



No. 10A

N° 10A

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 38th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 38^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 26 October 2005

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

Speaker
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 26 October 2005

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 26 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

POULTRY FARMERS

Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant): I'd like to inform the House that today is Chicken Day. Now, why would that be of significance? Well, personally, I grew up with broilers. I'm a former chicken catcher, and as a kid it was always such a thrill to open up the big cardboard boxes with thousands and thousands of day-old chicks for our barns.

You know, it's of significance for all of us. Supply management, for example, has provided decades of business certainty for our chicken farmers and for our food system. Chicken is priced competitively with both beef and pork. Supply management balances supply with demand. It prevents overproduction, flooded markets and depressed prices. That's why so many of us—John Tory, for one—have signed on to the FarmGate5 initiative. FarmGate5 seeks to ensure that the government of Canada secures a balanced trade deal that benefits all farmers, including those in the dairy and poultry sectors.

I would be remiss if I did not make mention of the member from Erie–Lincoln, Tim Hudak, who in 2004 won the celebrity omelette contest at the Smithville PoultryFest. That would be no mean feat. Tim had a secret herb blend and, of course, fresh local eggs. PoultryFest is coming up this year in Smithville on June 24, 2006. I invite all present to attend.

PETERBOROUGH CITY SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): I'm pleased to be able to speak to this House today about the Peterborough City Soccer Association, which is currently celebrating its silver anniversary. Congratulations to everybody involved in the PCSA.

The growth of soccer in our community of Peterborough over the past 25 years has been tremendous. Competitive soccer in Peterborough has come a long way in the past 25 years. Beginning as a place to showcase the talented men playing football in Peterborough, the club now boasts 28 teams: 25 youth teams from U10 to U18 and three adult teams.

Peterborough City is now a well-respected soccer club for girls, boys, men and women at both the adult and youth levels in Ontario. Our youth teams have also played at the top provincial level.

What has made Peterborough City so successful? From its modest beginnings, City has built a first-class soccer facility, a respected reputation and a strong club spirit. All this success is as a result of hundreds of volunteers who each year give thousands of hours to the club and their teams.

I believe the following quotation from the Peterborough City soccer club song is a perfect showcase of the club's spirit:

If you come to Peterborough
we will welcome you
Each man will play his heart out
the 90 minutes through
We carry the city's honour
we'll raise it to the heights
We are the boys
who wear maroon and white.

The future of the Peterborough City Soccer Association is truly exciting. Let us celebrate the past and look forward to another 25 years of Peterborough City Soccer Association successes.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): The situation which has led to the crisis at Kashechewan First Nation bears questioning of the Attorney General. As the minister who was responsible for aboriginal affairs until quite recently, I would like to ask why you failed to take action sooner.

The community has been under a boil-water advisory for two years, and of course we are all now aware of the 2003 report which identified problems with the drinking water quality at Kashechewan First Nation. I would hate to believe that the Attorney General was more interested in banning pit bulls and other publicity generating events than the health and welfare of a northern rural community. In fact, most of this government's focus has been on the urban agenda, at the expense of rural and northern communities. It is equally distressing that this government was more interested in haggling over who was responsible for taking action than the well-being of its citizens.

Again, my own experience, both in the constituency and in travelling around the north, is that First Nations

seem particularly disadvantaged in this regard, with little interest being shown for their welfare. I suppose the Attorney General was unaware of the province's obligation under the 1992 emergency preparedness agreement between Ottawa and Ontario. We can only hope that under the current Minister of Natural Resources, First Nations can look forward to greater attention. They shouldn't have to come to Queen's Park to beg to get action.

ROCKTON WORLD'S FAIR

Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot): I rise with a great sense of pride to acknowledge and celebrate the 153rd anniversary of the Rockton World's Fair.

Conceived in 1852 by the Beverley Agricultural Society as a one-day fair, the Rockton Fair now welcomes 100,000-plus visitors over the four-day period each Thanksgiving. A very special event, the Rockton World's Fair combines agriculture, education and entertainment in a number of delightful ways. In fact, it's the dedication of the Rockton Agricultural Society and the hundreds of volunteers who each year help to ensure its success. It's truly a celebration of the contribution of our local farmers and of rural life. The Rockton Fair also provides a considerable boost to the local economy. Visitors to the fair have the opportunity to feast on homemade pies and purchase handmade crafts.

This year we had a very special visitor as we welcomed the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, to the Rockton Fair. She toured the booths and displays and met with local farm leaders. I want to thank the good minister for taking time out of her busy schedule to attend our much-beloved fair and to let her know how much her participation was appreciated.

I call on all members of this assembly to join with me today in giving thanks for 153 wonderful years of caring and sharing; 153 years that mark with distinction and forever the Rockton World's Fair.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): The McGuinty government has created a grave and dangerous situation in my riding of Cambridge and the region of Waterloo by breaking their promise to proceed at once with the \$70-million Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion and upgrades mandated by the Health Services Restructuring Commission in 2002.

The approved project would fund 98 new beds and further expand the present emergency room. The city of Cambridge, the region of Waterloo and generous citizens throughout the region have raised the local share of \$23 million.

1340

The impact is critical. We have a regional health care system, including St. Marys, Grand River and Cambridge

Memorial Hospital, that our families rely on to provide excellent health care services. Essentially, it is a three-legged stool. If you take one leg away, the entire regional health system will collapse. Without a fully integrated regional health care system, we cannot attract and retain family physicians or specialists to our communities. Our region already suffers from a severe lack of doctors.

However, in this grave time the good people of the region and Cambridge have come together to fight the McGuinty government's political decision. Our city has initiated a community-based task force to lobby the McGuinty government. I would like to thank members of that task force.

Premier, I demand that you do the right thing: Stop playing politics with people's lives. Please proceed forthwith with the Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you.

TUITION

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): The Canadian Federation of Students had a press conference this morning asking, pleading, urging the Liberal government to freeze tuition fees for yet another two years. Why are they asking for this? Because students are being gouged. Their future is being gouged. Those who worry about the debt burden ought to consider supporting the bill that I will be introducing in approximately seven minutes from now. Students are now paying—Jim Bradley, Minister of Tourism—43% of their own education, versus 22% in 1992. They've doubled. In the deregulated programs they have quadrupled, if not more. To become a lawyer at U. of T. now, you have to spend \$17,000 a year, and it's going to go up to \$25,000.

Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): You've got to be rich.

Mr. Marchese: Only the rich.

Those connected to the Tories and the Liberals can get into those programs. The rest of us have got to struggle. It's just not right.

I urge the Liberals to appeal to Martin, having struck an accord with Jack Layton, to release immediately the \$600 million so that tuition fees can be frozen and/or reduced. Where is the minister on this? I urge those independent Liberal members to support my bill and to support the Canadian Federation of Students, who are here today.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Order.

ACADEMIC TESTING

ÉPREUVES ACADÉMIQUES

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell): The McGuinty government's education plan is working in Ontario, and especially in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Our Education Quality and Accountability Office test results are remarkable. Here are some examples:

Grade 3 pupils of the Upper Canada District School Board scored a whopping 70% in math.

Les élèves de la sixième année du Conseil scolaire du district catholique de l'Est ontarien ont obtenu en lecture, en écriture et en mathématiques 74 %, 73 % et 78 %. Quel succès.

Les résultats combinés de la troisième et sixième année du Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario ont augmenté de 16 %.

The combined results of grades 3 and 6 for the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario have increased by 10.5%.

Je suis extrêmement fier de nos élèves. Je tiens à féliciter les élèves, les enseignantes et enseignants, la direction des écoles, les conseils scolaires et les parents de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Cette progression constante des résultats montre que nos élèves sont en bonne voie d'atteindre un niveau élevé en littératie et en numératie dès l'âge de 12 ans.

The McGuinty government has made education our number one priority and we are well on the way to meeting the targets.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): There are quite a number of private conversations going on in here, which makes it difficult for the Chair to hear. Maybe, if we're going to do that, we could take them outside. We have lobbies for those purposes.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans): I rise today to commend our government for its continued efforts to improve health care in Ottawa and across the province.

Last Friday, our government announced a \$78.4-million investment in new critical cancer radiation equipment and new, more efficient diagnostic equipment for our hospitals. I was pleased to see that the Ottawa region will receive \$16.3 million as part of this investment, which comes after years of neglect by the previous government. Over \$6.7 million will go to the Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre to help people with cancer get treatment more quickly; over \$6.8 million will be used to purchase new diagnostic equipment for Ottawa hospitals; and over \$2.7 million will go to CHEO to improve care for children.

This investment continues a positive trend for Ottawa, a trend that has seen a near 50% increase in the number of MRI scans as well as thousands of additional hip, knee, cancer, cardiac and cataract surgeries in just two years. This is great news for my community of Orléans and for all of Ottawa, which we now know was left with some of the worst wait times after years on the Tory chopping block.

This positive trend isn't limited to Ottawa. Across the province, Ontarians are seeing shorter wait times and are receiving better care thanks to investments made by our government. We believe that Ontarians deserve the best health care, and these steps demonstrate our commitment to that goal.

POULTRY FARMERS

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex): It is my pleasure to rise today to welcome the Chicken Farmers of Ontario to the Legislature and to acknowledge the chicken farmers and producers who have joined us in the gallery today.

This year, the Chicken Farmers of Ontario celebrated 40 years of success as a farmer-operated organization representing 1,100 Ontario chicken producers. In 2004, Ontario produced 319.7 million kilos of chicken meat with a total farm gate value of \$525.7 million. More than 5,000 full-time jobs are directly attributable to this industry, and that doesn't include the spinoff jobs that we have in both urban and rural communities.

The chicken industry in Ontario continues to grow, in no small part attributable to supply management, which is a uniquely Canadian success story. At the upcoming meeting of the World Trade Organization in Hong Kong, Canada's success is going to be under attack. Chicken Farmers of Ontario are calling upon our trade negotiators to support our orderly marketing system and protect Canadian agriculture.

This is a particularly passionate issue for me, Mr. Speaker, as you well know. My husband Rene and I are proud to be one of the 32 chicken-producing families in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Today, Chicken Farmers of Ontario brought the farm to Queen's Park. I hope all the members of the House will take the opportunity to visit the replica of a chicken barn that is parked at the front to learn about the chicken farmers, their industry, their challenges and the good work they do. Finally, I hope all members will join me at the reception—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you.

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I didn't hear when that reception was. Did you hear when it was?

The Speaker: I'm certain the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex could tell us that.

Mrs. Van Bommel: The reception is in committee room number 2, Speaker.

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): What time?

Mrs. Van Bommel: It starts at 5:30, I believe.

Interjections.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Yes, they are telling me 5:30.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated October 26, 2005, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to

standing order 106(e)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on regulations and private bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Todd Decker): Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr13, An Act respecting The University of St. Michael's College;

Bill Pr20, An Act to revive 1376037 Ontario Inc.;

Bill Pr21, An Act to incorporate the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

NO TUITION HIKES ACT, 2005

LOI DE 2005

INTERDISANT L'AUGMENTATION DES DROITS DE SCOLARITÉ

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 12, An Act to implement a ban on hiking post-secondary tuition fees / Projet de loi 12, Loi visant à interdire l'augmentation des droits de scolarité au postsecondaire.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): I'm here and our party is here today to plead with the Premier to continue to freeze tuition fees for yet another two years. The Canadian Federation of Students—all up there—are here today to plead with you and your members to continue to freeze tuition fees as a way of avoiding the debt burden that is growing and getting larger by the minute. They don't want to be gouged, their families don't want to be gouged, and their families don't want their future to be gouged. So they are pleading with you—even you, Minister of Finance—to appeal to the federal government to release the \$600 million based on the accord between Layton and Martin so that you can freeze tuition fees and in fact lower them.

The Speaker: It's a brief statement, not a speech.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House

Leader): I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 26, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.

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

Ayes

Athurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat	Patten, Richard
Baird, John R.	Jeffrey, Linda	Peters, Steve
Barrett, Toby	Kennedy, Gerard	Peterson, Tim
Bartolucci, Rick	Klees, Frank	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bountrogianni, Marie	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramal, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Leal, Jeff	Runciman, Robert W.
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Bryant, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Sandals, Liz
Caplan, David	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sergio, Mario
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Smith, Monique
Chudleigh, Ted	McGuinty, Dalton	Smitherman, George
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Tascona, Joseph N.
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Tory, John
Dhillon, Vic	Miller, Norm	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	Milloy, John	Watson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Mitchell, Carol	Wilkinson, John
Duncan, Dwight	Munro, Julia	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	O'Toole, John	Yakabuski, John
Fonseca, Peter	Oraziotti, David	Zimmer, David
Gerretsen, John	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

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

Nays

Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Martel, Shelley
Horwath, Andrea	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 68; the nays are 6.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. What specific measures has your government taken to address the loss of 42,000 manufacturing jobs in Ontario so far this year?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): I'm delighted to receive the question. I know the leader of the official opposition will know that this economy has generated some 193,000 new jobs. You also must be very aware, I'm sure, that we have landed the first new greenfield assembly plant—

we're talking about manufacturing here—in some 10 years. It's the first of its kind in 10 years in Canada: Toyota in Woodstock, Ontario. To pursue the matter of what has happened in the auto sector, the member will also be aware that we have landed \$4.5 billion worth of new investment in the province of Ontario in our first two years. I think, by way of an update, that that speaks loudly to our continuing commitment to secure manufacturing in Ontario.

Mr. Tory: Premier, I asked you about the 42,000 manufacturing jobs that have been lost in Ontario and the 42,000 families in communities across this province who have been affected by that and who have one less paycheque coming into the house as a result of having lost their jobs.

The latest to close its plants in Ontario is Imperial Tobacco, with 555 jobs lost in Guelph and another 80 in Aylmer. The Guelph Mercury calls the plant closure a huge blow to the local economy. That's a little different from your Liberal MPP from Guelph–Wellington, who is quoted in the Mercury as saying, "It will cause disruption in the lives of those that will be laid off, but it does prove government legislation is working."

Premier, 635 people—635 families—just lost their jobs. Is this the official line from your government? Is all you have to say to those 42,000 families what you just said a minute ago? What are you doing for them?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I believe the leader of the official opposition has an understanding of what's happening with respect to manufacturing and how it's being affected by this era of globalization. We consider it an important responsibility on our part, with regard to what's taking place in our globalized economy, to look for ways to help manufacturing, in particular, to transition to a point where they are stronger by way of being more productive and more efficient, and also by continuing to invest heavily in the skills and education of our people.

But back to some important facts: In September alone, this economy generated 17,300 new jobs—that's net. Again, I say to the member opposite, he may be full of doom and gloom on the economy, but the facts speak otherwise.

Mr. Tory: As the Premier would say, back to some important facts: Forty-two thousand families in this province have been affected by the loss of jobs. We're all happy about the gains you talked about, but there are 42,000 families that have been affected by the loss of jobs in this province, and the trend is not limited to Guelph and Aylmer. In the last round of negotiations between the Big Three automakers and the union, which you referred to, jobs were cut as part of those deals: 1,100 layoffs at Ford in Windsor; 500 to 1,000 layoffs at Chrysler; 1,000 to 1,500 layoffs at General Motors, including St. Catharines. These overshadow the recent Toyota announcement, which we all welcome, by a margin of three to one.

I ask you again, Premier, what specific measures are you taking to help the 2,600 to 3,600 families that have lost their jobs as a result of changes being implemented,

as we speak, by the Big Three automakers? What are you doing for them?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I repeat that there have been 193,100 net new jobs created in Ontario in the past two years. The unemployment rate in our province is at its lowest level since July 2001.

The member is aware of the \$4.5-billion investment in the auto sector, and he knows about the thousands of jobs and spinoffs that will be created in connection with that. But he may not be familiar with others. For example, GlaxoSmithKline recently made a \$23-million expansion that will create 75 new jobs. The Automodular Corp. is building a new plant in Oakville. That's 400 new jobs. Minacs Worldwide is opening up a new call centre in Chatham. That's 300 new jobs. RioCan and Trinity Development Group is investing \$151 million in construction of four new shopping centres in our province. Stream, a Voice over Internet Protocol company, is adding 700 full-time new jobs. Back in my hometown, Dell is adding 500 new jobs. I could go on, but time does not permit.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): New question.

Mr. Tory: What the Premier did not mention is that the unemployment level in this province has been above the national average for several months this year, on your watch, for the first time since World War II.

My question is again to the Premier: Three hundred families in Chesterville, Ontario, in the riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh, have been devastated by the news that, by the middle of next year, their jobs will be no more. Nestlé Canada will be closing its doors in that community, where they've been in business since 1918. What specific measures are you undertaking to help the 300 families in Chesterville who will be affected by those job losses? What are you doing for them, specifically?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: Again, we're not going to pretend, as I'm sure the member opposite would not have us pretend, that somehow there will never be any job losses, any consolidations, any dislocations ever taking place on our watch as a government. I think he would understand that. I'm sure in fact that he would have, at least one time in his career in the business sector, been involved in layoffs. I'm sure he is familiar with that negative aspect of business.

But I can say that we feel for those families. We wish that they were not dislocated. We are going to do our very best to make the kinds of strategic investments to help strengthen this economy. That's why we're investing in the skills and education of our workers; that's why we're getting the fundamental rights; that's why we're making sure there is a reliable supply of electricity; that's why we're making sure we're limiting the deficit they saddled us with. Those are the kinds of things we are doing to strengthen this economy and ensure that every Ontarian can find opportunity.

Mr. Tory: Still not one thing for those families. I'll go on.

My colleague for Simcoe–Grey has raised the issue of manufacturing job losses with you directly, as Alcoa Wheel Products in his riding has publicly stated that the higher electricity costs they’re now paying are making them uncompetitive—420 jobs at risk.

Backyard Products has already closed down: 230 job losses. Blue Mountain Pottery, closed: 37 people without jobs. Nacan Products, closed: 87 people without jobs. Kaufman Furniture, closed: 150 people out of work.

In this case, both the mayor and the member for Simcoe–Grey, Mr. Wilson, have asked for nothing more than a round table meeting with you to discuss these job losses. Since you haven’t agreed to do anything else, would you at least agree to have a round table to discuss these job losses in Collingwood and Simcoe–Grey with the member and the people affected? Will you do that?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: By way of more good news, we have a new call centre announced today in Cornwall. That’s 650 new jobs.

Interjections.

1410

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I know members opposite may not be interested in this, but those people getting these new jobs are very interested in these stories.

MCCI announced recently in Thunder Bay that while they currently employ 350 people, they’re expanding their plant to double their staff to 700 within one year. Durham Contact Centre is opening a contact centre in Trenton. The centre is expected to be open by mid-September. It will employ approximately 190 people. I could go on.

The point is this: We don’t pretend to be able to stop all these dislocations, but we are working very hard at the other end to ensure that—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Tory: The question all the way through, of course, has been—and we’ll try one more time—what will you do for the people who have been affected, who are losing their jobs in these communities? I asked if you would do something as simple as having a round table, as requested by the member for Simcoe–Grey, and you didn’t even try to answer that question.

Sears Canada recently announced 1,200 job cuts across Canada, with 800 job losses in office functions. The Sears head office is on Jarvis Street in Toronto. Niagara Falls will also see 240 job losses when the ConAgra plant closes.

