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Wednesday 3 May 2006

Mercredi 3 mai 2006

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

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L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 3 May 2006

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 3 mai 2006

*The House met at 1845.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLEAN WATER ACT, 2006

LOI DE 2006 SUR L'EAU SAINE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 12, 2006, on the motion for second reading of Bill 43, An Act to protect existing and future sources of drinking water and to make complementary and other amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 43, Loi visant à protéger les sources existantes et futures d'eau potable et à apporter des modifications complémentaires et autres à d'autres lois.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate? The member for Toronto–Danforth.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** I appreciate the wild enthusiasm from the government benches.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, thanks for this opportunity to continue where I left off when I spoke a few weeks ago. It was my inaugural speech, and I have to say I do owe a debt of thanks to my colleagues in the House who've done their best over the intervening time to educate me as to the work of the Legislature.

When we last convened to discuss the act, my parting comments were made with regard to the big pipe, and I want to return to that issue, given its negative impact on the watershed in the GTA and how that action undercuts the protection of water sources, directly contrary to what I understand to be the intention of the bill before us, and I think it speaks to the actual commitment of this government to protect source water.

We in legislative assemblies are consistently faced with a situation in which many interests want things to continue on as they are. They want business as usual to be the order of the day. They want no change, and certainly they don't want change that is going to undercut their ability to make whatever profit they need to make. I would say that the sanctioning of the big pipe by the McGuinty government is an illustration, and a very stark one, of the status quo trumping the protection of source waters. Again, it gives me reason to wonder whether or not the passage of this act will result in any actual protection of source water.

In 2004, on a very sleepy Friday afternoon in August, a long weekend, the McGuinty government gave in to pressure from developers, from lobbyists, and approved a

project that threatens the source of Toronto's drinking water supply in a variety of ways, some of which I was able to touch on briefly the last time I addressed this House. I mentioned last time that this sewer system, this big pipe, this expansion, will remove 60 billion litres of groundwater from the aquifer system underlying the Oak Ridges moraine. In effect, a backyard swimming pool of water is being withdrawn every minute out of the moraine's aquifers, and this will continue every minute between now and 2007, and that's in the course of time while the big pipe is being put into the ground. These are the very aquifers that feed the Rouge, the Humber and the Don rivers, all of which drain into Lake Ontario, the GTA's source of drinking water.

Last night I was at the Green Toronto Awards at Toronto city hall and I had an opportunity to speak with Jim Robb from the Friends of the Rouge Watershed. Jim has been one of the most prominent figures in the fight against the big pipe. He has been an eyewitness to the damage that the pipe's construction has already caused to the groundwater supply.

**1850**

The last time I spoke, I mentioned how this past summer 120 wells went dry in York region and the water table has dropped from a five-metre to a 55-metre level over 65 square miles during phase 1 construction of the pipe. Jim actually brought visual evidence of the dried-up stream beds here to Queen's Park last October as part of his ongoing effort to bring the McGuinty government to its senses and reverse its permission for construction of the big pipe in York region.

Friends of the Rouge has consistently drawn attention to how the big pipe also creates conditions for water contamination. This sewage pipe is being laid very deep, right into the bed of the aquifer system. So if there was a leak, you could have E. coli and other contaminants seeping directly into the surrounding groundwater supply.

In one of my previous lives, I was a property manager. I had contractors come in, put in waterlines, drainage lines, and dealt, in my time at the city, with sewer contracts, watching the documents that were put before city council for approval. It's very standard practice to have waterlines located above sewer lines so that should there be a break in a sewer line, the chances of that contaminating the waterline are, if not eliminated, dramatically reduced. That is a very practical step we have developed in this society to protect the quality of the water that flows into our homes.

So what have we done with the big pipe? In effect, we've put a sewer line through the middle of the

waterline and hoped that that water, which supplies wells, probably supplies groundwater to the municipalities in that region—we have hoped that sewer line will never crack, will never break, will never leak into the water supply of those rural residents who depend on the high quality of that water for their homes, for their farm animals.

Imagine what would happen if a faulty joint or a natural event like a tremor caused a break in this massive sewer pipe. Geologists have already provided warnings that a bedrock fault line passes near the proposed sewer route and that earth tremors are entirely probable. Even a very small leak in a pipe carrying several hundred million litres of sewage every day can have a huge, catastrophic impact on source waters within the area and even outlying drinking water sources.

The government has brought forward this clean water protection bill, talking about protecting source waters, but they're putting a sewage pipe in the middle of a drinking water source with no thought as to how they would decontaminate that water, should it break or a leak occur. What do we do? What do we say to those farmers? What do we say to those rural residents, those cottagers, when they draw on their well water and find it's contaminated? How many years would it take, if it could be cleaned up, before it could be cleaned up?

To present a bill like this, to say you're in favour of protecting source waters, and to go ahead with something like the big pipe presents a fundamental contradiction in behaviour and thinking.

Environmentalists, citizens and civic leaders from across the GTA have joined together in loud opposition to the big pipe sewer project. The city of Toronto council, in the interests of protecting the rivers and streams that come into this city, have spoken out against the big pipe, and city council passed a motion calling for a stop to work on the big pipe and a full environmental assessment of the entire big pipe network.

At the Toronto city council meeting where that motion was passed, the government's own Environmental Commissioner, Gordon Miller, made a deputation that threw grave doubt on York region's assurances that the big pipe would have negligible environmental impact.

It isn't the first time that the province's Environmental Commissioner has spoken out against the Liberal government for approving the big pipe. On several previous occasions, like the release of his 2004 annual report, he spoke to the big pipe's negative impact on Lake Ontario and the Great Lakes basin, the source of drinking water for the GTA and a majority of Ontarians.

Aside from sanctioning the big pipe, the McGuinty government has been remiss on ensuring that water quality in the Great Lakes has been protected on other fronts. During their tenure, they have not made the investments needed to implement remedial action plans to clean up many of the areas of concern, or "hot spots," found around the Great Lakes basin. Toronto is one of those hot spots, as is Hamilton harbour. Implementing those remedial action plans is important to guaranteeing

the quality of the water that we draw from Lake Ontario. Toronto, Hamilton and other jurisdictions have plans that are ready to go, but they need the province to be a partner in their execution, not just in their development. If this government, this McGuinty government, is serious about protecting drinking water, as they claim, then they need to fund the implementation of remedial action plans.

I don't believe they're serious. I'm not seeing action that would say, "Yes, we want to protect source water; we want to protect the drinking water; we want to protect the water resources of this province." So instead of increasing their contribution under the Canada-Ontario agreement to implement the remedial action plans, the McGuinty government is content simply to reannounce on a yearly basis the \$50 million that the Harris Tories allocated towards Great Lakes cleanup in 2002, money that was to be meted out over a five-year span. Now it's an annual photo op. Toronto's plan alone costs over \$1 billion to implement and the Hamilton harbour plan requires between \$550 million and \$600 million. We aren't seeing the action on this that we need to see.

Recently, a friend of mine who coaches rowing clubs talked to me about her experience rowing in the Toronto ship channel, down in the port area in my riding. She said the toxic compounds—let's call them the volatile organic compounds—that come up out of that water in the summer are very strong. The hotter it gets, the more comes out of that water, the more comes up to the surface. The Ontario Rowing Association requires that when there are competitions in the ship channel, there have to be showers, just in case someone falls out of one of the rowing shells. They have to be decontaminated.

These are gross visible pollutions or degradations of the environment, and the action that has been promised, that has been seen as necessary, is not happening. And when that's not happening, one has to ask how effective this bill will be. Where will the political will be to actually do what has to be done if the existing problems are not being attended to? In fact, in the case of the big pipe those problems are deepening, becoming more profound.

The other concern I have is that if you draft legislation for source water protection plans and you don't provide the resources necessary to implement them, then you don't get the results that you expect to see. So when I previously discussed the Clean Water Act in its current form, I noted that it does not provide the financial assurances to cash-strapped municipalities and conservation authorities, those who are required to implement, plan, administer source water protection plans over time. So I urged the implementation of water-taking fees so that there would be a source of income to protect our source water. Take those fees, designate them for source water protection and ensure that those authorities responsible for protecting our drinking water have a source of income so they can actually do the job they're supposed to do, because we know what happens when they don't do the job they're supposed to do. Enforcement does not occur; protection does not occur; we have an empty shell.

I'm not alone in calling for this. The government's own advisory committees, convened for the purposes of drafting this legislation, recommended this measure as well.

#### 1900

Government members will be familiar with the volumetric water-taking fees that the McGuinty government promised in its approach to this whole issue in its 2003 election platform but has failed to deliver. I am confused about why the government isn't moving forward on this. Other provinces and states have water-taking fee regimes, so the argument that imposing water-taking fees could contravene trade agreements and provincial jurisdiction just doesn't hold water, if you will.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Tabuns:** I know. It was weak but I had to throw it in.

One other promise that I want to note before my time comes to an end: The Liberal election platform in 2003 made promises regarding protection of our source waters. Page 7 of *Growing Strong Communities: The Ontario Liberal Plan for Clean, Safe Communities*, states, "We will protect our water from stream to tap by preventing it from getting polluted in the first place." This legislation doesn't do that. It's narrowly confined to yet-to-be-defined "wellhead protection areas." The government has significantly narrowed the scope of water protection in this legislation, far more than what was promised in their election platform in 2003.

I would say that this government is continuing to trade on whatever goodwill it has been able to engender in the last while from the environmental community. But increasingly it's not acting, putting forward bills that from the beginning are not designed to be effective and that are contradicted at every step by the larger actions the government is taking.

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

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I'm pleased to have an opportunity, even though it is brief, to speak to the issues raised by my friend across the way. I want to remind him that this legislation is a balanced approach. It's part of our government's comprehensive, larger commitment to protect the environment and the water that we drink in all of our communities. It's part and parcel of our plan to protect the Great Lakes, to rebuild our infrastructure and to have water conservation measures, and the Clean Water Act demonstrates how serious we are about protecting that water.

In the case of a conflict between the source protection plan and a zoning bylaw, an official plan, the source protection plan will prevail. Where there's a conflict between a provision of the source protection plan and a plan or policy in another piece of legislation that affects the quality or quantity of water, the provision that provides the greatest protection to the quality and quantity of drinking water will prevail. If there's a conflict between the Clean Water Act and any other act or regulation, again, the provision that provides the greatest

protection to the quality or quantity of drinking water would prevail. That's how serious we are about ensuring that we protect drinking water across this province.

Let's be clear: The implementation of source protection plans within watersheds that drain into the Great Lakes will provide significant protection to the Great Lakes, because the Clean Water Act provides me, as minister, with a lot of authority with respect to how we are going to manage the Great Lakes.

I also had an opportunity, since the introduction and dealing with second reading, to travel across the province and join my colleagues in Peterborough, Ottawa, Orléans, Belleville, Quinte and Walkerton. We only need to spend a moment talking to the community in Walkerton to remind all of us in this House why we are bringing forward this comprehensive legislation, about which, when this legislation is out in full force, I believe I'll proudly be able to say that we are protecting drinking water from source to tap across the province.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I'm pleased to make a few comments on the speech by the member from Toronto–Danforth. I think it was really important and really indicative of the concerns that people have brought to him and to the previous member for Toronto–Danforth around the big pipe because, notwithstanding what the minister had to say in her questions and comments, the bottom line is that you get judged on how you behave, how you act and the things you actually do, as opposed to just the legislation. It was quite disturbing for many people to see the government's illustration of their commitment or lack thereof in the implementation of the big pipe. The member for Toronto–Danforth did a very good job describing not only what's problematic about that pipe—I know he talked about the possibility of risk to the source waters because of the possibility, for example, of a breach; the possibility of something happening, a break; the possibility of a natural event taking place and causing a problem with that big pipe, and then the result that would occur would be devastating for the communities that rely on the water in that area. The member also mentioned that similar concerns came forward from the Environmental Commissioner around that same issue in regards to the big pipe, particularly the impact on Ontario's Great Lakes basin.

