation of Agriculture members in terms of developing land use policy which will help farmers stay in farming. Halton region has expressed concern that there's a misfit in terms of sterilizing the land in some farming areas and what impact that's going to have on farms that are directly adjacent to the protected areas. I know the Minister of Agriculture is aware of that. That's a concern from Halton region and the OFA.

The second concern comes from groups like COPE—Citizens Opposed to Paving the Escarpment. This is an organization, which I have been working with and which I support, that has expressed concern that currently—and there are two areas of concern here. One is that the greenbelt plan does not speak very clearly to whether provincial policy statements have primacy, instruments that the Minister of Municipal Affairs has that he can take to cabinet and supersede a whole series of local planning act amendments and the Planning Act itself. It can supersede the Oak Ridges moraine act. It can supersede the Greenbelt Protection Act. The Niagara Escarpment act is the fourth piece of important land use legislation that protects land that has this provincial override. So this is a very powerful instrument.

Nowhere have we as the region of Halton, nowhere have organizations like COPE, been given assurances that, for example, transportation corridors, large-scale quarries, large-scale linear—linear and non-linear are forms of infrastructure; these are non-linear infrastructure packages. There is no clear policy statement. First of all, which has primacy? Shall the greenbelt plan have primacy over these others? I'm going to read into Hansard, if I have time, the specific sections of this bill that contradict each other. In fact, in one section it clearly states that the provincial policy statement, the instrument of power wielded by cabinet and the Minister of Muni-

cipal Affairs, has precedence over the Niagara Escarpment act and the Greenbelt Act and so on. My region of Halton has said that as long as these contradictions exist in this legislation, I'm not supposed to support it.

I support the principle of land use management. As someone who used to work for former Premier Bill Davis on staff, I can tell you that I was around when we brought in the Niagara Escarpment legislation. I was around when the first greenbelt planning documents were first conceived of. This was a very exciting time in urban planning in our province. It was one of my majors at university, it was an area of extreme interest to me, and I was fortunate to work for former Premier Bill Davis at a time when there was a huge renaissance in this area. So I personally support it. I worked on the Bruce Trail in my younger days; I've hiked it in my older years. I recognize fully the value here.

But there are some serious questions being raised with respect to where the mid-peninsula corridor will be located through the Niagara Escarpment. There are many of us, including myself, who believe that any transportation planning should be done with the utmost of scientific evidence and the utmost of best planning practices applied to protecting the escarpment. The greenbelt plan doesn't do that. The greenbelt plan is silent about these linear and non-linear infrastructure projects, and the minister's powerful provincial policy statement rights that he has within that. So those organizations are saying to me, as their MPP, that they're expecting me to continue to fight for what we believe in in terms of trying to preserve the escarpment and trying to find alternative routes for transportation corridors that are being considered by the mid-peninsula corridor, that in fact these protections need to be in place. Until we have those assurances, then this legislation, in my view, is being rushed, mistakes will be made, and they can't always be corrected by regulations that we will never see.

One of the individuals—many individuals, rather—expressed concern about how quarries are treated in this legislation and how various municipalities have built into their municipal planning the treatment of these facilities and potential growth. One of the persons who came forward—I'm just going to read briefly—a Burlington resident who was at the November 17 meeting in Burlington, noted that quarries affect water supplies and urged that no new applications be allowed on the escarpment. "The government is losing credibility in my eyes," said Helen Dutka, who lives on the escarpment. "It wants to protect the escarpment plan for years to come, but it's allowing the aggregate industry to continue business as usual," it went on in this article.

"The Halton region has expressed similar concerns." I'm quoting from their rather lengthy report that's contained, in part, in a letter to the minister, dated November 29, 2004—this letter is barely a week old—asking for more time to do a more thorough job with this report. The report raises some key question questions about the scale: "Under section 4.3.2, the second bullet point on page 23 of the draft plan should be modified to

read"—and this is what the Halton region recommends—"that 'Any application for the expansion or establishment of a mineral aggregate operation shall be required to demonstrate how the connectivity between key natural features will be maintained and how the water resources system, as defined under section 3.2.3, will not be adversely affected before, during and after the extraction of mineral aggregates.'" It goes on to indicate that Halton region has some very high standards in terms of the impact of aggregate extraction on the water table. And yet they do not have the kinds of protection in the greenbelt plan. So there's considerable concern being expressed by Halton region.

Halton region continues on further to say—this is a point that I just want to read into the record, that I raised for the minister. This has to do with the contradiction with the power of the minister under the provincial policy statement to override these various pieces of legislation. On page 5 of the draft greenbelt plan it says, "With respect to the PPS"—provincial policy statement—"the greenbelt plan includes policies that represent a higher or different policy standard than the PPS. Unless otherwise stated this plan"—and that means the greenbelt plan—"defers to the PPS, including the definitions in the PPS." The first sentence appears that the greenbelt plan prevails over the PPS, while the second sentence implies exactly the opposite. That's from the staff report.