My question, to wrap it all up, is simply this: What specific measures will you undertake or bring in for the families in Chesterville, Guelph, Aylmer, Collingwood, Windsor, St. Catharines, Toronto and Niagara Falls, the 42,000 families that are seeing the loss of a job, the loss of a paycheque in their family in this province right now? What are you going to do for them?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: By way of more good news, ISRA Textile Manufacturing in Niagara Falls has announced a new plant, and they’re going to employ up to 500 people. CAMI Automotive in Ingersoll: 400 additional jobs.

Here are the facts, and they are beyond dispute. Since we earned the privilege of serving Ontarians as their government, the economy has generated 193,100 net new jobs. In September alone, the economy generated 17,300 net new jobs. We have an unemployment rate that is at the lowest rate since July 2001.

We think the most important thing we can do to strengthen people so they can find opportunity in this highly competitive, globalized economy is to invest in their skills and education. That’s why there are unprecedented levels of support for education at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels, culminating with a \$6.2-billion investment for those people in college, university and apprenticeships.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. I want to quote some words to you today: “Why did it have to come to this? Why did we have to come here, our backs to the wall? We’re residents of Ontario. This should have been done weeks ago, years ago, months ago.” Those are the words of Stan Louttit, the Mushkegowuk Grand Chief, and he said them today.

Two years ago, the Ontario Clean Water Agency warned your government, the McGuinty government, that the water supply of Kashechewan First Nation was a Walkerton in the waiting. For two years, the situation got worse; kids got sicker. Premier, why did it take your government, the McGuinty government, two years to listen to the desperate situation of the people of Kashechewan First Nation?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): The leader of the NDP raises an important issue, which is the health, safety and well-being of families who are living on the reserve in Kashechewan.

I had an opportunity, together with the Minister of Natural Resources, who was there in his capacity as minister responsible for aboriginal affairs—we had a very good meeting with the representatives of the community. We also had a very good briefing, an excellent briefing, from a doctor who had recently visited the reserve. The conclusion that I quickly came to was that, notwithstanding the fact that responsibility, both for water and the health, safety and well-being of community members, lies with the federal government, we should take the bull by the horns and do what is needed in the circumstances. So we have ordered an evacuation. That will begin at 4 o’clock today. I have committed to Chief Friday and his colleagues that we will work as quickly as we can to make sure those kids are in school and that the families are getting the necessary treatment.

Mr. Hampton: The report from the Ontario Clean Water Agency—I emphasize again, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, an arm of your government. You and your cabinet ministers had this report two years ago. It’s very clear: No one should have to drink this water. But

for two years you ignored the problem; for two years you tried to say, "Oh, it's strictly a federal problem." But finally, when it came here and got headline, front-page coverage, you decided, "Oops, maybe it is an Ontario issue."

You could have done this two years ago. You should have done it two years ago. Why did people have to suffer under Third World conditions with contaminated water for two years while your government ignored the problem?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: There is a First Nations technical agency—something of that appellation—that asked the Ontario Clean Water Agency to prepare a report, which was then submitted to the federal government. Again, there is no doubt about it: The responsibility for the health, safety and well-being of Ontarians who are located on reserves lies with the federal government. Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor has also made it clear that the principal responsibility for water treatment and water quality also lies with the federal government.

Notwithstanding that, we have insinuated ourselves into this circumstance because we believe that the families living on the reserve deserve nothing less. There are conditions there which are completely unsatisfactory, not conducive to health, not conducive to the well-being of the families. That's why we've come to their assistance.

Mr. Hampton: It was the Ontario First Nations Technical Services, part of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, that went to the Ontario Clean Water Agency and asked for help. They asked the Ontario government for help. It was a health emergency then—it was a health emergency in April—when the Minister of Community Safety toured Kashechewan First Nation with community leaders and Gilles Bisson, the MPP for Timmins-James Bay. He saw it then; it was drawn to his particular attention. In fact, he said, "My God, Gilles, I can't believe that these communities are in this shape. It's terrible."

You knew six months ago. This community was asking for your help. Why did the McGuinty government ignore these people, residents of Ontario, who were in a desperate situation? Why did you ignore them six months ago and suddenly you recognize, now that it's on the front pages, that you have a responsibility to do something?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: Speaker—
Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Stop the clock.

Premier.

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The issues and concerns have been raised by the community for a considerable period of time now, there is no doubt about that, and those issues have been raised with the federal government. More recently, issues related to health were raised with us, and we have acted on that very quickly. I think it's incumbent upon all of us now to do whatever we can to ensure that we're providing whatever support is needed.

As of 4 o'clock this afternoon, we will begin evacuating those members of the community who should be

evacuated according to the determination of the medical experts and the chief. Many members will be located in the community of Timmins. Our responsibilities will now include ensuring that children can go to school. It will also require that we ensure that the necessary medical attention is brought to all those who have been infected by various illnesses.

The Speaker: New question?

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Mr. Hampton: To the Premier: You're trying hard to avoid the issue. Yes, in August 2004, your Minister of Health visited Kashechewan and was shown the deplorable state of the water treatment system and the deplorable state of the water that people were being forced to drink. In fact, your Minister of Health made several promises while he was there. So here is the long and the short of it: Your government was asked for help three times—once when the First Nation went to the Ontario Clean Water Agency; second, when the Minister of Health was there a year ago; third, when the Minister of Community Safety was there six months ago. You did nothing until we brought the issue here and put it on the front page. Premier, can you tell the people of Kashechewan why—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I could not hear the last part of the leader of the third party's question. We need to maintain some respect for the person who has the floor. Leader of the third party—if you want to complete placing your question.

Mr. Hampton: Premier, you were asked for help three times by representatives of this First Nation over a two-year period. Why did it take you until it got on the front pages of the newspapers to respond in the way you should have responded in the first place?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: This is a serious issue, and we have done what we believe is the right thing to do in the circumstances. Now, maybe I'm missing something. Maybe the leader of the NDP has raised this issue time and time again over the course of the past two years, but I believe this is the first time that he has raised this issue.

I think what we need to do now is turn our minds to the concerns held by that community. The concerns there relate to the poor quality of their drinking water; they relate to the engineering debacle that is to be found in the construction and location of the water treatment plant; they relate to the fact that young children are not in school; and they relate to the fact that the community is subject to flooding on a regular basis, and some thought must now be given to relocating the community. I think the responsibility that we have right now is to address those kinds of issues—

The Speaker: Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Hampton: Six months ago, my colleague the member for Timmins-James Bay specifically invited the Minister of Community Safety to go to this community. So don't try to pretend that no one was bringing this to the attention of your government.

You've cited the report of the Walkerton inquiry. I want to quote Mr. Justice O'Connor: "First Nations are also residents of Ontario. There can be no justification for acquiescing in the application of a lesser public health standard on certain residents of Ontario than that enjoyed by others in the province.... The province, if asked [by First Nations], has much to contribute."

Premier, this First Nation asked you three times over the last two years. Why did you ignore their desperate plight?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I'm going to make reference to recommendation number 89 from Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor's Walkerton report, where he said, "I encourage First Nations and the federal government to formally adopt drinking water standards, applicable to reserves, that are as stringent as, or more stringent than, the standards adopted by the provincial government."

It makes it clear that the principal responsibility for water standards on reserves is a matter that is shared between the community itself and the federal government. What we have done is—notwithstanding the jurisdictional responsibility, which should in fact be assumed by federal government—we have stepped in. We feel that it's important that we lend some assistance to the community there, that we lend a hand to the families that have been affected by their water quality challenges. That's why, as of 4 o'clock this afternoon, we're in the process of beginning an evacuation to bring these families and these children to safety.

Mr. Hampton: Two years ago the people of Kashechewan were asking for help from the Ontario government. A year ago, when the Minister of Health visited, they were asking for help from the Ontario government. Six months ago, when the Minister of Community Safety visited the community, they were asking the McGuinty government for help. Mr. Justice O'Connor says there is no justification for your government acquiescing. There are 51 First Nations communities in this province today with boil water advisories. Can you tell me, is your government going to take action on those or will they have to come here to Queen's Park and hold press conferences to embarrass your government before you take action with respect to them? What will it be, Premier—more acquiescence, or are you going to finally recognize that aboriginal people are residents and citizens of Ontario too?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: There is a real issue here: that of jurisdictional responsibility. The NDP may see this as not being of any importance, but I think it's of real importance. I think it's important to the communities involved that we get this right. Who has to take charge to ensure that there is, at a minimum, safe drinking water available to the families on reserves? The Constitution tells us precisely who has that responsibility. It is the federal government. They have failed to discharge that responsibility in the case of this particular community.

Rather than get into an exchange with the federal government, what we have done is we have taken responsibility. We have done what we believe to be the right

thing to do on behalf of these families. There are extraordinary circumstances that obtain here. We've decided that the important thing for us is to lend assistance immediately to these families, and that is what we have done. Again, as of 4 o'clock this afternoon, we will begin evacuation of these communities because we think it's the right thing to do.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): My question is for the Premier. I'd like to get back to the subject of jobs and the economy. Just this past month, I was at a conference here in Toronto. One of the speakers was Warren Jestin, senior vice-president and chief economist with Scotia Capital. They talked about the fragility of this economy. Member after member of that group kept saying how jobs were tied to energy in this province, and how your energy policy with regard to the high cost of power and the uncertainty of supply was leaving companies with no option but to shut down operations here, reduce their workforces or cease to plan expansion here in Ontario. Your economic policy and your energy policy are driving jobs out of this province. Are you going to continue to stand by as that happens, or do you have an economic and an energy strategy?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): What a bunch of bunk. A 6.4% unemployment rate, 193,000 new jobs: You don't know what you're talking about. This economy is on a roll. I've got to say to the member, when you look at Toyota and what they've done, they didn't say, "You have high energy costs." They're a full manufacturer. What they said was, "This is the place to invest," giving us a huge vote of confidence in this province.

I might add that over the time that party was in government, over the period of time from about 1994 to 2004, FDI, foreign direct investment, in this province dropped in half. That's the legacy of your economic policies. That's the legacy of a Conservative government.

Mr. Yakabuski: They can announce and re-announce the jobs at Woodstock and Toyota 100 times or 1,000 times if they want, but they simply don't cut the mustard when it comes to making up for the jobs you have lost in this province: 25,000 jobs in forestry this year alone—companies like Erco, 150 jobs; Nexen, 23 jobs; Abitibi, just last week, 360 jobs.

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You just can't go blindly waving around your flag of GM or Toyota and Woodstock and not address the job losses that continue to happen in this province as a result of your policy. What are you going to do to stop the hemorrhaging of business, jobs and prosperity in this province that is happening on your watch?

Hon. Mr. Cordiano: Isn't it interesting. This is what John Tory had to say when he was president of Rogers

Cable: “It’s a sign of the times. Most businesses today are finding that they have to reduce their costs and that includes, unfortunately, people costs.” He was advocating getting rid of people and getting rid of their jobs. That’s what he was saying when he was CEO of Rogers. That’s the kind of management he’s going to bring to this place.

I want to repeat all the great investments that are being made in this province: 400 new jobs—these are auto jobs, manufacturing jobs, at Automodular Corp. as a result of the Ford announcement in Oakville. Automodular is going to locate in Oakville. That means 400 brand new jobs in manufacturing to support the auto sector.

The list goes on. Dofasco announced, as a result of a number of positive—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you. Sit down. New question.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): My question is to the Premier. Premier, you’ll know that in 2003, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, as my leader said, gave your government a report that said that people were at risk of being sick, and possibly worse, as a result of drinking the water in Kashechewan. You will know that the First Nations community’s Leo Friday, the chief, along with Stan Louttit, were here, along with others, to demonstrate just how bad the situation is and how sick people are.

I’ve got a very simple question for you: Will you today stand in your place and apologize on behalf of your government for having failed to protect the citizens of Kashechewan since 2003?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): The minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): I think we have to have a little historical reality check here. As you know, the community has never made any direct demand to the province, nor would they want to, because they know that the federal government has a treaty obligation to take care of that community, as they do of all First Nation communities across this province. The First Nations guard that very, very carefully and they don’t want the province coming in on that. They want that obligation kept by the federal government. That’s why they’ve gone to them. That’s why we offered the assistance to the federal government to, “Do your duty to that nation, because it is your obligation to do it.” But when the emergency struck, we stepped up to the plate, and people are starting to leave that community this afternoon.

Mr. Bisson: Minister, don’t you come into this House and pretend to understand what those communities want. What they want is for their children to be safe. They went to your government in 2003 by way of the clean water

report. Your government did nothing. On visits to the community, both your Minister of Health, whom I respect, and the Minister of Community Safety—this issue was raised. People said, “We are scared of the water. There are problems with the water.” People have raised it.

I’m saying to you once again that your government has taken some action as a result of what happened here over the last couple of days. The community has a simple question: Is the Premier prepared to stand in this House today and say, “I’m sorry for the inaction of this government,” and basically do what has to be done from this point forward?

Hon. Mr. Ramsay: I can tell you what the community doesn’t want. They don’t want NDP-chartered planes full of press coming into the community when we’re trying to get planes out to get people out. That’s what we’re trying to do, and you’re putting on a show there. That’s what the community wants. We’re trying to charter planes so we can evacuate people who are sick, who need medical treatment. You’re taking up those planes to take the press up.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Stop the clock. Order. We need to come to order. Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I can wait.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe): Monsieur le Président, ma question est pour le ministre de l’Infrastructure.

Minister, Londoners care very deeply about health care, their doctors, nurses and health care facilities. They are especially proud of their hospitals, which have a reputation as world-class health care facilities. On September 27, you came to London to announce the province’s plan for the completion of the children’s and women’s hospital at London Health Sciences Centre. We are all incredibly excited about the announcement. However, some of the community seems to be concerned about the new financing process being implemented by the Ontario government and how it will affect the quality of care in London’s hospitals. Minister, can you explain why these concerns may be misplaced and why our government has chosen to finance hospitals in this manner?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member from London–Fanshawe for the question. If it’s not too late, I want to congratulate you on your appointment to the Chair.

Our government has taken unprecedented action to invest in health care infrastructure like never before. Part of our \$30-billion total investment, our ReNew Ontario program: \$5 billion of investment in hospitals and in health care. The big advantages of using the method here is that we can deliver state-of-the-art medical facilities for people, not only in London but right across Ontario from one end to the other, sooner, faster and more

efficiently. People in London will have access to state-of-the-art medical facilities. Those dedicated professionals, those doctors and nurses, not only will have better working conditions but conditions to be able to treat their patients. Those hospitals will be built sooner, the public interest will be protected, the quality of care will be of an enormous standard, and I'm excited.

Mr. Ramal: Minister, what can you tell the naysayers who see no difference in the model than that of the P3 model of the previous government?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: It wasn't just the previous government; it was the NDP, in fact, that introduced P3s into the province of Ontario. We reject the P3 model of the NDP and the Conservatives.

There are some very key aspects. We've laid that out in a framework for investment called Building a Better Tomorrow. There are five key principles: that public interest is paramount; that value for money must be demonstrated; that there are clear accountability lines; and that—this is a critical difference between the NDP-Conservative P3 approach and AFP—public control is always kept in the hands of the Ontario government and our partners. On the issue of core assets, like hospitals, schools and water, it is that they will always be publicly owned. Those are significant differences to the NDP and Conservative P3 approach.

VEHICLE INSPECTION CERTIFICATES

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Minister, you will know the importance of vehicle structural inspection certificates. The public relies on those certificates issued by your ministry to ensure both consumer protection as well as road safety. When a consumer purchases a vehicle, they rely on those certificates to give them confidence that their vehicle is structurally sound. Minister, when a purchase like that takes place and it's found subsequently that the certificate was issued fraudulently, do you believe your ministry has responsibility in that matter, or do you wash your hands of it?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation): We take any fraudulent cases very seriously. Any fraud is against the law, and we take those issues very seriously. If the member has any particular case he is prepared to give to me, we will investigate that.

1440

Mr. Klees: Well, Minister, I do have a particular case. My constituent, 19-year-old Justin Mejia, saved up \$7,000 to buy his first car so that he could get to and from work. He relied on your ministry's safety certificate when he purchased his first car from Mario Malicia, owner of Elite Import Auto Sales of Hamilton. Two weeks later, the same car was declared structurally unfit to drive by another inspection station of your ministry. Now he's told that it's going to cost him another \$8,000 to get the car back on the road. What's most disturbing to Mr. Mejia is the fact that the Ministry of Transportation is now denying responsibility and refuses to assist him in recovering his \$7,000.

Minister, will you commit, first of all, to a full investigation? Second, will you commit to ensuring that the appropriate charges are laid against that garage, as well as the mechanic who issued that certificate, and will you ensure that your ministry will assist in the recovery of this person's \$7,000?

Hon. Mr. Takhar: Let me assure the member that my ministry is aware of this case. This case is under investigation right now. What we will do is work with this person to make sure that the case does get full attention. I'm not fully aware of the circumstances of this case, but the case is under investigation.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): We're having way too many private conversations around this place. If you want to have other conversations, take them outside.

WATER QUALITY

Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I have a question for the Premier. Last Thursday, the city of Toronto's policy and finance committee voted in favour of stopping the big pipe—York-Durham's sewer system. The committee recognized how this sewer pipe threatens Toronto's and the surrounding region's drinking water supply. Experts, including your very own Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller, were among those who spoke to the committee and convinced its members to vote for a motion to stop the pipe. Mr. Miller is very concerned about the current design and construction and wants it to receive a full environmental assessment. Will you listen to your own Environmental Commissioner by issuing a stop order and a full environmental assessment of the big pipe today?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): I'll refer this to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment.

Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex): I want to thank the member for the question. The member will know of course that it was a committee of Toronto's city council that dealt with that matter, not the city of Toronto. It is our understanding that the city of Toronto will be dealing with that issue as early as today. I can assure the member that if the city of Toronto makes a written request to the Minister of the Environment, my minister will give that request immediate attention.

Ms. Churley: I must say I'm honestly surprised by that answer, because your own Environmental Commissioner, your own expert, is telling you to stop it and call a full EA. Your government bypassed a full environmental assessment and gave permission for a sewer pipe that will move up to 740 million litres of raw sewage daily across York and Durham to treatment plants in Pickering. If there is even a small break in the bottom half of the big pipe, E. coli and raw sewage will leak directly into the region's groundwater supply. Geologists have provided warnings that a bedrock fault line passes near the proposed sewer route. Your own Environmental

Commissioner wants you to stop the construction of the big pipe for a full EA. I'm going to ask you again: On the heels of the discussion that we're having today about E. coli contamination of water, will you stop this crazy project, this dangerous project, and order a full environmental assessment today?

Mr. Wilkinson: I just want to put on the record and to remind the member that the work that is going on currently is subject to 40 legally binding conditions set out by the Ministry of the Environment. I can assure the member that the Ministry of the Environment is very interested in that work and is doing its job to make sure that all of those conditions are met. As I mentioned to the member last week, one of conditions was not met previously and we issued a provincial order to deal with that.

As I said, the city of Toronto itself has not dealt with this matter. They will be dealing with it shortly. If we receive a letter, my minister will be giving that immediate consideration—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you. New question.

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): My question is to the Minister of Health Promotion. Minister, we're all concerned about the fact that Toronto and area has been rocked throughout the summer and the fall by youth crime and violence—gang violence in particular. Our government is acting by getting more police officers on the street and beefing up our guns and gangs unit, which will go a long way to resolving some of the immediate problems that we have.

At the same time, we must also focus on the causes of this gun violence. Many youth in my community have, in the past, accurately complained that there is nowhere to turn after school, a sentiment that was echoed in a recent *Globe and Mail* article, where one gang member lamented about the fact that lack of access to community centres and basketball courts was certainly contributing to the problem.