Then the member talked a little bit about something that was quite near and dear to my heart, the RAPs, the remedial action plans. You really don't understand the scope of these plans unless you take the time to spend with the people who put them together. I know people like John Hall in the city of Hamilton have worked tireless volunteer hours on our RAP and on trying to move government toward funding the implementation of various initiatives that will bring our Hamilton "hot spot" harbour back to a good quality.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** I look forward to and enjoy entering into the debate once again. I just wanted to talk about the question that was raised by the member opposite about the time required to get this whole process implemented. There is a debate by some

that we should move quicker, and by others that we should take a lot more time.

In the next five years, there are really two phases that are happening. There are about two more years of scientific work that have to be done. You'll recall that our government has provided the money to both municipalities and conservation authorities for them to do the scientific work. I can tell you that local landowners, industries, farmers and municipalities will not buy into this bill if they are not assured that the science that underpins it is sound. That's why that work is being done first.

Of course, there will be the development of the plan, and to make that happen, we envision an extensive series of consultations. We need to have buy-in from those people who are affected in the watershed or in the ground watershed. That is very key.

So we feel that (1) we have to have things based on science, and (2) we have to have consultation. Those are the things that I think set this bill apart from previous attempts by other governments in past days as to how one deals with this.

It is not a top-down process. There will always be questions where there will be an honest disagreement on the facts, and the minister retains her powers to deal with that. There is an extensive process that allows people to appeal at various stages. I can tell you that if a committee were to uncover an imminent or serious threat to drinking water, they are required under I believe it's section 24 to notify the ministry so that action can be taken to protect sources of drinking water. I'm sure everyone in this House would agree to that.

But it is important for us to get the right balance in regard to timing. We must have science, or people will not agree, and we must give people the time to consult and reach that consensus as we together protect our valuable sources of drinking water.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I appreciate the opportunity to lend a few comments from a local perspective, I guess is the best way to approach this. The Grand River Conservation Authority in the area that I represent along the Grand River, which is the largest in southern Ontario, has two things that I think we need to understand. The conservation authority itself has some of the most reputable scientists in the world. Their work in water and water protection, source water protection, and the delivery of water to our communities along the Grand River is second to none. I want to put on the record that I'm very co-operative and very supportive of the work they do as scientists, not just conservationists and not just people who plant trees. We should know that they take the protection of water very seriously, and I thank them.

I also thank the municipalities that work so well with the conservation authority. The Grand River Conservation Authority has great partnerships in the cities and the municipalities all along the river. That's the one point I want to drive home that the bill also does in terms of strengthening the planning process by pulling local communities together, and all the stakeholders, through the conservation authority. In this case I'm absolutely con-

vinced that that's going to happen in a very positive way for the protection of our water.

**1910**

The second part I want to mention and compliment the minister on is the First Nations part of the puzzle. We have an opportunity here to learn from our First Nations brothers' and sisters' thousands of years of understanding how you treat your environment. I say to you very respectfully that this bill has an opportunity to start bringing us together to rely on their abilities and help them in their water protection issues.

I want to work very strongly with the federal government, and I want us to work very clearly together to ensure that we take care of those water issues that First Nations are facing.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Toronto–Danforth, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Tabuns:** I appreciate the comments from the Minister of the Environment and her parliamentary assistant. The question I would have for them, and I'd be very interested in hearing their response to this: Let's say that the body responsible for protecting source water in the Oak Ridges moraine filed their plan and said, "The big pipe is a threat to drinking water in our area. We've looked at the reports. We don't have the confidence that this sewer pipe can be sealed, and sealed off from groundwater." So the reality is that this water could in fact be contaminated by a leak in the big pipe. Would the minister take action to shut down that big pipe?

What has happened so far is that the minister, in fact the McGuinty government, has allowed a project to go forward that puts a sewer pipe in the middle of a source of drinking water. If you ran a sewer pipe through the middle of a river, would you expect a calm approach on the part of the local authorities? Would you expect that to be approved? I don't think so.

When you put a sewer pipe through the middle of an aquifer, through the middle of the source of drinking water for a large number of people, you are putting those people at risk. How tightly, how closely, will that water be monitored?

I have friends in a rural area. They send in water sample bottles every year or so to see the quality of their water. Well, I have to ask, how long will things go on before a problem surfaces? I've asked the minister to speak to this. Will this act—

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Ask her tomorrow.

**Mr. Tabuns:** Well, questions and comments. I know I don't necessarily get answers but I'll see whether I get an answer. Then I'll see whether or not they've got substance on their side.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** I'm very pleased to rise this evening and speak to Bill 43. I want to say that I will be sharing my time with the member from Peterborough. I know there's some disappointment from across the way, but it will be equally riveting from the member from Peterborough.

I want to say as well that I will be supporting Bill 43, the Clean Water Act. I feel that by introducing this bill,

the government is taking action to protect the sources of our shared drinking water.

Ontarians deserve clean, safe drinking water, and that means taking preventive action in order to ensure that. I want to make special emphasis: If this bill is passed, it will complete 22 of Justice O'Connor's recommendations, and that's quite an achievement.

I want to say that we should never forget what happened in Walkerton six years ago. As many of the members in the House know, my riding comes right up to Walkerton, so I've had the privilege of hearing the stories coming from Walkerton. I can tell you that that day changed the history of that community, and not only that community, for a very long time. You hear the stories of young children who will continue to need medical help probably for the rest of their lives. When we talk about clean water, when we talk about what the people of Ontario need today, we cannot forget what happened in Walkerton. I know that sometimes there are some comments made about how we're going too far, too hard, too fast, but I do say, especially to the members across the way, if you had the opportunity to come and hear the stories from Walkerton, possibly if we had done more work in the past, it would have made a difference.

But I do want to thank the Minister of the Environment for coming to Walkerton, meeting with the concerned citizens in Walkerton, just to hear the stories. The people want to tell the stories of what happened. They don't want the people of Ontario to forget their stories. We also, both of us, had the opportunity to meet with members of the board from the Walkerton Clean Water Centre, to listen to their current initiatives and their future plans. I want to take this opportunity to quote the mayor of the municipality of Brockton, Charlie Bagnato. The minister had the opportunity to also make the announcement of the funding for this source water protection plan. I quote Mayor Bagnato's comments from the Walkerton Herald-Times.

"Brockton Mayor Charlie Bagnato agreed.

"A safe, secure water supply is a crucial factor in ensuring healthy, prosperous communities," he said. "We are working with the province and our partners in the region to protect our water now and into the future."

The mayor understands what is needed and what we need to move forward to ensure that our water will be safe for our children and our children's children. But the Clean Water Act sets out above all else prevention. This is something we have talked about over the years, but we need to do more. Keeping contaminants from entering the source of our drinking water and making sure that we do not deplete our resources is something that needs to be enshrined in legislation. Not only is it beneficial to us as humans, beneficial to the environment, but it's also about unit cost as well. The less we have to treat our water, it also brings it in at a lower cost. So not only is it a benefit to our health, our well-being, but it's also a benefit to our pocketbook.

Conservation authorities have recently been given funding to help with scientific studies and other planning

costs to lay the foundation for source water protection across the province. Many of you don't know this information, but I have three conservation authorities in my riding of Huron-Bruce: the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority, the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority and also the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority. They have all been very excellent to work with. They're very willing to help the province provide clean water for all.

In each and every watershed, source protection plans will be firmly based on science. Each watershed must undertake a comprehensive scientific assessment of the threats to the drinking water and carefully evaluate the level of risk posed by any activity before any action is taken. And the plans—and I feel this is very important to emphasize—will be developed locally with stakeholder input.

The Great Lakes, as many of you also know, especially the greatest of all lakes—that would be Lake Huron—

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** Lake Superior, by Thunder Bay.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Well, since it's my opportunity to speak, I get to say it's Lake Huron. But the lakes are so important to us in Ontario. Not only do we swim in them, sail in them, but we also rely on them as an economic driver. In the riding that I have the privilege to represent, tourism is our second-largest industry, so when we talk about the Clean Water Act we realize how connected the lake system is as well. That's why it's important to move forward with our source protection plans. The watersheds are bordering our Great Lakes. So we know the importance, we understand the importance, and I believe that the people of Ontario also understand the importance.

#### 1920

People from the rural and agricultural communities, including my own riding, have raised some concerns with this bill. The province has committed to support planning costs. That was one of the initial concerns. That has been addressed. Some \$67.5 million for source protection planning has been allocated.

Another concern was the financial hardship. There has been a recognition that there may be hardship cases, and it's proposing to develop an approach to address the situations on a case-by-case basis. So there have been concerns, they have been acknowledged, and they have been dealt with. Collaboration, partnerships—these are key elements for the proposed approach, and not only proposed; it is how it is being done. The proposed legislation contains clear consultation requirements at each stage in the process, and input from the community and local stakeholders will be taken into consideration before any decision can be made or will be made.

One of the things that I think we must understand is that another concern that was raised from the rural communities was the overall scope. It's been clearly identified to bring forward municipal water sources. This will provide the most benefit to the people of Ontario. So when we talk about moving forward, the concerns that I

heard from my rural and agricultural communities have been identified and they have been met. I want to thank the minister and her PA for all the work they have done. This is, in my opinion, legislation that is long overdue.

I know one of the concerns that is addressed from the rural communities is that somehow nutrient management gets thrown into clean water—

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Such support from across the way. I would argue that if this piece of legislation had come forward before the Nutrient Management Act, we would have been able to clearly identify the areas we needed to focus on. I believe this piece should have come forward first. I believe there was not enough of a scientific approach taken to identify where the contaminants could be, where this clearly, by science, lays out the planning that will be done. It's taken time, it's comprehensive, and with lots of consultations: very important.

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

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I listened to the member and I'm somewhat disappointed. Her argument hasn't been established. She has 10 minutes left. I would seek unanimous consent that she complete her remaining 10 minutes to make her arguments. Someone must have stolen half your speech.

Actually, I see this bill as an assault on the liberty of individuals, while at the same time I respect the importance of safe, clean and available drinking water.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** If the member from the other side who is speaking—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Would the member take his seat, please. Point of order?

**Mrs. Mitchell:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** No? And you don't want unanimous consent? I have to get this all clear.

**Mr. O'Toole:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay. Continue.

**Mr. O'Toole:** The member for Huron–Bruce basically had 20 minutes and only used 10. She did request unanimous consent initially to divide her time with Jeff Leal. She didn't complete her time. I'm speaking to 43 and responding in the two-minute limited time, including your interruption. I was waiting for Jeff Leal to speak, and it appears he's been silenced on this bill.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** The member for Peterborough—perhaps some would think he should be silenced, but I didn't say that in any official sense. I have the greatest respect for the member for Peterborough, because I know Gary Stewart watches carefully.

I look at this bill, and our member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke—there are three sections that the public should be listening to. There's section 48 on the perimeter costs and downloading; section 83, which is the expropriation issue, because it really is the tenuous hand of government reaching into your property, taking your rights; and the immune-from-action section 89. If

they don't address these sections, this bill is difficult, and yet so important.

**Mr. Tabuns:** To speak to the member from Huron–Bruce, there's no question that what happened to Walkerton was a profound tragedy. It has shaped the thinking of people in this province, similar in many ways to the tainted blood scandal and tragedy. Justice Krever, when he assessed what happened there, called for precautions; he called for the use of the precautionary principle when human life was at stake. I have no doubt that the member who spoke today spoke about the need to protect not just her community but other communities throughout this province.

My concern, and I want to go back to it because I think there's a simple piece of logic here that seems to be shunted aside in this debate: Is there anyone in this House who, responsible for a local water supply, let's say a local water reservoir, would put a sewer pipe through the middle of that reservoir? Is there anyone here who would manage a property and would put a sewer pipe through the well that supplies water to that property? I don't think there's anyone sitting here in this chamber who would do that, because they wouldn't put the users of that well water, the users of the water from that reservoir, at risk. But, in fact, that's what the big pipe does. It puts a very large sewer pipe through the middle of an aquifer that supplies water to this greater Toronto area. Fundamentally, what it says is that this government will put forward a bill and, whatever the virtues of the bill, the reality is that, on the ground, the water will not be protected the way it needs to be protected. We learned enough from Walkerton to say that there has to be a lot of care taken when you're talking about the water supply for any community.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** I was very pleased last week to have the minister, Ms. Broten, down to Orléans, where my community is really divided between three watersheds and we have very good conservation groups. They used to be called conservation authorities, but they didn't want the "authority" in there. They do have a lot of authority over what happens to the groundwater in our area. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority was very pleased to accept a cheque for \$267,000 from the minister. They've been doing excellent work with the Rideau Valley. Also, because Orléans is downstream from the city of Ottawa, downstream from the Rideau Valley, we're fortunate enough to be in the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. That was the decision that they took. Part of our municipality does go to the South Nation and the Raisin region. We had members from both those authorities there as well, because they realized the importance of groundwater.