So clearly we have a problem with a contradiction as to which has primacy. And the citizens of Halton and Burlington have very legitimate concerns about this government's intention to bring in a mid-peninsula corridor that paves through this significant ecosystem and this part of the Niagara Escarpment.

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The minister makes promises, and we know we have difficulty hearing promises from the government. It speaks directly to their credibility. I don't impugn their intention here. I think it is proper and appropriate to be concerned about land issues, but, frankly, he has raised more questions, as has my region, than the answers we've received. I am still waiting for those maps so that I can share them with Halton council.

I want to acknowledge my colleague from Erie-Lincoln for his leadership on this issue. I will allow him to take over the floor on my behalf.

Mrs Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I'm pleased to take this opportunity to speak to the proposed Greenbelt Protection Act and to encourage and urge my colleagues to give this legislation the priority it deserves and to ensure that it passes quickly.

The proposed legislation is fundamental to many aspects of life in Ontario and its future. It is pivotal to the manner in which Ontario will grow. It is necessary for strong communities that a well-planned, less-congested and curbing of sprawl exist and that we provide Ontarians with a high quality of life. It is needed to preserve and protect our environment, ensuring that our watersheds, ecosystems, resources, forests and more survive. It is critical for a healthy agricultural sector, one that will

provide us with the food we need so that, as our population grows, we have local produce and food that we can count on for our citizens.

We want to be able to support a vibrant economy, one that attracts business and investment and creates jobs, opportunities and prosperity for Ontario and Ontarians. It is vital for our enjoyment of life. If the member from Trinity-Spadina could imagine a greater Golden Horseshoe without trails or rural areas, I am sure that's something we wouldn't even think of. For all these reasons, I think it is important that we deal with this particular bill expeditiously.

We've been told that there are estimates of how fast our province will grow, particularly in the Golden Horseshoe area. We're told that by 2031 we can expect four million more people to be living in this area, bringing the population to a total of 11 million. With that will come, of course, additional jobs. It's estimated that approximately two million new jobs will come with that, and that is good for our province. We need that kind of strength and diversity in our economies. That will help our ability to prosper.

Currently, central Ontario generates nearly two thirds of the province's GDP and nearly one third of Canada's GDP. Solid growth will certainly help all of us and be of benefit to this province, but then there's another side to the problem. Without proper planning, this significant growth will overwhelm our province, eat up our land and diminish our quality of life. Our government is proposing to accommodate this growth, and that is done through greenbelt protection.

You will recall that almost one year ago Minister Gerretsen introduced the Greenbelt Protection Act, 2004, which was passed by the Legislature in June. This act created a greenbelt study area across the Golden Horseshoe from Niagara Falls to Rice Lake near Cobourg and north to Barrie. As you know, that includes some of the most environmentally sensitive areas, some of our best agricultural lands and also some of our most attractive landscape in the countryside.

These same lands are also under some very intense development pressures. When we talk about development pressures, we are concerned about the urban sprawl that is consuming the lands we want to keep. We want to keep agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.

Our government resolved to study this area, and we have determined how best to protect it for future generations. The original Greenbelt Protection Act established a one-year moratorium on new urban development in rural and agricultural areas. Lands that were already zoned for development could still go ahead, but the moratorium guaranteed that we were able to hold areas until we were able to bring forward the public discussion that we wanted to have.

Minister Gerretsen established the Greenbelt Task Force, and the task force went forth and made recommendations on the scope, content and implementation of a permanent greenbelt. It developed a discussion paper and consulted widely. Within that consultation, we heard

from over 1,200 individuals, 60 stakeholder groups, and we received over 1,000 written submissions. In August, the task force presented its series of recommendations. Out of that we developed Bill 135, the proposed Greenbelt Act. We want to build on that public consultation that took place then and the public consultation that we have done since.

One of the things that I heard in particular at the public consultations was the whole issue of agriculture. Agriculture is a cornerstone of our plans for the greenbelt area. The area we are talking about holds some of the most fertile soils in the province. It is some of the most productive farmland we have. The plan would permanently protect about 100,000 acres of the Niagara Peninsula's tender fruit and grape specialty crop areas. This is the land that is so important to us in terms of our tender fruit industry, but also our wine industry, for which we are internationally recognized. All of us recognize the importance of the ice wine industry to our international markets.

The plan also protects the entire Holland Marsh specialty crop area, which is over 15,000 acres of land located in York region and Simcoe county. There are very few of us here today who haven't driven through those areas and seen that farmland and seen how beautiful it looks and how productive it is. That is just very evident as you go by.