Minister, what is the McGuinty government doing to ensure that there are positive opportunities for young people to get involved in after-school activities?

Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion): I want to thank the member from Scarborough Centre, and I also want to pay tribute to the education minister and Minister Bradley, who initiated the community use of schools program last year. We listened to community leaders, who told us, quite frankly, that rising rental costs and extracurricular activity fees were driving individual youth groups and sports leagues out of the schools because they could no longer afford the fees.

The previous government, quite frankly, turned its back on the young people of Scarborough and other communities in this province. I was pleased when our Premier and our government included \$20 million in the last budget for the community use of schools program.

As we heard yesterday about the basketball program in and of itself, 10,000 young people in the GTA area were deprived of the opportunity of playing basketball because of high rental costs. Scarborough Basketball, which Mr. Duguid is interested in, had their user fees reduced under this program by this government by—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you. There may be a supplementary. Supplementary?

Mr. Duguid: I can tell by the heckles today that—again, I was taken aback yesterday when the opposition expressed total indifference to the important strides that we're making in ensuring that our young people have access to important recreation facilities and programs. The opposition appear to believe that providing young people with recreational activities, be it basketball or anything else, for that matter, should not be a priority for this government. I couldn't disagree more.

The previous government killed recreation programs in the province; the third party appears to be indifferent to it. Can the minister share with this Legislature some examples of how the community use of schools has impacted the lives of our young people?

Hon. Mr. Watson: The Conservatives and the NDP may laugh at our young athletes who want to give something back to their community and get involved in extra-curricular activities, but this program is not just about basketball. Urban Family Outreach, a non-profit charity, was able to run three new summer camps as a result of the community use of schools because of reduced fees. Rexdale soccer league doubled their participation. Scouts, guides and air cadets were all able to see their fees reduced from \$85 to \$17.

Yesterday, the NDP insulted the young people who are involved in sports and recreation, one of the great unifiers in our society. They voted against the community use of schools, thereby endorsing higher fees for young people. I tell the NDP: Why are you against young people getting involved in extracurricular activities? The NDP, once a great party of principle, is now relegated to cheap stunts, rhetoric and empty promises—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. We'll stop the clock for a minute. We can wait.

The member for Durham.

1450

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): It seems that the Minister of Health Promotion is quite pumped today.

My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I'm asking you a question today, Minister, on behalf of my constituent. This is a gentleman who's 31 years old, he's the parent of two children, and his spouse is a stay-at-home spouse to raise their children. In 2001 my constituent had exhausted all practical medical remedies for his condition of ITP, which is a euphemism for a cancer term. His treatment options in Ontario were

exhausted and he had no choice but to attend the Mayo Clinic, where he received Rituxan. The suggestion was by his physician. However, at \$17,000, Minister, the question here is: Would you please advise what steps my constituent can take to get this out-of-country coverage for a life-saving condition?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I will try to be of some guidance, but it was unclear from the honourable member if what was being sought was compensation for out-of-country coverage that was acquired by the patient without prior approval. There are circumstances, of course, where an approval process allows for an Ontarian to access a service outside our province in certain circumstances. Those are well outlined and they're exactly as they were when your party was in office. The gentleman will have the opportunity, through the Health Services Appeal and Review Board, of taking his case forward. I'm happy to work with the honourable member, with the presentation of a bit more information, but that would traditionally be the mechanism that would be available to the individual.

Mr. O'Toole: Minister, this is not a new issue. I brought this up during estimates with you directly. I have written you, on April 29, and again on the 13th. Let's keep this down at the level of human beings, the condition of a family. This is a 31-year-old gentleman with a life-threatening condition and we're asking you to not just toss this off to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board. I'm asking you today, will you simply look at this file? I would be pleased to share the name personally with you. I have their permission to do that. Do that for this family. Would you respond to that, Minister, please?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: Most certainly. As I said in my earlier answer, I am happy to work with the honourable member on this more specifically. At the same time, in expressing compassion for any individual in Ontario who is experiencing a health difficulty, it is important that I also be conscious of my legal responsibilities and of the authorities that a Minister of Health has and those that a Minister of Health does not have. I had the chance to answer on a similar question from one of your colleagues. The circumstances are the same as they have been in our province since, I believe, legislation in 1991; that is, a Minister of Health does not have the discretion to override decisions related to that. But that notwithstanding, on the honourable member's question, will we assist him in this individual case, getting to the bottom of it? Yes, we most absolutely will.

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York): My question is to the Minister of Labour. More than a million people in the GTA alone are working themselves to the bone and still living in poverty. The reason that's happening is because Ontario's minimum wage does not pay them enough. Most are workers of colour, most are recent immigrants and most are women. Some can't

come home to be with their children because they are working two or three jobs just to pay the rent. Minister, Ontario's minimum wage is not enough for these workers to live on. What are you prepared to do, as the new minister, to get these families out of poverty?

Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour): Thanks to the member for the question. Certainly, as a government, we recognize the serious plight of people in this province, and as a government, we moved forward with raising the minimum wage, the first increase that took place in nine years, because we recognize these are some of the most vulnerable individuals in the province. On February 1, 2005, the minimum wage was increased for the second stage. We moved forward with a four-year transition to move that minimum wage to \$8 an hour. Certainly we recognize the challenges that this may have impacted on businesses, and that's why we've moved in a responsible manner, phasing this in over a four-year period.

Mr. Prue: I ask the minister, how about being responsible to the working poor, who are making \$7.45 an hour, \$15,000 a year? We've seen that ministers of your government are able to eat steak, are able to spend \$50,000 in just nine days. That's three times as much as a family of six are able to have in a whole year. These workers work in health care, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, clerical and service work.

Tomorrow, representatives from ISARC are coming here and they're going to ask you what you're going to do for justice for hard-working people. What are you going to say to these delegates: that in two years they're going to earn \$8 an hour, in two years they're still going to live in poverty and two years from now, these families are still going to be suffering? Is that going to be your answer, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Peters: As I said in my opening comment, for nine years in this province there was a freeze on the minimum wage. Even back to your own time in government, from 1991-95, you increased the minimum wage by 85 cents. We recognize that there was a period of time when some of the most vulnerable citizens in this province had not seen a wage increase, and that's why we've moved forward. This year saw the second instalment of that increase and, by 2007, the minimum wage in this province will be \$8 an hour.

As well, we've moved forward on a number of other fronts, whether it's providing assistance through affordable housing in this province or through community and social services with the increases in disability support payments. We have a plan in place to help those vulnerable individuals on the electrical front. We've moved forward on child care as well.

HYDRO GENERATION

Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge): I'd like to preface my question to the Minister of Energy with congratulations. This is my first opportunity to pose a question to her in the Legislature since her appointment as Minister of Energy.

Minister, I'm aware that you were in Belwood, near Fergus, yesterday and announced a new regulation that will help Ontarians develop clean, renewable energy right in their own yards. I've had constituents in my riding who are cottage owners asking me about putting up solar panels on the roof of their cottages. Some are even interested in small-scale wind turbines on their properties up north. These, and Ontarians in general, want to make a positive difference in the air we all breathe, and if they can save some money on their electricity bill along the way, all the better.

I'm sure there will be plenty of people who would like to know more about these options that are open to them. Minister, can you please tell me how my constituents can best take advantage of the new net metering regulation?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): Thanks to the member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge for the question. I would also like to take this opportunity and publicly thank you for being vice-chair of the conservation action team, who, along with 10 other members, did an absolutely superb job. It also gives me an opportunity to say that there was an alternative fuel all-party committee that did some excellent work that we're able to draw upon as well. It really does go to show you how important conservation and alternatives are in this Legislature.

The first thing the cottagers need to do is determine what type of renewable energy they would like to participate in. For example, it could be wind, wind and water, run of the river—probably not. It could be biomass, but I doubt it. That would be more for agriculture. They might in fact want to go with the associations and ask for some support and help, in particular with their local distribution company. You'll find that they will—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you.

Mr. Arthurs: My constituents are interested in setting up more than a couple of solar panels; they want to put together larger-scale projects. I have farmers in my riding who are talking about taking advantage of the biomass they create and using it as another source of revenue. Farmers are talking about putting up wind turbines in their fields in my riding. There are many thousands of Ontarians who have seen North America's tallest and largest wind turbine, and, with respect to my Toronto colleagues, that's not at the CNE; that's on the waterfront in Pickering.

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There are lots of good ideas out there and a lot of opportunities for enterprising Ontarians. Minister, what are our government and you, as the energy minister, going to do to help people who simply want to do more than make their meters spin backwards?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: As you know, yesterday was about net metering, and it was an opportunity for someone to put in place generation for up to 500 kilowatts. The previous minister asked the Ontario Power Authority to come back with a standard offer, along with the Ontario Energy Board, and we hope that will be here by the end of the year. There will be opportunities for

individuals to generate electricity and sell it directly back into the grid. Not only will we be producing the renewable energy we need to meet our commitment of 5% by 2007 and 10% by 2010, but at the same time Ontarians will be able to participate in helping us to generate that new capacity as well.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton): My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. A recent report from the OECD puts Canada's productivity rate at 12th in the world. In 2003, we were third. Ontario is the economic engine of this country, and we have lost 10 points under your watch. What are you doing to keep Ontario from turning into Canada's economic caboose?

Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I would point to Roger Martin's studies on productivity rates. When he looked at the prosperity gap between Ontario and 16 jurisdictions in North America, we were 13th out of 16. During the time we've been in government, we actually closed the gap. We went from about 6,000 per capita GDP at the time we took office in 2003, and that gap has been closed significantly to about 3,000 now. So we're on the right track.

Productivity remains a challenge. One of the things we have done in this province, which I might point out as significant, is with respect to research funding. We funded \$300 million in our ORF. I might add that we have put forward an agenda for commercializing that research, something you didn't do when you were the government.

Mr. Chudleigh: The minister is quite right: Productivity is a challenge. It's a tender balance between delivering government services and creating an economic environment in which industry and businesses can survive and thrive. Increasing taxes, increasing gasoline prices, increasing hydro rates, increasing costs to businesses, and on and on, take precious money out of businesses' ability to reinvest in their companies. Without that reinvestment, these companies are not going to be able to maintain their productivity.

Changing the jurisdictions that you measure yourself against doesn't solve the problem. The jurisdiction we're concerned about is Ontario in the Canadian context, and increasing Ontario's productivity rate is paramount to becoming a successful jurisdiction. I'm not sure you understand this, Mr. Minister, and I'd like to know what you're doing to turn this situation around, specifically so that companies will have more money to invest in their businesses.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): I'm going to need a few people to move so that I can see the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Hon. Mr. Cordiano: One of the other things that Roger Martin pointed out was the fact that when that government was in power, they cut the wrong taxes—even if you agreed with cutting taxes. We, on the other

hand, are reducing the capital tax in Ontario, something you left behind. Roger Martin points out that if you want more investment in this province, which increases productivity, you should be reducing the capital tax, and we're doing just that. The last budget and the one before it pointed to that.

I say to the member, when you were the government, the productivity gap between Ontario and the US doubled. That was your legacy.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I have a petition, signed by good citizens of the region of Waterloo, to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, headed "Save Our Hospital."

"Whereas the \$80-million expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital was approved in 2002 pursuant to the mandate of the Health Services Restructuring Commission; and

"Whereas the plans for the project have been in the works for the past two years; and

"Whereas the residents of Cambridge and North Dumfries, the city of Cambridge and the region of Waterloo have contributed their share of the project; and

"Whereas the decision to cancel the expansion will adversely affect and diminish health care in Waterloo region;

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

"Resolved that the McGuinty government reverse its decision to cancel the Cambridge Memorial Hospital expansion and hospital upgrades."

I sign my name thereto.

CANCER TREATMENT

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition that has been given to me by residents of Toronto. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

"Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

"Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

"Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the" government "of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of patients."

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

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): There are too many conversations again.

Petitions? The member for Scarborough Southwest.

CRIME PREVENTION

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Sonny Sansone, community leader and activist at Catarqui Crescent, along with other residents of Scarborough Southwest are happy with the recent announcement by the Attorney General regarding guns and crime;

"Whereas gun violence is really affecting the quality of life and safety of residents in the Scarborough Southwest community;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ensure that any strategy to fight gun violence should include funding for youth programs like street hockey, basketball and youth empowerment."

I agree with this petition, and I affix my signature to it.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas children with autism who have reached the age of six years are no longer being discharged from their preschool autism program; and

"Whereas these children should be getting the best special education possible in the form of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) within the school system; and

"Whereas there are approximately 700 preschool children with autism across Ontario who are required to wait indefinitely for placement in the program, and there are also countless school-age children that are not receiving the support they require in the school system; and

"Whereas this situation has an impact on the families, extended families and friends of all of these children; and

"Whereas, as stated on the Web site for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 'IBI can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Its objective is to decrease the frequency of challenging behaviours, build social skills and promote language development';

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fund the treatment of IBI for all preschool children awaiting services. We also petition the

Legislature of Ontario to fund an education program in the form of ABA in the school system.”

PENSION PLANS

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed mostly by good working people of Hamilton.

“Whereas every Ontario worker has the right to a secure pension that is indexed to inflation and provides the dignity of a stable and sufficient income for retirement;

“Whereas pensions represent workers’ deferred wages and all pension contributions belong to the workers;

“Whereas people who work all their lives deserve the right to retire with a decent pension at age 65 without having to worry about making ends meet;

“Whereas the pension system is sorely in need of reform; it hasn’t been reviewed since 1987 and many Ontario seniors have seen the value of their pensions vastly reduced over the years;

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

“We call on the government of Ontario to form a special legislative committee on pension reform to study ways to ensure that all workers have the ability: (1) to participate in a pension plan; (2) to have a real say in how the plan is managed and governed; and (3) to have vesting from day one, indexing, portability from job to job and absolute protection of their pension through a much-enhanced pension benefit guarantee fund and stronger provincial legislation.”

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature.

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CLASS SIZE

Mr. Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and signed by about 1,000 of my constituents.

“Whereas class sizes have been capped at 20 from grades 1 to 3, we believe that the class size for the junior grades should be capped at a similar student-teacher ratio. It has been indicated that lower class numbers make for a better learning environment. Regardless of age, all children have the right to equal opportunities for success in all schools.

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

“The Legislative Assembly will introduce a capped number of students, similar to that of primary grades, for grades 4 to 6.”

I sent this to you via page Mandy.

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): “Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new

cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

“Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

“Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

“Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of” their patients in Ontario.

This has my signature of support.

PENSION PLANS

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): This petition has been signed by folks from Guelph and reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas every Ontario worker has the right to a secure pension that is indexed to inflation and provides the dignity of stable and sufficient income for retirement;

“Whereas pensions represent workers’ deferred wages and all pension contributions belong to the workers;

“Whereas people who work all their lives deserve the right to retire with a decent pension at age 65 without having to worry about making ends meet;

“Whereas the pension system is in sore need of reform; it hasn’t been revised since 1987 and many Ontario seniors have seen the value of their pensions vastly reduced over the years;

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

“We call on the government of Ontario to form a special legislative committee on pension reform to study ways to ensure that all workers have the ability: (1) to participate in a pension plan; (2) to have a real say in how the plan is managed and governed; and (3) to have vesting from day one, indexing, portability from job to job and absolute protection of their pension through a much-enhanced pension benefit guarantee fund and stronger provincial legislation.”

I agree with the petitioners, and I’ve affixed my signature to this.

MANDATORY RETIREMENT

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

“Whereas existing legislation enforcing mandatory retirement is discriminatory; and

“Whereas it is the basic human right of Ontario citizens over the age of 65 to earn a living and contribute to society; and

“Whereas the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories have also abolished mandatory retirement in various forms; and

“Whereas ending mandatory retirement is a viable means of boosting the Ontario labour force and accommodating the growing need for skilled workers;

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

“The Ontario government should act by abolishing mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is best achieved by passing Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement.”

Since I agree, I’m delighted to affix my signature to this document.

REGIONAL CENTRES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I’d like to present to the House a petition. This pile totals over 7,000. It’s from the Huronia Helpers organization. It says:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and his Liberal government were elected based on their promise to rebuild public services in Ontario;

“Whereas the Minister of Community and Social Services has announced plans to close Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, many of whom have multiple diagnoses and severe problems that cannot be met in the community;

“Whereas closing Huronia Regional Centre will have a devastating impact on residents with developmental disabilities, their families, the developmental services sector and the economies of the local communities; and

“Whereas Ontario could use the professional staff and facilities of Huronia Regional Centre to extend specialized services, support and professional training to many more clients who live in the community, in partnership with families and community agencies;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government to keep Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, open, and to transform them into ‘centres of excellence’ to provide specialized services and support to Ontarians with developmental” disabilities, “no matter where they live.”

I’m pleased to sign my name to that, and I will present it to Kiki to take down to you.

PENSION PLANS

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): This is another petition from people in Hamilton.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas every Ontario worker has the right to a secure pension that is indexed to inflation and provides the dignity of a stable and sufficient income for retirement;

“Whereas pensions represent workers’ deferred wages and all pension contributions belong to the workers;

“Whereas people who work all their lives deserve the right to retire with a decent pension at age 65 without having to worry about making ends meet;

“Whereas the pension system is sorely in need of reform; it hasn’t been reviewed since 1987 and many Ontario seniors have seen the value of their pensions vastly reduced over the years;

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

“We call on the government of Ontario to form a special legislative committee on pension reform to study ways to ensure that all workers have the ability: (1) to participate in a pension plan; (2) to have a real say in how the plan is managed and governed; and (3) to have vesting from day one, indexing, portability from job to job and absolute protection of their pension through a much-enhanced pension benefit guarantee fund and stronger provincial legislation.”

Again, I agree with this. I will affix my name and send it to the Clerks’ table via Graeme.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West): Thank you for recognizing the wonderful constituency of Hamilton West.

“To the Legislature:

“Whereas we feel that the present penalties for endangering or harming animals are too lenient, we request that these be increased.” We have over 700 names.

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

“Increase the penalties for endangering or harming animals.”

I agree with this petition, and I will sign it.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. John O’Toole (Durham): Recently, I met with the Community Living people and others, who presented me with these petitions.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas without appropriate support people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

“Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

“Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector, to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community.”

I'm pleased to endorse and support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham.

MANDATORY RETIREMENT

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas existing legislation enforcing mandatory retirement is discriminatory; and

“Whereas it is the basic human right of Ontario citizens over the age of 65 to earn a living and contribute to society; and

“Whereas the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories have also abolished mandatory retirement in various forms; and

“Whereas ending mandatory retirement is a viable means for boosting the Ontario labour force and accommodating the growing need for skilled workers;

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

“The Ontario government should act by abolishing mandatory retirement in the province of Ontario. This is best achieved by passing Bill 211, an Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement.”

I'll affix my name to this petition.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 24, 2005, on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Further debate.

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): It's my pleasure to have a few moments this afternoon to make my remarks about the throne speech, which we heard about a week and a half ago now. I have to say that it's funny—the timing was interesting—because kids have just gotten back to school, have been in school for a

couple of weeks, and my son was doing that as well, the usual things. Conversations started around what you're going to have for lunch, and who's bringing what to lunch. It's funny, because when I got here and listened to the throne speech, the analogy that came to mind was that we here in this Legislature were getting a lunch-bag letdown similar to the ones my son was already describing that his friends at school were getting.