I was involved in water supply in Prescott–Russell/SD&G for many years as a consulting engineer, and a lot of the problems came out because we didn't protect our groundwater. A lot of situations arose which could have been much like what happened in Walkerton. So now we have very good legislation coming out of that, and it's going to be legislation that protects the people and certainly not have something happen like Walkerton.



As a councillor in the city of Ottawa I felt very strongly about that, and I made a presentation to Justice O'Connor's committee when he came through. I think I was the only councillor who did it. I represented a rural ward of Cumberland at the time.

So I'm glad to see this legislation going through. It's extremely important for groundwater sources in Ontario, for the people who drink from those sources, and the sooner we pass this legislation, the better. I just want to commend the minister on the great work she's been doing for this legislation.

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**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** In the brief time I have, I think one of the issues that is absent, quite frankly, from the discussion, particularly on the part of the government, is key to Justice O'Connor's report. I would like to quote where he states, "If the system is ... too expensive, the provincial government should make assistance available to lower the cost per household to a predetermined level."

I think that in understanding the complexity of water, I would just want to remind the members that there's a difference between surface water and groundwater and they're not to be confused.

The fact is that the kind of legislation we are looking at this evening is something that imposes a potential cost of enormous proportion, not only on our municipalities but on our individual landowners. It seems to me that in this bill we are looking at, there is no recognition of the kinds of cost factors that are inherent in this bill. While I believe there is no one who would argue against the need for safe drinking water, there is a cost to be paid. One of the things that I think the government must consider is that while it can say that it is answering a number of the recommendations—I believe this bill, they argue, represents 22 of the recommendations of Justice O'Connor—the issue is the important one: Who's paying?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Huron–Bruce, you have up to two minutes to respond.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** I do want to thank the members from Durham, Toronto–Danforth, Ottawa–Orléans and York North.

I want to say, in remarks that were made—I also want to talk about the cost of not taking action. That's the flip side of the argument as well. There has to be a day that you say, "Today we're moving forward," otherwise the journey never begins. Clearly this is based on a scientific approach. Care is being taken. It talks about our water system in its entirety. So I would say to the members of the House that if we don't begin, if we don't start addressing some of the concerns, the cost of not taking action may be greater than the cost of taking action.

Those are the concerns that we talked about. Those were concerns that were addressed, those were concerns that will be addressed, but we have to start with knowledge—a base, a foundation—and that's moving forward with a scientific approach. That's where this is going. It's relying on local input; it's relying on local knowledge. It's receiving input from our local communities, from our representatives. Those are being covered off.

I say to the members across the way that the cost of not taking action was how I began the 10 minutes that I was allowed to speak tonight. We know that that no longer is an option. Now we must begin the journey of implementing the recommendations. I can tell you that 22 from the O'Connor report—this is a huge step in the right direction.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I'm sure it will come as no surprise to you that I'm going to disagree with the member for Huron–Bruce.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Oh, not tonight.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Oh, yes. The government decided to bring in Bill 43, a vague piece of empowering legislation that gives little answers to the people who are going to be most affected by it.

We won't debate one issue: Every single person in this room, in this building, in this city, in this province, in this country and I'm sure around the world believes in safe drinking water. There is a question, however, as to what we think we can do to ensure that. I can tell you one thing, and you don't have to be a scientist to know this—there is nothing you can do to absolutely, positively guarantee safe water. You can have no amount of legislation and no amount of money—nothing. Here's a government that is prepared to download the biggest download in the history of this province to municipalities and to individual landowners. Some estimates run as high as \$7 billion downloaded to people on private properties and municipalities in this province.

There's a very good reason why this wasn't enacted before: They couldn't afford it. But you people have decided that you're going to download it to the taxpayer. As my colleague from York North said—and by the way, when you people were running for election, you said, "We will implement every one of Justice O'Connor's recommendations." Well, it doesn't matter how many you implement if you stay away from the big one, and that is number 16, which says, "You want to bring it in, you've got to pay for it." Even in Manitoba, there's compensation. There's nothing in this bill that compensates a landowner, a farmer, and there's nothing in here that defines what activities can be deemed unlawful or unsafe for the water source that's being protected.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It's called an imminent threat to drinking water.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Who decides that? People who are out here in rural Ontario need to have some answers. First of all, this government wanted to have this bill passed before we recessed for the summer. They wanted it passed without any hearings. But we're going to have hearings. We must have hearings across this province so that people who are concerned about this legislation can have their say.

The farmers in this province are absolutely terrified of what this could mean to them. They are absolutely terrified of what could happen. We met with a group of farmers last week. They were here. They are terrified of what this bill could mean. There are no answers in this

bill. The bill contains only guarantees of power to conservation authorities, to municipal permit officials, all kinds of power to come onto one's land without any permits whatsoever.

We need to have clarification as to what this bill actually allows people to do and what it actually prevents people from doing on their land. As it is right now, there is nothing in there that—

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Have you read the bill, John?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I have read as many of the sections as we need to. I would ask the member for Perth—Middlesex, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, tell me, is there something in the bill that tells you what activities can or cannot take place?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It tells you the process exactly. You have to read the whole bill.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** The process? Well, I'm going to tell you, the people of Ontario do not believe this government when they put up their hands and say, "Trust us. We'll look after all of this in regulation. We'll take care of things in regulation." There have been all kinds of assurances given by the government to different groups: "Oh, we're not going to worry about that. We're not going to deal with that," but nothing in writing.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Science. Consultation.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Consultation? People don't trust you. People do not trust this government. I repeat myself: They could bring in a million bills and they can't guarantee that something won't go wrong. When you have negligence and incompetence coupled with drunkenness, you can have problems in this province. Walkerton is a wonderful example—"terrible" is a better word—a terrible example of what can happen when the weak links in the chain cause the whole thing to collapse.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, who's going to oversee the overseer? And who's going to oversee the overseer of the overseer? Do you see what I'm saying, to the member from Peterborough? There are no guarantees. When human beings are involved, you cannot absolutely guarantee anything. But you can guarantee one thing: You can guarantee that you are going to cost municipal rate-payers, through their municipalities, billions of dollars in this province, and you're going to cost individual landowners possibly even more if you decide that activities carried out on their land are simply not acceptable.

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When you talk about protecting water sources of surface water now, we all have to understand that, in my riding, almost all of the water is taken from the surface, and when you have a river basin, it isn't coming down a cement tube. It's massive. It covers hundreds of thousands of acres of land, and anywhere in that basin is going to come under the auspices of this act, but there's nothing defined in here of how big that's going to be, what they're going to do to protect it.

Again, everybody wants to have as much assurance as possible of clean water, but you people have to be more straight about what you're trying to do here, and if you

are implementing something that is going to cost billions of dollars, you can't do it unless you're willing to pay for it.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Show me the \$7 billion.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Tell me what it's going to cost, then.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member from Perth—Middlesex—

**Mr. Yakabuski:** You tell me. That's the figure I've been given.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** From who?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Farm groups.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member from Perth—Middlesex, come to order, please. I'd like to listen to the speaker.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Where's the information?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Pardon me for interrupting you when you're standing. I apologize for that.

Where are the numbers from the ministry? Nothing.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** You just want people to go along and say, "Oh, yeah, just take us to the cleaners. We trust you." Well, they don't.

We need to have some clarifications as to what this bill is going to do here in Ontario and what it's going to do to rural landowners and farmers who have been conducting activities that tomorrow, the day after the bill is enacted, some municipal permit official could come in and say, "I'm sorry, but you know what? You can't farm here anymore."

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** It can't happen? Under this bill, it could.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** That's nonsense.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Yes, avenues for appeal and everything else. People would like to know in advance, what are you planning to do in this province? What are you planning to do with regard to people's land in this province? You're not getting a blank cheque. People won't give you a blank cheque, because they have seen what has happened in the past. They saw what happened with regulation 170/03. Only after tremendous opposition to what was going on has there been some pullback on that regulation, even to bring some semblance of common sense into the equation.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** In fairness, I'll say—and I see one of the members of the Ministry of the Environment staff, whom I will not name—some of those people were very good at listening to what some of the concerns on reg. 170/03 were and they've implemented some positive change. I've said that in the past, and I thank the Minister of the Environment at the time, Leona Dombrowsky, for listening to some of the recommendations we were bringing forward and that some of those people I represent were bringing forward. I appreciate the fact that there was some common sense and some listening, but they're not going to go for a blank cheque again here.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It's going to committee.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Committee? Come on. We all know how long committees go: one day here, one day there. That's not enough. People need some definitive answers in this province as to what this bill is going to mean to them. They've got to have it.

I'm going to read some of the things that some people are saying about this bill, so you'll know that it's not just my words, because I have a feeling that some of those people over there don't actually believe what I say sometimes.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Jean-Marc, we'll talk later, but I've got a clock running.

"Many details to be determined, provincial regulations and guidance documents, details not finalized"—nothing. You want people to buy—

**Interjection:** Framework legislation.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Framework legislation? You want people to buy a pig in a poke here. They need to have some assurances in writing.

As a matter of fact, the very first line of the bill, in part I, states, "The purpose of this act is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water." See section 1. Now, when I talk to people from the Ontario Environmental Farm Coalition, they say that people in the ministry have said it's to protect municipal sources of drinking water. Perhaps I could have the Clerk's table confirm whether or not the word "municipal" is in there, Speaker. I can't see it, but my eyes are not the best. Maybe my colleague from York North knows. Is the word "municipal" in there? I don't see it. So when you want to tell people that that's what you're protecting, then put it in the bill. Can you tell me where it is in the bill?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Yes, I can. I'll see you in committee.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Okay. I'd love to. Well, give me a hint now. I'll be glad to read it if it's there.

There are so many loose ends in this bill that it has created a tremendous amount of uncertainty. This is a complete download of the liability to the municipalities, more downloading to the municipalities.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** You're going to tell us about downloading, right?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I have never been party to a bit of downloading legislation in my entire political career—not once. But these people over here are responsible for this download, which could be the largest download in the history of the province of Ontario.

How much land and where? What activities will be regulated inside the designated areas? Nothing is being told about that. What is the expected implementation in operational interaction? Who pays for implementation? "The purpose of this act is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water": Here it is. The purpose statement casts a broad net: verbal assurance—verbal—to limit scope to municipal water, not confirmed in writing.

Surface water intake zones, which I was talking about, are much larger than wellhead protection zones. If you

were taking water out of the Ottawa River, my God, you'd have to protect half of the province of Quebec, because the Ottawa River basin covers millions of hectares in Quebec. As I say, most of the water in my riding is surface water, taken out of lakes and rivers. I've got some diagrams here, but it wouldn't matter, because they couldn't see them anyway.

I'm going to ask the questions that people are asking me. I had to go to a meeting last Friday in my riding, and these were some of the questions that were being asked of me and also some of the statements made by the Environmental Farm Coalition. They want some of those answers. They've said it's very hard for them to establish a business case about whether this bill is good or bad, because there is nothing in the bill they can actually put their teeth into so they can determine what the net effect of that section is going to be with regard to cost or anything else.

In the province of Manitoba—I was speaking about that earlier—they actually have a stewardship fund to assist impacted landowners. If you're conducting, for the sake of argument, we'll say, an agricultural activity on land in this province, and under this bill, for whatever reason, it was determined—and we can't say it will or it won't, but we certainly can't say it won't, and that is the important distinction here—that that was no longer a permissible activity, you will not be compensated. You will not be compensated. So you could have your livelihood swept away by a stroke of the minister's pen when this bill becomes law by bureaucrats and government.

**Mr. McNeely:** Fearmongering.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, is it the truth? Is it wrong? Could it happen or could it not happen? Can you say categorically it could not? You can't say that. You absolutely cannot say that because the possibility exists.