Just this past weekend, I had an opportunity to speak to one of my constituents about the greenbelt area. He told me about how he enjoys coming into the Niagara region to tour the wineries and the vineyards. He told me that every year he comes back and there are new wineries that have been established. He enjoys sampling their wares, and he takes home with him the product he finds there. We want to keep those kinds of things. The last thing we want to do is pave all of that over. Our plan would ensure that farmers continue to farm that land and allow for a full range of normal farm practices, and we would support farm operations.

I heard the member from Trinity-Spadina speaking about the possibility of selling farmland. There is no question that this has been a particularly difficult year financially for many farmers, but that is the case right across this province. The BSE issue has added to that and compounded it greatly, and our government has addressed that by providing a safety net and aid to those farmers. But there is no question: oilseeds and grains have definitely seen a decline in price. Prices are very low.

But farming is cyclical. We have all experienced these things. I wouldn't be the first farmer who could say that I have thought of selling my farm at a time when things were particularly low and using those funds to try to deal with the economics I had to face. But on sober second thought, we all know that that is very short-sighted. We are not going to sell our farms and abandon the future. That is not what farming is about.

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We have always dwelt and lived on the hope of the next season, and I know people sometimes think that doesn't make a lot of economic sense, but it's a very real thing. I know the farmers whom I've talked to in the greenbelt consultations are dealing with those kinds of issues right now. They're dealing with the finances and the viability issues, but that is, as I said, something that we all share in this province. What they really want to do is make sure that there are farms and farmland for the future. They want to leave that legacy for the next generation of farmers. In the long term, we recognize the importance of agriculture not just for ourselves as farmers, but for the society that we try to grow the food for.

As I said, no one wants to see these lands paved over in unrelenting sprawl. Our plan would certainly ensure that farmers can continue to farm those lands. We will support farm operations, including larger agricultural operations and activities, that would provide the agricultural range that we need and also allow for secondary farm uses. We want to stop the fragmentation of farmland—this is very important—so we want to introduce strict limits to non-farm uses that would conflict and hinder farming.

One thing that we have done in this bill and in our plan is allow for the sale of surplus farm dwellings. We need to do that so that farmers can consolidate their farms. As I mentioned, we are in an agricultural environment where farmers are getting larger. So, in order to consolidate—farmers have told us they don't want to be landlords; they want to farm—the plan allows for the selling of surplus buildings, which would allow those farmers to take those dollars and reduce the cost of having to buy the farmland they need in order to continue in their production.

Bill 135, the proposed Greenbelt Act of 2004, will help us to set the right course. If passed, the act, as well as the proposed greenbelt plan, would make sure that Ontario grows and thrives, that our land, air and water will remain clean and healthy, and that it will all be accessible to our population. It would ensure our continued ability to grow the food we need and enjoy the heritage that we value. It would ensure that we build where it is best to build, preserve where it is best to preserve, and live and work well in our separate and unique communities. It would recognize the need to balance the goals of the greenbelt with the long-term infrastructure requirements of growth.

I urge our colleagues to move quickly on this bill because, if passed, the proposed act would provide for the greenbelt that would represent a pivotal commitment to the people of Ontario.

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): It's my pleasure to join in the debate this evening on Bill 135, Act to establish a greenbelt area and to make consequential amendments to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001, and the Ontario Planning and Development Act, 1994

Of course, we're discussing this bill this evening, but it's a time allocation motion to force the bill through and to really end debate on it. Certainly, we're hearing that more time needs to be spent on this bill to get it right, and I know that our party is really pushing for more time. We want to see committee hearings. We'd like to see that in January and take the time to get it right. You look at all the news clippings, and what do you see? "More Time Needed," from the Standard, St Catharines-Niagara, December 3:

"More time needed to comment on greenbelt law, region says. But regional council is calling for that to be extended by 45 days to ensure the province has all the right information, particularly when it comes to the lines drawn restricting growth in Niagara.

"It is a very tight time frame," said Grimsby Regional Councillor Debbie Zimmerman. "I have serious concerns regarding the mapping"—and we have serious concerns about the mapping and the science that went into where the lines are.

Questions have also been raised about irrigation ditches in Niagara-on-the-Lake being designated as fish habitats, restricting use by property owners.

"A great deal of work needs to be done regarding a number of policies in the draft plan," says Lincoln mayor, Bill Hodgson. "We need 45 days of meaningful consultation. There has to be more consultation," he said. "It is critical we get all these things right before the legislation is passed. What is the great rush? Why is December 16 so critical? Why not take the time, with such an important bill, and get it right?"

The Hamilton Spectator: "Greenbelt Moving Too Fast, Group Says.

"This whole process is being driven too fast with rigid deadlines. How can the government hope to finalize comprehensive legislation just two days after the last day for submissions?