The throne speech was certainly a lunch-bag letdown for the people of Ontario. Why is that? I think people expected us to come back to an important new vision that the government was going to lay out with great fanfare, after in fact coming back a couple of weeks later than expected. Theoretically, I was thinking that that extra time was being taken up for the government to lay out exactly a positive new direction that they were hoping to embark on.

Of course, that was my first throne speech as a member of this House. Having been elected in a by-election, I wasn't able to participate in or attend the first throne speech that this government read in the House. Unfortunately, my first experience with a throne speech was in fact a lunch-bag letdown. After it was over, my initial thought was, “where's the meat?” Where is the important, new, bold vision that the government was trying to explain or trying to get at with the throne speech? It wasn't there. Unfortunately, the new agenda was a non-agenda. The goals and priorities were no different from the 20 or 30—actually, 60 or 70—promises that the government had already broken. It was warmed-over meat loaf, I think one of the other members described it as in a discussion about the throne speech. I can't disagree with that description.

It's unfortunate, because when this government was first running for election back in 2003, they made some significant promises to the people of Ontario. We, on this side of the House, all spent the last two years unveiling, one after the other, these broken promises, broken promises, broken promises. So of course we expected to come back to this House to a throne speech that set a new course, that was supposed to—at least in my humble and inexperienced opinion with regard to the way this House works—re-inspire the people of Ontario, that was supposed to reconfirm that the government actually does have a plan on something—on anything. Unfortunately, we found out that the government in fact doesn't have a plan for a heck of a lot of things.

I'm going to spend some of my time this afternoon talking about some things that I was surprised not to see in the throne speech, that I was disappointed weren't in the throne speech, that I think ordinary Ontarians were looking for, were hoping for. They were desperately wanting to see some signals that their government understood their issues, was aware of the concerns they have and was prepared, through the throne speech, to actually start addressing some of the concerns, to actually start acknowledging that the two years so far have been a wasted two years in terms of the people of Ontario having any recognizable benefit to government policies

since the last government was booted out. Unfortunately, that's not the case.

Even with this throne speech now, we're looking at a further two years where the government has still not acknowledged that the people of Ontario have some real, significant concerns and problems that they expect their government to address. What do we get in the throne speech? The biggest announcement, the thing that everyone was all atwitter about, was a rebate on birth certificates if they don't come in on time. Give me a break. If that is the major piece of your throne speech, then you guys have got to get back to the think tank and start figuring out what exactly your job is.

Does anybody have a problem with the fact that they expect birth certificates to come in a timely manner? Of course not. But the arrogance to expect that every single person in Ontario can equally take advantage of that offer, that back-of-the-cereal-box kind of offer: "If you don't get it in two weeks, you'll get your money back." But guess what? The only people who will get their money back are people who have credit cards, because you have to pay by credit card. Why do you have to pay by credit card? Because you have to apply for it on-line. So there you have two significant barriers for many people in Ontario to even access the big centrepiece of the pitiful throne speech, the money-back guarantee for birth certificates. I shook my head in absolute surprise.

I represent a riding, Hamilton East, where many people don't have access to the Internet and do not have a credit card. In fact, the very people who are often searching for documentation, who need things like birth certificates to be able to apply for other kinds of assistance and help, are the ones who are not going to be able to pay for these documents by credit card. I was absolutely stunned that the government so callously celebrates this announcement and totally glosses over the fact that there are hundreds of thousands, likely millions of people in Ontario, who will not even be able to get the windfall of the money-back guarantee on birth certificates.

When I talked about the lunch-bag letdown that this throne speech was, what it means for me is that the government has not realized that they need to do some major initiatives to sustain families in the province of Ontario. Families in Ontario are looking around today. They are looking at their cheque books at the end of the month and are looking at their accounts at the end of the month, if they're so lucky to have them. They're looking at their circumstances during the month, and at the end of the day, families in Ontario are realizing that after two years of Liberal governance, they are no better off and, in some cases, are worse off than they were two years ago.

Why do I say that? We're in the month of October. We're almost at the end of the month of October. People are already shaking in their boots to see what their bills are going to be as their bills start to climb over October, over November, over December. Those hydro bills are going to be going up. Those heating bills are going to be going up. People are already hurting from the gasoline

increases that were not managed at all by this province when they did that huge spike. Yes, they're levelling off, but they're still rather high for people to be able to afford.

So here we have a throne speech, coming into the winter months, that doesn't even address some of the basic issues that the people of Ontario expect their government to deal with, just some of the down-and-dirty daily things that people need to have addressed by a government if they're going to see, not even an improvement, but just a maintenance of their quality of life. As I said, that maintenance has not existed over the last two years. The quality of life of the people of Ontario is very slowly eroding because the government is not undertaking the kinds of initiatives that the regular people of Ontario, that Ontario's working families, that Ontario's ordinary families expect them to undertake.

Instead, we have a government that decides, after having promised that it's not going to increase taxes, to then turn around and announce almost immediately that it's going to increase taxes in the form of a health tax for all the people of Ontario. So already one of the initial actions of the government after being elected is to increase costs to the families of Ontario by putting this health tax on them.

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As if that's not bad enough, they decide to implement a health tax that disproportionately burdens lower-income families over those with higher incomes. What you end up with is people in lower-income brackets having to pay a higher proportion of their earnings, of their take-home pay, if you want to call it that, on the health tax. It's bad enough that that promise was broken, but when the government deliberately refuses to acknowledge that some people in this province are much better able to pay than others, and therefore to adjust its policies accordingly, it sends a signal that they are either—well, I wouldn't say they are ignorant of the facts, because obviously they made that decision based on some kind of information, but they didn't think it would matter. They didn't think there would be enough of a kerfuffle over the fact that they are hitting the lower-income families harder. I don't know why. Maybe they figure that lower-income families are not going to be voting for them anyway, so they don't care. I certainly hope it wasn't that. I certainly hope the government wasn't callously targeting lower-income families, but I can tell you that that is the result of their policy, of the way they decided to implement their health tax.

Do we hear anything about that in the throne speech? No. We don't hear anything about their regressive tax regime, except maybe some allusions to the fact that the way they are dealing with our health care crisis in Ontario is through ensuring that Bay Street gets its cut of our health care dollars through the implementation of P3 hospitals. Maybe that's what they see as the way to deal with the health care issues. Now we're paying extra tax dollars with the health premium that this government implemented on the people of Ontario, and guess what?

The money we're now paying as a portion of our taxes every year is going to go directly to Bay Street as the government unfolds more and more of their P3 capital projects, which they vilified the previous government for when in opposition.

You've got to ask yourself exactly what that throne speech was all about. I have to tell you, on this side of the House, on my measuring stick, it was much ado about nothing, as they say.

I want to go back a little bit to the energy cost issue, because already we've had calls in my office. The calls in my office last winter went through to the spring and into the summer. People just got so far behind last winter that even into July and August we were still trying to help them solve their problems when it came to the fact that they couldn't afford utility costs. In fact, in the city of Hamilton, we've had several fires over the last couple of months and most of those fires were as a result of unsafe use of candles. Those candles were being used because people couldn't afford to light their homes, they can't afford the hydro costs or they've been cut off and can't afford the reconnection fee. So it's a serious situation. Has this problem been solved? No. The government has its head in the sand. It has its head in a hole like an ostrich, pretending that somehow the people of Ontario are going to be able to get through the winter. It's just not going to happen. There are going to be numbers and numbers of families who are not going to be able to get through this winter; mark my words.

It's not only going to be because of the energy costs, because hydro is going up and heating costs are going up; it's also going to be because thousands upon thousands of families have lost their jobs. Some 42,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in this province. Those are manufacturing jobs. Those are the jobs that pay decent wages, that have decent pensions, that have health benefits and dental and eye care. Those are the kinds of jobs that are being lost. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade got up today, talking about the net gain of jobs in Ontario, but look at the fine print and you'll see that the majority of jobs being created are not the kind that are good, well-paying jobs, where people can actually support their families on one job, where they can get a decent wage and decent benefits and have a decent quality of life. Those are not the jobs. It's not just a matter of the cost that everyone is going to be incurring as we roll into the winter months because this government has not addressed some of those major problems in energy and heating costs, but the fact that people are losing their jobs. They won't even have the paycheques to pay for things like heating and hydro and increasing rents, which I know, Mr. Speaker, for you particularly, is an ongoing issue.

Hundreds of thousands and millions of people in Ontario are tenants, and that government decided when they were running, when they were trying to get votes from tenants, that they were going to promise that the Tenant Protection Act put in by the previous government—which did wrong by tenants, in my opinion, and

in yours, Mr. Speaker, I know—was going to be fixed. In fact, they said they would fix the Tenant Protection Act within one year of being elected. Guess what? It's into the third year and there has been no amendment to the Tenant Protection Act. Rents are still very difficult for people to cover and landlords are still increasing rents on vacant apartments, so the market is still a different place for people who have affordability problems in the province.

Speaking of which, whatever happened to affordable housing? Again, this government gets up and pretends that it's building affordable housing. The Speaker in the chair tonight, when he's wearing his hat as a member of this caucus, happens to be the critic for housing, and guess what? He can tell you as easily as I can tell you that this government is simply glossing over reality when they talk about their achievements in housing. Something like 65 units have been built in this province. In Hamilton, there are 5,000 families on the waiting list for affordable housing. In Toronto, it's something like 70,000 families on a waiting list.

So please, let's get down to brass tacks, I tell these government members. Let's go back to the drawing board and start thinking up the real things that are going to effect real change in this province that Ontario families would like to see.

I talked a little bit about job loss. It's an interesting thing. I was at a couple of events in Hamilton recently, and I ran into some leaders of industry. Some of our major manufacturing companies were there—it was a fundraiser for the children's aid society—and I got a chance to talk to them and just feel them out on how they're feeling about Ontario's prospects for the future in terms of the viability of their existing manufacturing concerns. They were extremely forthright in their criticism of this government's handling of the hydro file. It's another thing that could have been addressed in the throne speech, but it wasn't. It's something that the government could have at least acknowledged, could have said, "We've got a plan for this. We're trying to work with stakeholders, workers and industry to try to solve some of the concerns about the competitiveness of Ontario industry, about the bedrock of jobs that we need to maintain a decent quality of life in this province." But no, there was nothing there.

And so we watch my leader, Howard Hampton, and our northern members in this Legislature day after day, talking about the forestry crisis in northern Ontario, about the hundreds and hundreds of jobs that are being lost on a daily basis. That's not like southern Ontario, where you lose a plant and it's very tough on a community. Things are rough, and some mom-and-pop stores close down because there's just money sucked out of that community. Yes, that happens, but in some of these northern Ontario communities, a whole community can be devastated by the closure of a mill. One mill just closed last week because of the inaction of this government and their refusal to acknowledge that their hydro policy is closing down companies, closing down forestry jobs, and is in fact closing down communities in the north.

But it's not just forestry; it's the chemical industry, the manufacturing industry and all of those industries that rely on hydro in large quantities. What happens is, when they're trying to get the energy they need to run their furnaces and mills, they have to go on to the spot market. Sometimes the price is \$2,000 per kilowatt hour. Who the heck can survive that?

In fact, I was up in the Legislature just last week talking about a mill in Hamilton that's having to lay off its workers at least once or twice a week. At least once or twice a week, those workers get laid off and sent home because there's not enough hydro to fire the furnaces to keep this steel mill running.

What kind of government ignores those signals from industry, ignores those realities that are happening in the north in forestry, and in the south as well because a lot of services and companies in the southern parts of Ontario feed those northern mills and feed forestry and the pulp and paper industries; certainly they do. So it's not a northern versus a southern issue; it's an Ontario issue that should have been addressed in the throne speech about a week ago, but it wasn't there. It wasn't in the throne speech, nor were many issues that need to be addressed. The multi-faith social justice groups will be here in the next little while. They're concerned too because the problem is that the level of poverty in this province is increasing no end. This government does not have a plan to deal with the growing poverty in Ontario.

They have not committed to a plan in this throne speech and that's a disgrace for every single one of us.

1540

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue): Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East): It gives me great pleasure to speak to our throne speech, a speech that at its core focuses on 12 million people, the people who live here in Ontario. It is about strengthening our economy through our greatest resource, and our greatest resource is our human resource, leveraging our people, because since we came into government we have turned this ship around. We came into government with a \$6-billion deficit that has been lowered to \$1.6 billion through the great work of our Minister of Finance and our Premier and the visionary measures that have been taken.

We are making sure that Ontarians get value for money through government, that everything is measured and we can have measurable results. We have brought stability and peace to our workplace. For eight years, our teachers were always in a situation of strife, with a government not respecting them, not acknowledging them. We made sure that for the first time in the history of Ontario there were four-year contracts with our teachers. We have long-term contracts with our public service, long-term contracts with our health care providers.

We have turned this ship around and are making headway to where the people of Ontario want to go, and that is a government that is focused on them, focused on creating an economy that is knowledge-based, on invest-

ments in higher education—an unprecedented \$6.2 billion being spent for our colleges and universities, never seen before. These are milestones that we are achieving at the fastest of paces so that we can make sure we have prosperity today and for the future in Ontario.

This is a great throne speech, something all Ontarians should be proud of, and it gives me great pleasure to have spoken to it.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton): It's amazing the different perspectives there are on this throne speech. There's a rosy perspective down here, and then just a few seats down the House this throne speech has been a disaster. In the election campaign of the government over here, there were over 230 promises made to the people of Ontario. Up until the point of this throne speech, over 50 promises had been broken. This throne speech didn't mention the 170 yet-to-be-fulfilled promises. They're just out there in the ether someplace, floating around. Perhaps they'll come back; perhaps they won't; perhaps they'll be broken. We don't know what's going to happen to those ones.

In the meantime, Ontario families are struggling to make ends meet. These are real pocketbook issues. These issues deal with jobs. They deal with families who are bringing home the same money they did two years ago, or if they've had a raise, it's been a very small raise, and yet at the same time they are paying increased crippling health taxes. They're paying more for gasoline. They're paying more for electricity because this government broke a promise on electricity prices. They're paying more for natural gas. They're paying more in property taxes. Next year, tuition fees are going to rise, after a Liberal freeze, and those tuition fees are going up considerably—to say nothing of the physiotherapists, chiropractors and eye exams that people now have to pay for under this government, which in a form is a tax, when they said they would have no new taxes. So this throne speech is a huge disappointment. I only sit 15 seats down from the member who thinks this throne speech was the greatest thing in the world. I don't know how long he intends to stay in this House. But as long as you're in this House, I hope that this is the worst throne speech that you ever hear because Ontario can't take too much more of this.

Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): The member from Hamilton East, Andrea Horwath, demonstrates once again what an incredibly valuable contribution she's making to this Legislature, and how this chamber has been enhanced by her election in the by-election in Hamilton East. It is such a pleasure to work with her. It's such a pleasure to be the beneficiary of her acute and not uncritical analysis of things that are dealt with on a daily basis here in the legislative chamber.

Folks in Hamilton East should be incredibly proud of the hard work that Ms. Horwath does here, in her riding, in her constituency office and indeed across the province as she fights for working women and men and their pensions, as she fights for families living in apartment buildings and their right not to have a landlord, a crooked

landlord, undermine their physical security, their health and safety by ripping off the component of the rent that's designed to pay for hydro and heat. That's why Ms. Horwath has, for instance, been such a strong advocate of legislation: her introduction of the Fred Gloger bill, which would prevent, during the cold months, the termination of hydro and fuel services, natural gas in most cases, when that would have an incredibly dangerous impact. Look, she indicated that she's the one who rang the alarm bells but this week about landlord-tenant prosecutions in the city of Hamilton not being heard in provincial offences court until the year 2007—not 2006 but 2007. Landlords who are violating the rights of their tenants are running—

The Acting Speaker: Time has expired. Further questions and comments?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest): I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes to comment on the comments made by the member from Hamilton East. Before I do that, I just wanted to say that I was quite surprised to hear that the member from the Progressive Conservative Party didn't have a single positive thing to say about anything that's happening here at Queen's Park, in this Legislature. We've got a plan that we laid out in the throne speech that deals with the major issues that we campaigned on: a better health care system, a better education system, a functioning energy sector, as well as other key issues which we'll get into later on this afternoon.

Just looking at the health care portfolio, which is so important—it's right here in the throne speech: The "government is reducing wait times for key medical procedures by providing: 8% more CT scans; 11% more cancer surgeries; 16% more cataract surgeries; 17% more cardiac procedures; 28% more hip and knee replacements; and 42% more MRI scans."

This is what people in Ontario want to hear. They don't want to know what the Progressive Conservatives did, holding budget speeches in car parts plants, giving tax breaks to corporations, and seeing the deterioration of our schools and of our education system in general, as well as our health care system. It has taken years—it's going to take years to replace the damage they've done. We're on a path to fix that. We're on a path to bring in a better education system, a better health care system and a number of other reforms that were included in the throne speech.

A number of other members here today from the Liberal Party will be speaking to that. I think that we've got a very positive, optimistic future to look forward to, and this throne speech lays the groundwork for that.

1550

The Acting Speaker: The member from Hamilton East has two minutes in which to respond.

Ms. Horwath: I want to thank the members from Mississauga East, Halton, Niagara Centre and Scarborough Southwest for their comments.

I just wanted to follow up on the remarks that the member from Niagara Centre was making just before the

end of his time. That was the fact that the Attorney General gets up in this House on a regular basis and makes claims about reformation of the justice system, while in the city of Hamilton—and I asked the question, and he had no answer for it yesterday—the justices of the peace are in such short supply that when we finally do get the conviction of this particular landlord on charges laid by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the ministry people are foiled in their attempt to bring justice to these tenants because the Attorney General has not solved the ongoing problem of the lack of justices of the peace in the system.

The bottom line is that back in January 2005, and again just a couple of weeks ago, the city of Hamilton begged, urged and petitioned this province to fix the problem of the lack of justices of the peace. He can talk all he wants about the reform of the justice system and all his nice words, but they mean naught if you're in a situation like the city of Hamilton is in. If there is a serious issue that has to come to trial, has to come to a provincial offences court, guess what happens? It will take one day per month, maybe for the next 10 years, to be able to address that issue, because there is not enough court time available for these hearings to be scheduled.

It's a sad day in Ontario when nothing was said of that in the throne speech, when the government gets up and pretends that they are actually doing something, but the reality on the ground, in municipalities like Hamilton, shows that they are doing nothing to address the problem of the backlog in our provincial offences courts.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): I'm delighted to join in this debate on the throne speech. Let me say at the outset that I will be sharing my time with the very distinguished member from Mississauga South.

We recognize, first, that everything we do depends on Ontario's prosperity, whether it is the ability of our businesses to compete, our capacity to fund a caring society or the opportunities that will be available to our kids. That's why the McGuinty government is working with Ontarians to strengthen Ontario's economy: in education, in the skills of our people and in improving the health of our people, fostering innovation, leveraging our diversity and getting fundamental rights approved.

The positive results we've seen over these past two years—from higher test scores in our schools, to shorter wait times in our hospitals, to over 193,000 new jobs—are the product of Ontarians working hard, working well and working together.

Education is an example. We have seen smaller class sizes and improved test scores. New textbooks and other learning resources are replacing worn-out, outdated textbooks, and new library books will stock school shelves, thanks to a \$61-million investment.

Every school, regardless of size or geographic location—and every student—will benefit from this investment. Our children will also see better conditions in which to learn. Our Good Places to Learn initiative will support school construction, facilitate repair and renewal

projects, in the amount of about \$4 billion over three years, and will benefit over 1.5 million children.