**1950**

**Mr. Levac:** Can you say it will?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** No, I can't say it will. I absolutely cannot say it will. But you know that I can't say a lot of things categorically and absolutely with regards to natural disasters or anything else. I can't say that when I step out of this building, if there's a thunderstorm going on, I'm going to be struck by lightning. Chances are pretty darn slim, but I can't say it won't happen either. And you can't either.

That is the important distinction here, because they will give no real, genuine, concrete written assurances as to what people can expect in the future under this legislation with regards to protection of the activity that they currently conduct on their land, be it agricultural, commercial or whatever. You can shut down anybody doing anything in this province.

**Mr. Levac:** So let's do nothing.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** And you say, "Let's not do anything." There was a report that came out last Friday. It was on the news. They did an evaluation of Ontario's drinking water. Do you know what they said? Ontario's

drinking water is excellent. They didn't say it was pretty good. They didn't say it was okay. They didn't even say it was very good. They said it was excellent. So you want to download to municipalities and landowners, up to \$7 billion is the estimate, to make excellent excellent.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** It already is. It's not going to cost \$7 billion.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Exactly, but there are no assurances. Can they have an assurance that you will not go in and shut down the activity that they're currently making a living on on that land? Can you assure them?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Then if you're not going to shut it down, why are you not offering compensation?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, you can't have your cake and eat it too. If you're so sure that it won't be shut down, then offer compensation if it is. Offer compensation if it is and cover the costs of implementing this report, as you did in the key part of your—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Perth—Middlesex, come to order.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** —election promise, that you would implement all of Justice O'Connor's recommendations in the Walkerton report, principally being—

**Mr. Wilkinson:** So did your party.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Do you know what? Do you want us to do your work for you? We're in opposition now. You guys are the government. Don't ask us to do your work. For goodness' sake, now they ask us to write bills for them. For God's sake, you guys have to take some responsibility. When you get the drivers and the big offices, you've got to take the responsibility. Don't keep coming over and asking me to write a better bill for you. That's your job.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Committee, absolutely. But don't ask us to write legislation for you. Please, you've got to take your responsibility seriously. If you want to be the government, you've got to accept the tough sledding along with that chauffeur-driven car you've got there.

I can't believe it, but my time is running out here. It is very, very important that this bill get to committee and that we have a chance for a full and wholesome discussion on all of the aspects of this bill. I'm prepared to travel throughout this province to get to the bottom of this so that when this bill is finally passed—we know that it will be passed; it will have second reading before we rise for the summer—it is something that is protective of the water source but is not Orwellian in the way that it treats private landowners.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. If they haven't been asked or answered already, we'll now go to questions and comments.

**Ms. Horwath:** I'm wondering if there was some play on words with the word "Orwellian"; we're talking about water, wells. Nonetheless, it's always a very entertaining

time in the House, listening to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. Although I know he has dealt mostly with the issues from the environmental farm coalition, I think it was a responsible thing for him to do. Obviously he has met with that group and they have a number of concerns.

There are some overarching concerns that many stakeholders have with the bill, and he has raised them in the context of the environmental farm coalition. Those are the issues about lack of definition that exists in the bill, loose ends that are still not tied up in the current bill, and the need definitely to get to committee. That's something we certainly agree upon, because there are some pieces to this bill that need further scrutiny and need further defining and refining.

The member talked about the cost to municipalities and particularly concerns about costs to landowners and farmers. I come from a municipality that consists of a great deal of farmland, so not only do I understand that concerns come from those farmers but that often the municipalities that contain some of those farmlands will have similar concerns and problems around cost of implementation. My own municipality is going through a number of upgrades to our water and waste water systems, and the member talked a little about the impact in terms of costs for upgrades on the municipal sector.

I look forward to the bill being further refined in terms of its commitment to partnering with implementers, whether they be conservation authorities, municipalities or landowners, around our joint responsibility for stewardship of our source waters in the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I'm very pleased to enter into the debate. I think we all have to take a moment to pause and remember that all three parties in this House campaigned on implementing the Walkerton report. They did not say, "If we don't win the election, we'll change our mind, flip-flop, and decide we're not going to go do it." We all agreed in public that we were going to support and implement Walkerton. So this is not about whether we should do this, it's about how we do it.

I say to the member opposite, it is important that we temper our rhetoric. Sir, if you have some report that shows that the cost of implementing this bill is \$7 billion, I'd like you to send it over here, because I'd like to see the source. The conservation authorities have come to us, and we have fully funded, uploaded the entire cost, to get to the root of the science that is the underpinning of this bill. First we do the science, then we do the consultation. Yes, there will be hardship. We've recognized that and we're prepared to play our role as government.

When I was talking to the provincial nutrient management advisory committee and to the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition, they told me quite clearly that they had had to deal with the Nutrient Management Act brought in by the previous government, where they had been given assurance after assurance after assurance that it would be based on science and that there would be cost-sharing. They told us about the challenge they had

with reg. 170—and the amount of time our government has had to take to fix reg. 170, which I appreciate that you've acknowledged, and what we've had to do on nutrient management is why there's some concern.

But this debate and the amendments, which we look forward to, will be based not on rhetoric but on the facts. I'm sure the member will share those facts he has with our side of the House. Send them over.

**Mrs. Munro:** I'm pleased to respond to the comments made by the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. One of the cornerstones of the argument he presented is the fundamental problem of signing a blank cheque, the fact that there are all these administrative ideas put forward in this bill but no corresponding recognition of the cost. I think all members have made reference to the fact that we accept, individually and collectively, the importance of clean water. That isn't the issue of the debate here at all. It's the question of how we bring that about in our communities in a way that, frankly, people can afford. It's only when you see a legislative framework such as this come forward, with no attachments with regard to financial support, that within the communities we represent is the concern: Who is going to pay for this? How will this be done?

It's really important to take my colleague's comments in the context of the need to provide assurance that people aren't going to be bankrupt, that they're not going to be chased off their piece of property and their homestead or their lifestyle or their way of earning a living. Those are the issues that we are concerned about.

**2000**

**Mr. Tabuns:** The comment from the honourable members about the issue of cost is a relevant question. I think the member opposite was quite correct when he said that every party campaigned on its commitment to implementing those recommendations from Justice O'Connor to ensure that never again would we have to deal with the tragedy that we had to deal with in Walkerton.

We are charged with the responsibility, all three parties, of eventually coming forward with something that will be accepted and implemented. So I'm not standing here saying I don't want a bill passed. I want a bill passed that will be effective, that will in fact prevent another Walkerton from happening, and I have no doubt that the honourable members from the opposition feel exactly the same way.

Let's go back to the question of cost. During the 2003 election, now-Premier McGuinty promised that he would be implementing fees for taking water. Former Minister of the Environment Leona Dombrowsky said that "the days of taking water away for free are over." I thought it was a good statement, frankly. And I think if we indeed are going to make this bill go forward, have effect, have impact, then we have to look at the source of funds necessary to implement this bill, and having water-taking fees is an obvious source of revenue for the protection of water itself. Protection of water, protection of the environment, is not free. It requires regulation. It requires

enforcement of those regulations. It requires investment. We should be charging for large-scale water-taking, and we should use those funds to help individuals, businesses and farmers make sure they meet the regulations.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I want to thank the members from Hamilton East, Perth–Middlesex, York North and Toronto–Danforth for their contributions and comments on my address.

You know, it's nice that it has gotten quiet. It's really wonderful when you can speak in this House and keep it down a little, because really, that's the way we like to debate things here. When it's a little quieter, I can save my voice for an occasion, maybe tomorrow, when I've got to sing or something.

The member for Perth–Middlesex was being very diplomatic in his assurances about how "We're going to work to get this thing right" and "We're going to discuss this in committee" and that kind of thing. Those are wonderful words, but the people out there need these assurances in writing and they need to be assured that those costs are not going to bankrupt them. There are so many activities that take place in this province that could come under the wicked old hand of government and just get squashed and mashed away by the power of the bureaucracy because some official has decided that's no longer a permissible activity. So you have to be there with the money too. I understand the positions of the three parties, but good Lord, we've heard enough about Liberal promises in this House. I don't think people take those things seriously at all anymore.

But if we can get some real, genuine, fulsome hearings across this province, get some explanation as to what this bill means and some sharing of the liability and the costs, we may be getting somewhere. However, at the same time, the rights of landowners have to be respected.

At the end of the day, there is no way that any government should be able to pass legislation and then download all of the responsibility for that legislation onto others.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. Horwath:** I'm going to ask the members opposite to be not quite as loud as they were with the previous member, because I have a bit of a head cold and it's difficult for me to project at this evening's debate on Bill 43, the Clean Water Act.

I want to start out by acknowledging that of course everybody here has an interest in making sure that our source waters are protected in the province of Ontario. In that vein, it's quite clear that New Democrats look forward to the time when we can see legislation implemented. It's long overdue. I think everybody would agree that this legislation has rightfully found its time here. It probably could have been a little bit sooner, but nonetheless it's here and we need to do everything we can as responsible legislators to make sure that, at the end of the process, we have a bill that is going to do what we all want it to do in regard to source water protection.

People may know that the draft bill was posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights in June 2004. At that time, the minister thought the legislation would come by the end of that year. We know that didn't happen, and it's unfortunate, but it is here now. It's here for us to deal with. It's here for us to debate and discuss and, hopefully, it's here for us to improve upon through the process of the committee hearings, which we expect will be coming at some point in time.

Notwithstanding some of the silliness that goes on in this House, especially in the evening sessions, I'm heartened by hearing some of the comments of the Liberal members who are acknowledging that of course amendments are likely, amendments are expected. There are lots of stakeholders involved in this legislation, lots of people who have something to say about it. Lots of scientists have been involved, certainly, but lots of regular people also want to have something to say, are going to have something to say, want to have the opportunity to do so at the committee stage.

New Democrats look forward to that. We have all confidence in our lead critic on this file, the member from Toronto–Danforth. We all heard the last quarter or so of his leadoff speech on this bill earlier this evening. I am going to reflect on his comments in my own comments tonight, because I think he did an excellent job of reviewing not only the body of the bill and the pieces in there that we think need some attention, but also some of the things happening in Ontario right now that are of concern, that people who are concerned about the protection of our drinking water in Ontario have raised alarm bells about. I'll be discussing some of those as well.

I think it's appropriate to quote Justice Dennis O'Connor when he introduced the idea that source water protection plans need to be developed for all watersheds in Ontario. In describing watersheds, he said they are "an ecologically practical unit for managing water ... the level at which impacts to water resources are integrated and individual impacts that might not be significant in and of themselves combine to create cumulative stresses that may become evident...."

What we need to do, and what this bill I think is hoping to do, is to deal with the accumulation of various variables, various issues, various pieces that impact our source waters within various watersheds across the province. We want to make sure we don't face another tragedy like the one that every member so far, in debating this bill, has recalled, and that was the Walkerton tragedy that took place in May 2000.

It is incumbent upon us to make sure that the legislation we put place in to prevent those kind of things from happening again, that kind of tragedy, that horror that the people of Walkerton faced, has to be strong. It has to be very clear and people need to understand it and their role in it. People need to understand that it is being taken care of, that it is being looked after by their government. But people also need to know that their government, in taking care of these issues in terms of this clear and strong legislation, is also committed to providing the funding necessary to implement the legislation.

I know this issue has come up already; we've talked about it a couple of times this evening. I know the previous debater on this bill, the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, was talking about concerns about the cost to municipalities and the cost to individual landowners. We see a real opportunity here that needs to be addressed; we see a real commitment that the Liberals made. Now is the time to translate that commitment into action. That was the commitment around charging fees for water-taking in the province of Ontario.

#### **2010**

It seems so simple a solution. On the one hand, you have legislation that is so important, that is so vital, that is so absolutely necessary, and that's going to have costs incurred to be able to make sure it's effective. On the other hand, you have sometimes huge corporations that are simply sucking water out of our water systems and selling it for a profit—again, not to say that there's anything wrong with a profit, but holy smokes. Let's put some fees on that water, whether it's being used in the production of beverages or whether it's being used in the production of drywall, for example. There are all kinds of different uses where there's large-scale taking of water from our water sources in the province of Ontario. Let's take the opportunity now to put water-taking fees in place, and then use those dollars to fund the rest of the implementation, if you will, of the new regulations and new requirements under this bill. It seems almost too simple a solution to be undertaken, but we remain hopeful, not only that that promise will not remain a broken one but that Bill 43 will be the opportunity for the government to make good on that promise. So we await that amendment during the process of the committee hearings.