"We need more time—at least a year—and more flexibility to address all the issues," said a spokesperson for one group.

"Other concerns and suggestions included"—and they list a whole list of them, which I won't go through because I don't have that much time.

The other evening I met with the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Farmers have great concerns about what is going to happen with their farms and the value of their farms, and whether they will be able to finance their crops after the values of their property are decreased. It's like expropriation without compensation. Ron Bonnett of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has many concerns with this and farmers have many concerns with this legislation. I think we need, for the sake of farmers, to take our time and get this legislation right. Ron Bonnett writes:

"In recent years, a trend has been developing that is causing concern for Ontario's farming community. The trend is the disconnect between legislation and policy development and the economic realities of farming....

“There are a number of examples where legislation and/or regulations have been introduced with little regard for practical implications and economic costs that impact the farming community. Recently examples include the Ontario government’s greenbelt legislation....”

The legislation has to take the farmers’ concerns into consideration. The last thing you want to see is useful farms going from farmland to parkland. I think we need to have public input, take the time and get it right. There’s no need to rush this legislation. I know there have been some public meetings. In those public meetings there have been all kinds of people coming out and voicing concerns. Why not take the time to get the legislation right and to treat farmers properly?

Recently, we had the wine-selecting evening here at Queen’s Park, a very nice evening where we get to select from Ontario wines the white and red wines that will represent the Legislature of Ontario for the year and have the logo on them. In that very nice event, the Grape King, Livia Sipos, was here, and wanted to be very polite, but also felt it very important to let people know that this legislation is causing vineyard owners great concern. They want those concerns to be addressed, and I think we should be addressing those concerns.

I am pleased to say that the wine from Livia’s vineyard was selected as one of the wines for the Ontario Legislature this year. So wine from the Grape King’s vineyard, the Crown Bench Estates Winery, is going to be one of the official wines of the Legislature of Ontario for the next year.

There are many other concerns which I will very briefly go through, because I know the member from Erie-Lincoln is keen to comment on this debate as well.

What happens with the leapfrog effect to communities like Barrie? What happens with the transportation corridors to the communities like Barrie and the price of housing in those communities when we bring this greenbelt into effect? There are some very serious concerns, so why time-allocate it? Why not take the time?

I’m only going to use one time allocation quote and that is one from Jim Bradley from St Catharines on December 16, 1997: “The opposition role is to help to slow the government down, and I think ultimately better legislation for all the people of this province emerges when the government is forced to take a little longer to pass that legislation.” That’s all we’re asking for: more time. I’m in favour of protecting Ontario’s farmland, but we also need to protect Ontario’s farmers. So let’s take the time and get this legislation right.

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Mrs Sandals: I am delighted to have this opportunity to debate our greenbelt bill tonight and to talk a bit about why we need to do time allocation, because I do think it’s important that we give this bill high priority and get it passed quickly.

But first of all, I’d like to talk a bit about why the bill is very important. I was at an event Saturday night and someone came up to me and said, “I’m very supportive of what you’re doing with the greenbelt legislation.” As

you look over what a government can do, this may be the single most important thing a government can leave as a legacy: the protection of land for future generations.

I believe this is truly balanced legislation, when you look at what we are doing. There will be continued opportunity for growth, but we want to make sure that as we grow, even within the greenbelt, we have strong, well-planned, compact communities.

I have been driving to Toronto for years and years and years and dealing with commuting. Over the years, I have seen Toronto sprawling out and, with the traffic, it takes longer and longer to get to Toronto. When you see the stats, that’s not surprising. From 1967 to 1999 the urbanized area of the GTA grew by 360% while the population less than doubled, which means we’ve been taking up more and more space per person as we’ve moved out. We’ve created massive urban sprawl, and of course that’s precisely why the traffic is getting worse and worse.

We need to pay more attention to public transit. We need to pay more attention to compact forms of urban growth. Ontarians are clearly ready to address this. The advocacy group Environmental Defence Canada conducted a survey that said 81% of Ontario residents support the greenbelt plan. The group’s executive director, Rick Smith, said, “Ontarians support the greenbelt protection approach and they want to see more of it. They’re tired of sprawl, smog and gridlock, and see the greenbelt as a real chance to protect the environment and improve our quality of life.” I agree with Mr Smith.

We are going to be protecting our environment. In fact, the little bit in my riding that has been designated as greenbelt has to do with environmental protection because the headwaters of the rivers that feed the Hamilton area and the Halton area rise at the south end of my riding.

Mr Leal: What about the Speed River?

Mrs Sandals: No, we’re going to debate about the Speed River—it’s in the Grand River—on Thursday. We have to protect it too. That’s Thursday. Stay tuned. That’s the next step. This is the greenbelt.