New legislation is on its way, too, in making it mandatory for young people to keep learning until they are 18 years old. The new alternative high school diploma will recognize the importance of learning a skill or a trade, and we're implementing our Reaching Higher plan for post-secondary education, which will invest \$6.2 billion more in universities and colleges over five years.

I know that many of us here today who are MPPs, on all sides of the House, thanks to the generosity of previous governments—I'm thinking about the Bill Davis era and the Robarts era—in terms of expanding our schools, expanding the horizon of education and creating new universities right across Ontario—thanks to those opportunities, many of us are here today. We therefore have a great responsibility on our shoulders to extend again, as a good Ontario government, the dollars and the hope that are needed to produce the students and the skills so they can compete in the international market.

The world today is just one globe. Our neighbour is not just the person living next to us or the person in the next street, but also the person far away in another country. It has been said that it's a global economy—no doubt. Having said that, we know that the person in China is our neighbour too. It just takes a few hours, or now a few minutes, and we are just as much affected in terms of our health or our education or our investment strategy. It takes just seconds to shift vast amounts of money around the globe, affecting every taxpayer of Ontario.

It is true that our neighbour here and our neighbour in whatever country we pick affect us directly, sometimes to our benefit and sometimes detrimentally. Therefore, we have to work out a strategy—and the throne speech actually addresses some of these issues—where we begin to understand, where we begin to have a new idea, where we begin to have a shift in thinking to really understand that we are one family. We know that when we're talking about crime in Toronto or when we're talking about sickness or education, the problems that are facing every Ontarian will be at our doorstep soon. We must therefore consider doing something about that, and the throne speech directly affects some of these kids. I'll talk about this in specifics. I'll talk about this and how we are developing and creating the programs that are necessary for skills to compete.

Our Best Start plan enables Ontario kids to begin school fully prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. Children's health is a top priority, as was demonstrated with the recent announcement of new funding for student nutrition programs and the implementation of a minimum 20 minutes per day for physical activity. As part of our commitment in terms of health and the success of our kids and youth in Ontario, the government has recently doubled its investment in nutrition programs, from \$4.5 million to \$8.5 million annually. More than 2,500 kids across the province of Ontario will receive funding. This is a revamped program. A healthy breakfast, lunch or

snack will be provided each day to approximately 67,000 students in elementary and secondary schools.

In health, we've seen dramatic increases in the number of CT scans, cancer surgeries, cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures, hip and knee replacements and MRI scans. Shorter waiting times: That's our goal. This means that the people in Davenport, my riding, will enjoy shorter wait times and potentially improved prognoses of illnesses caught by MRIs in the early stages. Family health teams feature doctors working alongside other health care professionals. And we are focusing on protecting the health of Ontarians by investing in public health, combatting smoking, requiring daily physical exercise activities in our grade schools, introducing legislation to protect drinking water and reducing smog by replacing coal-fired electricity generation systems.

Our province is rich in diversity and welcomes the best and brightest from all over the world. My riding of Davenport celebrates the fact that it is one of the most diverse in Ontario. At least 30% of us are new immigrants in Ontario. The government is expanding training programs and also English as a second language instruction. When people arrive in Ontario from abroad, you must also try to make sure they have some services, some English-as-a-second-language programs and above all else some programs to bring them in so they too become taxpayers, some programs that will open the doors, especially in terms of professions and trades.

1600

We've come a long way in terms of opening the doors to professions and trades. They were closed. They were shut. There is, of course, a difference in attitude. The attitude in the past has been, "OK, you're smart. Here is the test—take it. You want to be an accountant? You want to be a physician? You want to be a pediatrician? Take the test. Here, go do it." Of course the failure rate was high. Why? It's obvious: No experience locally; no experience in terms of Ontario rules, laws and procedures. It is clear that if we don't open the doors to professions and trades, we'll continue to see them as taxi drivers, as cleaners. We've been fighting this for a long time, but I must tell you, we have come a long way. The attitude has changed now. You know what it is now? "OK, you want to pass the test? Come on in. We'll give you a hand. Here are the rules and regulations for Ontario. You make us a promise to study hard and we'll make you a promise that you can pass if you have at least a basic intelligence."

This attitude of a closed door as opposed to an open door has changed in Ontario today. And we are the better for it, because we are now opening the doors and having them as productive citizens. A productive citizen is a more confident person. A productive citizen is also a taxpayer who supports all our institutions and makes us more competitive.

We are lucky to have as our next speaker the MPP from Mississauga South, Mr. Tim Peterson.

Mr. Tim Peterson (Mississauga South): When the Lieutenant Governor, James Bartleman, delivered the

speech from the throne, he described it as “a speech for the people of Ontario: the millions of Ontarians who get up and work hard every day to reach higher, to build a better life for themselves and their children and a brighter future for their province and their country.” It is with great pleasure that I can report that the 38th Parliament of Ontario is continuing to support the people of Ontario with better education, more responsive health care and a healthier economy, so that each person, each family, can maximize their potential and realize a brighter future.

As I reflect on my riding of Mississauga South, I reflect on where I was married, where my children were born, where my wife and I built our businesses and where we have contributed to the social fabric of our community. When I joined this House two years ago, I targeted four main issues on behalf of my community: (1) the unfair funding of social services in Peel, also known as Fair Share for Peel. Due to rapid growth in Peel and the frozen funding formulas for social services, children and families in Peel get 50% less support than the families in Toronto and the rest of Ontario; (2) the burning of coal at the Lakeview generating plant; (3) the polluted beaches of Lake Ontario in Mississauga South; and (4) the unfair representation of the city of Mississauga within the region of Peel. Despite having 70% of the population, we had 40% of the votes.

In two short years, our government has made improvements to three of these four issues. On children's services, Marie Bountrogianni corrected the funding formulas for Best Start and autism. There is more to be done, but we are resolved to continue this fight. We have closed the Lakeview generating plant. We have adjusted the voting imbalance in Peel by giving Mississauga 50% of the votes.

Today, I wish to add two new items to my list: the building of the Mississauga South Charity, a master charity that will help other charities in Mississauga South, and the remediation and recirculation of brown-field sites in Mississauga South. I am pleased to report that with community support, both of these are moving forward. Hopefully, major announcements will be forthcoming shortly.

My reason for mentioning these community-based projects is to re-emphasize to all that Mississauga South is strongly committed to family, to community and to economic growth. While I am the first Liberal elected in Mississauga South since Confederation, it was because the community trusted me as one of theirs, as one who would maintain and build upon these values, for these were the values of Mrs. Marland and Mr. Kennedy, the people who held this seat before me. This support of individuals, families and community is the mantra, the stamp of Premier Dalton McGuinty. It not only reflects his personal values, but his guiding values as he steers the ship of Ontario.

But as I look around this magnificent and august chamber, I feel the presence of other leaders. I feel the spirit of Stephen Lewis. I want this chamber to be blessed again with his captivating idealism and his wonderful

rhetoric. I feel the ghost of John Robarts. I was witness to his gentle, paternal charm and his quiet, disarming but effective manner. Any government would be blessed to have more of these qualities. I sense the presence of Bill Davis, with his incisive wit, cutting criticism and circular management style that kept Ontario at the centre of Canadian Confederation. I also have memories, as many of you have, of David Peterson's quick, familiar humour, warm, mischievous smile, inclusive approach and voluminous memory.

But the most important presence I feel in this chamber, in the space above the chandeliers, is the presence of my parents, Clarence and Marie Peterson, for it is upon their shoulders that my brothers and I have built our lives, our families and our careers. My parents, Marie and Clarence Peterson, have lived the dream of this throne speech, the Ontario dream—indeed, the Canadian dream. Both of my parents were raised by single mothers. My father's parents were Norwegian immigrants living in Manitoba, and after six years of courtship, my father finally accumulated enough money to marry his sweetheart from Saskatchewan. Amazingly, my mother graduated from university and went into teaching. My father used his raw talent to train himself in banking, sales and marketing, real estate and personnel management so that he could anchor his own business.

When my parents finally settled in London, Ontario, in the late 1940s, they put down the roots that would anchor them—anchor their successful business, anchor their active family and anchor their numerous society-building endeavours. The loving success of their marriage is unique. The success of their business will one day help their grandchildren. To those who are skeptical about having three sons in politics, they remain delightfully oblivious. But there are no skeptics as to the great contribution they made to London. They built the Liberal Party in London, Ontario, the same way they built their farm, the same way they helped build the Canadian Club, Westminster College, London Little Theatre, the London hunt club, the YMCA and the city of London—indeed, the way they helped build their friends, their family and, last but not least, each other.

I offer today the example of my parents, who support our government's attempts to build a better education system, a better health system and a better economy, so that many can achieve today what only a few like my parents could achieve yesterday. If any members of this House are winding their way past London, please stop off at 550 Dufferin Avenue for coffee, sandwiches and great conversation. My mother and father are both 92. They will treat you to 184 years of personal and political history that will leave you in awe—in awe of their love for each other, in awe of their courage, in awe of their success in helping to build their city, their province and their country.

By working together, we can educate the illiterate and innumerate, restore the health of the sick, and build a strong, robust economy for all. This is the vision of Premier Dalton McGuinty. This is the inclusive mandate

of the 38th Parliament of Ontario. This is the future of Ontario and Canada.

1610

Thank you very much for this opportunity to make this personal speech. As we go forward, I am very pleased that my children are taking the benefit of the wonderful education system, especially in Lorne Park. My daughter is in grade 12 and is participating at Lorne Park Secondary School as a member of the high-performance development team. My son has just gone to Laurier university and has become a member of the basketball team. It is in them that I will find my future, as today I find my great delight in what they are achieving on the foundation of what we have all given them. If I am successful, they will be appreciative and will understand that they must pass that on to their children and their children's children.

It is a great honour to be able to make this speech today. Thank you for your time.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Chudleigh: It's interesting. The member talks about Lorne Park Secondary School. Personally, I went to Thomas L. Kennedy Secondary School. Thomas L. Kennedy, of course, is my grandfather, and I felt that was probably the only high school I could ever graduate from, because the teachers were very benevolent to me there. But I did spend a lot of time down at Lorne Park Secondary School, because there were a couple of girls, who are probably now married and wouldn't like to be associated with—I won't mention their names, but we used to spend some time down at Lorne Park Secondary School. Of course, the football and basketball games were always exciting.

The member mentioned the goals of his government, and those are laudable goals—goals for a better health care system, goals for a better educational system. It's disappointing, to me on this side of the House, that those goals aren't being reached, those goals about reducing wait times. Wait lists are no shorter than they were when this government was elected, and it's no easier to find a family doctor than it was two years ago.

They've spent millions of dollars in severance pay to fire 1,000 nurses. They said they were going to hire 8,000 nurses, and before the end of their mandate, they may very well do that, but they have spent a lot of money in severance pay getting rid of 1,000 of them, to say nothing about the cost to the average citizen in Ontario—that they have to pay for physio, they have to pay for chiropractors, they have to pay for their eye examinations now. Since you have to take this money out of your pocket, this is not a way to improve the goals of a better health care system.

You also set up a brand new health bureaucracy with the LHINs. The same thing happened there, with the LHINs replacing the district health councils. The district health council people were all fired and paid severances, and then they were rehired as the LHINs—another huge mismanagement. So it's very disappointing to hear him talk about goals of health care.

Mr. Kormos: It was a true delight to listen to the comments of the member for Davenport, Mr. Ruprecht, who has been working a long time on the file for the recognition of foreign-trained professionals, and continues to work on that file. I join him, as I have often, in calling upon this government to keep its promise to expedite the recognition of the credentials of foreign-trained professionals. Surely—and I understand the frustration of Mr. Ruprecht, because he's committed to it. I know he is. I only wish his Premier was, and I only wish the cabinet of this McGuinty government would share the commitment and passion for expediting the recognition of foreign-trained professionals that Mr. Ruprecht has.

I was similarly pleased with the comments by Mr. Peterson from Mississauga South, and I tell people that he has made his presence known here at Queen's Park. It was wonderful to hear these people so enthusiastic about the throne speech, because I was here on the day of the throne speech, and the Liberal backbench had never been more glum, sullen and unenthusiastic. There were no pompos; there were no rah-rahs; it was hard. You couldn't get a round of applause out of it. It was their own finance minister, their own government having written the darned thing, read by Mr. Bartleman. What a sad-faced bunch when they listened to the thin gruel offered up by this feckless, unenthusiastic and, quite frankly, unimaginative—if you're going to make stuff up, make up big things. They couldn't even make up big things; they had to make up mundane things. That's what was most depressing. These guys were in shock. It's nice to see they have come out of it and are now able to feign some enthusiasm.

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the time to stand up and speak for two minutes about the throne speech and about the different speakers who spoke before me.

Mr. Speaker, I was listening to you when you were in a different capacity yesterday, sitting in your chair and talking about the school system. You were talking about poverty in schools, about the school structure and about different areas. We share your feelings and your vision about better schooling. That's why the throne speech talked about these issues. That's why the government of Ontario, the McGuinty government, is investing more money in schools, creating peace and tranquility between the teachers, the parents and the government. That's the first time in a long time.

I was listening to the member from Davenport talk about accreditation. This area is very dear to my heart. Many people who decide to choose Canada as a final destination to live and raise a family come with experience, education and a profession. That's why our government is working hard to make it easier to get accredited, to fit them into the system and make them taxpayers, because that's very important to all of us—not just for them, but for us as Ontarians. We want every person to be able to use his or her education and talent to be a part of building this great community and this great province that all of us enjoy and love and that we call Ontario.

Our government increased the number of foreign-trained doctors from 90 to 200, worked with all the regulatory bodies to make some kind of transition, creating a bridge program through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to help all newcomers find their way, to find a mechanism to enable them to fit in the system and get accredited.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak.

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): I'm pleased to be able to offer a couple of comments on the speakers so far, and particularly on the member from Mississauga South. I would have to say off the top that I found his personal history more interesting than much of the throne speech, because of the fact that there was so much of it that is so typical of the kind of resourcefulness, the kind of qualities of hard work, determination and vision that families share. It really doesn't matter whether you are someone who has been in this country for many generations or a few years. There is that sense of recognition, of the importance of free speech and the elements of a democratic society, the opportunities both economic and social that this member clearly touched on in presenting that very personal history.

I think all of us can look back fondly on the experiences we had as young people growing up in Ontario and the opportunities this province has provided for us. Quite frankly, as I mentioned at the outset, it's in many ways more interesting than the throne speech. When we look at some of the details, which I will have an opportunity to do in a few minutes, we see it's rather disappointing. Words like "warmed over" and things such as that generally characterize the approach many people took in responding to the throne speech itself.

1620

The Acting Speaker: Either the member for Davenport or the member for Mississauga South may respond.

Mr. Ruprecht: Thank you to my colleagues who talked about this subject: the members for Halton, Niagara Centre, London-Fanshawe and York North.

To the member from Halton, very briefly, I wish you had not mentioned the nurses. I was here when your government fired 8,000 nurses—you were sitting right there. Not only was that not enough; you rehired them and paid almost twice as much to get them back.

Mr. Chudleigh: Check your facts.

Mr. Ruprecht: Those are the facts. If you don't believe it, we'll get together outside the Legislature and have a press conference about this, and you can get the facts on this.

I want to thank the member for Niagara Centre very much for his kind comments that I'm leading the fight for accreditation and opening the doors for foreign-trained professionals. Thank you. I appreciate that very much.

Right next to me—in fact, right here—is the minister who is going to help us not only to open the doors but to open the doors much, much wider in terms of accreditation. He's right here, and he made a commitment. He's right here, and he can speak to it. Not only have we continued to improve the relationship between foreign-

trained professionals and what's happening today in Ontario, but he's going to take it a step further because of his commitment to the cause.

No doubt there is more to do—much more to do. There is much more to do in terms of the safety of our communities; we made a promise in the throne speech of 1,000 more police officers. There is certainly much more to do in terms of identity theft. We know, for instance, that 6.8% of adults have been victimized by identity theft, and a striking 43% of adults have received a phishing contact. In other words, there are hundreds of people out there sitting at their computers trying to enter and get information from us in terms of our numbers.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs. Munro: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Nepean-Carleton.

To begin my comments today I want to talk a little bit about what has historically been the purpose of a throne speech. It was designed as something that would offer to the public, to legislators, to everyone in the community, a major announcement that would clarify for everyone the vision of the future. Past governments always used this opportunity to lay out a plan: where they wanted to take the province, the manner in which they thought they would be able to make the province better and how they would carry out the promises they had made to the people at the time of the election.

Certainly, as a member of the previous government, I was very conscious of the fact that throne speeches were, in fact, those kinds of opportunities and that the throne speech then outlined the course that the government would follow. In doing so, they exposed in a way that was appropriate the principles upon which the government had made its election promises and the principles that stood behind the actions it was going to take.

But this throne speech, in this Legislature in 2005, has been reduced to a list of reannouncements. Policies that the government has neglected to get around to putting into effect and promises that remain broken are part of this throne speech. Many of the reannouncements are things that we've heard several times. A concern I have, which I think was shared by members of the press, is the fact that this government has failed to express a vision of the future, and so much of that is because of the fact that they have not been able to accomplish their goals from the past. So it really exposes, I think, a sense of concern amongst thoughtful people in that they make such promises, as we know, and then have trouble meeting them and also moving on to a new and improved vision of the future.

This is a very troubling trend that was certainly revealed in this. Again, going back to my own particular experience, when I was elected as part of a government, it was based on the idea that there were principles and from those principles flowed policies which translated into practical government action.

It seems to me that this is really the malaise of this government, and it showed in this throne speech. If you

look at the question of reannouncements, for instance, you can very easily find so many examples.

Even the question of coal-fired electricity generation: The government announced in its platform that it was committed to closing those, and steadfastly stayed with the 2007 date until just recently. It has now been changed to the 2009 deadline, but was, again, reannounced in this throne speech.

An announcement made again in the election platform had to do with drinking water protection at source, and again it's announced in this throne speech as if it were something new that the government was going to undertake.

Even smart meters: I remember those were being suggested, and again they appear in this throne speech, again with some deadlines. Obviously, it's fair to think that people are going to see them as moving targets.

I was interested that the member from Davenport even referred to the 1,000 police officers, because that was certainly something very clearly in the election platform, and in the throne speech it's again being reannounced.

People have talked about the fact that maybe there is nothing new in this throne speech. Well, I found a couple: the creation of two new Web sites—one to deal with class sizes and one to deal with waiting times. I think people are able to understand that the Web site notion is strictly an administrative bureaucratic proposal. It doesn't do anything to shorten wait times; it just means you can read about them. I think it tends to speak to that lack of vision that I mentioned at the very beginning.

Of course, the other new item is the question of the rebate. Certainly when I heard it, I couldn't believe a government would seriously be looking at such a gimmick as something like this. People actually want a birth certificate. That's really more important to them than the question of following a particular procedure which will then give them a rebate. That's really not what they are after.

As I studied the reannounced promises of this visionless throne speech, I was struck by the absence of any reference to culture. As the critic for culture, I searched for references to preserve our history and heritage. The word "culture" appears three times in the speech but not in a single reference to anything the Minister of Culture should be protecting. Does this government not realize that our provincial archives building is falling apart? Do they not think that preserving our documentary history is important? What political principle drove them to cut the budget of small-town libraries last summer? Is this the way to promote education? Don't they think libraries are important?

Preserving our heritage is a principle we value on this side of the House. That is why we were willing to sign an agreement to move our archives and to spend the money necessary to move them to a safe location. The Liberals cancelled the deal and are now doing nothing.