There are a number of other amendments that we are going to be seeking at the committee stage to strengthen the Clean Water Act, because we really want to make sure that we have a high degree of integrated protection. We really are encumbered by the necessity to make sure that human health is protected to its absolute maximum.

I know that earlier this evening the member from Toronto–Danforth spent some time talking about the big pipe, and I'm not going to repeat that yet again. But that's certainly one example of where the legislation in Bill 43 is going forward against the backdrop of some of these other huge decisions this government is making that are so incongruent. How can you on the one hand say you're committed to source water protection and then go ahead with some of these plans like the big pipe? It boggles the mind. I know that's been raised.

I want to raise another one, and I think it might have actually been raised as well: the north Leslie issue. It doesn't stop at the big pipe. The government's decision to allow the north Leslie lands to be paved over with 7,800 houses, on top of commercial and industrial developments, so that a new urban sprawl community the size of Stouffville can be built in the Oak Ridges moraine and the Rouge River headwaters wetland complex is unfathomable. The north Leslie development is being fought by environmental groups at the OMB.

We talked about science earlier. One of the members on the opposite side, on the Liberal benches, was saying, "This is all about science." Well, how can we talk about science in regard to this bill and not look at the science that's happening in terms of the north Leslie development? Even the government's own scientists have stated that the majority of the site is too environmentally sensitive to develop, and contains the provincially threatened reaside dace as well as a regionally significant wildlife colony. That's the kind of science that raises the ire of environmentalists, when they watch the government ignore that science and continue on plowing the bulldozers through the Oak Ridges moraine. External experts and government scientists have all testified that the north Leslie lands should not be paved. But has the McGuinty government acted to protect those lands? Absolutely not. Instead, they're standing by while environmental groups attempt, on their meagre budgets, to defend these important pieces of land.

Another example is Waste Management and site 41. This is an issue that has come up a couple of times this very week in question period, around the commitment of this Liberal government to its campaign promises on waste diversion. It's unfortunate that this government doesn't see the connection between fulfilling those commitments, keeping those promises on waste diversion, and the result if they don't. Of course, the result if they don't is more pressure on expansion of landfill sites.

We have a pretty major one—we've had several of them in Hamilton. We have some closed landfills. We have some open landfills that are working right now. And I can tell you there's no end of misery experienced by the residents up around the Glanbrook landfill in Hamilton, because people are concerned—and rightly so. Landfills create leachate. Leachate seeps out into the ground and can contaminate groundwater. It's quite obvious that it's a problem. The way to prevent landfills from growing or the need for more landfills is of course to divert more waste away from the landfills, but unfortunately, the McGuinty Liberals have decided they are not committed anymore to divert 60% of waste out of Ontario landfills by 2008.

Their failure on this is felt by citizens who are concerned around the proposed site 41, around the Napanee area, including the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, who are facing the expansion of Waste Management's Richmond landfill. They know how Hamilton or Glanbrook residents feel. It's the same. They feel very concerned about the effect of landfills on the water quality of adjacent communities. Nonetheless, I think it's clear that the diversion of waste is going to have a significant impact on our ability to reduce our reliance on landfills and therefore reduce the risk to neighbouring communities, whether that's site 41 in Simcoe county, whether that's expansion of a place like the Glanbrook landfill site or any other landfills, for that matter, in the province of Ontario—the Richmond landfill expansion, and there are many, many others.

Another issue we are concerned about that's incongruent with the stated direction that this government is

putting forward in Bill 43 is the Milton quarry expansion. Again, quarries are something that are problematic. I know in my own community we have problems with pressure of quarries that are wishing to expand further and further their reaches in their production. But the bottom line is that the one I wanted to raise this evening is the Dufferin Aggregate's quarry in Milton. This quarry operates within the Niagara Escarpment, is currently part of the greenbelt and lies within a significant headwaters region that includes several tributaries of the Sixteen Mile Creek. However, mining is going to take place below the groundwater table, and the quarry expansion itself would create three permanent artificial lakes to the depth of up to a hundred feet.

To prevent these lakes from sucking the surrounding creeks and wetlands dry, the plan is for Dufferin Aggregate to construct an elaborate system of 126 recharge wells—126—that would have to operate in perpetuity, using untried technologies, to be able to prevent these lakes and creeks and wetlands from going completely dry. Now, it seems to me crazy that we would even contemplate having to run recharge wells to maintain water levels in surrounding creeks and wetlands forever—forever. That's not source water protection. That's not source water protection in my mind. And I don't see how anybody could consider that to be source water protection. It looks, however, like there is an opportunity to prevent this environmental tragedy from occurring. We're certainly hopeful that the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Protect Our Water and Environment Resources Power group are going to be able to convince the joint panel that this is wrong-headed and an inappropriate thing to do in this day and age, particularly on the backdrop of the government bringing forward Bill 43.

#### **2020**

There are a number of other issues I want to touch on, but before I do, there is a particular one that I recall having come up at my own municipal council, when I spent some time there a couple of years ago, and that was the issue of the spreading of human waste on farmlands. That was a promise that was made in *Growing Strong Communities: The Ontario Liberal Plan for Clean, Safe Communities That Work*. On page 7, that document, after talking about other issues, goes on to say:

"The best way to ensure clean drinking water is to prevent it from getting polluted," similar to the idea of the landfills. "Source protection is critical. We will pass a law to enhance protection of the lands that surround our vital water sources.

"Incredibly, the Harris-Eves government allows the spreading of untreated human waste on our farmlands. This threatens our drinking water. We will immediately ban the spreading of raw human waste."

This was a quote directly from *Growing Strong Communities: The Ontario Liberal Plan for Clean, Safe Communities That Work*.

In 2003, the McGuinty Liberals were talking that talk, but to this very day the most incredible thing is that that

practice is still with us. Despite the government's promise to immediately ban the spreading of untreated human waste on our farmlands, today we still have that happening. It's unthinkable. If spreading human waste on farmers' fields threatened our drinking water in 2003, when they put together their document that they shopped around to all of Ontario, then it still threatens our drinking water today. If it did so in 2003, it's still doing so today. But, again, the government is more concerned about making those promises during an election than keeping them after they're in office.

For this legislation to be meaningful, the government needs to really get its act together and look at some of these issues, particularly taking immediate action to stop the spreading of human waste on farm fields, so that we can ensure that we have source waters that are protected for the present and for the future.

There are a number of other items that I wanted to raise briefly that likely need to be addressed in the committee stage. However, some of them are of concern and are worth putting on the record. There are a number of definitions of key terms that are left to regulation; for example, "ground water recharge area," "highly vulnerable aquifer," "surface water intake protection zone," "wellhead protection area" and "vulnerable area." All of these terms are left to regulation, and that's a concern to us. As I stated earlier, we want this legislation to be strong and clear. The best way to do that is to define these terms in the legislation. For example, what constitutes a "significant risk" and an "adverse effect" to source waters? That's also left to the regulation stage.

The problem is that failing to define some of these terms in the body of the proposed legislation makes it more difficult for us to assess the full impact of the legislation, and that's selling short the commitment that you've heard around this chamber of a real desire to move forward in a proactive and positive way. If we could put these terms into the legislation, we could have a fuller discussion about what the bill really does in effect.

There are also other issues that the bill doesn't address. I've already raised some of them: the one around the funding and the implementation, the costs of administration, how we're going to put together the source water protection plans and how we're going to resource the committees that are putting the plans together. There are major issues around who's going to be sitting on the committees. We particularly want to make sure not only that First Nations communities are being asked for their expertise in source water protection plans but also, where these plans impact First Nations lands, they need to be very well built into the process. In fact, it needs to be mandatory that there is First Nations representation on these committees. The role of the First Nations and traditional environmental knowledge needs to be recognized in the protection of source waters and the development of source water protection plans.

So there are a number of issues that need to be addressed. I'm sure that at the committee stage the gov-

ernment will be open to any suggestions that make the bill better, because ultimately, it is the protection of our excellent water in Ontario that needs to be of primary concern.

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

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I'm pleased to follow my colleague from Hamilton East, who has, I thought, in her first few minutes, strung together a very thoughtful series of comments, making a particular effort to draw connections. I think this is all about the connections that we often forget to acknowledge. I was particularly taken with her reference to some of the local situations in the Hamilton area, on which she and I have some past history. I can assure you that, as relates to that particular part of her comments, she certainly knows what she's talking about. So I profoundly appreciated those comments.

I was in Mexico about seven weeks ago for the World Clean Water Conference. It's quite an experience, as you listen to people from the Third World speak about the difficulties with water. We indeed have a lot of blessings up in this country, to be starting at such a very good state, notwithstanding some of the trauma we've had.

One of the things that one of the people said in Mexico was interesting. It was one of the kids who said, "You know why there's no life on other planets—why life's extinct on other planets? Because their scientists were more advanced than ours." I thought that was kind of an interesting comment.

There are risk costs to any action, but obviously those risk costs are far less than the risk of any comfortable inaction. I think that needs to be said, and I think the member from Hamilton East needs to be complimented for her thoughtful, integrated comments.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I respect every time the member from Hamilton East gets up, or indeed the member from Toronto–Danforth, whose hearts and souls are very much dedicated to protecting us from ourselves. We need sometimes to take that to heart. But on this bill, it once again speaks to the "Mother knows best"—I mean, the "Dalton knows best"—kind of scenario.

I think the members, those viewing tonight, should be—I'd like to make a reference, because the debate is that important and that substantive that the member from Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, our critic on this file, has done an inordinate amount of work to find reasonable solutions to an important issue which substantively we all agree to. I would refer them—they can call my constituency office. I will give them copies of the Hansard from April 12 as a response to the minister, Ms. Broten, in terms of Bill 43, the Clean Water Act.

If you listen to the stakeholders, everyone here would agree. Let's strip away the ideology and the "I know best" idea. I can say with some confidence that everyone here wants safe, clean drinking water. That would include John Tory. I listened to him weed his way through the resistance of the Dalton McGuinty government to listen to any reasonable solutions—earlier today the debate was on energy; tonight it's on water. What could



be more important to our communal survival, not just in Ontario but indeed in Canada?

What's lacking here are clean principles. I don't say that to be disparaging, because I look in this bill—and I'll be speaking later hopefully, and people should pay attention to this issue.

**2030**

**Mr. Tabuns:** I too want to compliment my colleague from Hamilton East for her comments this evening. I think she put forward the arguments very clearly. I think she touched on the main points that have to be addressed for this bill to be of use: It has to have clarification on definitions; there have to be items addressing the financing; we have to address issues beyond the bill itself—we have to look at the larger influences on water.

As you, Mr. Speaker, and other members of this House would know, the abuse of the water that we depend on in this province is not a recent phenomenon. In the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s, dumping of toxic waste into water bodies was an all-too-common matter. I'm from Hamilton. I remember one of the inquiries about dumping toxic waste into Hamilton harbour. You may not remember this, Mr. Speaker, but I remember being so struck by the story that came out of a commission of inquiry into something called the magic box.

In Hamilton harbour, at the end of a pier, there was a box that had a big lid, and it went down into the water. Trucks could come in, they could back up to that box, they would lift the lid, and the truck would dump everything it had into the box. The lid would come down, the truck would drive away and another truck would come up. An extraordinary magic box—everything went straight through the bottom of that box into the harbour. We have done some terrible things to the water that we depend on. In Walkerton, the chickens came home to roost. No one wants them to come home to roost again.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tabuns:** We never want them to come home again.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Durham, come to order.

**Mr. Tabuns:** We have to protect the people in this province. We have to make sure that the bill that is before us is one that can actually protect the health and well-being of people in society, and that will mean changes along the lines that the member from Hamilton East has set forward.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Either I was having trouble with the clock, or the clock was having trouble. We're back on track.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. McNeely:** Thank you, Speaker. I think that was a double hit of two minutes there. I was watching the clock myself.