I do have a little bit of the greenbelt at the very south end of Puslinch. It has been included because it’s the area of the headwaters of those rivers, and that’s very important in protecting the water quality as it flows down through the river valleys into the greenbelt area included in Hamilton and Niagara.

It’s very important to create a healthy agricultural community. As you look at that sprawl moving out from Toronto, which not so long ago was farmland around Brampton or Milton or Oakville, you see acre after acre of farmland being paved over. If we’re going to have agricultural communities in the future, we can’t continue to pave all our farmland.

In particular, there are two very special areas that the greenbelt legislation protects: the grape-growing and tender fruit areas in Niagara, which are unique to this province; and the Holland Marsh area for vegetable

growing, another unique agricultural area. These areas are protected.

It protects some of our recreational areas. When we look at the Bruce Trail and the Niagara Escarpment, it protects those recreational areas.

So we do have an act here that will allow growth, both industrial and urban, but in a more sensible form, while at the same time respecting our environment, our agriculture and our recreational areas.

The opposition asks, "What's the rush?" Well, there are a couple of things here. Before the current act that we're debating, there was a previous act, and it imposed a moratorium within the greenbelt study area. The moratorium says there could be no further changes in zoning to allow additional development. If something is already zoned for development, it can go ahead, but if it's currently zoned for farming or open space, for a non-development use, there's a moratorium on it. That moratorium expires on December 15. What does that mean? It means that if we do not pass this act before Christmas, developers can get in there and start changing exactly the land that we want to protect. We don't think that's right. We have gone through an extensive consultation to ensure that we are protecting land. Quite frankly, we don't want to blow it at the last minute for want of passing this legislation before we recess for Christmas. In terms of protecting this land, it is absolutely critical.

Have we consulted? With the original legislation that imposed the moratorium there were traveling public hearings and three days of clause-by-clause hearings by committee. Then, when we look at what has happened around the Greenbelt Protection Act, in February 2004 there was a 13-member Greenbelt Task Force assigned to look at the issues and make recommendations about a permanent greenbelt. This group developed a discussion paper, consulted widely on proposed approaches, heard from more than 1,200 individuals and 60 stakeholder groups and received more than 1,000 submissions. They presented their final recommendations in August 2004, which led to the current proposals around what the greenbelt should look like.

Since that time, there have been eight public meetings attended by over 3,500 people, with 1,100 written submissions, and more than 60,000 people have checked it out on the greenbelt Web site—which, unfortunately, apparently the member from Trinity-Spadina couldn't find because he's not quite clear on where the greenbelt is going to be. In total, we have had 14 public consultation sessions and a great deal of input on this particular piece of legislation. We have debated it at length in this Legislature, and it is now time to pass it.

Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln): I'm pleased to rise but obviously disappointed that after a mere three days of debate on the proposed Bill 135—legislation that, I remind the members of the assembly, would, under the plan, lock land into certain uses in perpetuity and give the minister extraordinary powers. It has received but three days of debate, and I would wager that barely one out of

10 members of this assembly has risen to give substantive comment on this legislation.

My first comment: Shame on you. Shame on you for bringing this forward. Shame on you for bringing this closure motion on this debate about legislation that will have far-reaching, long-term consequences.

Let me read back one of the quotes in Hansard from the minister himself on December 3, 2002: "It seems to me that this is a complete attack on the democratic principles and the parliamentary rules that have been a tradition within the Westminster model."

Minister Gerretsen, the member for Kingston and the Islands, himself said that in opposition, but now, as a minister, is ramming this legislation through the House, limiting debate and giving members, I think, barely 24 hours to review hundreds of consultation documents, hundreds of submissions on this legislation from across the province of Ontario, whether it's farmers, municipalities, environmentalists, taxpayers in general—barely 24 hours to make any kind of comment based on those submissions for amendments to the act.

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I have not received a single solid argument from any member of the government side as to why this legislation needs to be passed through three readings by December 16. The member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex said that it's because four million people are moving into the province of Ontario. They're not moving into the province of Ontario in the next couple of weeks. What's wrong with extending consultations on the legislation into the new year so we can hear from farmers, from taxpayers, from municipalities, from environmentalists, to make sure that you get the legislation right?

We've heard tonight, we've heard during debate on this bill that the map, the plan, even the legislation are replete with errors. We've documented, I think, some 50 to date just through media alone, let alone when the submissions come in, of how many problems there are with the map, with the plan, with the legislation.

So sure, fantastic, four million people will be moving, we hope, into the Golden Horseshoe area—what is it, 20 or 30 years down the road? Let's make sure that now, in preparation for those four million people, we get it right, that we preserve the land that should be preserved and that you set aside the land for growth that should be set aside. For those four million people coming 10 or 20 years hence, what's the difference of a few weeks to make sure we get this legislation right? Take the time. Get it right.