1630

As critic for children, I was shocked that in the Liberal throne speech no mention is made of supporting autistic

children. Everyone will remember how strongly the Liberal Party condemned the last government for not providing the support the Liberals thought was necessary, but at this time they are, instead, using taxpayer dollars to fight a court case. So you have to ask, what kind of party breaks its promise to those vulnerable children? What is the Minister of Children and Youth Services doing to speak up for children in Ontario? What is the Minister of Culture doing to protect our culture and heritage? The minister for children may be quiet, but the Minister of Culture is completely silent. Ontarians want to know that their representatives in this House and in the cabinet are speaking up for them.

I want to end my time by thanking someone who is making a difference for the children of Ontario. The Lieutenant Governor's book campaign is now up to 1.2 million books and has twinned 100 native schools with Catholic and public schools throughout the province. He deserves our thanks for the work he has done to help literacy for native children. Though I cannot support the motion in favour of the speech from the throne, I wholeheartedly endorse the Lieutenant Governor's campaign for children. I just wish this government would join him.

Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean—Carleton): I'm pleased to follow my friend from York region. She gave a very good speech, as she always does.

The motion on the reply to the speech from the throne really gives you a lot of latitude to talk about issues, not just the ones addressed in the throne speech but, as the member from Hamilton East who spoke earlier mentioned, items that were not in the throne speech.

This summer I saw a young girl I said I would mention in the Legislature. She sent me a picture. This young girl is from Perth, Ontario, and her name is Gracie Froggatt. So Gracie, if you're there, I say hello to you, and thank you for that picture you sent me.

I want to talk about two big issues that are affecting folks in my region. The first one is health care. When it comes to government services or priorities for public expenditure, health care continues to be a huge priority for people, not just in my riding of Nepean—Carleton but in our region and, I think, in the province and probably right across the country. There is a tremendous amount of concern about that. There are concerns in a variety of areas, whether it's the overall system or whether it's the front-line services that they need or they use.

We have a big debate going on in Nepean about the future of the Queensway Carleton Hospital. This hospital sits on federal government land and the federal government is trying to jack up the rent to full market rent on the land. Speaker, you're from Toronto and you would know: What would 50 acres be worth in the middle of Nepean? It's a huge concern that the hospital, as the past chair of the board said, will have to lay off up to 40 nurses or go cap in hand to the provincial government to get the money to pay for it. We've been working hard to try to support the hospital—the federal member, Pierre Poilievre, and I—and he has a motion that will be voted on in the House of Commons in about an hour's time.

I want to publicly thank a number of people for making this a non-partisan issue. The member for Nickel Belt, the New Democrat health critic, is supportive of our campaign to get the federal government to rent the land for \$1 a year. The Minister of Health, whom I spoke to about this and it was clear this was not an issue we were going after him or his government for, has signed our petition. I want to thank him for standing up for the hospital. Of course, if the hospital does have to get the rent, he will have to pony up the money to pay for that. If he ponies up any new money for our hospital, we want them to cut waiting times and we want them to hire more nurses, and not simply send more money to the federal government. I also want to thank the Minister of Health Promotion, Jim Watson, the member for Ottawa West–Nepean, who has supported this issue—it's difficult when there's a bit of a split federally and provincially—and Madeleine Meilleur, the Minister of Culture and also a local member from Ottawa. This is a very important issue. We're awaiting this vote in the House of Commons and hoping they might do the right thing.

I also want to talk about crime. I sit here in the Legislature beside Bob Runciman, a former Solicitor General and someone who has worked very hard on crime issues over the years. I have noticed a huge uptick in the concern level, not just about crime and law and order issues, but about people's personal security in the last six months in Ottawa. It surprised me a great deal. We had a tragedy in my riding—I spoke about it in this House—involving a young woman named Jennifer Teague who went missing and was tragically found dead some 10 days later. This is obviously a huge tragedy for her family and her friends.

I attended a dinner honouring Jennifer and raising funds for victims of violence, a nationwide group that advocates for victims, run by Gary Rosenfeldt and Sharon Rosenfeldt. I had the chance to hear Jennifer's father Ed and stepmother Sylvie speak at this event, and what class and what dignity they brought. This fundraiser was able to raise about \$20,000 to help victims of violence, which was a nice way to honour Jennifer's memory.

Following this tragedy, the real issue that I'm getting from the community, not just in south Nepean and Barrhaven but right across the area, is the need for more police officers, more front-line, uniformed officers on the street. It's something that's tremendously important, because what we're seeing out there is a culture of fear. You may look at the statistics.

The senior whom I talked to in Bayshore this summer, who's afraid to walk four blocks to the Swiss Chalet after dark, isn't in the statistics, but when she's afraid to go out of her house at night, she becomes a victim. I talked to a young student in my riding who's 17 years old and lives in Centreponte. He's been mugged three times. In one of them, he was injured and had to go to the hospital and spend two or three hours there. A young 17-year-old mugged three times in Nepean—that's not the community that I knew growing up, and it's one that causes us a

huge amount of concern. So more officers on the street is something important.

I've talked to the Minister of Community Safety and told him about the concern not just in south Nepean but in the community, about police officers, and I was very pleased. The minister of public security is probably the classiest member of this House. He's a very good guy. He was well aware of the situation in Ottawa. Chief Bevan and his team just arrested a suspect in the Ardeth Wood murder, which happened two years ago. He and his team have done a phenomenal job. The minister was very well aware of the situation in Ottawa. Chief Bevan happened to be here that day, and I was pleased that he was well aware of that issue.

There had been some debate. I talked to the minister and the chief about it—if Ottawa was shortchanged in the last go-round. The minister tells me they weren't, that they got a request and they got all that they applied for, that there wasn't initially enough regional money, city money, for it. The chief has another version of events, but whatever. We can make it better. The city of Ottawa has put in a request for 90 police officers, and the minister says we'll hopefully have some news before Christmas. That's something that's very, very important. We have, in this House, talked about this being announced seven times, but let's get moving on that, because it's a priority for people in our community.

Violent crime: People want more police officers on the street. People also want people who use guns in the commission of violent criminal actions to be put in jail. Daryl Kramp, a federal MP, has a private member's bill—five years minimum, no excuses, no first-time offence. If you use the gun in the commission of an offence, you're going to jail.

I have to say, though, that I sat in amazement today during question period, with the suggestion that if we just spend more money on basketball, that somehow—we've had 44 murders in the city of Toronto?—these violent gang members, these drug dealers, these criminals, are going to put down their arms and go and play basketball, and we'll all hold hands and sing Kumbaya. That's a namby-pamby approach to crime. I don't think it would work.

I did want to mention one thing on the government's agenda. It's on newborn screening. I have a private member's bill before the House—for more than a year now—that was first introduced by the member for Windsor, who's now the finance minister, to call for greater newborn screening. That's something that I hope we'll see more of in this session of the House. The government announced about a month and a half ago that it would follow through, but it just came forward with 19 additional diseases or conditions to be screened for. That would bring us to 21. They left the disease of sickle-cell out. They're looking at it, apparently. I don't want to see this program established without sickle-cell being included. We heard people at committee hearings in September come forward and talk about how important this is.

1640

Ontario's immigration: 75% of the immigration we get comes from areas where this condition is prevalent, not just Africa, but people of Middle Eastern background, people from the Caribbean and people from the Mediterranean area. In Africa, it's one out of 100. In the Caribbean, it's one out of 150. It's particularly important for the black community, not just here in the city of Toronto but for people in Ottawa, and I don't want to see the newborn screening train leave the station without that issue being addressed.

I also wanted briefly to congratulate the government on its response to the Pakistan earthquake. It's not the provincial government's job to get involved in international aid. I think this was very much an exception. This tragedy is so awesome, in a year of so many tragedies, that I think if there were to be an exception made, this was a nice effort. I attended a fundraiser put on by the Pakistani and Muslim community in Nepean not long ago. They raised a considerable amount of money but there is a huge amount of donor fatigue out there, with the tsunami, the situation in the United States, and now in Mexico and Florida.

I also wanted to talk about environmental issues. This was not contained in the throne speech. It's about what would happen if Michigan closes its doors to Toronto's garbage. There is huge concern growing in Ottawa and city council that both the Trail Road land facility that's located in my constituency or the private sector facility in Carp will become home for Toronto's garbage. I have tabled a resolution in this House that would require the city of Ottawa council to give its approval. We have been environmentally responsible when it comes to landfill and waste diversion, and I don't want to see that effort go down the drain. That is something we'll hear a terrific amount about in the weeks and months ahead.

I also finally, as did the member for York region, who spoke before me, congratulate the Lieutenant Governor. He got the only standing ovation of the speech, I say to the member from Niagara Centre, for his efforts with respect to literacy in the north and among First Nations. This guy is a class act—I think he would have been a great choice for Governor General of Canada—and I was thrilled. The member for Niagara Centre and I led the applause for him in that effort. It was the best moment of the throne speech and it was a great tribute to him.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Kormos: I'm pleased to pose questions and make comments on the contribution by Mr. Baird, the member for Nepean–Carleton, who I'm told has been nominated by the riding association of Ottawa West–Nepean to be the candidate for the federal Conservative Party, as distinct from the provincial Progressive Conservative Party, notwithstanding that Mr. Baird has been identified as very much a member of the progressive wing of the federal Conservative Party.

Mr. Baird will serve his constituents well in his new role as federal member of Parliament. I know he won't forget his colleagues at Queen's Park when he's sitting in

Ottawa, that from time to time he may send money because his salary will increase significantly, and in his senior years, when he's collecting a fat pension, I'm sure he will remember each and every one of us. Perhaps when, on occasion, in our own senior years without pensions, we're on the bus to Ottawa—perhaps with one of those seniors' groups touring Ottawa during the tulip season—Mr. Baird, with his pension, may see fit to take us out for a bite, maybe at Dunn's. There is a Dunn's in Ottawa now; there hadn't been a Dunn's for a while. If anything, I envy him the Dunn's restaurant, the smoked meat, that's just two blocks south of Parliament Hill.

I wish Mr. Baird well. I'm sure he will serve his constituents extremely well on Parliament Hill.

Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I want to acknowledge the member from York North, who spoke and is a very gracious person, and I want to acknowledge the member from Nepean–Carleton on his recent maturity in dealing with the debate. He has been known, as you well know, as being one of the more pesky members, with great enthusiasm and thunderous hyperbole. But I truly appreciate his comments this afternoon on what he identified as being important. I think he made his case well. I believe the members will take this to heart, and certainly the government will.

One area that I would like to build upon that he identified is crime. As you know, our government recently has responded specifically to situations in Toronto, although there has been a commitment that goes beyond simply the environs of Toronto. He identified the area of basketball, as if somehow that was what some people thought was the only solution. I would just like to elaborate on this thought because it has been brought up a few times. There is good, solid social research that shows that for certain communities that lacked recreational opportunities and had been provided with new opportunities of involvement and participation, this has played a significant role in the reduction of youth crime, in the reduction of youth offenders—and it's not just recreation. I think there has to be opportunity for job creation, for training, for people feeling that they have an opportunity to do that.

I'm not the type that suggests we should simply throw someone in prison, lock them up and throw the key away. If that were the case and that was the solution, the United States would have the greatest, or the lowest, crime rate of all because they have 10 times—

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington): I'm glad to have a chance to respond briefly to the comments by the member for York North and the member for Nepean–Carleton, who are sharing the available time in response to the speech from the throne. Everyone in the House is aware that the member for Nepean–Carleton, when the federal election is called, will be departing to run for a seat in the federal House of Commons. I know that he knows he has my best wishes, and I'm hopeful to have the chance to get up to his riding and give him a hand during the course of that election campaign. He has been

a very, very effective member of our caucus, one of our leading lights, one of our pillars, and we're going to miss him very much when he leaves. But at the same time he has done a very effective job in recent months. While being a nominated candidate and preparing for the election, he has, at the same time, discharged his responsibilities as an MPP in a very admirable manner. He served as Minister of Energy in our government and, I think, as the Minister of Community and Social Services for a time, and minister responsible for francophone affairs. In all of those responsibilities he comported himself with a degree of professionalism and dignity that will be, I think, very much appreciated by the House of Commons when he goes to serve there.

His comments on youth crime were very pertinent today. Certainly this has been a top-of-mind issue in Ontario in recent months. The level of crime in Toronto has been a serious problem. The government has recently seen fit to want to appear to respond in a meaningful way, but I think we have seen from the Liberal government in the past an unwillingness to address some of the root causes and an unwillingness to take the tough measures that are required to ensure that the streets in our communities across the province will be made safe once again. I would hope that the government will follow through on some of the rhetoric we heard this week from the Attorney General, but I must say that I am doubtful, given their past record on that particular issue.

Ms. Horwath: It's my pleasure to make some remarks on the discussion by the members from York North and Nepean–Carleton on the throne speech. I have to say that they both reflected on some of the unsolved mysteries in Ontario that the throne speech hasn't in any way addressed. That's a similar theme, although with different specifics, that members of the NDP caucus are raising in our criticisms of the throne speech.

The throne speech I think is something that not only needs to be criticized for what's in it, but significantly criticized for what ain't in it, and that's the crux of the matter from our perspective. There's a lot lacking in the throne speech. There's a lack of vision, in my humble opinion. There's a lack of understanding of the reality facing Ontario families, facing the ordinary people of Ontario. Their issues and concerns are falling on deaf ears apparently. If they're not falling on deaf ears, then it would take some convincing by government members to tell me how they're not falling on deaf ears, because the throne speech unfortunately doesn't do what some of these members talked about.

1650

I can just take one example. Earlier, one of the members on the government side was talking about all the great things that are happening, with a reduction of wait lists in the health care sector. Interestingly enough, the government unveiled their big announcement on their wait list reporting only to find out that half of the hospitals in Ontario aren't even sending the data that need to be inputted into the system to ensure that those wait lists are being appropriately reflected. So even their one, small health care change has been a dismal failure.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Nepean–Carleton has two minutes in which to respond.

Mr. Baird: Before I respond, I want to say that this guy, the member for Beaches–East York, got up the other day and demanded that a by-election be called in Rouge River, and the government retreated into defeat and yielded to his call. That expeditious manner is a rare success.

I want to thank the members for Niagara Centre, Ottawa Centre, Waterloo–Wellington and Hamilton East.

I agreed with the member for Hamilton East when she talked about the lunch-bag letdown when it came to the throne speech.

The member for Waterloo–Wellington talked about the crime rate. I really do think there's a lot of wisdom out there. I don't deny—and I appreciate the member's comments. I may be mellowing in my old age. I'm still pesky some days; I'm just going after different people, perhaps.

The member for Ottawa Centre has done a lot in his life, professionally and personally, with respect to young people and whatnot, and I support it all—no problem at all—but we cannot for a moment think that's enough. I firmly believe that if we've got people out there who are repeat sexual predators, send them to jail for a long time. There's a lot of wisdom out there among the general public that I think is sometimes lost on politicians.

Interruption.

Mr. Baird: That's the first time I've ever had cheering from the gallery. I've given many speeches which have elicited responses from the gallery, I say to the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr. Kormos: I encourage that kind of applause.

Mr. Baird: I say to the member for Niagara Centre with respect to the parliamentary pension, I think it will be a reach to suspect that I would get elected not once but two or three times. I think the riding I'm running in has not ever re-elected a Conservative in the modern age, let alone two or three times.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to the rest of the debate.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate.

Mr. Kormos: I think the current member for Nepean–Carleton is far too humble. He displays a humility that we've not seen before when he suggests that there will be anything formidable, any insurmountable hurdles or anything akin to insurmountable in him being elected in Ottawa West–Nepean. Mind you, I'm encouraging New Democrats in Ottawa West–Nepean to vote for the New Democratic Party candidate.

Mr. Baird: Marlene Riviere.

Mr. Kormos: Ms. Riviere.

Mr. Baird: OPSEU president at the Royal Ottawa.

Mr. Kormos: OPSEU president—very laudable.

I look at the reality of the numbers, the location and the profile of that riding and, as I say, there's going to be a good New Democrat running, there's going to be a good Conservative running, and may the most successful person of the two be elected.

Having said that, it came to us that depending upon what happens over the course of the balance of this week in Ottawa—think about this—this could well have been Mr. Baird's last speech in this chamber. I know he's a little choked up about it. I've not seen that side of Mr. Baird. I find it touching that he can display the softer part of John Baird, really. It's the emotional part of John Baird. It's the part of John Baird that will appeal to more than a few voters in Ottawa West–Nepean. But I tell you, it's joined with a person who has significant political experience and who I say will make the next Prime Minister's life hell in Ottawa, regardless of which party that Prime Minister belongs to.

I'm not particularly impressed with the federal question period, I'm really not, and I know Mr. Baird disagrees with me. I've watched it from time to time, and I think our question period can be far more effective than Ottawa's. But I will actually be tuning in from time to time, not on cable, because you know I'm not a fan of cable television. I encourage people to drop cable and get satellite.

Mr. Fonseca: John Tory wouldn't like that.

Mr. Kormos: Well, the cable companies have certainly disappointed Ontarians when it comes to their promise to include community content, haven't they? It's been nothing but token community content in order to comply with CRTC licensing. To boot, the product they deliver isn't particularly impressive either. Having said that, I want to speak to a particular element of the throne speech.

Folks know full well that the Chicken Farmers of Ontario were here at Queen's Park today. We in the New Democratic Party, with great pleasure, met with Paul Karges, Bill Woods and Adrian Rehorst of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario. This is a lobby. In fact, they're hosting a chicken wing event downstairs in the cafeteria during the supper hour this evening.

Interjection: Committee room 2.

Mr. Kormos: It's in committee room 2, which will be the cafeteria for the moment.

One of the things that the chicken farmers expressed interest in, as did I, in the throne speech was the proposition in the area that dealt with agriculture, or purported to: "Marketing Ontario food: Your government will work with the industry to develop a new branding and marketing strategy."

Indeed, it was only a week ago that Ms. Wynne, the member for Don Valley West, introduced her resolution in this House, which was supported by everyone, that talked about the expansion of the Foodland Ontario program, again, specifically for the purpose of promoting Ontario food. Chicken farmers, you see, suffer from the significantly high levels of chicken that the federal government allows to be imported as part and parcel of any number of trade agreements, and I endorse and applaud a program which allows any one of us in the province of Ontario, as consumers, to identify Ontario product and use that as part of our criteria for purchasing that product over a non-Ontario product.

In the case of chicken, it's particularly relevant, because we have, as we're told by the chicken farmers, the highest standards for the production of chicken for consumption. We have farmers who are committed to disease control, who have adopted all sorts of protocols to control disease to ensure that the product they're producing is the safest, most quality product that the Ontario consumer could ever get. What we learned today is that it's the chopped-up stuff, the "open the package and you're not really sure what it is" stuff that tends to be imported. We're told that most of the chicken that one buys in Ontario that's in whole pieces—even, dare one eat it, the nine-piece bucket at KFC—is probably Ontario chicken. It's once you get into the processed stuff, the mushy stuff, the indefinable stuff, the stuff you probably shouldn't be eating anyway, that you've got the imported product. The problem is that we just can't be sure how that chicken was raised, we can't be sure about the level of antibiotics and growth hormones that were incorporated into that chicken's diet during the course of its being raised, and we were cautioned today about that by chicken farmers.

1700

My concern is this—and I told the chicken farmers that unless they put real pressure on this government, this Foodland Ontario, this new branding and marketing strategy, is going to consist of little more than some magazine and newspaper ads and some banners in supermarkets.