I'm very pleased to hear some of the positive comments about this legislation, because it's so important. Part of my work life was with constructed wetlands, which have been proven to clean up surface water. One

of the ones we designed is at Alfred College of Guelph University, that presently treats some of the sewage from Alfred. We were at a place called Minot, North Dakota, where they use wetlands for a town of 40,000. Their outlet goes into the Souris River, which is an international river; it comes through Canada. They were meeting the water quality requirements there.

So there's a lot we have to learn about how water is cleaned and how water is protected. I think we have great organizations through the conservation groups in this province who know it and what's happening at the conservation level, with good general managers like Del Hallett in the Rideau Valley and Dennis O'Grady in the South Nation River conservation. These people have been working with excellent staff people for many years; they have been interacting with the farmers. We know that the farmers are great stewards of the land. Generally, they have bought into this water quality, very much so, and they're working at the conservation level. So I think the dollars that are going out as part of this overall plan to protect our source waters are just excellent. One of the small things is that I also think we're going to have more knowledge around these large industrial farms, which have caused some major problems in some areas.

I welcome this legislation. I welcome what we're doing: getting the dollars out at the grassroots level. I'm sure we're going to have something that's very workable in protecting the water of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Hamilton East, you have up to two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Horwath:** I want to thank the member for Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot, my former regional colleague way back in those days, for his kind words and his acknowledgement of not only our past as colleagues, but our common present and our common future in terms of how we look after our own community. I'm pleased to be able to be with him in that regard.

The member from Durham, again—I think it's interesting. The member from Durham got a bit of a chuckle when he said that we're protecting us from ourselves, but in fact, if you reflect, that is quite a profound statement and one that is exactly what this bill is all about. It was again reflected in the remarks of the member for Toronto–Danforth, who talked about the historical abuse that humans have heaped onto their waterways and into their water systems. In order for us to protect us from ourselves in the future, we certainly need legislation like Bill 43. Again, the member for Toronto–Danforth in his remarks reiterated the fact that we need the legislation to be strong and clear in terms of its definitions and language. We need to make sure it is funded. In other words, we need to make sure we implement things like water-taking fees to make sure that we can find ways to appropriately fund the plans and the implementation of the plans.

Finally, the comments from the member for Ottawa–Orléans: He not only talked about his own personal experience in terms of wetlands development systems, but also took the time to talk about some of the

leadership that he's very proud of in his own community from a perspective of conservation authorities.

If I can just end by saying this: Partnership is not just provincial and environmental. Every single one of us needs to take responsibility for doing the right thing on this file. I look forward to the committee hearings when I'm sure that's going to happen.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to make a few remarks this evening on Bill 43, the Clean Water Act.

I recall, as a little guy growing up in the city of Peterborough—many of you in this Legislature may know Peterborough. Right downtown is the site of the Holiday Inn. But when I was growing up, that was a Canada Packers slaughterhouse, right in the middle of Peterborough. I was about six or seven years old. After they would bring all the hogs and cattle in, they would do the slaughter at that Canada Packers packing house, and all the remains were put into Little Lake and ultimately into the Otonabee River. Many kids like myself—and maybe the member for Durham will remember—after swimming in Little Lake or the Otonabee River, suffered from earaches and throat infections, and everybody wondered where that was coming from. Indeed, it was the contamination of the water from the slaughterhouse activity by the Canada Packers operation, which was the largest packing house in those days in east-central Ontario.

That's why Bill 43 is so important. We want to bring forward legislation to protect groundwater and source water in the province of Ontario.

Just last Friday and Saturday, I had the pleasure of hosting the Minister of the Environment in the riding of Peterborough, and on Saturday she announced the funding for the well awareness program. The well awareness program is a program that allows such agencies as the Peterborough Green-Up to go around and test wells in the riding of Peterborough. One of the reasons that program is so important is because the maintenance of wells to provide clean drinking water to individual residents is so vitally important. So that program, through the Ministry of the Environment, makes people very conscious that wells need to be maintained. Further, on Saturday, the minister opened up the Green Expo in Peterborough, an opportunity to see technologies that are dealing with a whole variety of environmental issues.

I'd like to use most of my time tonight to talk about the enhanced roles of municipalities and conservation authorities in source water protection under the proposed Clean Water Act. Mr. Speaker, you would know, being the former mayor of Leamington, how important conservation authorities are to deal with planning and mapping of source water in individual municipalities. It was always sad that the previous government for eight years did that to many conservation authorities across the province: They stripped them of their funding. They re-oriented them to be an organization that was involved in fee for service. It got them away from their original mandate of planning and looking at the protection of

water in individual municipalities across the province. That was part of their downloading exercise. Conservation authorities across the province, without a sustained amount of revenue, had to lay off many of their experts in fields of planning and water source protection. This government, our government, is renewing dollars back into conservation authorities to enhance their capacity, and I think that's crucial.

**2040**

Currently, as members are aware, municipalities have the lion's share of the responsibility of providing drinking water to their residents. About 80% of us get our drinking water from municipal water treatment systems. Municipalities are responsible for drinking water supply and infrastructure, and none of this would change under Bill 43. In fact, the proposed legislation would enhance the control that local municipalities have over their water supplies. In the past, water protection measures adhered to municipal boundaries, but today, as we know, that's not a sound scientific basis on which to plan for safety of our drinking water. The fact is, many communities in the province share the same watershed, and effective plans to protect our water resources need to take into account the whole watershed.

Under Bill 43, communities would work together to develop their local source water protection plans. These plans would identify threats to the local water supply, including potential threats from sources outside the municipal boundary. This is something new and important for Ontario and it provides a much more effective basis for long-term planning and getting back to the original roots of conservation authorities in Ontario.

My good friend and colleague the member from Perth-Middlesex, in his remarks to the House, has explained the major goals and objectives of local source water protection planning and the five crucial steps in the proposed planning process. It seems to me that one of the key aspects of this process is the government's commitment to ensure that every local source protection plan is developed co-operatively, with the broad participation of all stakeholders in the community. That includes municipalities, along with businesses, farmers, other property owners, individual citizens, conservation authorities and public health units. It would ensure that all interests are addressed in the plan and that everyone has a say in this process.

As I mentioned earlier, a focus on specific watersheds represents a new element in our thinking about drinking water protection, one that is based on sound scientific principles. Ontario's conservation authorities will be valuable partners in this process and they will help at every stage of the watershed-based source protection planning. Currently, the CAs and municipalities are over-seeing valuable research that will tell us how much water we have, the manner in which it replenishes itself, and will identify significant and potential threats to municipal drinking water sources.

As we begin to form local source protection committees, conservation authorities will continue to play a key role by working with different municipalities in-

volved, along with other stakeholders. CAs will also have a role in sharing public information and coordinating the consultation process for local source protection plans. The proposed legislation will build on the work already being undertaken by municipalities to protect their drinking water supplies. It recognizes existing municipal authority in this area.

As my colleagues pointed out earlier, our government recently committed \$67.5 million to support a source protection planning process across the province. Conservation authorities and municipalities across the province are receiving this funding, and it will allow them to do the research needed to make sound science-based decisions about the protection of local water supplies.

I'm convinced that the proposed Clean Water Act is important and very necessary legislation and that it represents a significant step forward in our ability to ensure safe, sustainable clean water for everyone who lives in this great province of Ontario. Our government's first priority is to protect the health of our people, and by supporting Bill 43, all members have an opportunity to help us achieve that important goal.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet Dick Hunter, who is the new general manager of the local conservation authority in Peterborough, the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority. Clearly, he's excited that a government is now putting financial resources back into conservation authorities in Ontario, allowing them to do their planning and allowing them to start to look at source water protection, because they've always perceived that that's one of their key roles in working with their municipal partners.

I'd also like to recognize an old friend of mine, Mr. Paul Crough, who's the current local chairman of ORCA, a man who served with me for a decade at Peterborough city council, and a guy who I've had the opportunity to chat with and who's very much excited that we are going about this renewal of conservation authorities in Ontario.

I think Bill 43 will be a significant piece of legislation for this government, one that will have positive aspects for many years to come. We look at water as a very precious commodity, something that we are going to have to use wisely and appropriately, and I think this legislation goes a long way to meet those goals.

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

**Mr. O'Toole:** I'm surprised that the member from Peterborough didn't have more to say. Quite obviously, the members here would remember the flood in Peterborough, and that all the good work the conservation authorities had done, which was flood control, didn't work. I don't mean to blame anyone, but he was attesting to the great work the conservation authorities had done—and their mandate indeed was flood control. We know, post the flood in 1955 from Hurricane Hazel, that that was the birth and genesis of the conservation authorities. As such, those are comments I would ask him to substantiate in his rebuttal. I look in here, and there's a substantial amount of money, for the right reasons: to map out the aquifers and the various sources of water. I

think the conservation authorities should stay to their principal tasks of doing that, and I would support that.

If you look at the reasoned arguments in this bill, I go back—and this may be repetitive, because these are the only notes I have. But the principle of "Father knows best" is that the Liberals seem to think that they've finally found the magic bullet, the silver bullet. The member from Stratford, or near that area, in his theatrical way, has just raised a book. They have a whole book on it. Most of them are probably complaints or concerns.

As I've said before, we on this side have had a number of very reasoned debates, and later on this evening—hopefully some of the Liberals will stay around, because I have a letter from several constituents who are seriously concerned about the overarching principles. The Liberals think they have the perfect solution, yet this bill is flawed.

**Mr. Tabuns:** Water and its protection is going to shape politics in this province over the next few decades. There's no question that Walkerton shaped the politics of this province. The next step, though, is this legislation before us and whether we make it effective or not. This legislation speaks in a narrow way to the protection of drinking water. But the question of water quality beyond immediate drinking water is one that will have to be dealt with by the government of whichever party runs this province over the next few decades.

It's interesting when you look at China, an extraordinary industrial powerhouse, a country that is trying to grow its economy at an extraordinary rate, and it's beginning to hit up against the limits of available water. Because they have not attended to keeping pollutants out of that water—and I don't just mean sewage; I'm talking about industrial pollutants—they are finding that the ability to actually take water out of rivers and use that for industrial processes is becoming limited. You're beginning to get the conflict between agriculture and industry. In many ways, actually, it's a conflict that we're seeing in Alberta, a conflict between the oil sands industry, which uses huge volumes of water, and the agricultural industry.

**2050**

We here have to have that larger perspective. Protection of drinking water, obviously, is a core part of the mandate of any government that runs this province. But beyond that, we all have to be thinking about that broader issue: How do we protect water in its entirety? Because this resource, as I said in my speech when I first spoke, is going to become increasingly scarce in this province.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I want to thank my good friend the member for Peterborough for entering into this debate on behalf of the government. I thought his comments were well placed, both his personal experience and also his ability to deal with the heart of the bill. But there was previously a comment raised by the member from Hamilton East about the bill itself. We say to the good people of Ontario who are watching, in every piece of legislation, the tools we have in the Legislature are two: legislation and regulation. There has been some debate as

to what should be in legislation and what should be in regulation. I know there's some concern about things being in regulation, but let's look at the pros and cons.

In legislation, we set that framework. We say in the law to all people, "These are the principles upon which we want to base good government in a civil society." This is the framework, and this framework, which has taken many years for us to develop, is some 71 pages long. That is the legislative framework of the bill. But in this place as well, so that we can respond and make sure that pieces of legislation can breathe and adapt, we adopt the form of regulation. Regulation allows bills not to ossify, so that for each and every bill where there's some small change that's required, it does not have to be dragged back into the House. That's why we have regulation.

There's an important need for us to strike that balance. I look forward to dealing with both parties in committee, because we believe that we want to strike the appropriate balance between legislation and regulation. We've had many concerns brought and we look forward to listening to those. We look forward to amendments. I say with pride, unlike the previous government that did not have committee hearings, there's not been a major piece of legislation passed by the McGuinty government that has not gone to committee and been amended and improved in that process when it came back here for third reading debate. We look forward to working with the opposition in that way.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I'm pleased to rise to offer comments on the bill before us, the Clean Water Act. To my colleague from Perth-Middlesex, I appreciated his comments about no significant piece of legislation not having hearings. I'd ask for his assistance tomorrow. Bill 81, a major change to the way our democratic system works—the extension of municipal terms and trustees' terms to four years—is only having two hours of public consultation. There has been no public consultation on that, there has been no debate in the House from the government side, and I'll ask for his help to sever out schedule H from that legislation as a stand-alone bill for consultation.