There is no appeal mechanism in this legislation for a particular land use. It only resides with the minister or cabinet to make an amendment to the bill and a 10-year review plan. So the decisions that we make today and that cabinet makes on the regulations will be for 10 years, if not into perpetuity. Take the time. Get it right.

We have a proud record. We support the principle of preserving green space. The Oak Ridges moraine legislation—award-winning—is recognized around the world for its approach to preserving green space and setting

aside the right area for growth and infrastructure; for the way the consultations, based on science, were brought about it. The Lands for Life initiative under Premier Mike Harris was the biggest set-aside of protected areas in the history of the province of Ontario, in the country of Canada. It was not done in a couple of weeks' time; it was done based on consultations, good science and making sure you took the time to get it right.

I was proud to be part of a government in voting for those initiatives. I was pleased to be part of the Progressive Conservative Party that brought in the Niagara Escarpment plan. That wasn't done overnight. In fact, I think the process took about 10 years before the final map was put into place. They took the time to make sure they got it right. Now, with a few exceptions, it is an admired area and admired legislation. I'm proud to be part of the Progressive Conservative Party that, through Frost and Robarts, brought in the Bruce Trail system, a treasure for the entire province, country and tourists who enjoy it because we took the time to get it right.

It's not just us who are saying that. My colleagues on the government side say they've consulted and now they've got to rush this legislation through before Christmas. But the same people they consulted with—the same municipal leaders, the same farm leaders, conservation authorities—are all saying the same thing, that it's important, for landmark decisions, to take the time to get it right—Durham region, the town of Erin, the chair of Durham region, the county of Wellington, the OFA, Vaughan, the region of Niagara, to name a few.

My colleague from Burlington talked about the concerns that Burlington has. He made comments about the rush for this legislation. The other reason, one of my colleagues, the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, said, is that we need to get legislation through before Christmas is because we're on the verge of losing all the farmland. But there are no bulldozers at the gate as we speak that will make a difference between December 16 and good consultations for the new year. You know that.

Bill 135 has extensive provisions for protections that go back to December 16. When I'm in Caledon, when I'm in Niagara, the farmers at these hearings are saying one thing very consistently: "If you want to save the farm and save the farmer, take the time and get it right." I want to make sure this plan is based on science.

So this notion that on December 17 this armada of bulldozers is going to start paving over the tender fruit land and the Holland Marsh is a bunch of hokey—bull feathers. I don't know how far I can go; the table is staring at me now. This notion of all these bulldozers lined up at the gates of the farms is a bunch of nonsense, because you know as well as I know that Bill 135 has protections in it that when passed—if passed—in the New Year, will cover for that area. My other colleague I think from Guelph had said it's because Bill 27 expires on December 16. We all know the government has the option to extend that provision—I think you would find members opposite supportive of doing so—to make sure that we get the plan right, that we do so based on science.

As I said, we support the protection of green space, but we do so based on good science and a plan to make sure it works.

Another fallacy I hear from the government side is that through land use, through zoning decisions, you're going to preserve the farmland for generations to come. That's a fallacy, it's false. Along with the land use provisions, you need an economic plan. I know my colleague from the Ministry of Agriculture is here this evening. He has a report before him that they commissioned: some good things in that report, some things that need to go further. I encourage him to look at what the Niagara agricultural committee and the OFA, for example, have brought forward. If you want to keep the farmland in production you need to support the farmers, not land use only. It's a viability plan for our farmers that is absolutely lacking at this point in time. In my view, they should go hand in hand: the land use in Bill 135 with a complementary agricultural plan.

The same goes for infrastructure and transportation corridors, because we know that people will be moving on beyond the greenbelt into the so-called leapfrog area. You need a transportation plan to ensure folks get to work, get to visit their families, get to travel safely and efficiently. You need to know where the infrastructure—the hydro corridors, for example—is going to go. A smart growth plan, a fully thought through plan would address those issues—the infrastructure, the farm viability plan, along with a green space preservation plan.

I think I've raised some good questions to the minister, who has not yet given a satisfactory answer as to why he wants to put this legislation put through by December 16. I've given back to them their three arguments and debunked them all. That won't happen. Those three are all false arguments. There are options the government has to put it into the new year. But I pointed out last week that an area containing a cemetery, a waste disposal site, a police training facility and industrial land is zoned for tender fruit and grape production. I know our farmers in Niagara are very talented, but I don't think the notion of them growing grapes or tender fruit in a cemetery is a realistic notion whatsoever. There are grave concerns—

Interjections.

Mr Hudak:—that the map ain't right. See, they are listening. I've encouraged; the government members are listening. I hope I'm making some headway.