Look at what this government has done to grape growers in Ontario, amongst other places, down where I come from in Niagara, where grape growers and advocates of Ontario produce have been pleading with this government, year in, year out, to ensure that only 100% Ontario grape product is marketed as Ontario wine, and that's notwithstanding the VQA label, which in and of itself does little by way of consumer knowledge about what "VQA" means in terms of 100% Ontario wine.

This government actually lowered the requirement for Ontario grape content in wine that is marketed as Ontario wine. How was it marketed as Ontario wine and still is? By God, in the liquor store over the weekend, there it is, the Ontario wine shelf, and there's the plonk, with imported garbage in it from any number of places, side by side with VQA wine on the Ontario-labelled shelf. That is misleading to consumers. That is a fraud upon consumers. That is a serious injustice to hard-working Ontario grape growers, whether they're in Niagara, whether they're out along the north shore of Lake Erie down toward Pelee Island or whether they're up where Richard Johnston and a small group of highly specialized boutique grape growers and winemakers are, up Bay of Quinte area, producing wine.

So I'm not very comforted by the mere observation in the throne speech that there's going to be a branding and marketing strategy when I see how the government has betrayed grape growers in Ontario.

I say this—and I put it to the chicken farmers—there should be clear labelling of product that is 100% Ontario

food product, and that includes chicken. It includes, quite frankly, beef; it includes anything else that farmers are producing or growing here in the province of Ontario, and that anything that isn't 100% Ontario product, that's even 5% foreign content—you see, the reason why we were told there's the drive to import foreign chicken is because inevitably it's cheaper. Supermarkets, we're told, presumably—and I don't know whether Loblaw's Mr. Galen Weston is among them—have import licences that are historical, that allow them to import certain quantities of chicken.

I say to this government that the throne speech promise of a branding and marketing strategy for Ontario food should have, as its fundamental prerequisite, the assurance that anything that's called "Ontario chicken," "Ontario apple juice," "Ontario tomato juice," "Ontario peach juice," "Ontario anything," should be 100% Ontario product, without one bit of non-Ontario product. That's what promoting Ontario farmers' efforts amounts to.

When is this government going to respond to the need to ensure that non-Ontario wine—oh, "cellared in Ontario" or "cellared in Canada," rather, which is what the label says, doesn't even imply fermented in Canada; it means what's happened, more often than not, is that grape juice is fermented on its way from Chile as it travels through the Panama Canal, and by the time it reaches Toronto harbour, it's some of the most horrible, acidic, fermented stuff that the big ones, people like Vincor and Andrés, because they're the two biggest utilizers of foreign grape content, then try to pass off in a not-so-subtle way as Ontario wine.

New Democrats told chicken farmers that we will stand with them. We'll stand with any farmer, because, look, unless we can help farmers persuade Ontario consumers that it's in their interest to buy and eat Ontario produce, whether it's beef, pork, lamb or chicken, then we're betraying those same farmers whom we call upon to perform stewardship over agricultural land here in the province of Ontario.

I've got a whole lot of chicken farmers down in Niagara region. These are pretty hard-working people. These are some young people. Some of the youngest farmers who are in the chicken farming industry made significant investments, worked really hard to deliver a quality product and feel, in my view, undermined by governments—federal and provincial—that won't help them promote their product as a distinctively Ontario product and one that warrants being purchased as first choice over other product, not just because it's made in Ontario, not just because of some sense of commitment to our neighbours—not that we shouldn't have this—but because it's actually inherently a better product because of the incredibly high standards that Ontario food producers abide by.

The throne speech, in the broadest sense: I told you before, I was sitting right here, Speaker. You were sitting up there right behind me. We were looking at Liberal backbenchers squarely, dead-on, and you never saw such a sombre group in your life. You'd think the parakeet had

just died. You'd think the dog had just run away. Not only was it unenthusiastic down here on the green carpet, but do you remember there was a day when you'd fill the visitors' galleries for the throne speech? Remember when there used to be standing room only for a throne speech? You can't even give tickets away to a throne speech now. I'm walking up and down Yonge Street, I'm grabbing people by the seat: "Do you want a ticket to the throne speech?" They'd say, "Is it McGuinty's throne speech?" I'd say yes. "Nah, not today."

Mr. Chudleigh: Were you scalping them?

Mr. Kormos: I was giving the darn things away. I started putting a \$5 bill in my hand with the throne speech ticket; people still wouldn't take it. I put a \$20 bill in my hand with the throne speech ticket; people were still telling me to pass on, get away from them and don't bother them. A McGuinty throne speech—not interested.

But not only was the public not interested, McGuinty's own backbenchers weren't interested. You never saw more faraway looks in your life. You never saw more blank looks on the faces of people who were clearly thinking and daydreaming about things totally unattached and unrelated to what was going on in this chamber. And the lack of enthusiasm—not only had nobody brought out their pom-poms, but nobody was cheerleading, never mind cheering. You couldn't generate a round of applause.

Mr. Baird told you it was the Lieutenant Governor who got the only round of applause, the interrupting of his speech—and well deserved. I gave Baird an elbow—I don't know whether he started it or I, but we agreed that the Lieutenant Governor deserved a standing ovation because of the work he has done and the comments he made—and I said, "Just watch; it will be the only one of the whole afternoon," and it was, wasn't it?

I have watched, listened to and sat through a lot of throne speeches. I have sat through good ones, not so good ones and bad ones. But even in the bad ones, the backbenchers could feign enough enthusiasm so that they could muster up some applause, some modest cheering, even on a bad day. Not a murmur. Whether it was indigestion, whether it was some bad pizza for lunch, I have no idea, but you never saw such a sombre group, downright sullen, moody, not even temperamental to the point of displaying anger, but just a bland response to a bland throne speech. It was remarkable.

There were people nodding off in the group of visitors here. I saw people tugging on other people's sleeves, jerking them awake. You could hear the soft snoring of people who had actually fallen asleep. You could hear the soft rustle of snoring by people who had actually fallen asleep.

The Lieutenant Governor—God bless him. We are truly fans of his, and I say this in all seriousness, but that was probably the toughest day of his career as Lieutenant Governor here in Ontario, because once he got through the first 10 minutes or so, where he talked about some of the great things he has been able to do, the rest of it—I can't read minds but sometimes you get a pretty good idea. Do you know what I mean? You just read the body

language and sort of read the tone. It's just one of those things, as you accumulate years in life, you get a knack for doing it. If there was one of those MAD Magazine bubbles above the Lieutenant Governor's head, what he's saying and what he's really thinking, he'd be going, "My God, this is tepid, pappy stuff," because that's what he was really thinking. Do you remember MAD Magazine? The pages know MAD Magazine, right? It's what the guy is really saying, and then what he's really thinking. Nothing has changed much in 40 years. Everything old is new again.

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Mr. Baird: It was kind of debasing for him to have to do the money-back-guarantee thing.

Mr. Kormos: Then; oh, yes. Look, the Lieutenant Governor is a great guy. He earns every penny of a relatively modest salary. He ain't no Adrienne Clarkson, I'll tell you that. No, I mean she can spend money. She's something else—Adrienne and her friends. Mr. Bartleman doesn't make a big salary, and there he is. He's actually got to come up with a Canadian Shopping Channel line. It's like a Pizza Pizza ad. It's like something you see at 2 o'clock in the morning, when you can't sleep too well and you're watching obscure cable channels. That Her Majesty's representative should have been subjected to this indignity should tear at the heart of every monarchist in this province. To force Her Majesty's representative—to force him—to impose such poor taste on him, to make him utter language that is far more appropriate to the Canadian Shopping Channel, to make His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor—

The Acting Speaker: A point of order from the member from Mississauga West?

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I quote from standing order 23(1), which forbids members from speaking "disrespectfully of Her Majesty or any of the royal family, or the Governor-General, or any administrator of Canada, or the Lieutenant Governor."

The Acting Speaker: The member has raised a point of order, but I did not hear any disrespect intended in the statements. If the member can point me to where the disrespect was actually stated—I did not hear disrespect to Her Majesty or the Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Delaney: To impute that a representative of the crown was bored or in any other way disturbed by the speech from the throne may be disrespectful, and I submit that for your judgment.

Mr. Baird: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I was wondering if you might reset the clock so that I might enjoy what could be the last speech I hear the member from Niagara Centre give.

The Acting Speaker: I will be a little lenient if he wants, but we're still dealing with the point of order. The point of order has been made but I do not see the disrespect to which the member alludes. The member can continue the speech. Reset the clock for one minute and a half.

Mr. Kormos: I seem to be the only person in this chamber who's concerned about the dignity of her

Majesty and her representative here, the Lieutenant Governor. I'm expressing concern for the dignity of the Lieutenant Governor. The throne speech was authored in such a way that he has to stand up there and say, "Your money back; your money refunded if you don't get it in 15 days." That reminds me of the world's three greatest promises: "The cheque is in the mail; your money cheerfully refunded," and, "Hi, I'm from the government and I'm here to help you."

I say to you, Speaker, that I find it amazing that I'm the only one so far who has come to the defence of Her Majesty and her representative the Lieutenant Governor. If anything showed disdain and disregard for that important office, it was knowing full well that the Lieutenant Governor was going to fulfill his responsibilities to read the throne speech and then writing one that smacked of hucksterism, that smacked of the language that's more familiar to carnival barkers than it is to throne speeches: "Your money back if you don't get your birth certificate in 15 days." People don't want their money back. They're prepared to pay for the birth certificate. They just want the birth certificate. The question that remains to be asked is—fair enough, "Your money back if you don't get your birth certificate in 15 days." But I predict that it will take two years to get your money back, and you'll have to call your MPP's office three times before that happens.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce): I'm very pleased to respond to the member from Niagara Centre. I want to congratulate the member for Niagara Centre for making reference to the agricultural component of the throne speech. I thank you for that.

I also would like to thank the member for meeting with the chicken farmers today, and just so the member understands, he has 12 chicken farms in his riding, which I'm sure he was very much aware of, but I thank you for taking the time and meeting one of my chicken farmers, Adrian. I'm sure he kept you very well informed.

I would like to add a comment from the OFA, as the member has chosen to speak to the agricultural component. I quote from Ron Bonnett, the president of the OFA: "The recent speech from the throne—the McGuinty government's road map to the future—offered hope in a number of areas for Ontario agriculture...."

"The speech listed three priorities for agriculture—innovation to support research and development, marketing Ontario food products, and improved levels of farm income based on new risk management and production insurance programs."

I want to thank the member once again for raising the awareness of the agricultural community, and we know that with your support we will continue to make the agricultural community even stronger by not only buying Ontario, but certainly by a raised level of understanding of what our rural communities can do, which was certainly reflected in the throne speech. So we thank the member for the support for the throne speech.

Mr. Baird: I appreciated the speech by the member for Niagara Centre, as I always do. As the member

opposite has indicated, he has 12 chicken farms in his riding. In my constituency, we're more dairy and corn and soybeans. I don't think we have any chicken farms in Nepean–Carleton, to my knowledge, but I know the member is a strong supporter of the agricultural sector.

I couldn't agree more with him, though, when he talked about the debasing of—

Mr. Kormos: Humiliation.

Mr. Baird: He says the “humiliation” of His Honour in having to talk about these lines that would be more likely coming from Mel Lastman's son in a television commercial where he wears the con outfit. So the hucksterism and carnival barking, as the member talked about, was regrettable, and it was a sad day. That type of stunt would make Mike Harris and his communications people blush. They never went to that level.

I found his comments on the wine industry to be quite interesting. I, too, find it a real concern that the government has approved a regulation to have Ontario wine labelled “made in Ontario” with as little as 1% of the grapes being from Ontario. I understand the real, short-term considerations that the industry is facing this year, but I think it could do serious, long-term damage to the wine industry. If people are drinking what amounts to grape juice from Chile, with maybe a few drops of Ontario—

Interjection.

Mr. Baird: I'm saying you brought in a regulation saying you could have 99% Chilean grape juice in a bottle labelled Ontario wine. You don't even know that, that's the disgraceful part, but thank goodness the member from Niagara Centre is here pointing this out and standing up for his constituents. It was a terrific speech, and I look forward to many more. I look forward, when he comes to Ottawa, to taking him out for a smoked meat sandwich.

Ms. Horwath: Unfortunately I think the member from Nepean–Carleton is not going to be able to be here to hear many more of Peter Kormos's speeches, at least not in person. Certainly I know he'll be in tune on the Ontario legislative channel, finding out exactly what's happening, or maybe not happening, in the province of Ontario.

I'm pleased, actually, as well, that the member from Niagara Centre spent some time on some of the local economic issues that really make a difference in communities across the province. It's interesting to note that in the throne speech the government spent a lot of time talking about economic this and economic that, but when you talk to any one of these sectors, many of them are very concerned about what's happening in Ontario.

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Interestingly enough, another big piece of the government's self-congratulatory framework is around the health care sector. I just came from a little meeting that is happening downstairs in the dining room. It's a gathering of registered practical nurses of Ontario. They are there to educate the MPPs on what is happening in the health care sector on the front lines. I think these members, as

they go around talking about all their massive accomplishments, need to actually sit down and listen to some of those registered practical nurses of Ontario and hear what they have to say about what's really happening in the health care system, and what they are talking about in terms of lack of real patient care, lack of real attention to the needs of patients in Ontario, real concern about the hurry-up way people are shoved out the door of hospitals, not given enough time to heal and get well and thereby ending up back in hospital weeks down the road when they discover their healing process isn't working out, and it isn't working out because they were quickly kicked out the door.

This is a big problem that's occurring in the health care system. Maybe the government should take some time to fix that problem.

Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham–Kent Essex): I'm pleased to have a few moments to speak about the throne speech. It seems that in the last few moments persons have wanted to speak about agriculture, which is very close to me, as you would know, Mr. Speaker.

I had an opportunity today to meet with grain and oilseed producers. Many of them are completing their harvest this year. They are coming and wanting to talk about their situation. I also met with chicken producers at noon hour today, and talked to them about their industry and how things are doing with them. It's always a pleasure to meet people from the rural community here at Queen's Park. I meet them on a regular basis in my riding, of course, on the streets, in the stores and at my office as an MPP.

They were pleased that our government, through the throne speech, mentioned agriculture. They were very pleased to know that we talked about the support in the past and the support we hope to give to agriculture in the future. I know they were pleased about it because they mentioned to me that in the two previous throne speeches by the then Conservative government, agriculture was never mentioned. So they were pleased that they are on the radar screen with the McGuinty government and with the new minister, that our rural caucus and our urban caucus as well appreciate and understand that agriculture, being the second most prolific industry in Ontario, needs to have the support of their government.

Through those enunciations in the throne speech, it was relayed to the broader agriculture community—agri-business, some of our universities and colleges that deliver programs in an agricultural way—that we are here to assist them into the future, because we know how important the agriculture business is to all our communities, urban and rural.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Niagara Centre has two minutes in which to respond.

Mr. Kormos: We're going to be back tonight. Tonight we're going to be talking about Bill 169. We are going to be talking about the shafting that particularly the Toronto taxicab drivers are going to be getting from the Liberals here at Queen's Park. Boy, they're going to be run over, rolled over, driven over. They're going to be

dragged sideways behind speeding limos from Pearson airport. The taxi drivers are going to take a beating from the Liberals at Queen's Park.

They're as mad as all get-out; they're mad as all Hades. You heard them circling Queen's Park just last week—at least you had no trouble getting a cab—horns honking, because they're getting it done to them by the Liberals at Queen's Park.

So we're going to be debating that bill. The regrettable thing about Bill 169 is that there are some things in Bill 169 that every member of this assembly supports. But there is the incredible attack on taxicab drivers. Those guys work hard. They work a dangerous job. They work in the coldest of weather, the muckiest of weather, and here it is: This government is handing over their livelihood to limo drivers who have the monopoly at Pearson for taking people from Pearson airport. So this government has opened the door and given a carte blanche to the limo drivers in their Lincoln Town Cars, their Mercedes-Benz S600s and their Cadillac DeVilles. This government's giving carte blanche to the Lincoln Town Car, Cadillac and Mercedes-Benz limo crowd to scoop taxi fares at hotels in Toronto, yet at the same time denies any reciprocal power for cab drivers. New Democrats say that what's good for the goose is good for the gander. It's a shame that the Liberals wouldn't give taxicab drivers a similar right to work in their area in the city of Toronto as they've given limo drivers to work at Pearson airport.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot): I'll be sharing my time with the member from Mississauga West.

As I was growing up, Mum would often offer advice. One thing she said to me was that the most important journey any of us could travel was what she called the one-foot journey—the distance from the head to the heart. I was thinking of that the other day as I was listening to the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey respond to the throne speech. I listened very carefully, because I believe the Leader of the Opposition to be a man of substance and quite impressive in the way he presents himself. Certainly the rhetoric was there. But as interested as I was in listening, I became very concerned with the general tenor of the sharing. Perhaps it's to be expected in this place—roles and what have you—but his general tenor was that the government on this side simply can't be trusted. In that regard, I think he was quite optophobic. Optophobia, of course, is the fear of opening one's eyes. In that context, I think his comments were certainly unfortunate and, in many instances, unfair.

Why do I say that? It's because our present circumstances, if nothing else, are a reflection of past choices, just as current choices will be a reflection of our future circumstances. It's been said that politicians campaign in poetry and govern in prose. I think that's true. In that context, I want to add my own personal observation: I think good government is about closing the gap between the poetry and the prose, and that's not always an easy thing to do.

I was particularly struck with the emphasis that the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey seemed to place on broken promises. I say that because I think there's fairly ample evidence that when the previous government was in power, they suffered from attention deficit disorder. In fact, I think there's a huge difference between a broken promise and breaking the public trust. Of course, I am talking about the almost \$6-billion deficit that we found. As I listened to the comments, I got to thinking, it's interesting to hear all this stuff about broken promises. I want to say, by the way, that had that \$6 billion been there, we could have been doing a lot more, and a lot more quickly, and we certainly would have. That's the simple truth.

The previous government made commitments just before and during the election campaign to open 18 new hospitals, but there was no money allocated for that. The Leader of the Opposition made reference to the debt being equal to what we spend in education, but he made no reference to the fact that next to the New Democrats, the previous government added more to the provincial debt than any other party in Ontario history. He talked about the Who Does What relationship with municipalities, without ever mentioning that the Who Does What task force was a previous government initiative. They got the best advice they could get that money could buy before completely ignoring it.

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They talked about tuition fees and the like, without ever acknowledging that under their tenure, tuition fees went up 50%. Then, to top it all off, there was some reference to Soviet-style, centralized, controlled health care. My goodness. What could be further from the truth, with this government's emphasis on the development of local health integration networks?

By the way, my community council, which meets regularly in the great riding of ADFA, commented that they thought that was the single best and most enlightening transformation that our government was launching.

Now, we know that while certain arguments and issues are, from time to time, recycled in this place, there's one thing that we can't recycle, and that's wasted time. So we're getting at it as best we can, and we've come to government with some new understandings: We understand that there's a big difference between knowing what is best and bringing out the best. We understand that we need to work with people rather than pitting neighbour against neighbour. Why? Because the best way to move forward is to listen, to learn and then to act. So we've established a consultative milieu here at Queen's Park and, more importantly, throughout Ontario, unlike the previous government, that is helping us to move forward in prudent and pragmatic ways.

We also understand that policy must be pragmatic, directed by reason, supported by principle and designed to achieve the greatest good. We know that great things are done not by impulse but by a series of good things that are brought together. It's like a puzzle that has to fit together.