To the bill at hand, I'll refer my colleagues to the most recent edition of *Better Farming*, April, 2006, courtesy of the OFA. There's an excellent article in here called "Consultation With Farmers Key to Making the Clean Water Act Work." Certainly, in the riding of Erie-Lincoln, farmers in West Lincoln, in neighbouring Binbrook or down on the way of Fort Erie-Port Colborne, are concerned about the impact that this legislation is likely to have unless amended or backed up by significant funds for their operations and their livelihood. It's certainly a common issue that's brought forward by the official opposition to the government. We're pleased to see some progress in the federal budget and we hope that the provincial government, at the very least, matches the initiatives we heard about last night.

But let me read from the article. It says:

"However, several Ontario farm organizations say farms are being made the scapegoat for years of poor

water management. John Kikkert"—who's actually from my riding, lives in West Lincoln—"president of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario"—John's a very wise man—"says farmers will have to pay for costly upgrades to farms and machinery without reimbursement.

"People close to wellheads, open water and streams will certainly be affected," he says, adding that farms near municipal wells can expect to feel the brunt of legislation if it is passed."

I hope members will take John's words into consideration.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member from Peterborough has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Leal:** I want to thank my colleagues from Toronto-Danforth, Durham, Perth-Middlesex and Erie-Lincoln. As I said in my remarks, one of the things that I feel is so important in this bill is about rebuilding the capacity for conservation authorities in Ontario. As this House knows, we experienced a devastating flood on July 15, 2004. This government was there to respond to the needs of our community immediately, just hours after the floodwaters hit.

**Interjection:** That's good government.

**Mr. Leal:** That is good government.

It's great that the Minister of Natural Resources is here this evening, because about a week after the flood, he was in Peterborough to provide some emergency financial resources to the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority, for them to do some planning. On the day he was there, he talked about how for eight years conservation authorities in this province were stripped of dollars to do their work that is so essential, to do their planning for floodwater management and source water protection. That's a fact. That was part of their downloading exercise. It's undeniable, what they did to the conservation authorities in Ontario.

We're stopping the downloading, and part of that is renewing conservation authorities in Ontario. That planning aspect of Bill 43, to provide the dollars for conservation authorities to do the planning for source water protection, is a tremendous move forward after the eight long years of neglect by the Tories towards conservation authorities in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** I know the member for Peterborough could have gone on for an additional 10 minutes, and it's unfortunate that the chief government whip and the government have been encouraging the backbenchers in recent days and weeks to limit their speeches to about 10 minutes per round. That's been a clear pattern. It would appear that the government wants to ensure that their backbenchers have a bit of an opportunity to participate in these debates, but it seems to be a pattern that the speeches are about 10 minutes in duration.

I know that the member for Peterborough had a lot to say. He gave a very partisan speech criticizing the former government. I can't say that I agreed with everything he said, but I certainly found his speech to be interesting.

I'm pleased to have a chance this evening to participate briefly in this debate on Bill 43. It's a very important bill. I guess I'll start with a quote that was in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record on December 7, 2005, which I believe was two days after the bill was introduced in this House and given first reading. It's a quote from John Steele, who is the Ministry of the Environment spokesperson, I think one of the key media people that the ministry employs to deal with media inquiries. He is quoted in the Record as saying that "the legislation is possibly the most complex the ministry has been involved in. It is the result of extensive consultation with municipalities, environmental groups and businesses."

I'm aware that the conservation authorities have been consulted on this. I'm very well acquainted with Peter Krause, who is the chairman of the Grand River Conservation Authority and head of Conservation Ontario. He's done a good job in that capacity for quite a number of years. I am aware that his organization has been consulted extensively. I would assume that AMO has been consulted, and ROMA, although I haven't had an opportunity to check with them to see what level of consultation they were able to engage in with this government. I'm quite sure that individual municipalities have not been fully consulted, even though their organizations may have been.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Here's AMO.

**Mr. Arnott:** Okay, I have information that has been brought to my attention. Apparently this is a quote from AMO, from what I'm told. It says, "Although the resource and financial impacts of the above requirements ... have not been assessed, we anticipate the costs will be substantive due to the creation of a system to review applications, the high qualification requirements and potentially a large number of these positions, undertaking of legal proceedings associated with the issuance of orders, safety concerns of the employees and potentially high insurance rates."

This is a concern that AMO has expressed in response to the first draft of the bill, I would think, from what that says. So clearly AMO still has some concerns, and the consultation process hopefully will continue.

**2100**

I want to offer a few general comments at the outset of my presentation and then get into the substance of the bill. Many members, during the course of this debate, have expressed their view that protecting our water supply is vital to everyone and that we all want clean drinking water. That's a motherhood statement that I think everyone in this House would endorse. Perhaps where we differ is in how we would go about achieving those goals, but we all hold those goals to be dear.

There are responsibilities of the provincial government that the government must be in a position to respond to in an appropriate way. I'm glad that the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal is in the House today, because I want to express to him my appreciation, on behalf of my constituents, for some of the COMRIF announcements that were gratefully received by some of the municipal

councils in our riding. There were a number of applications from Waterloo-Wellington that unfortunately, even though I had expressed my strong support for them, were not funded. I'm glad there is talk of a third round of COMRIF funding to ensure that those communities—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Arnott:** We maybe did, but there's still some outstanding applications. It's still my contention that the provincial government, if it's going to be in a position to share gas tax revenue with municipalities, should be prepared to share gas tax with all municipalities, not just those with transit systems, not just with the cities, because obviously we in rural Ontario have real infrastructure needs related to our transportation network as well.

But I digress, Mr. Speaker, in response to the interjection from the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. I do want to return to my basic comments and indicate to this House that in my view this bill represents a response by the government—after almost three years of inaction on this issue, the government has introduced legislation, Bill 43, that provides no basic details, in many cases, passes responsibility to municipalities and farm families to cover the costs and do the work of protecting watersheds, and delays development and implementation of these plans for another five years. I think that has to be brought forward in the context of this debate.

I think it's important as well to point out that when our party was in power, leading up to the election in 2003, when we were in office, we moved forward on the Walkerton report, the recommendations of Justice O'Connor following the tragedy in Walkerton, implementing more than 50 of Justice O'Connor's recommendations through what we brought forward as the Safe Drinking Water Act. I'm told that to date, the number of implemented recommendations, after more than two years of Liberal foot-dragging, only stands at 60, according to the Ministry of the Environment's website.

Another important point that needs to be brought forward in the context of this debate is the fact that Justice O'Connor's report recognized the high cost of water protection improvements and stated, "If the system is ... too expensive, the provincial government should make assistance available to lower the cost per household to a predetermined level." It's my understanding that this legislation completely ignores this advice from Justice O'Connor. Clearly, from my perspective as an MPP representing a rural area largely, but also an urban area, many of my communities are unable to undertake the basic infrastructure improvements they need without the help of the senior levels of government. I have many constituents who are relatively low-income, and many of these constituents reside on rural properties. If the government comes in in any way, shape or form and tells them they have to undertake expensive improvements to ensure that groundwater or source water is going to be protected, they just can't afford it. That's why the provincial government needs to ensure that whatever it

does in this regard is accompanied by a funding program that helps those individuals in those communities meet the needs that we all understand.

I would also inform the House that in my view this legislation proves once again that the McGuinty Liberals have no plan, are incapable of taking any real action.

This Bill 43, as I said earlier and as John Steele, the spokesman for the Ministry of the Environment, said, is one of the most complex bills that the Ministry of the Environment has ever brought forward. This again underlines the need for extensive consultation. I am pleased to learn that the government is prepared to ensure that this bill does go to a standing committee of the Legislature, that there are extensive public hearings. I would hope that those hearings would take place over the summer months when we can have entire days of hearings, when the committee can travel easily, as opposed to having hearings concurrent with the sitting of the Legislature, which of course means that the hearings can only take place from about 3:30 or 3:45 in the afternoon until 6 o'clock in most cases. When the House is in session, those hearings unfortunately always take place here in Toronto at Queen's Park, at least most of the time. On occasion we travel on Fridays but, by and large, if we're going to get out of this building to hear what the public has to say about this issue—and certainly I believe we ought to do that; we have to go to rural Ontario—those hearings should take place over the summer months. I would hope that the government won't arbitrarily constrict the time frame available for those hearings, because I think weeks of hearings are probably going to be necessary on this particular issue.

Part I of the bill states the purpose of the bill is "to protect existing and future sources of drinking water." Again, that's a goal that all of us share and applaud. The bill "also establishes the area of jurisdiction of each conservation authority as a drinking water source protection area. The conservation authorities will act as drinking water source protection authorities in those areas.... Regulations may be made designating drinking water source protection authorities for drinking water source protection areas established in other parts of Ontario."

I'm pleased that my colleague the member for Cambridge has joined us in the Legislature this evening as well, representing Cambridge. The head office of the Grand River Conservation Authority is in his community, and I know he shares the interest that all of the members on this side of the House have on this issue.

As I said before, I had worked with Peter Krause at the Grand River Conservation Authority, and Paul Emerson, who is the general manager. Other conservation authorities that cover our area include the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority, the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority and Credit Valley Conservation. All of those conservation authorities, in my view, do an excellent job in their area of jurisdiction and they demonstrate a high standard of professionalism. In my working with them over the years, I've come to respect what they do

and obviously work with them to the benefit of our constituents.

I think back to one of the issues that was brought to my attention by the Grand River Conservation Authority at some point between 1999 and 2003—I remember the term of office that that issue came up—and it was the need for repairs to the Conestoga dam, which is an important piece of infrastructure in Waterloo-Wellington. The members who were serving in the House at this time may recall that on a number of occasions, as a member of the government, I raised rather pointed questions in the Legislature and raised it numerous times in members' statements and questions, calling upon the provincial government—a government I sat with, obviously—and directly confronting the government on the need for provincial assistance to help the conservation authority complete the needed repairs to the Conestoga dam.

**Mr. Hudak:** I remember that.

**Mr. Arnott:** You might. I felt it was necessary to bring it forward in a public way. I asked the government to participate in funding the repairs and pay for 50% of the cost of the repairs. After some time, the Minister of Municipal Affairs of the day, Chris Hodgson, ensured that a special assistance grant flowed to the municipality that the dam was in—the township of Mapleton—and that that money in turn was passed over to the conservation authority. It was something that I remember working carefully with the conservation authority on at that time. It was an important issue in terms of drinking water quality and that's why I remind the House of that activity.

The issue of regulations versus legislation was brought up in response to one of the previous speeches tonight. The member for Perth-Middlesex talked about the need for ensuring that the legislation created a broad framework but allowed for, I suppose, minor changes, or relatively minor changes, over the life of this legislation, if it's enacted. The ability of the government to make changes by regulation was something that he endorsed.

I would have to say in response to that, yes, that's true. Bills tend to empower the government to undertake certain changes and responsibilities and allow for changes and modifications, in many cases, to be made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council—or, as we know, regulations, but of course we also know that regulations that are approved by the government tend to be debated and discussed behind closed doors. There is a public process when the regulation is approved by the cabinet—it's made public and people are informed that the regulation has been passed by the cabinet—but of course there is very limited opportunity for public consultation and input unless the government chooses to draft a regulation and publicize it in advance. Quite frankly, in my experience governments don't always do that. Unfortunately, if those decisions are made behind closed doors by the cabinet, the public has no opportunity to hear what was discussed or debated, what the tradeoffs were, perhaps, what the options were. From the perspective of opposition, we are quite concerned about the

latitude the government gives itself in some cases with some of these bills and the regulatory power inherent in them. Obviously, this is one of those bills. If these decisions are being made behind closed doors by the cabinet, if the public doesn't have an opportunity for input, if the public isn't privy to the discussions, the public may be surprised by the result of the regulations that come out. Those are concerns that we would express and would continue to talk about in the Legislature.

#### 2110

Part II of the bill talks about:

"The preparation of a drinking water source protection plan begins with the establishment of a drinking water source protection committee by the source protection authority. The source protection committee prepares terms of reference for the preparation of an assessment report and the source protection plan. The terms of reference may be amended by the Minister of the Environment. If the source protection area contains water that flows into the Great Lakes, the terms of reference are deemed to require consideration of certain agreements relating to the Great Lakes to which Canada or Ontario is a party.