On the other hand, there are some important areas that the Web site greenbelt.ca has pointed out should be set aside potentially, that should be part of a greenbelt but are not. For example, there's the Pleasantview area in Dundas, as we've heard at the public town halls—an area of 1,000 acres of rural land with many natural features. In 1995 the Ontario Municipal Board ruled that Pleasantview should not be urbanized. There's been movement to make it part of the escarpment, if I remember correctly. A good question: If this plan were based on science, why isn't Pleasantview part of the plan?

In Vaughan region as well there is Boyd Park—many key ingredients from an environmental perspective. One

wonders why that is not being preserved. Sadly, I think it's because this plan is not based on science. It's being rushed, and I fear too much based on politics as opposed to true science.

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We recommend four approaches, and as part of that more time in the new year for real public consultations to make sure that we get the plan right. To save the farm, you need to save the farmer. You need an agricultural viability plan hand in hand with this. You need support for greenbelt municipalities to make sure that they're strong, that they'll prosper, that they'll buy into this plan—direct support from the province of Ontario. A transportation and infrastructure strategy must be in place to complement the greenbelt initiative and, obviously, most importantly, the greenbelt plan should be based on real science, not political science.

Mr Wilkinson: I am looking forward to joining in the debate. I was just following up the member from Erie-Lincoln. I always describe the member from Erie-Lincoln as a fine wine. He's a fine wine from Erie-Lincoln. I can always tell by his comments. After that grave comment, it's the least I could do.

I think if you look in the dictionary under the term "time allocation," you will find the previous government and the government before that. For the two opposition parties to come into this House and bust our chops and give us a hard time is the pot calling the kettle black. This is only the third time that our party has used time allocation, and this isn't a bill that we're ramming through the Legislature—far from it. This is a bill that has already been considered by this House. There will be committee hearings. There have been many public consultations.

I want to talk tonight about two issues: the issue of legacy and the issue of action. I preface my remarks by recalling that I attended a symposium at U of T called the Natural City. There's a movement among the urban planners, something called the Natural City movement. I was a panellist there, representing my minister, the Minister of the Environment. I was joined by the member for Toronto-Danforth, Ms Churley, as well as John Godfrey, who is now a minister of the federal government. We were part of a panel.

It was part of a three-day symposium that talked about the theory of natural cities, that all creatures, not just humans, create habitat. The question is, is that habitat in balance with the rest of nature? Bees create hives and foxes burrow dens, but they have a balance with nature around them. This is the question that we have to deal with.

We are an urban people in many cases. We get together and form centres of business and commerce, but we lose that connection back with nature. As the member for Perth-Middlesex, the most productive agricultural riding in the country, where we are the food basket—

Mr John Milloy (Kitchener Centre): In the dominion.

Mr Wilkinson: In the dominion—we are the food basket of Ontario. What we have to do is find that balance between urban and rural. That area where we have to find that balance is what we call the greenbelt, a million acres, or 400,000 hectares of legacy that we will leave for future generations, where we, as a government—and I believe with some lukewarm support from the NDP and perhaps outright opposition from the official opposition—are saying to people that we have an opportunity to move forward and to get that balance right between urban and rural, to get them to live together in a balance. It's not one against the other. How do we create that?

The first thing that we have to do as a government is pass legislation that says this is the area of Ontario that we're talking about. We have some areas just north of Toronto, stretching from Niagara all the way over to the county where I was raised, Northumberland, that great swath of Ontario which should not be developed, in my opinion, for environmental and agriculture reasons. Do we let urban sprawl, something we all complain about, something we all deal with every day, go on, or do we strike a balance? That's why the greenbelt is here. That's why I'm in favour of speaking to this motion, because it goes to the question of legacy.

Joseph Addison, the great writer, said, "Books are the legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn." I would paraphrase that to say that our greenbelt legislation is a legacy that is delivered by our government, that we leave to the province that we love, that will be delivered down from generation to generation as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.

A hundred years from now, 200 years from now, people will forget about this debate. As they forget about the Niagara Escarpment debate, as they forget about the Bruce Trail debate, what they remember is the fact that a government did it.

I know the member from Erie-Lincoln is rightfully proud of that legacy of his party, but it seems to me to be somewhat disingenuous for them to deny our party an opportunity to also add to the natural legacy. He talked about Lands for Life, an initiative that his party is proud of, but it seems that this is perhaps only available to some parties in government, not to all. We want to contribute to that great legacy and that great history in this province, and so I ask the members of the opposition, who probably will vote against time allocation tonight, is it your position that you, if you ever were to form government, would vote down the greenbelt? Would you rip up this piece of legislation? Would you say, "No, we should have unfettered urban sprawl. We should take our farmland and we should pave it. We shouldn't save it"? I don't think so.