We also know that action is a restorer of confidence. We've seen a lot of inaction, the result caused by fear, but action is the restorer of confidence. That's why we've been moving forward in some of the areas that were so optimistically shared in the throne speech: post-secondary education; ending the educational chaos; replacing the barriers and the riot police with some peace and stability in this province; recruiting specialized teachers; more textbooks; enhanced community use of schools; 1,300 new high-school teachers; more English-as-a-second-language funding; acknowledging that test scores, for the first time in a long time in our public schools, are going up; and 25,000 new child care spaces being provided.

On the post-secondary front, we're making the largest investment in post-secondary education in the last 44 years. I've got to just share quickly that when we made that announcement about post-secondary education—as you know, we're not to make comments from the gallery. There was a comment from the west gallery there, and I looked up, thinking to myself, “What sort of foolish person is up there making that comment?” You know who it was? It was former Premier Bill Davis. He was on his feet, applauding Premier Dalton McGuinty's Reaching Higher initiative for implementing a report written by a former NDP Premier, Bob Rae. I thought, what interesting days. I went home optimistic that day, that maybe there was still the odd instance where we could transcend narrow, partisan ideologies and actually work together for the greater good.

On the health front, we have 80 new health care teams out there. We're going to graduate 23% more doctors. We're going to increase CAT scans by 8%, cancer surgeries by 11%, cataract surgeries by 16%, cardiac procedures by 17%, hip and joint replacements by 28%. There are 3,000 new nurses, new long-term-care funding for our vulnerable seniors, and a new emphasis on prevention with the creation of the new ministry.

Some may say that's nothing, that it's inconsequential, that there's nothing at all there in the budget, but I want to tell you, a combination of post-secondary education and health care transformation, coupled with our commitment to strengthening relationships with municipalities through a new City of Toronto Act—that's meaningless, I assume—and gas tax being shared with municipalities for the first time. This is the first government in Canada to do that. There is the creation of a new Greater Toronto Transit Authority and, to top all that off, a commitment to unparalleled transparency with respect to fiscal issues.

I want to say in the last few seconds I have that it's clear to me—and yes, I'm biased; after so many years of watching what's been happening on the other side, it's hard not to be—that hope is on the way. We're doing more than keeping a wet index finger in the air, trying to see which way the wind is blowing. We're trying to be real wind-changers in Ontario.

Mr. Delaney: A new speech from the throne is both a time for a government to refocus its agenda and to celebrate what progress the government has made. I'm

pleased to stand here, representing the Mississauga West communities of Streetsville, Meadowvale, Lisgar, Erin Mills and Churchill Meadows. I bring a special greeting to the brand new development of Churchill South, a neighbourhood that Andrea and I are now pleased to call home.

The government that the people of Mississauga helped elect sent me and five other MPPs, all Liberals, here to the Ontario Legislature to make a difference. We came to make a difference for all Ontarians and especially to bring local active and responsive representation to the 680,000 people in fast-growing Mississauga.

I want to acknowledge the driving force that has towered over our city of Mississauga since its inception as a city. Earlier this year, our dynamic mayor, Hazel McCallion, was named to the Order of Canada. Here in this Legislature let me say, Madam Mayor, that we are all very proud of you and we all celebrate your elevation to the Order of Canada.

Let me also acknowledge Mississauga's Citizen of the Year, Jake Dheer, who is our Rogers Cable TV station manager. I will recognize Jake in this House in more detail next month. Let me also acknowledge another leader in our city, our newspaper editor, Steve Pecar, who serves as a volunteer in the host program at Inter-cultural Neighbourhood Social Services. By their leadership, these two people typify the many thousands of Mississauga people who serve their community and who help build their community as volunteers day to day.

Mississauga's people have worked together to create Ontario's third-largest city, a city that is home to 50 of Canada's Fortune 500 companies. Our government's throne speech outlines many of the things Mississauga can celebrate because of the work our Mississauga MPPs have done and the work our government has done. Each year some 20,000 people make Mississauga their new home. Many of those move into the western Mississauga area that I represent. For years, people in western Mississauga have appealed to Queen's Park to help them build lives, careers and communities. Those needs fell on deaf ears for 13 long years, but how quickly times have changed. Since 2003, we've opened three new elementary schools in Mississauga West, and we have two new high schools nearing completion to serve the new families moving into Lisgar and Churchill Meadows.

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to announce funds to help our public and Catholic schools upgrade old buildings. I visited Vista Heights, a school built nearly 50 years ago, and asked a group of grade 5 students what part of their school needed improvement most. The first thing the students cried out was, “Girls' bathroom,” and that was followed by the gymnasium and the library, and they are going to get their wish.

Our 2005 budget laid out a historic \$6.2-billion multi-year investment in post-secondary education. That was music to the cultivated ears of Ian Orchard, principal of the University of Toronto at Mississauga, which we call Erindale College. It also delighted the young men and women who aspire to knowledge-intensive careers.

Our fellow Canadians in Alberta are building their future on the natural resources in the Athabasca tar sands, which now rank as among the world's best oil reserves. Ontario is building its future on the natural talent, brain power, work ethic and entrepreneurial drive of the men and women in Ontario. Post-secondary education builds the talent pool of tomorrow's managers, entrepreneurs, professionals, scientists and risk takers. Our throne speech reaffirms this commitment. Unlike fossil fuels, Ontario's brainpower is a renewable resource.

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People in Mississauga need to get around—get around from where they live to where they work or where they do business—and if you're from Mississauga, boy, do you know all about gridlock and traffic. That's why the government of Ontario has stepped in and done something. Some \$1 billion worth of work is underway right now on Peel's provincial roads alone. Earlier this year, after bringing the needs of our commuters to this Legislature with my petitions, the Minister of Transportation and I were able to announce a new GO train station to be built in Lisgar. Two weeks ago, I met with the executive of the Lisgar Residents' Association. We reviewed the design proposals from GO Transit, and we all liked the red brick, peak roof, traditional-looking train station. Lisgar station, located where 10th Line crosses the tracks, will be the first new GO rail station in Mississauga in 25 years, and, Mississauga West, we got it. Our new Lisgar station will open in 2007, and construction will be underway early next spring. It will look very much like a traditional Canadian railway station. It will allow much of the east-west traffic that clogs our roads at Derry, Aquitaine, Battleford, Britannia, Thomas and Eglinton to flow north and will ease our rush-hour traffic congestion.

Our government also listened to the people of Streetsville, who told me that for the last few GO trains, a commuter faces a lengthy walk from the back of the parking lot to the station, then to the underpass and only then on to the platform. I spoke with GO Transit. They've been a fine team and a delight to work with. They sent an analyst to assess the situation at Streetsville, and he agreed with me and with Streetsville residents. In response, GO Transit will construct a tunnel near Thomas Street to enable commuters who have their monthly passes or who have purchased tickets to get those tickets cancelled and take a shortcut directly on to the platform. As well, GO trains will soon be 12 cars instead of 10. While this requires the upgrade of GO's fleet of locomotives, this will keep the cars from being "standing room only" after only three stations.

We're not finished with transit yet. Our public infrastructure renewal minister listened again, and a badly needed third track on the Milton GO line is on Ontario's very extensive public infrastructure renewal plan. We need that third track to restore all-day GO service on the Milton line, and we need that third track because CP Rail, its owner, is using it at nearly 100% of its capacity for freight.

Mississauga, this is a government that has listened to you and that is moving ahead on your concerns and helping you to get from where you are to where you need to go, where you need to work and where you need to do business.

Few cities in the world have grown faster than Mississauga, and on my watch as their MPP, no fewer than three long-term-care seniors' residences have opened in Mississauga West because seniors are our fastest-growing demographic. What this means is that our dynamic and fast-growing Mississauga community has also fallen behind in health care. The motto of our Credit Valley Hospital is, "World class, right here." No matter how good our people are—and they are terrific—we are well below the capacity that we need to serve the legitimate needs of our community. Just as one measure, our hospital was built to handle 2,700 births per year, and it handles 5,000. Day after day, we petitioned our government, and our government listened.

On August 22 of this year—coincidentally, my own birthday—the Minister of Public Infrastructure—

Interjection: Happy birthday.

Mr. Delaney: I knew I shouldn't have said that. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and I stood in front of hundreds of staff and patients at Credit Valley Hospital and announced that phase 2 will break ground in fiscal year 2007-08. It's a tight schedule, and our hospital is working closely with both ministries. We want to get that ceremonial spade in the ground, and we want to get that facility open, and I know I can count on their help and their co-operation.

Minister, on behalf of our community, I've petitioned our government to thank you for your help and your co-operation on phase 2 at Credit Valley Hospital, and I know that I can continue to count on your co-operation.

Finally, our government listened to Mississauga in its ongoing reform of Peel region. We have about 63% of the population of Peel, a proportion that will continue in the coming years, but Mississauga had only 48% of the votes on Peel regional council. Our government brought fairness back to representation on Peel regional council. We stood up for Mississauga. The other parties in this House trashed our city and slagged our mayor. The citizens of Mississauga are going to remember that.

This is a government that has delivered for Mississauga. Our throne speech lays out the blueprint for many more years of partnership with the city, with the businesses that help it grow and with the men, women, students and families in our great city of Mississauga. It's been a pleasure to stand to discuss the speech from the throne, Speaker, and I thank you for your time.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Arnott: I'm pleased to have a chance to respond to the member for Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot and the member for Mississauga West. They've split their time this afternoon so that both of them could make a contribution on behalf of their constituents, and I think both of them gave fine speeches representing the views of the people who reside in their constituencies.

Of course, in this throne speech debate, it is customary that there are almost no limits to the subject under discussion, and as such, I want to also inform the House, as a number of other members have today, that I was pleased to have an opportunity to meet with representatives of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario today in my office and to see their display out front this morning. I'm looking forward to attending their event later on this afternoon and early evening. I am starving; I'm very hungry, and I'm looking forward to eating the chicken wings or whatever else they have for us, and I would certainly encourage all members of the House to avail themselves of that opportunity as well.

I'm looking forward to hearing the speech from the member for Cambridge—he's coming up next for our party—and I want to express support for the issue that he has brought forward in recent days in this Legislature, that being the need for the provincial government to come through with a financial commitment to rebuild and upgrade the Cambridge hospital.

The member for Cambridge has now brought forward this issue on a number of occasions. So far, the Minister of Health, I'm afraid, has been indifferent, at best, to the presentation of the problem and, at worst, dismissive. I would suggest to him that it's important to the needs of the constituents, not only in Cambridge but in Waterloo region, that the necessary work and upgrades at Cambridge hospital be undertaken as soon as possible. I would encourage the government to revisit the issue, to listen to the member for Cambridge and come forward with the commitment that is necessary to ensure that the health care needs of the people of Cambridge are met.

Ms. Horwath: I too am pleased to make some comments on the remarks from the member for Mississauga West and the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot, my good friend Ted McMeekin, who is a neighbour of mine, geographically in some ways, and who I had the pleasure of serving on our regional council—that was before amalgamation in our good region, at the time of Hamilton–Wentworth.

I was vigorously looking through this reference book, because it struck me that many of the speakers tonight have been talking about the chicken farmers. And why I was looking through my little reference book here is because it struck me that the reason everybody's all excited about the chicken farmers is, yes, of course they've come and spent some time informing members of this House about their industry and the things they need, but they also provided each member with some memorabilia to remember them by. The reason I thought about it is because my son has a particular term—my son Julian Leonetti, who maybe is watching tonight; hopefully, he's doing some homework—for these bits of memorabilia or gifts to remember these corporations or organizations by, and it's called “schwag.”

So, the chicken farmers provided us with very interesting schwag, including a little chicken stress ball, which, I must admit when I look at the throne speech, I need to use a little bit because it stresses me out that the

throne speech was a bit lacking for the people of Ontario—but also a T-shirt and a little recipe book about how to cook chicken wings and a drinking mug.

I have to say, notwithstanding all of the other extremely important parts about the chicken farmers and the agricultural industry and the province of Ontario generally, those chicken farmers sure know how to put together a good package of schwag for the MPPs.

1750

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): I'm happy to comment on the remarks of the members from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot and Mississauga West. I have to say that in Don Valley West, what I hear from my constituents—from my seniors' advisory council, for example—is that they are very happy we're investing in home care. They're very happy we're moving on local health integration networks and trying to graduate more doctors from medical school. The ratepayer groups in my area are eagerly awaiting Ontario Municipal Board reform. They're happy we're moving on a City of Toronto Act. They're really pleased we're investing in transit. On education, the parents' and the teachers' groups that come to talk to me really are very clear that the tone in education has shifted from one of confrontation.

All those groups that come to talk to me acknowledge there's more to do, but they also know that the stated goal of the previous government was to tear down what had been built up in this province for decades. What we're doing is reinvesting in infrastructure and innovation. We are investing in the future of this province in a very responsible way.

I think that's what the member for ADFA, as he calls it, was laying out in response to what our throne speech said: “Here's what we're doing. Here's our plan.” We're not saying that it's all done, that we have accomplished everything we set out to accomplish. We're on the road, however. We've turned the ship around and we're in a positive, building mode in this province. I think that's reflected in the people who come into our constituency offices and say, “OK, you're on the right track. Where are you going next?” That's what the throne speech was about: to point in that future direction. I am happy we have come as far as we have.

Mr. Chudleigh: It's interesting that the member would say, “We haven't finished yet.” The people of Ontario would like you to start pretty soon. Stop breaking promises and get on with some of the things you talked about doing. You should start the program pretty soon. It's time. It's been two years. It's over two years into your mandate and it's time to get going on that.

One of the problems with this throne speech was it didn't have a vision. There was no vision of the future in this throne speech. There was nothing. It was a regurgitation of broken promises from the first throne speech. It didn't have a clear vision of what Ontario can be in the future.

Much of your criticism is focused on the past, and I can tell you that in the past the people of Ontario helped

with the policies our government put in place. The people of Ontario created over a million new jobs. There were a million new dreams fulfilled, a million new people who came home and said those four magic words: "I got the job." That's a wonderful way to create a vision for Ontario, an Ontario that is working, instead of killing 42,000 manufacturing jobs with your tax increases and your increased costs of health care and electricity, increased costs every time you turn around. You're killing the incentive. You're killing the ability of small business in Ontario to reinvest in itself, and that's where our productivity is disappearing to. You can no longer afford to reinvest in the new equipment and new technology you need to maintain the productivity growth in which this province has led this country.

You're taking the economic engine of Canada and turning it into a caboose with your increased cost of doing business in this province every time you turn around. Every time you turn around, there's more money to pay out to the government from small businesses, and that's killing this province.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot has two minutes to respond.

Mr. McMeekin: On behalf of my colleague from Mississauga West, I want to thank the members from Waterloo–Wellington, Hamilton East, Don Valley West and Halton for their comments.

There's a fresh breeze blowing across Ontario. It's the wind of change, long-delayed change designed to ensure that the food we eat, the air we breathe and the water we drink are safe; change designed to promote innovation and prosperity; to ensure a strong, viable automobile strategy; to create new jobs—in fact 200,000 new jobs to date—and more co-op and apprenticeship programs; change to enhance farm safety nets and to bring added value to agricultural stakeholders; change to restore and maintain stability and civility in our education system; to place a new emphasis on local health care decision-making; to protect our sacred green spaces from senseless urban sprawl; and along the way, to acknowledge and promote greater conservation.

I didn't speak much about the democratic renewal initiatives. We could easily have spent 20 minutes just on those, but I want to say that we're seeing democratic renewal in this place every single day.

I want to close by saying to all the people who may be viewing this that we on this side of the House, and I hope on the other side of the House, want to acknowledge all the local community champions who are prepared every single day to care and share and dare with each one of us to build the stronger, healthier, more caring and sustainable communities we all desire, because the throne speech was for them.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I have the opportunity to speak for three minutes before we join the chicken broilers down in the dining room. Unfortunately, it doesn't leave a lot of time because I'd like to speak

about our hospital. I noted in the throne speech that there was really no mention of capital funding. There was an announcement some months ago in which the McGuinty government announced \$100 billion for capital spending in Ontario, and I thought, boy, that was a pretty impressive number. Unfortunately, if you read down to the second line, the next thing you realize is that that \$100 billion was not over the next five, not 10, not even 15 years; it was over the next 30 years. Now, how can one project a lifetime of spending? That's almost a lifetime.

I get the feeling that they took today's capital funding for this year and said, "We have to come up with a round figure. What would we like—\$25 billion, \$50 billion, \$75 billion, \$100 billion? Boy, that has a ring to it. That is a whole lot of money." So they arrived at that over 30 years. And you know, it worked; that's the strange part. I've watched the newspapers. The headline or the byline—strangely enough, in our newspaper trade, reporters who write the stories do not write the bylines on many occasions. They're written by two different people, and I don't know who writes the bylines. On many occasions I've noted that they really have nothing to do with the story that follows it. However, throughout Ontario, as I followed the story, the byline was: "\$100 Billion for Capital Spending in Ontario." Then later, you find out it was over 30 years.

Our hospital, out of that \$100 billion, seems to be getting absolutely nothing for capital costs, even though in 2002 the Ontario restructuring committee mandated an expansion of this hospital, an expansion of 83 beds, an expansion of the emergency ward, an expansion, for the first time—Cambridge had not had schedule 1 psychiatric beds for individuals who needed care. A project that was approximately \$70 million was, I take it—

The Acting Speaker: I'm afraid it is 6 o'clock and I must now put the question.

On October 13, 2005, Mr. Crozier moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session."

On Monday October 17, 2005, Mr. Tory moved that the motion for an address in reply to the speech from the throne be amended by striking out all the words after, "We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session," and replacing them with the following:

"However, the current speech from the throne ignores the real problems faced by real working families throughout Ontario; and

“Whereas, in place of real action for Ontario’s families this throne speech offers nothing more than warmed-over old announcements and ‘novelty items’; and

“Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardship imposed by the new Liberal health tax during an already difficult time; and

“Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardships that Ontarians face in paying more for electricity, home heating and vital medical care; and

“Whereas the throne speech continues to neglect the mounting problems of nursing supply, wait-lists or timely access to care; and

“Whereas, based on this Liberal government’s broken promises in their first throne speech ... Ontarians have valid reason to doubt the contents of the current one.

“Therefore, I regret to inform His Honour that the current Liberal government has failed to keep its election commitments, failed to listen to the real needs of Ontario families and have instead persisted in unreasonable taxation, undisciplined spending and continued neglect of the real needs of Ontarians. We therefore condemn this government for ignoring the real problems facing real Ontario families and demand immediate action before it’s too late.”

The first question to be decided is Mr. Tory’s amendment to the motion.

All those in favour of Mr. Tory’s amendment to the motion, please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

More than five are standing. Please call in the members. There will be a 30-minute bell.

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): Unless.

The Acting Speaker: Unless—I have just been handed a note to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

“Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening session be deferred until Thursday, October 27, 2005.” It has been signed by the chief government whip.

Having this notice in hand, and it now being after the hour of 6 o’clock, this House stands recessed until 6:45 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1803.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown
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, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L) Speaker / Président	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC) Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L) Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement t	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L) Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Erie-Lincoln Essex	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	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	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L) Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Guelph-Wellington	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L) Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L) Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	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
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Toronto–Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
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	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Parkdale–High Park	Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard (L) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	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
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Whitby–Ajax	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (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
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L) Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (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
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Sarnia–Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (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
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Vacant
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse		
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		
Scarborough–Agincourt	Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L) Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L) Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L) Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

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

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

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