"The source protection committee will then prepare an assessment report that will identify all of the watersheds in the source protection area and will set out a water budget for each watershed. It will also identify vulnerable areas within each watershed and drinking water threats associated with those vulnerable areas. Risk assessments would be prepared to identify significant drinking water threats. The assessment report is subject to the approval of a director appointed by the Minister of the Environment. The assessment report must be updated if inaccuracies or omissions are found before the source protection plan is completed. During the period between approval of the assessment report and completion of the source protection plan, the source protection authority must submit reports to the director on measures taken to address significant drinking water threats identified in the assessment report."

This is information coming directly out of the bill, obviously very technical and complicated, but essentially what the government is saying is that this source protection committee will have a great deal of latitude and power. The Minister of the Environment, I gather, will be given the opportunity to appoint these committees and they will be accountable to him. This creates, it would appear, a new power to the Minister of the Environment of the day.

"The source protection committee then prepares the source protection plan," which is a rather logical next step. "The source protection plan will include the most recently approved assessment report. It will also set out policies intended to ensure that every existing activity identified by the assessment report as a ... drinking water threat ceases to be a significant drinking water threat, as well as policies intended to ensure that none of the possible future activities identified by the assessment report as activities that would be drinking water threats

ever become significant drinking water threats. The source protection plan will also designate activities and land uses that should be regulated by part IV of the bill. The source protection plan is subject to the approval of the minister"—again, here we are, more powers for the minister—"after consideration of public comments. The source protection plan takes effect when notice of the minister's approval is published on the environmental registry established under the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993, or on such later date as is specified in the plan."

We're getting into part II of this bill, and this gives a great deal of information as to how these plans will work, how these committees will work. It's fairly prescriptive, obviously, as to how they'll work. But we come back to the powers of the minister, the ultimate power, I guess, of the minister in this particular section.

I would carry on:

"For source protection areas outside the areas of jurisdiction of conservation authorities, source protection plans may be prepared according to an alternative process. The Minister of the Environment may enter into an agreement with one or more municipalities for the preparation of the source protection plan by the municipalities. Source protection plans prepared in this way are subject to the approval of the Minister of the Environment according to the same kind of approval process as is applicable to other source protection plans.

"A source protection plan may be amended. The amendment process may be initiated by a source protection authority ... or by the Minister of the Environment....

"When the Minister of the Environment approves a source protection plan, he or she is required to specify a date by which a review of the plan must begin. The review procedure is similar to the procedure that applies to the preparation of a source protection plan."

I'm running out of time. I have just under two minutes to go and I've really just gotten started in terms of talking about what's in the explanatory note. There's still much more to go.

Again, this underscores and underlines for us tonight the complexity of the issues that are raised in this bill, certainly the science that has to go into this. Obviously whatever we do can't be governed by politics as much as it has to be governed by science. This again tells us how important these public hearings are going to be so as to ensure that, number one, people in Ontario who are going to be affected and impacted by this bill have an opportunity to express their concerns before the bill is passed into law, so that the committee hearings can take place, the members of the Legislature who are on that committee can listen, hopefully amendments will come forward to ensure that the bill is improved, votes will take place on that amendment, and then of course the bill will be referred back to the House for yet another debate.

But I would come back again, in terms of a final point before my time elapses, to the absolute need for funding assistance for communities and individual landowners who are going to be expected, as a result of this bill, to

undertake significant capital costs so as to comply. If that is not going to be forthcoming, I have to say as the MPP for Waterloo–Wellington that even though this bill seems to be well intentioned in some respects and the goals that the bill outlines are laudable, if the government is not prepared to assist with the costs and the financing of these improvements, this bill will not have my support.

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

**Mr. Tabuns:** Earlier, the parliamentary assistant spoke to this whole question of regulation and legislative framework and how in fact we should be approaching that. He was concerned about setting things up so that there would be threat of potential ossification of the legislation—

**Mr. O’Toole:** Obfuscation?

**Mr. Tabuns:** Ossification. Two different words.

I understand the logic in that argument. What I have great difficulty with is the fact that some definitions in this legislation go very much to the heart of whether or not this legislation will be effective.

“Groundwater recharge area” has a meaning described by the regulations. Frankly, a groundwater recharge area could be defined extraordinarily narrowly, relatively broadly or quite broadly. Those definitions will shape the effectiveness of this bill. Similarly, “highly vulnerable aquifer.” What is that? Is that an aquifer that is near a major metropolitan area? Is that an aquifer that is in a relatively isolated area? Is that an aquifer that is right inside a large industrial operation? That lack of definition there and in other places is highly problematic for those of us who are trying to determine whether this bill will be of consequence.

There are other definitions in this bill, a wide number of definitions, definitions relating back to other legislation. It isn’t as though definitions are not possible, but they’re not specified in some very key parts of this legislation. In fact, when you go further into the legislation, they refer back again to these particular items, “vulnerable aquifer,” etc. that have to have definitions in order for you to know whether or not this legislation is going to do what it’s supposed to do.

I again would go back to the parliamentary assistant and say, look at the definitions here and bring them forward so we know what we’ve got on our hands.

2120

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I’m happy to enter the debate again. I want to say to my neighbour and my good friend the member for Waterloo–Wellington, who spoke on behalf of the official opposition: I think, sir, that you really, in a kind of circuitous fashion, made many of our own arguments that we’re making on this side of the House, as you actually read the bill.

For example, you quoted Mr. Steele from the MNR—I know his minister may speak briefly—that this was such a landmark and very complex piece of legislation. So, to say that after two years, somehow we were dragging our feet, I want to share with the member the fact that some six months after we formed government, we issued a white paper from the Ministry of the Environment that

dealt with this bill. Some 300 stakeholders were part of that process, as we dealt with the white paper, before we were able to introduce legislation into this House. I would say that we were not dragging our heels; that we were consulting, as we should, as Mr. Steele said, on such a major piece of legislation. Since that time, I can assure you, there has been substantial consultation with so many stakeholders which, again, is why we’re looking forward to the committee process.

I know the member also had some reservations in regard to regulations, that somehow these could be done in secret by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, but you also then read in the bill that since this is a Ministry of the Environment bill, all of those regulations must be posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights as a draft before they get to this secretive process that you were so concerned about. That was right in exactly what you were talking about, that we think we have that.

I think we have been able to achieve a balance, and I do want to say, with all due respect, that our government has passed some 33 of Justice O’Connor’s recommendations. I think it’s inaccurate to say that you had 55 in your term of office. We’re very proud of these 22. I look forward to dealing with the issues of clarity raised by our friends in the third party.

**Mr. Hudak:** I enjoyed the comments from my colleague the member for Waterloo–Wellington, as always. I do remember the member standing up time and time again about the Conestoga dam. I think he chased a few ministers of natural resources down the hall from time to time, being active on behalf of his conservation authority and those who were concerned about the dam. I remember Minister Snobelen, particularly; I think you had a few good conversations with him. I was happy to hear about Minister Hodgson flowing some of the funds.

I do want to continue to add to the comments from my friend from Waterloo–Wellington. It is a good article, and I know some members may have read it. Again, it’s Better Farming, April 2006. My colleague from Waterloo–Wellington did speak quite a bit about the impact on farmers. I don’t know if he used the “downloading” word, but it seems like most of the costs of this bill will be imposed upon the backs of farmers in many of the ridings of members here in the House, many who are speaking.

I’m going to go on now to John Kikkert’s comments in this article. Mr. Kikkert said that “proposed legislation may force some farmers to abandon some fields altogether as new minimum distance separation guidelines take effect.” He also mentions that, “Environment Canada reports that the most significant sources of groundwater contamination from agriculture are less significant than from landfills and industrial waste disposal sites.”

Further in the article—of course, Ron Bonnett always has some important and insightful comments: “Ontario Federation of Agriculture president ... says the legislation is too broad and lacks the necessary content to allow farmers an easy transition into new practices.” Here’s a



direct quote from Mr. Bonnett: “There needs to be some identification of what is at risk and this needs to be based on science, not on perception.” So some important comments that I hope my colleagues will take into consideration, if they have not already read the article.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments? The Minister of Natural Resources.

**Mr. Hudak:** He’s against the bill.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** No, I think I’m for it. I was glad to hear some of the speeches tonight in regard to the important role of conservation authorities in Ontario, because they’ve really become very important partners with both the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources in carrying out what we call the water budgets that are going on. These are the studies, the plans of the source water protection areas.

What’s been very good is that we’ve been bringing the CAs together, the conservation authorities, and where some of them may be a little small to take care of a large watershed, we’ve asked them to work together with other conservation authorities. They’ve been doing that, and through this 100% funding—and I think people need to remember that it’s 100% funding that we’ve been giving to the CAs; last year it was \$27 million from MNR, \$10 million from the Ministry of Energy, a lot of money—they’ve been able to bring in expertise to their operations, so there’s a real technological transfer going on from academia and from consultants to our conservation authority officials. They’re doing this work, leading the charge, because they’re the people on the local level who really have the feel for this.

I know many of the members around the House tonight in this debate have been naming their own conservation authorities, and I know there’s an affection for their local conservation authorities because they work with the community and the municipalities in protecting those watersheds, doing what they can to protect from flooding. Sometimes it doesn’t work; Mother Nature, we know, can better us sometimes, and that’s always our challenge. But it’s good work; it’s important work. We’ve learned from what happened in Walkerton that we have to do this work to ensure that we do have the best water systems in the world. But we’ve learned from the inquiry that it’s not just what happens going into the tap, but it’s what gets into the source. We have to protect that source at the very beginning.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Waterloo–Wellington, you have up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Arnott:** I shall take those two minutes, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for Toronto–Danforth, the member for Perth–Middlesex, the member for Erie–Lincoln and the Minister of Natural Resources for their responses to my remarks this evening.

The member for Toronto–Danforth, newly elected to this Legislature, offers an interesting perspective. It’s my understanding the member has been affiliated with Greenpeace in the past, obviously an organization that has a great deal of interest in the environment. He talked about some of the regulatory concerns that he has with respect to this bill. I don’t always agree with the New Democrats, obviously. In fact, most of the time I disagree with them in terms of their approach to these issues. But at the same time, I would say that the New Democrats have an important perspective to offer on any issue, and certainly the environmental issues are ones that they hold very dear to their hearts, and obviously those perspectives need to be considered in the mix of the discussion.

The member for Perth–Middlesex, my neighbour, my good friend, offered his response as, I think, the parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of the Environment, if I’m not mistaken. That means he inhabits that palatial office in the Ministry of the Environment building up the road that I used to occupy for a short period of time—

**Mr. Hudak:** Palatial?

**Mr. Arnott:** It is palatial. It used to be a minister’s office, I think. It’s supposed to be a secret, I suppose.

We look forward to his participation in the hearings, because I’m sure he’s going to be very busy this summer if indeed the hearings take place the way we suggested.

I want to thank the member for Erie–Lincoln for his compliments and his intervention and for drawing the attention of the House to that article in *Better Farming* magazine. I would certainly commend all members of the House to take a look at that, because I think it’s something that’s sent to each of our offices, if I’m not mistaken, free of charge. And I’m sure some of the urban members would find it interesting reading, and they would learn a great deal if they read that magazine.

I want to thank the Minister of Natural Resources for his comments about the professionalism of conservation authorities.

Mr. Speaker, my time is up, and it’s getting pretty close to 9:30.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I’ll take that as a hint.

This House is adjourned until 10 of the clock on Thursday morning, May 4.

*The House adjourned at 2127.*

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Etobicoke North / Etobicoke–Nord	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> 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	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean–Carleton	MacLeod, Lisa (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)	St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L) Attorney General / procureur général
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick</b> (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (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	North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim</b> (L) Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David</b> (L) Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George</b> (L) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto–Danforth	Tabuns, Peter (ND)
Parkdale–High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Whitby–Ajax	Elliott, Christine (PC)
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra</b> (L) Minister of Education, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de l'Éducation, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight</b> (L) Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Sarnia–Lambton	<b>Di Cocco, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline</b> (L) Minister of Culture / ministre de la Culture	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte</b> (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph</b> (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V.</b> (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry</b> (L) Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
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Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J.</b> (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		

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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