I think there is a lot of talk, but I don't think, when it comes right down do it, that we should forget the words of Sam Rayburn, who was a US congressman of note a hundred years ago. He said at that time in the States,

“The greatest domestic problem facing our country is saving our soil and water. Our soil belongs also to unborn generations.”

Mr Leal: Sam Rayburn?

Mr Wilkinson: Sam Rayburn. A hundred and fifty years ago he was discussing this question. It's the soil. There's a connection between the land and future generations, and it is at our own peril that we forget that connection. That's why I'm so happy to support this bill and why I think it is time for action.

I say that it's time for action because for thousands of years people have discussed that question of, when is it time for debate to be done and when it is time to take action? All governments have to face that. I know the member from Burlington was speaking this evening. He didn't go on and on and on about time allocation. He said, “You know, we did it, all parties do it.” Eventually governments have to decide that it's time to move along and make a change for the good.

I know that the great—and I know the minister of citizenship is here—Greek Sophocles said, “Knowledge must come through action”—it comes through action. “You can have no test which is not fanciful, save by trial.” That's what this place is all about; it's about action. At the end of the day we stand in our place and we vote with conviction and we decide to move forward. Some would have us move back, and I know some parties would have us move a little bit to the side, but our party is all about moving forward. That is why we were elected.

Aristotle said, “A state is not a mere society having a common place established for the prevention of mutual crime and for the sake of exchange.... Political society exists for the sake of noble actions and not mere companionship.” Despite the companionship that we all have here this evening, it's all about noble action. I can think of very few things in this short year that I've been here where one could consider that we are taking noble action; where we're taking a step bridging that gap to unborn generations. We're saying to people that it is all about preserving our soil for future generations. It's about going to the people and saying that we have to have a symbiotic relationship between rural and urban, we have to have a relationship between the farm, the people who produce the food, and the urban people who consume it.

I can't believe for a moment that any of the political parties are so opposed to the greenbelt that in the light of day in the future they would turn around and try to rip that up. That's why no one would come back and say,

“We're going to get rid of the Niagara Escarpment Commission. Oh, we're going to get rid of the Bruce Trail. Oh, we're going to get rid of Lands for Life.” You'd have your head handed to you on a plate if you were to say that. I believe that the million acres that cut through a wonderful part of Ontario are now going to be preserved in perpetuity. I give my thanks and congratulations to Minister Gerretsen, who has had to take this file and move this forward. Minister Gerretsen has a lengthy career in this House and as the great mayor of the city of Kingston. He knew around that every so often around municipal council it was time to stop talking and start doing. That is what we're doing tonight. I welcome and join all of the colleagues here this evening to vote and move forward on the greenbelt.

The Acting Speaker: That concludes the time for debate on this motion.

Mr Kennedy has moved government notice of motion number 292.

Is it the 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.

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

The division bells rang from 2120 to 2124.

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

Ayes

Bountrogianni, Marie
Brown, Michael A.
Crozier, Bruce
Duncan, Dwight
Fonseca, Peter
Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoy, Pat

Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
Marsales, Judy
Matthews, Deborah
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol

Patten, Richard
Peters, Steve
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Smitherman, George
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John

Nays

Dunlop, Garfield
Hudak, Tim
Jackson, Cameron

Marchese, Rosario
Martiniuk, Gerry
Miller, Norm

Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 23; the nays are 7.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being close to 9:30, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 1:30 pm.

The House adjourned at 2126.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Alvin Curling

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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

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

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

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

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: John O'Toole
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco, Andrea Horwath,
Cameron Jackson, Kuldip Kular, Phil McNeely
John Milloy, John O'Toole, Jim Wilson
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Finance and economic affairs /
Finances et affaires économiques**

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Toby Barrett, Mike Colle, Pat Hoy, Judy Marsales,
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General government / Affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Jean-Marc Lalonde
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vic Dhillon
Marilyn Churley, Vic Dhillon, Brad Duguid,
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Deborah Matthews, Jerry J. Ouellette,
Shafiq Qaadri, Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski
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Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

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Lorenzo Berardinetti, Michael Gravelle,
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Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,
Joseph N. Tascona
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Justice Policy / Justice

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bob Delaney
Michael A. Brown, Jim Brownell, Bob Delaney,
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Frank Klees, Peter Kormos,
David Oraziotti, Mario G. Racco, Elizabeth Witmer
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco
Donna H. Cansfield, Kim Craiton, Bob Delaney,
Ernie Hardeman, Linda Jeffrey, Rosario Marchese,
Norm Miller, Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

Public accounts / Comptes publics

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro
Laurel C. Broten, Jim Flaherty, Shelley Martel,
Bill Mauro, Julia Munro, Richard Patten,
Liz Sandals, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong
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Khalil Ramal, Maria Van Bommel, Tony C. Wong
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Social Policy / Politique sociale

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Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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